

RESPONSIBILITY

While in recovery we learn to accept responsibility for our actions, even when we are powerless over our addiction, others around us, or certain factors in our circumstances. We come to realize that all our actions yield consequences. Some of us may have deceived ourselves into thinking we can escape the consequences of the bad choices we have made - either active choices for angry, hurtful and addictive behaviors, or passively accepting negative circumstances and stuffing our pain. With time, it becomes clear that God has made accountability a necessary element of healthy living.

We often wander through months and years of our life not satisfied with who we are and the circumstances in which we find ourselves. We blame individuals and organizations for not doing what they should to take care of us, instead of looking at what we have available to us and what responsible choices we can make today to have a productive and caring day.

We refuse to acknowledge the truth that what we are living in today is the product of our own choices. If we are living with confusion, that is our choice. If we are actively seeking solutions with a peaceful and trusting heart, that is another alternative. We can choose to complain about all we don't have or to be grateful for all we that we have and experience. We can sit back feeling bored and dissatisfied with life, or we can take action to get involved with paid or volunteer activities that add purpose and meaning to our day. We can live in the goodness of today or let worry about the future and unknowns rob us through fear and anxiety. We can walk forward with purpose or we can wander. We need to take personal responsibility for our life if we desire to progress along the road to recovery.

God gives us a clear message about choices and their consequences. He uses the illustration of planting and harvesting. We harvest what we plant. If we plant poor seed, we'll get a poor harvest. If we plant quality seed, the harvest will be abundant and good.

"You will always reap what you sow! Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires will harvest the consequences of decay and death. (Galatians 6)

"But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit". "Plant the good seeds of righteousness, and you will harvest a crop of My love. Plow up the hard ground of your hearts, for now is the time to seek the Lord, that He may come and shower righteousness upon you" (Galatians 6, Hosea 10).

God says we always reap what we have sown. Sins and addictions, passive or aggressive reactions have painful consequences. For a while we may be able to fool ourselves into thinking that certain activities and relationships are all right. But when the consequences catch up with us, there will be no denying the facts. We need to take God's warning seriously and take steps to change now. It may take time to finish dealing with the negative consequences of our past sins, but this need not discourage us. In time we will see a good crop begin to grow as we plant the seed of good choices and actions one day at a time.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. How do I see the law of sowing and reaping in my own circumstances?
2. Who or what do I often blame for these consequences?
3. How do I take responsibility for my actions?
4. Why is it important for me to take responsibility for what I've done or am doing?
5. What does taking responsibility look like?
6. Am I presently in relationships that are destructive? How are they affecting me?
7. What one behaviour can I change this week?