

Celebrate Recovery Lesson 16: Amends

Suck it up and do your 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 programs. Also, it coincides with principle 6 of the Celebrate Recovery 8 Principles.

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.

- **Adm**it 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

Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.

Joshua 1:8 (NLT)

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, 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!!

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person.

The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT)

Celebrate Recovery Lesson 16 Highlights

In the Celebrate Recovery study guide, 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. **A**dmit 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 you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven.
Luke 6:37 (NLT)***

#2. **M**ake 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. **E**ncourage 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 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. Not for 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 – not expecting anything from the other person except for them to hear you out! 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! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid.
Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children
of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked.
Luke 6:35 (NLT)*

#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.

*Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.
Philippians 2:3-4 (NLT)*

#6. Start living the true promises of recovery.

According to the Celebrate Recovery study guide, 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. 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?

***Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.
Romans 12:18 (NLT)***

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.

Celebrate Recovery Principle 6 Prayer

Dear God,

I pray for the willingness to evaluate all my past and current relationships. Please show me the people whom I have hurt, and help me offer my amends to them. Also, God give me Your strength to become willing to offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me.

In Jesus Name I Pray, Amen.