

Questions Asked During Live Webinar Broadcast on 11/28/18



Building Healthy Relationships in Recovery: 10 Tips

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Do you think it's better for people who are early in recovery to remain relationship free? I have 15 guys in my program and they are constantly getting in seemingly toxic relationships.

A: yes, and the reasons why this is so is that in the early stages of recovery one needs to concentrate on their own relationship with self, the new self without their drug(s) of choice, and other relationships that are current. As soon as an individual starts a new relationship, the endorphins in the brain start firing and the limbic takes over. Rational thought, being able to see the whole person, is no longer in view. It takes about 2 years (at the least) for the brain to heal enough to be consider a new relationship. Add to that, if a person is familiar with toxic relationships in the past – that is what their brain will look for currently. My thoughts: take time to get to know the “new you”, reflect on what you want in a relationship and the types of characteristics you would like in a person you are that closely connected to, and what you yourself have to bring to the relationship.

I have been substance free for over seven years. The negative self-talk is still there sometimes. Is there a word or phrase I can say to myself - to help me reach my homeostasis and balance again more quickly? I haven't found that yet.

A: Negative self-talk takes many years to re-wire and it beings with every day starting the day with new self-talk. Self-talk that includes states such as; “I am substance free and it is great”, “I am building my life and it is getting better bit by bit”, “my addiction took time, so will this negative self-talk to turn it all around”, “recovery is amazing and so am I – doin’ it”. End your day with positive self-talk and say these things once again in the evening before sleeping. This places these thoughts in your brain to work through in your both your conscious and sub-conscious. It gives positive energy to your waking moments that can last through the day. It helps to reinforce these same type of comments during the day....day by day.

Can something someone feels is positive about you also be a negative?

A: There seems to be two-sides to many things if taken to an extreme. For instance, a person is a hard worker....taken to far, it could be said they are compulsive about their work and not have anything else in it to balance. Another instance, a person who is loving can caring for their family, on the other hand, that person could become so compulsive that they do not regard other people than their family. It is dependent on the manner in which the positives are played out in real life.

I have control issues in my marriage. Do you have any advice on ways to work on this?

A: First thought – what causes the need to control for you...childhood disruptions and difficulties? Troubled relationships in the past? Fear of something is my guess. Ask yourself to sort that, identify where the control issues stem from – there may be several. Secondly, ask yourself if this is the only way you can manage – are these other tips discussed in the webinar possible for you to use instead? Do you actually “win” anything by controlling? Imagine how you feel when others work to

control you....how do you feel? Thirdly, remind yourself that the real power in life is NOT to control – it is to work to influence. Only then do you have a healthy relationship with others, when you let go of the need to control and cause the real control to come from you to yourself and your need to control. Turn from thinking of controlling to loving and having high regard to those you want to control. When you do that – your while attitude changes and so does theirs.