

Exploring the Effects of Physical, Sexual and Emotional Abuse

RECOVERY IS A TWO FOLD PROCESS in this case. The first step is healing from the traumas done to us in our past, and the second step is healing from the influence these past experiences continue to have on our present.

Characteristics of Someone Struggling with the Effects of Physical, Sexual, and/or Emotional Abuse may include, but are not limited to:

- Are hesitant to identify themselves as victims of abuse.
- Feel isolated, depressed, worthless, and helpless to change.
- Are struggling with feelings about God in relation to their life experiences of abuse.
- Condemn themselves, denying the past abuse affects their present circumstances.
- Feel out of control and defeated in areas of compulsive behavior.
- Feel angry, bitter, and rebellious; have trouble with authority figures.
- Feel a lack of self-worth and low self-esteem.
- Are preoccupied with thoughts of what it means to have a “normal” relationship with others: mates, friends, family.
- Question their own sexual identity and may experience confusion regarding their own sexuality.
- Desire to regain their sexuality and feel safe in intimate relationships.
- Question self-reality: “Who am I?”
- Question whether life has a purpose.
- Feel “at home” in crisis situations.
- Struggle with perfectionism or “all or nothing thinking.”
- Desire to have victory through Christ over the life experience of abuse.

How We Find Recovery

Through a relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Higher Power, and by working through the 8 recovery principles and the Christ-centered 12 steps, we can find freedom from our hurts, hang ups and habits.

Characteristics of Someone in Recovery From Physical, Sexual, And/Or Emotional Abuse May Include, but Are Not Limited To:

- We recognize that we are powerless to heal the damaged emotions resulting from our abuse. We look to God for the power to make us whole.
- We understand that safety is a high priority and will remove ourselves from any unsafe situation.
- We come to believe that we matter to God and He loves us as His child.
- We admit that God's plan for our lives includes victory over the experience of abuse.
- We understand that the abuse committed against us is not our fault. We are NOT GUILTY.
- We understand that the people who abused us are responsible for the abusive acts committed against us. We will not accept the guilt and shame resulting from those abusive acts.
- We look to God and His Word to find our identity as worthwhile and loved human beings.
- We learn that the emotions we are feeling are very real and need to be acknowledged.
- We learn how to organize our emotions by first noticing them, honoring them, organizing them, and sharing them with God and at least one other person.
- We don't accept responsibility for the abuse itself but do accept the responsibility for our responses to the abuse.
- We are willing to accept God's help in the decision and the process of forgiving ourselves and those who have perpetrated against us.
- We come to understand that releasing our offender to God allows us to move forward toward the healing process.
- We come to understand that forgiveness does not necessarily mean reconciliation with my offender.
- We are willing to mature in our relationships with God and others.
- We come to believe that God won't waste the hurt in our lives.
- In our recovery, we become willing to be used by God to bring hope to others with similar struggles.