

Regaining Your Credibility in Recovery

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During active addiction, many individuals engage in deceptive, dishonest behavior and diversionary tactics. These actions are inherent to addiction, driven by the necessity to conceal the extent of one's problem. Balancing the demands of addiction alongside the usual obligations of life while simultaneously hiding the use of alcohol or other drugs becomes a daunting task. The impact of addiction extends beyond the individual, affecting those in their orbit and leading to inevitable conflict.

As addiction progresses, performance in various aspects of life deteriorates. The individual feels compelled to preserve the status quo, maintain appearances, and continue their addictive behaviors. Deception and dishonesty become commonplace rather than exceptions.

Honesty is the cornerstone of any successful recovery program, laying the foundation for personal growth and transformation. Without honesty, individuals cannot confront their challenges truthfully, hindering their ability to make meaningful progress in their journey toward recovery.

Reflect on the following questions to identify how addiction has eroded honesty and credibility and to replace dishonesty and deception.

Pre-Recovery Dishonesty:

What actions did you take to conceal your addiction?

How were you dishonest in speech and action?

Who were the recipients of your lies?

Did you persist in lying even when it had no bearing on the outcome?

Were you habitually dishonest?

In what other ways were you dishonest?

Did you cling to lies despite knowing your significant other recognized them?

Did you become defensive when confronted about your lies?

Did you believe your word could override others' judgment?

How did acting against your values affect you emotionally?

How did you cope with the emotions stemming from dishonesty and value betrayal?

Current Dishonest Behavior:

Who are you still lying to in recovery?

Are you truthful about the impact of addiction on your life and others?

Are you honest about the damage caused by your addiction?

Defense Mechanisms:

Identify any defense mechanisms hindering honesty in your recovery. Examples include denial, rationalization, intellectualization, justification, blame, minimization, and projection of anger or hostility.

Are you dishonest about your recovery efforts or other aspects of your life?

Potential Risks to Recovery:

Acknowledge how resistance to honesty might jeopardize your recovery.

Recognize that honesty is fundamental to successful recovery.

To foster genuine honesty in recovery, consider the following steps:

Seek Guidance: A sponsor or experienced mentor can provide invaluable support while making amends.

Face Your Fears: Recognize the positive outcomes that honesty can yield and confront any anxieties about being truthful.

Plan and Execute: Prepare yourself mentally and emotionally for honest conversations. Choose an appropriate time and approach the situation with clarity and humility.

Take Responsibility: Own up to your actions without deflecting blame onto others.

Keep it Simple: Communicate your message clearly without unnecessary elaboration or justification.

Practice Honesty: Continuously strive to develop and maintain honesty in all aspects of your life.

Recovery necessitates honesty. Embrace the challenge of being truthful with yourself and others as an integral part of your journey toward healing and redemption.

See also "[Addiction and Recovery Worksheet: Recovering Your Honesty](#)".

Note: This article has been revised and edited from its original version, which was previously published in 2009 on this site. The content has been updated for contemporary language, clarity and accuracy.

As you use self-reflection to identify your dishonest behavior in active addiction, seeking to replace it with authenticity, you may experience some uncomfortable truths about yourself. It is crucial to realize that upon self-reflection, you will uncover remarkable strengths, talents, and virtues that help you discover your inner resilience and reclaim your self-worth. "Building Self-Esteem: A Workbook," a transformational resource, offers a structured, intimate self-exploration to elevate your self-esteem and overall well-being. You can use the challenges of your addiction recovery to empower your path of self-discovery.



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