# Celebrate Recovery Lesson 16: Amends

A challenging step in recovery occurs in **CR lesson 16** as you offer amends for any harm you have caused to others. This takes serious courage, but it is a very freeing experience that you won’t want to miss out on.

Do you remember climbing rope in gym class? Have you ever ridden a bike up a steep hill?

It’s not easy but once you’ve gotten over **the halfway point**, you have nearly achieved complete victory!

The same holds true for recovery! You are **now at the halfway point**of these lessons!

**Celebrate Recovery lesson 16**is **necessary**as you learn how to make amends to those you have wronged in your life. Be brave and take this step seriously; it will change your life!

Lesson 16 tackles **Step 8**of the Alcoholics Anonymous and [Celebrate Recovery](https://sharinglifeandlove.com/blog/what-is-celebrate-recovery/) programs. Also, it coincides with principle 6 of [the Celebrate Recovery 8 Principles](https://sharinglifeandlove.com/blog/celebrate-recovery-8-principles-of-recovery-what-they-mean/).

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## What is Celebrate Recovery Lesson 16: Amends?

**Celebrate Recovery principle 6 is: Evaluate all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I’ve done to others, except when to do so would harm them or others.**

**Happy are the merciful. (Matthew 5:7)**

**Happy are the peacemakers. (Matthew 5:9)**

**Step 8 says: We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**

***Do to others as you would like them to do to you.* (Luke 6:31)**

**This will be a humbling experience, but with the help of God, you can do this!**

As Celebrate Recovery loves to use acrostics, in lesson 16, we use the acrostic for **AMENDS**, which will help you get started in mending your relationships.

* **Admit the hurt and harm.**
* **Make a list.**
* **Encourage each other.**
* **Not for them.**
* **Do it at the right time.**
* **Start living the promises of recovery.**

**James 1:21 NLT**

**“So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.”**

**“You were sick, but now you’re well again, and there’s work to do.”**

**Kurt Vonnegut**

**This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.**

**Joshua 1:8 (NKJV)**

## By now you should have confessed your wrongs to yourself, God, and someone you trust.

## Now, it’s time to **make actual amends**to those you harmed when you were going through your hurt, habit, or hang-up. This isn’t an easy thing to do by any means!

According to [Merriam-Webster](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/amends), to**offer amends**is to offer compensation. It is to compensate for the wrong you have caused in someone else’s life. Your sponsor or accountability team can help you accomplish this goal, as you’ll need to decide who to speak to in order to offer amends.

You will want to think about who was affected by your mistakes. Where did you hurt or harm another person? In what ways did your actions hurt or harm them? If you can **empathize**with their pain, it might help you know the right things to say.

Remember, you are a **new person**– someone who still struggles with daily battles but an individual who is also victorious over many things! While this task might be overwhelming, think of all that you have already overcome! You’ve got this!!

**Anyone who belongs to Christ is a new person. The past is forgotten, and everything is new.**

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (CEV)**

## Celebrate Recovery Lesson 16 Highlights

In the [Celebrate Recovery study guide](https://amzn.to/3tbRL8R), we learn that **making amends**is the beginning of the end of any isolation you have had from other people and from God. It’s time to roll up your sleeves and get a little dirty with amends!

### #1. Admit any hurt or harm.

It’s important that you look at the wrongs, hurts, and resentments that you have caused or that have been caused to you. If you hang on to **resentment or pain**, it blocks your recovery and the forgiveness that you can freely receive from God.

**Do not judge others, and God will not judge you; do not condemn others, and God will not condemn you; forgive others, and God will forgive you.**

**Luke 6:37 (GNT)**

### #2. Make a list.

When you made your inventory, you created a list of people who you needed to **forgive**. You also had a list of people you owed amends to.

**Do some analysis**. Decide if you need to add to this list. Remember that you have done wrong, just as it has been done to you.

We often remember pain because it hurts, but we forget about the pain we have caused others. This isn’t about feeling guilty; it’s just about **taking responsibility**for your past actions and the effect those actions had on other people.

**Treat others as you want them to treat you.**

**Luke 6:31 (TLB)**

### #3. Encourage each other.

It’s a smart idea to **meet with your accountability team**before making amends to anyone or before you decide to offer forgiveness to other people. This way, you can [encourage one another](https://sharinglifeandlove.com/blog/how-to-encourage-someone-100-unique-and-easy-ways/) and offer valuable feedback to keep one another on track.

It can be rather easy to feel guilty when you think about “your list” of wrongs, but it’s all about **balance**when doing this. Your team members can help you keep things even so that you are not creating a purely negative or purely positive list!

**Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.**

**Hebrews 10:24 (NIV)**

### #4. Do Not focus on them.

When you approach people to offer your amends, you need to remember to **be sincere and humble**. Make sure you are [patient and understanding](https://sharinglifeandlove.com/blog/25-easy-ways-to-improve-your-patience-and-understanding/) – not expecting anything from the other person except for them to [hear you out](https://sharinglifeandlove.com/blog/how-to-listen-better-why-listening-is-so-important-10-reasons/)! This is the key to giving successful amends!

The **key**is to not offer any excuses for your actions. If you try to justify what you’ve done, you are likely to seem insincere. It’s as if you are trying to “trap” the other person into apologizing for something you’ve done. Focus on **your part alone**, and don’t expect something back.

