

Lesson 2: Powerless

A crucial part of recovery happens in Lesson 2 **Powerless** because you learn that you are not alone on this journey toward recovery. Once you learn that you are not in control of everything, you can move forward on your road to recovery.

If you feel distant from God or lack the motivation to trust Him with your life, try reading the Bible more (listening to what God wants to tell you) and praying consistently (talking to God). This kind of communication is essential in making positive steps toward recovery.

Celebrate Recovery lesson two is a necessary lesson because it allows you to put your faith in the Lord – the key to ending worry, anxiety, and many of your fears!

What is Celebrate Recovery Lesson 2: Powerless?

Celebrate Recovery **Principle 1** is to:

Realize I'm not God. I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

“Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor.”

Matthew 5:3

Step 1, which corresponds to this principle, says: **We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors, that our lives had 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*

What Does Powerless Mean?

Powerless means we lack the power to prevent something from happening. When we are powerless, we tend to obsess over the thing we are trying to control but can't. For example, an alcoholic who is powerless over his or her desire for a drink may obsess over having one more drink.

When we obsess over something, we have a persistent idea, emotions, desire, or feeling that we can't seem to get rid of. Because of our obsession, doing the right thing or making the right choice is nearly impossible.

Celebrate Recovery uses many acronyms, so with lesson 2, we use the acronym for **POWERLESS**, which spells out the things that may be preventing you from gaining true serenity. This comes straight from Celebrate Recovery lesson two.

- **Pride**
- **Only Ifs**
- **Worry**
- **Escape**
- **Resentments**
- **Loneliness**
- **Empiness**
- **Selfishness**
- **Separation**

1. **Pride prevents us from admitting our problems.**

When we mix pride with our lack of understanding in the situation and the power we have to control our mind and body, we create a deadly mixture. We control how we respond to certain situations and how we react, and when we don't understand something, we often lash out and behave poorly.

Doesn't it feel better to just trust God with the things we cannot control and the things we do not understand instead of filling ourselves with worry and anxiety?

Ignorance + power + pride = a deadly mixture!

"Pride ends in a fall, while humility brings honor."
(Proverbs 29:23, TLB)

"Pride ends in humiliation, while humility brings honor."
(Proverbs 29:23 NLT)

2. Our **Only ifs** in life keep us trapped in the fantasy land of rationalization!

Unrealistic expectations or fantasyland keep us trapped.

If you focus on the past and decisions or actions you could have taken, you won't be able to see what is right in front of you. The key to doing this is practicing mindfulness. With mindfulness, you stay in the present moment. You don't think about "what could have been" or "if only."

Take the present moment to focus on your relationship with God. Go to Bible studies, read your Bible, trust Him, and believe that His plan for your life is better than yours. There is a meaning for His timing of things.

**“Whatever is covered up will be uncovered,
and every secret will be made known.
So then, whatever you have said in the dark
will be heard in broad daylight.”
(Luke 12:2–3, GNB)**

3. Worrying too much prevents us from trusting God.

Let go of the worries that are weighing heavy on your heart and mind. Instead, turn your cares and concerns over to the Lord. He is always there, ready to listen to what you have to say. Trust His plan for your life.

If you feel uneasy or uncertain of His plan for your life, you should pray more, tell Him of your concerns, and trust Him to take the reins in your life. Prayer is how we talk to God, how we communicate with Him, and how we can let go of worry and anxiety. Make sure prayer is a big part of your life!

If you aren't sure what God is saying back to you, it's time to break out the Bible. Bible reading and study can show your heart what God is communicating back to you. His word is how we hear what He wants us to know.

Worrying is a form of not trusting God enough!

***“So don't be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too.
Live one day at a time.” (Matthew 6:34, TLB)***

4. Escape

By living in denial we may have **escaped** into a world of fantasy and unrealistic expectations of ourselves and others.

**“But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them,
for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said,
“Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead and Christ will give you light.”
Ephesians 5:13-14 NLT**

5. Resentments make us stuck.

It's easy to stay mad at people. It's simple to keep resenting things, people, circumstances, and the way we feel inside. What isn't easy is letting go of those resentments and learning to be happy.

Forgive easily, just as you are forgiven by God. Allow resentments to fest and grow, and they will multiply like cancer cells!

Resentments act like an emotional cancer if they are allowed to fester and grow.

**“In your anger do not sin’ Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,
and do not give the devil a foothold.”**

Ephesians 4:26-27 NLT

6. Loneliness can prevent us from moving forward.

Instead of having a cold shoulder toward others, learn to love others and build relationships up through forgiveness, understanding, and compassion.

You need connections with other people to get past your troubles. God encourages us to lean on one another for support and encouragement.

