

Recovering a Life of Relationship

Why We Come #1: We are a group of individuals who believe our lives are unmanageable without the loving care and guidance of God. We believe we need a healthy and growing relationship with God, with ourselves, and with one another.

It's common to have many questions about the future when we leave our familiar world of addiction behind. To start with we simply wonder, "How does this new life work?" We talk about God's will for our life but how do we access that? How does God lead us? How do we build a life of relationship with God, with ourself and with others that is healthy and growing?

We start by admitting that doing life alone doesn't work, doing things our own way hasn't solved our problems or healed our heart. We come asking God what it means to be in relationship. We come admitting that we need to learn new ways of listening, new ways of responding, new ways of naming what is going on in us and around us. We come willing to be guided in a new way.

The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you." (Ps. 32:8)

God makes promises to us that if we will rely on His way of doing things that we will find what we long for. So, one of the first big challenges for us in regaining a life of relationship is to actually RELY on new information, to actually change our behavior before our mind understands how it all works.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do and he will direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5,6)

We often turn back to our own way of seeing things and quit relying on trusted counselors and God's word because we are afraid to trust. In the past we've only trusted the bottle, our drug, our habit. That's what we found to quickly address the problems in our life and that's what we know. It's time to admit that hasn't worked, won't work and will only destroy any chance at the life we long to experience. Will we experience some loneliness and disappointment as we begin to take new steps in a new direction? Of course. We are on a journey away from old ways of thinking and behaving. God promises us strength and wisdom to do things in the new way but we still need to take the journey one step at a time to build the new behaviours that lead to security and peace. What we have for that journey is God's promise to guide us along the right path. It will be an unknown path because we haven't walked it before but God loves us and is ready and willing to show us how to have and enjoy a life of satisfying relationships.

Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path. (Ps. 119:105)

God has given us his Spirit (not the world's spirit) so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us. (1 Cor. 2:12)

Trust in God is foundational for trust between people. We need help to meet each person and situation and respect their uniqueness. Are we asking God for His guidance and His direction in how we relate to others and the decisions we make? What does it mean each day to live with faithfulness and integrity in our work relationships, our friendships, and our families? What does God say to us in each of these situations? How are we to behave in a new way that builds rather than breaks? This will require that we forgive instead fighting or walking away. Sometimes we'll have to choose to think the best rather than the worst about why someone is doing something. We'll need to make space for the faults of others and not personalize their troubles with life. We'll need to learn put the slogan "live and let live" into practice.

Many of us have lived most of our life in fear and insecurity and have seldom taken the opportunity to get to know who we are and what resources God has given us to share with our community. God longs to introduce us to ourselves and show us all He has freely given us. God wants us to utilize the gifts of personality and talent He's given us to help others. As we reach out and work to support others, we'll find ourselves and the unique giftings of our life more and more. In this way we will come to know who we are.

If you need wisdom—if you want to know what God wants you to do—ask him, and he will gladly tell you. He will not resent your asking. But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. (James 1:5-7)

We face all sorts of challenges as we seek to build this new life. We may lack faith to receive God's guidance because we're afraid of making mistakes. We may be afraid that we don't have a right to ask for help – that we have to figure it out on our own. Our faith may also be weak because of all the broken promises we've experienced with others. Why would God be there to help me? All of these things can discourage us and keep us in isolation rather than in healthy relationship with God, ourselves, and others. But God has a better way if we will only ask.

God invites us to believe in His goodness and his wonderful provision for our every need. We can pray with assurance for God's help and guidance in building a new life of relationship filled with love and care.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. How do we go about building healthy relationship with God, ourselves, and others?
2. What keeps us from healthy relating to others?
3. What tools does God give us to help us build this new life?