

Celebrate Recovery Lesson 21: Relapse

We have officially reached Celebrate Recovery lesson 21 – Relapse!

This year so far, we have covered many things we need to know to work through our hurts and habits. We've also discovered many ways to maintain our sobriety or spiritual wellness.

Now, we are ready to look at the dreaded point that relapse might happen. There are many things that we can do to avoid relapse in our recovery, and we will look at each of these things so that we are set up for the best amount of success available!

“Listen to the lord. Hear what he is telling you.”

Isaiah 1:10

Celebrate Recovery lesson 21 continues to look at Principle 7, which states we need to set apart time for Bible reading, self-examination, and prayer each day. We'll move forward in the 12 steps of recovery as we look at Step 11 – improving our relationship with God.

Step 11 is one of the steps from the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Celebrate Recovery programs. This step is paramount for us if we are struggling to carry out God's Will for our life.

What is Celebrate Recovery Lesson 21: Relapse?

Celebrate Recovery principle 7 states the following:

Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and His Will for my life and to gain the power to follow His Will.

Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.

The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Mark 14:38

In Step 11, We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His Will for us and the power to carry that out.

We can get through this – no matter what circumstance you find yourself in!

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly.

Colossians 3:16

If you are currently being negatively impacted in this way, do not lose hope. There is a light at the end of the tunnel. Remember, we all have ups and downs in life, and with time, this too shall pass!

Relapse is often an inevitable part of recovery but it does not have to be.

According to the Celebrate Recovery study guide, the best ways to prevent relapse are to reserve a daily alone time with God, evaluate your health, listen to Jesus, pray, slow down, and enjoy the growth that you are experiencing along the way!

*Be still, and know that I am God.
Psalm 46:10*

Tonight, we are going to talk about how we can prevent RELAPSE

Let's, take a look at these elements.

Tonight's acrostic is RELAPSE:

Reserve a daily quiet time

Evaluate

Listen to Jesus

Alone and quiet time

Plug in to God's power

Slow down

Enjoy your growth

RESERVE

Reserve a Daily Alone Time with God

The first letter in relapse stands for Principle 7 itself:

RESERVE a daily quiet time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and His will for my life and gain the power to follow His will.

The first step in preventing a relapse is to admit that you will be tempted, that you are not above temptation.

As you took a close look at Principle 7 when you learned the 8 principles of Celebrate Recovery, you know you should make this time for God. It will include time for Bible reading and study, self-examination, and prayer.

Have you made this time available everyday yet?

If you do not know where to start in terms of Bible reading, why not try a Bible reading plan? You do not have to allow the Bible to intimidate you or the fact that it is no longer the first of the year! You can start reading and studying the Bible any time of the year!

“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly.”

Colossians 3:16

Mark 14:38 NLT

Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation.

For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”

Philippians 4:6 NLT

Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.

Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

EVALUATE

Evaluate Your Overall Health

When you take a look at your health, you should examine the physical, relational, spiritual, and emotional parts. Take a close inventory of any hurt, exhaustion, anger, resentment, or tension you are experiencing. Pay close attention to problem areas and speak to your sponsor!

As a special precaution when doing this check, read Romans 12:3-17. In those verses, you will see that you need to be honest in your estimation of your well-being. Lean toward the good in your life, and steer clear of what is wrong. Be patient and loving during this time of turmoil.

Your evaluation needs to include your physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual health. And don’t forget the value of doing a “H-E-A-R-T” check. Are you...

Hurting

Exhausted

Angry

Resentful

Tense

“Be honest in your estimate of yourselves...Hate what is wrong. Stand on the side of the good. Love each other...Be patient in trouble...Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honest clear through.” Romans 12:3-17

LISTEN

Slow Down and Listen to God

L is LISTEN

We need to take a time-out from the world's "rat race" long enough to listen to our bodies, our minds, and our souls.

We need to slow down enough to hear the Lord's directions.

**"Test everything that is said to be sure it is true, and if it is, then accept it"
(1Thessalonians 5:21, TLB).**

It is often easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of life. We are all too busy to get anything done the way we should. It's so different – the way we put quantity above quality. When it comes to your faith, God deserves quality time. He did create you!

Pray then Listen for God!

Take a break from the things that flood your mind, body, and soul. Slow down so you are able to listen to the instructions that you receive from God.

What if He needs to tell you something important about your calling or your purpose or your issues ?

It would be wise to hear that information, right?

We need to take a time-out from the world's "rat race" long enough to listen to our God, our bodies, our minds, and our souls. We need to slow down enough to hear the Lord's directions. "Test everything that is said to be sure it is true, and if it is, then accept it." (1 Thessalonians 5:21, TLB)

I like that verse in The Message: "Don't be gullible. Check out everything and keep only what's good. Throw out anything tainted with evil."

Alone and quiet time – Jesus Christ spent time alone with His Father.
We need to do the same.

***Listen to the Lord.
Hear what He is telling you.
Isaiah 1:10 (TLB)***

Letter **A** stands for **ALONE** and quiet time.

The first part of Step 11 says: “We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God.”

Now in Principle 7 in order to keep your recovery growing, you need to have a daily quiet time with Jesus.

Set a daily appointment time to be alone with God.

FYI: The enemy loves it when he keeps us from growing and from working on the most important relationship in our lives-----our relationship with Jesus.

PLUG

Plug into God’s Power with Prayer

Now in Principle 7 in order to keep your recovery growing, you need to have a daily quiet time with Jesus.

Set a daily appointment time to be alone with God.

FYI: The enemy loves it when he keeps us from growing and from working on the most important relationship in our lives-----our relationship with Jesus.

Don’t just gloss over the subject of prayer. Jesus knew the value of talking to His Father and He frequently took time apart from the world to converse with God. If you find it helpful, set a spiritual goal to pray more and improve this habit one step at a time.

