

10. We continued to take personal inventory as new memories and issues surfaced. We continued to renounce our shame and guilt, but when we were wrong, we promptly admitted it.

“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!” (1 Corinthians 10:12)

11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God and our understanding of His character, praying only for knowledge of His truth in our lives, His will for us and the power to carry that out.

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” (Colossians 3:16)

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as we accepted God’s love and healing through these steps, we tried to carry this message of hope to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs, claiming God’s promise of restoration and wholeness as new memories and issues surfaced.

“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)

Small Group Guidelines

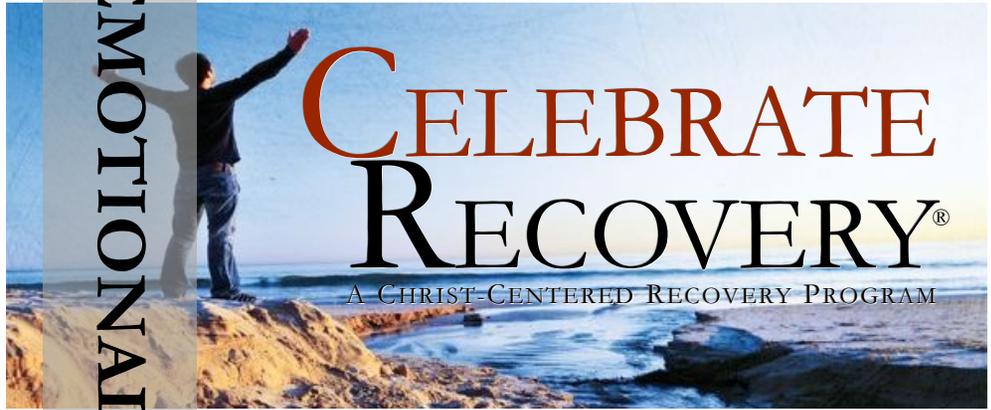
1. Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Limit your sharing to three to five minutes.
2. There will be NO cross talk. Cross talk is when two individuals engage in conversation, excluding all others. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruptions.
3. We are here to support one another, not “fix” one another.
4. Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group. The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others.
5. Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centered recovery group.

Accountability Team Phone Numbers

Sponsor: _____

Accountability Partners:

EMOTIONAL / PHYSICAL / SEXUAL ABUSE



*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another”
Proverbs 27:17*

We meet Monday nights:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 6:15 - 7:00 p.m. | Dinner (\$4) |
| 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. | Large Group |
| 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. | Small Group |
| 9:00 - 9:45 p.m. | Walt’s Cafe |

Idlewild Baptist Church
Life Discovery Ministry
18333 Exciting Idlewild Blvd
Lutz, FL 33558
813.264.8771

The Problem

We have experienced some form of abuse, which has damaged our emotions and identity in ways that continue to affect us. We have developed incorrect ideas about life and destructive ways of dealing with the pain. This is harmful to us emotionally and physically, and damages our relationships with others. We need healing from the traumas done to us. We also need healing from the influence these experiences continue to have in our present lives.

The Solution

By actually working through the Christ-centered 12 Steps and 8 Recovery Principles with Jesus Christ as our Higher Power, we can and will change. We experience the true peace and serenity we have been seeking when we admit we are powerless to heal ourselves from the effects of abuse and give our lives and our wills over to the care of God. It is only when we become dependent on God for our happiness, believing that His plan for us includes victory over the abuse, that we stop living and reliving the past and experience complete and lasting emotional healing.

Here we learn a new way of living. We recognize that the persons who abused us are responsible for their abusive acts and we reject the guilt and shame resulting from those acts. We look to God and His Word to find our identity and standards for living. We honestly share our feelings with God and others to help us identify those areas that need cleansing and healing. We accept responsibility for our responses to the abuse. We rely on God as we go through the process of forgiving ourselves and our perpetrators. This enables us to establish and fully participate in healthy relationships and share this life-changing message with others. Those of us who have experienced life change through this program encourage you to keep coming back. It works, by God's power, if you work it.

Characteristics of Survivors of Abuse

- Hesitate to identify themselves as victims of abuse.
- Feel isolated, depressed, worthless, shameful and helpless to change.
- Struggle with negative feelings about God.
- Condemn themselves as responsible for the abuse.
- Deny that being abused in the past somehow affects present circumstances.
- Lack self-control; defeated in areas of compulsive behaviors.
- Feel angry and/or bitter.
- Have trouble with authority figures.
- Have difficulty trusting others or place unwarranted trust in unsafe individuals.
- Lack self-worth.
- Are preoccupied with thoughts of what it means to have a "normal" relationship with others: friends, family, the opposite sex.
- Lack a healthy sexual identity.
- Act in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Question their self-identity—"Who am I?"
- Question whether life has a purpose or is worth living.
- Feel "at home" in crisis situations
- Struggle with perfectionism or "all or nothing thinking".
- Desire or fantasize about a better life.

The Twelve Steps for Physical, Sexual and Emotional Abuse

1. We admitted we were powerless over the past and as a result, our lives have become unmanageable.

"I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out." (Romans 7:18)

2. We came to believe that God could restore us to wholeness, and realized His power can always be trusted to bring healing and wholeness in our lives.

"For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose." (Philippians 2:13)

3. We made a decision to turn our wills and our lives over to the care of God, realizing we have not always understood His unconditional love. We chose to believe He loves us, is worthy of trust, and will help us understand Him as we seek His truth.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship." (Romans 12:1)

4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves, realizing all wrongs can be forgiven and renouncing the lie that the abuse was our fault.

"Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord." (Lamentations 3:40)

5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of the wrongs in our lives, including those acts perpetrated against us as well as those wrongs we committed against others.

"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." (James 5:16)

6. By accepting God's cleansing, we renounced our shame and were entirely ready to have God remove all our distortions and defects of character.

"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up." (James 4:10)

7. We humbly asked Him to remove all our shortcomings, including our guilt. We released our fear and submitted to Him.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

8. We made a list of all persons who had harmed us and became willing to seek God's help in forgiving them, as well as forgiving ourselves. We realized we have also harmed others and became willing to make amends to them.

"Do to others as you would have them do to you." (Luke 6:31)

9. We extended forgiveness to ourselves and to those who have harmed us, realizing this is an attitude of the heart, not always confrontation. We made direct amends to those we had harmed, except when to do so would injure them or others.

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift." (Matthew 5:23-24)