

*Do not testify falsely against your neighbor.* (Exodus 20:16 NLT)

We live in recovery as long as we live in the truth with love. The more honest we are with ourself, others, and God, the healthier we will be. The more we are willing to know and receive the truth back from others about how our actions and words affect them, the more we will live secure and satisfied lives in loving relationship.

We are not taught by our society to deal honestly and to live truthfully. Whether in business, in paying taxes, in politics, or in getting ahead, we have many demonstrations where the truth has to be "fudged", and lies have to be used to get around the barriers that keep us from being on top.

It's difficult to tell the truth and own up to the chaos and crime that filled our lives in addiction because we fear we will have to pay consequences that will dramatically change the course of our life.

Most of all, we fear being honest with ourselves about who we are. We are afraid that if we start opening up and looking at what's really in our heart, we will be devastated. So we lie and continue to live that lie. Sometimes we lie for so long that we reconstruct who we are and what our history has been. We lie through denial, blaming, rationalizing, minimizing and so many other forms of avoidance.

Honesty with God, with ourself, and with others is essential for our growth. We can never recover in the areas where we deny that there is a problem.

God clearly teaches us that to know and live in the truth is what gives us fullness of life. *And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.* (John 8:32 NLT)

The Bible is filled with the benefits of living and telling the truth. We all long for love. In one of the most famous chapter in the Bible - the "Love chapter" we see how truth demonstrates love. *[Love] is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out.* (1 Corinthians 13:6 NLT) Loving relationships result from living truthfully. *Instead, we will hold to the truth in love, becoming more and more in every way like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. Under his direction,*

*the whole body is fitted together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.* (Ephesians 4:15,16 NLT)

- Excuses to Lie
- It might inconvenience me if I tell the truth.
  - I feel inadequate or ashamed.
  - I want to be liked or admired (to create a persona or an identity)
  - To cover my mistakes
  - To get what I want
  - I'm angry at someone and want to hurt them
  - To rationalize or minimize the consequences of my addictive behaviour
  - To escape conflict or confrontation
  - To escape punishment
  - It's a habit
  - I think it will help in a situation (like save someone's feelings)
  - To avoid pain
  - I don't know what else to say

God has rescued us and put his life on the line for us. One of the wonderful ways we can show our gratitude to Him is to do the things that please Him. *There are six things the Lord hates—no, seven things he detests: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord among brothers and sisters.* (Proverbs 6:16-19 NLT)

Many people, including us on occasion, believe that we can get away with being dishonest - that it really doesn't matter. We may not get caught immediately but God is clear that there will be a judgment where all things will be revealed. What are we hiding that we need to bring out so we can live in complete honesty? *Remember that some people lead sinful lives, and everyone knows they will be judged. But there are others whose sin will not be revealed until later.* (1 Timothy 5:24 NLT)

Many people live under the influence of their emotions. God is well aware that our emotions will rise and fall. The devil is well aware of this too and tries to use our own feelings to get us to live a lie - it doesn't matter if that's for better for worse as far as he is concerned, as long as we are not living the truth. Typically though, the devil tries to accuse and condemn us in our emotions. God's way to keep us from this temptation is to have us look at our actions, not our feelings, to find truth. *It is by our actions that we know we are living in the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before the Lord, even if our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.* (1 John 3:19-20 NLT)

We come into recovery because we long for a life of peace and serenity. We're tired of the confusion and chaos of our mind. God loves to give us the gift of sanity and wisdom. He does it by filling our lives with truth. *A wise person is hungry for truth, while the fool feeds on trash.* (Proverbs 15:14 NLT)

Questions For Reflection and Discussion

1. Why do I lie? How do I lie?
2. What needs to change if I am to live the truth in love?