With Jesus by your side, you never have to be alone again. Welcome Him into your heart so that you can be forever blessed with Him by your side. If you permit empty feelings and loneliness to grow inside of you, you will begin to feel hopeless.

If you feel hopeless, you need to reach out to your Celebrate Recovery group! Those friends are there to support and lift you up!

Loneliness is a choice. In recovery and in Christ, you never have to walk alone.

***“Continue to love each other with true brotherly love. Don’t forget to be kind to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!”
(Hebrews 13:1-2, TLB)***

**“Our greatest glory is not in never failing,
But in rising every time we fail.”**

Ralph Waldo Emerson

7. Empiness

You know that empty feeling deep inside.

The cold wind of hopelessness blows right through it.

Jesus said,

“The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy.

My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.”

John 10:10 NLT

8. Selfishness

We often pray: “Our Father which art in heaven; give me, give me, give me.”

It’s easy to be selfish. When we pray, we often just ask for help or ask for things of this world. We forget to thank the Lord for all the blessings He has given us. Make sure your prayer life is balanced with gratitude and requests.

Also, don’t forget that He is always there for you. You are not alone in this world. The Holy Spirit is always with you. You just need to have faith and know that God has your back.

*“If you cling to your life, you will lose it,
and if you let your life go, you will save it.”*

Luke 17:33 NLT

9. Separation stops us from growing with God

**Some people talk about finding God –
as if He could ever get lost!**

“And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:38-39 NLT

**“If we are facing in the right direction,
All we have to do is keep on walking.”**

Zen proverb

What Can We Do About Powerlessness?

Once you understand powerlessness, you realize that there is nothing you can do because you have no control over your obsessiveness. However, there **IS** something you can do. You have the ability to turn to God and let Him do what you are unable to!

So, how can you do this?

1. Accept that you are powerless.
2. Be willing to ask for God’s intervention.
3. Make your relationship with God your number one priority.
4. Serve and love others.

Now that you understand your problem and what you have power over and what you don't, you can accept your situation and turn to God for help!
Celebrate Recovery Lesson Two Highlights

Lesson 2 Notes

So, you have now taken the first step by coming out of denial and into reality, where you can clearly see what you do have control over and what you do not have control over.

You've heard the Celebrate Recovery Serenity Prayer, which asks God to help us recognize what we can and cannot control and to give us the power to see the difference.

Now is the time to admit you are powerless over the things that rob you of the serenity you are so desperately seeking. Let's look at what can stand in our way of admitting we are powerless to control our tendency to do the wrong thing.

**“Success is the sum of small efforts,
Repeated day in and day out.”**

Robert Collier

Lesson 2 Questions

- *In what ways has your pride stopped you from asking for help and stopped you from getting the help you need to overcome your hurts, hang-ups, and habits?*
- *What, in your past, has caused you to have the “if only” statements?*
- *What are you worried about that you should let God control?*
- *In what ways have you tried to escape your past pain?*
- *How has holding onto your anger and resentment affected you?*
- *Do you think that loneliness is a choice?*
- *How has your denial isolated you from important relationships?*
- *What is the emptiness you have felt, and what does it feel like?*
- *What are some new ways you are finding to fill that emptiness?*
- *In what areas of your life have you been selfish?*
- *What can you do to get closer to God?*

My Story – In Relation to Celebrate Recovery Lesson Two

Let's get personal.

Let me first introduce myself.

My name is Dennis. I'm a grateful believer in Jesus Christ, and I struggle with workaholism, perfectionism, codependency, and anxiety. I celebrate recovery from an addiction to drugs and alcoholism.

Pride has affected my recovery because it has prevented me from allowing God to do His work in my life, and many times, I have failed to trust Him with decisions. I often don't want to ask God for help because I'm afraid if I admit my shortcomings, I will be held accountable for not changing the way I am. Change is hard!

I used to worry all the time about everything instead of laying all my fears and anxiety at the feet of God. I had trouble trusting God's plan for my life. I've always struggled with impatience, so His timing was not good enough for me. Now, I am able to see the magical things He was doing in my life.

I now trust God and His plan for my life, regardless of the struggles that come my way. Those are just more things I can ask Him for help with. One thing I need to work on is trusting His timing, not mine. Patience is a skill I need to work on.

My Thoughts & Suggestions on Celebrate Recovery Lesson 2

- Stop being angry over past resentments.
- Identify the things that cause you pain.
- Deal with any empty feeling inside.
- Look at making new Christian friends at your local Celebrate Recovery.
- Watch how you fill the void in your life.
- Reduce the amount of stress and anxiety you are feeling.
- Think about which areas you are selfish in and work to improve that.
- Find a church home for you and your family.
- Focus on the good you can do for your community and Celebrate Recovery.
- Read your Bible and pray daily.