Lesson 25

The Seven Reasons We Get Stuck

**Introduction**

Tonight, I want to call a time-out. Let’s take a week to have you discuss and evaluate where you are on your individual roads to recovery. I believe it is valuable for us all to take a breath, pause, and review our program. We need to stop for a moment and thank God as we look back on our progress and our growth. We need to make sure we are still moving forward through the principles, that we are not hung up on a particular one.

Some of you may have just begun the journey through the principles. Others are somewhere in the middle. It really doesn’t matter which one you’re on. Anyone can get off track and stuck.

**Seven Reasons**

Tonight we are going to talk about the seven reasons we get “stuck” in our recoveries!

***1. You Have Not Completely Worked the Previous Principle***

Perhaps you are trying to move through the principles too quickly. Slow down! Give God time to work! Just moving forward isn’t always progress. Did your brakes ever go out when you were driving down a hill? You may be going fast, but it’s not progress. It’s panic! Remember, this program is a process. It’s not a race to see who finishes first.

Galatians 5:25 says, “Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”

Take your time with each principle. Work it to the best of your ability. Remember, many people get lost while trying to find an easier route for the straight and narrow.

***2. You Have Not Completely Surrendered Your Will and Your Life to the Lord***

Remember, there are two parts to Principle 3. The first is to ask Jesus Christ into your heart as your Higher Power, your Lord and Savior. The second is to seek to follow His will for your life in all your decisions. Perhaps you are trusting Jesus with the “big” things, but you still think you can handle the “small” things.

Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us, "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.”

What part of your life are you still holding on to? What areas of your life are you withholding from God? What don’t you trust Him with?

***3. You Have Not Accepted Jesus’ Work on the Cross for Your Forgiveness***

You may have forgiven others, but you think your sin is too big to be forgiven.

First John 1:9 tells us, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace”” (Ephesians 1:4-7).

I think the real question here is “Have you forgiven yourself?” That’s where I see most people getting stuck in their recoveries.

This is what God wants you to do with the darkness of your past: “ ‘Come now, let us settle the matter,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool’ ” (Isaiah 1:18).

Remember, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.” (Romans 8:1-2).

***4. You Have Not Forgiven Others Who Have Harmed You***

You must let go of the pain of past harm and abuse. Until you are able to release it and forgive it, it will continue to hold you as its prisoner.

It has been said that forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door of resentments and removes the handcuffs of hate. It is the power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness.

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32)

Do you know that you may need to ask forgiveness for blaming God? There is God’s will, the Devil’s will, and your free will all at work on the earth. Remember, the harm others did to you was from their free will, not God’s will.

***5. You Are Afraid of the Risk in Making the Necessary Change***

It may be fair to say that some people here tonight put off change and procrastinate as long as they can. There can be several reasons for delaying positive change.

*You may be paralyzed by the fear of failure.*

Remember, falling down doesn’t make you a failure. It’s staying down that makes you one. This is where your faith and trust in Jesus Christ comes into play.

*You may fear intimacy because of the fear of rejection or being hurt again.*

This is why it is so important to move slowly in a new relationship, taking time to seek God’s will, develop realistic expectations, and establish proper boundaries.

*You may resist change (growth) because of the fear of the unknown.*

My life is a mess, my relationships are a mess, but at least I know what to expect. All together now —“a mess!” If you really try working the steps and principles on that hurt, hang-up, or habit, your life will change.

Some people change jobs, mates, and friends, but never think of changing themselves. What does God’s Word tell us?

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?” (Hebrews 13:6)

***6. You Are Not Willing to “Own” Your Responsibility***

None of us is responsible for all the things that have happened to us. But we are responsible for the way we react to them. Let me give you some examples.

In the case of abuse, in no way is the victim at fault or responsible for the abuse.

Step 8 in our sexual/physical abuse 12 Steps reads as follows:

Made a list of all persons who have harmed us and became willing to seek

God’s help in forgiving our perpetrators as well as forgiving ourselves. Realize

that we have also harmed others and become willing to make amends to them.

My kids are not responsible for being children of an alcoholic, but they are responsible for their own actions and recovery. You need to take the responsibility for your part in a broken relationship, a damaged friendship, or with a distant child or parent.

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.” (Psalm 139:23)

We increase our ability, stability, and responsibility when we increase our accountability to God.

***7. You Have Not Developed an Effective Support Team***

Do you have a sponsor or an accountability partner? Do you have the phone numbers of others in your small group? Have you volunteered for a 12-Step commitment to your support group?

There are a lot of opportunities to get involved at Celebrate Recovery:

Help with Fellowship events

Greeters

Sponsors

Accountability partners

Much more...

All you have to do is ask!

“Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.” (Proverbs 13:20)

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

Remember, the roots of happiness grow deepest in the soil of service.

**Wrap-Up**

Now you know the seven areas in which we can get bogged down, stuck in our recoveries. How do I know? Because somewhere along my own personal road to recovery, I visited them all.

Take time this week and reflect on your progress, your growth. If you are stuck, talk to your accountability partner, your sponsor, or your small group leader. Find out which of the seven reasons you are hung up on, and together, implement a plan of action and move ahead on your journey.

Keep Celebrate Recovery’s Daily Action Plan for Serenity (printed here as well as on page 63 in Participant’s Guide 4) where you can see it and review it daily.

***Celebrate Recovery’s Daily Action Plan for Serenity***

1. Daily, continue to take an inventory. When you are wrong, promptly admit it.
2. Daily, study God’s Word and pray asking God to guide you and help you apply His teaching and will in your life.
3. Daily, work and live the eight principles to the best of your ability, always looking for new opportunities to help and serve others —not just at your recovery meetings but in all areas of your life.