**Love your enemies and do good to them; lend and expect nothing back.**

**Luke 6:35 (GNT)**

### #5. Do this at the right time.

Offering **amends** requires good judgment, courage, and a willingness to do it right. Watch out for bad timing, though. If you are unsure when is a **good time**, ask God for guidance and direction to know when is a good time.

Another smart move is to work with the person you are trying to communicate with. Think about their schedule and what is going on in their life. Of course, everyone has excuses as to why they cannot do things, so **don’t easily give up**when making amends.

On the other hand, you should be conscientious of their circumstances. Most people have drama, hectic schedules, children, and a ton of other reasons that a meeting won’t work for them. **Keep at it**; the person will eventually make time to hear what you have to say.

**In humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests**

**but each of you to the interests of others.**

**Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)**

### #6. Start living the true promises of recovery.

According to the [Celebrate Recovery study guide](https://amzn.to/3lO0SaV), you now get to discover and live out God’s **gift of freedom**from your past! This means you will get to enjoy serenity and peace as you embrace God’s purpose for your life! That’s a pretty great treat at the end of the maze!

You can **embrace serenity**every day by memorizing the [Serenity Prayer](https://sharinglifeandlove.com/blog/celebrate-recovery-serenity-prayer/). That prayer has helped so many people in recovery discover peace. If it works for them, why not give it a shot? What do you have to lose in memorizing a simple prayer?

**If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.**

**Romans 12:18 (NIV)**

**“It’s not how far you fall, but how high you bounce that counts.”**

**Zig Ziglar**

### Celebrate Recovery Lesson 16 Questions

* How has holding on to your guilt and past resentments blocked your recovery?
* Make an Amends List of those you owe amends to and those who have hurt you. Watch how God increases this list as you add to it on a regular basis. Pray for an eager spirit in completing this principle.
* List those on your recovery support team who encourage you during this process. (Think sponsor and accountability partners).
* What does “not for them” mean to you?
* What does “don’t expect anything back” mean to you?
* List those individuals who could be injured from you making amends to them and the reason this is the case.
* List the promises of recovery that are finally starting to come true for you.

## My Story Regarding Celebrate Recovery Lesson 16

Hello. I am **Michele**, a very grateful believer in Christ Jesus.

I **celebrate recovery**from several addictions, including nicotine and alcohol. I still struggle with workaholism, anxiety, perfectionism, and patience – as we all do – from time to time!

As we dive deeper into Celebrate Recovery lesson 16, please remember that **I’m not perfect**. In fact, I struggle as much as the next person! However, I do trust in God and know that He has a bigger plan for my life than what I imagine it to be!

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways, submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.**

**Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)**

### Holding On To That Which Hurts

One thing I learned about **holding on to anger and resentment**is that it meant I was not trusting God. Rather, I was allowing those things to fester inside of me, which was keeping a wall between God and me.

Having walls was truly **keeping me in darkness**rather than bringing me into the light. I learned that God does not waste a hurt, so I needed to figure out how to grow from the problems I faced on a daily basis, and I did!!

It’s SO easy to embrace hurt and pain and focus on those things rather than on the positive things in your life. Consider **counting your blessings**to get a more balanced view of the world you actually live in. This exercise builds character, positivity, and courage!

**Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.**

**Matthew 6:34 (NIV)**

## How to Make Amends and Grow

When I made my amends, I had to explain what I was doing – as you can probably imagine. Explaining **why I was in recovery**and what I was making amends for was difficult, but it also helped me to grow quite a bit. I believe it can do the same for you!

Just remember that this is not for anyone else; you are not controlled by others, but rather, you can **make your own decisions**. This challenging exercise can help you build your character, provided you do not expect anything back from others.

You might be **scared to offer amends**for [fear of judgment or even gossip](https://sharinglifeandlove.com/blog/how-to-deal-with-gossip/). I understand, as plenty of judgment was passed in my world! Don’t let fear stop you, though. Other people are not likely to apologize when they are not in recovery or growing as individuals.

For this reason, it’s important that you focus on yourself and what you need in recovery. Focus on the benefits you are receiving from recovery, and you’ll **come out ahead**in this exercise. If you go into it with selfish motivations, you are likely to be disappointed with the outcome.

As someone who still struggles with perfectionism and cares too much about what others think of me, I did have unfulfilled expectations going into this, but once I realized it was my problem, I **let go**of what I couldn’t control. This **helped me grow**and **build my confidence**immensely!

If you haven’t completed this step yet, make sure you do it **with the right heart**. Remember also that [God has your back](https://sharinglifeandlove.com/blog/how-to-build-a-relationship-with-god-3/)! He will walk you through this each step of the way!!

**Cast your cares on the Lord, and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous be shaken.**

**Psalm 55:22 (NIV)**

**“Forgiveness is giving up the hope that the past could have been any different.”**

**Oprah Winfrey**

**Celebrate Recovery Principle 6 Prayer**

**Dear Lord,**

**I come before You asking for help in evaluating my past and current relationships. Give my heart a willingness to go through this step as You would have me. Please show me who I have hurt and assist me in offering my amends to them.**

**I also humbly ask for the strength to give forgiveness to each of the individuals who have hurt me. Since this is a delicate matter, please bless me with the ability to get the timing right. Thank You for all the gifts You have given me.**

**In Your Name,**

**Amen**