Don’t expect to become a prayer warrior overnight. Do take the time to really set down distractions and watch God work in your life. We are encouraged to pray about every matter, not just the big-ticket items. Seek His Will in ALL you do and witness greatness!

If you are already an avid prayer enthusiast, here are a few things that you can consider for your prayer life.

Many people ask “Why did God allow that to happen to me?”

Did you pray and seek His will and guidance before you made the decision to get married, before you made the decision to change jobs?”

You see, if we don’t daily seek His will for our lives, how can we blame Him when things go wrong?

Our job is to daily see His will for our lives.

God's guidance and direction can only start when our demands stop. Ask but don't demand.

Philippians 4:6 NLT

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.

Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

Our next letter is **S**:

Slow down long enough to hear God's answer.

Slow Down During Recovery

We become impatient and need to slow down long enough to hear God's answers and directions.

Our timing can be flawed, but God's timing is always perfect.

After we pray and ask, we need to listen.

As you walk (or soar) through recovery, remember to slow down. God's timing is perfect, and you don't want to ruin that by behaving impatiently. Remember that you were created for a reason, so be sure to take the time to enjoy and embrace what you've been called to.

God said to Job,

"Listen to me. Keep silence and I will teach you wisdom!"

Job 33:33

The last letter in relapse is **E**:

Enjoy your growth.

You need to enjoy your victories. Rejoice in and celebrate the small successes along your road to recovery!

Don't forget to share your victories with others, no matter how small.

Your growth gives others HOPE!

Celebrate the victories you see along the way, too! Whether you are on your first step or have been down this road many times, you should adopt a joyful attitude. An attitude of gratitude will set you on the right path. Appreciate the lessons that you learn along the way, as well.

Even when things seem grim, you can positively impact the lives of those around you. Show them what hope really looks like by triumphing when you could complain. Share your recovery or spiritual testimony with those around you, so they can see God's glory in plain sight!

Some additional things that may help you as you are worried about a relapse in recovery are having a specific time and place for your daily time with God, going to as many Celebrate Recovery meetings as you can in your schedule (prioritize), and spending time with others.

“Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.

The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Mark 14:38

Keep in mind that the term “others” does not include negative forces that encourage you to relapse (usually because it benefits them). Instead, lean on your church family or the Christian friends you have met along the way.

Finally, consider doing volunteer work.

Be joyful always, pray at all times,

Be thankful in all circumstances.

1 Thessalonians 5:16 (GNT)

Here are the questions from Celebrate Recovery lesson 21.

- What tools will you use to prevent a relapse?
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- What have you tried in the past?
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- Are you hurting right now? How?
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- In what ways are you exhausted?
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- How are you feeling anger and resentment?
-
- What are you still harboring in terms of these items?
-
- What is making you tense right now?
-
- How do you behave when you feel the stressors above?
-
- How do your listening skills rate on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 is the best)?
-
- In what ways could you improve your listening skills with God?
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- How could you improve your listening skills with others?
-
- What does a “quiet time” with God mean to you? Why is it crucial?
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- How could you improve your prayer life? Get into the details here.
-
- When and where do you currently pray? (Consider a prayer closet).
-
- Do you currently give God the opportunity to speak to you as you listen?
-
- What does meditation mean to you?
-
- How do you celebrate your recovery?
-
- List what you do, even with the small victories.

A Celebrate Recovery Lesson 21 – A Personal Story

As customary in Celebrate Recovery, I will introduce myself. I am Dennis – a grateful believer in Jesus. I celebrate recovery through the grace of God from various addictions and still struggle with perfectionism, complaining, arguing, anger and resentments..

I have had a numerous “traditional” relapse if there is such a thing!

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

Philippians 4:6

Don’t get me wrong. I’m far from perfect and still struggle with many things – some of them creep up on me! The enemy is clever like that. Before, I had a negative attitude, which likely caused much of the catastrophes that accompanied my walk.

What Has Changed on My Journey?

Today, when bad things happen, I can see that God has a bigger plan, and I trust Him to guide my life. I still have the loss of meaningful relationships, as one example. However, I can now look back and see exactly when this problem began and how it escalated to this point.

In other words, I have problems like anyone else, but they are easier to manage because I know that God is on my side. I wouldn’t say that I have fewer problems or less tragic ones, but I handle things differently. After all, we were never promised the easy road by Jesus.

“I know the plans I have for you,”

Declares the Lord,

“Plans to prosper you and not to harm you,

Plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

Psalms 46:10

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)

Celebrate Recovery Lesson 21 Relapse Study Guide

1. Have you experienced a relapse? What happened?

Always give thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. – Ephesians 5:20

2. In what ways are you experiencing joy in recovery?

The joy of the Lord is your strength. – Nehemiah 8:10

3. How do you act when you are upset?

Everyone who honors Your Name can trust You because You are faithful to all who depend on You. – Psalm 9:10

SHARING LIFE AND LOVE

4. What does prayer mean to you?

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. – 1 Thessalonians 5:18

5. What steps do you need to take to release all of the anger and resentment you still have?

But the light will show what these things are really like. Light shows up everything, just as the Scriptures say,

“Wake up from your sleep and rise from death. Then Christ will shine on you.”– Ephesians 5:13-14

6. How do you meditate and/or pray?

God cares for you, so turn all your worries over to Him. – 1 Peter 5:7

SHARING LIFE AND LOVE

7. How do you listen to God?

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the

Father through Him. - Colossians 3:17

8. What will you be doing to improve your alone time with God?

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. – Matthew 11:28

9. What were your key takeaways from this lesson?

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in Spirit. – Psalm 34:18

SHARING LIFE AND LOVE