

CHAPTER ELEVEN

RECONCILIATION: THE FAMILY IN RECOVERY

A family that enters together in the recovery can have new vision, new tools and a new influencing center based on Jesus Christ. It is an opportunity to be rebuilt God's way. The power of redemption is significant. When truth, love, honesty and forgiveness are permitted to dominate an environment, relationships can be reestablished as God intended. That doesn't mean it will be perfect or without challenges, but it can be driven by God's principles rather than survival techniques.

WHAT IS RECONCILIATION?

Reconciliation is the process of the healing that occurs when a relationship that had been strained and separated is brought back together. It takes away that wall of separation and replaces it with intimacy and closeness. Jesus Christ came to reconcile - He removed the sin that separated us from Him and gave us access to fellowship and intimacy with Him. Even though He offers us the ability to be in close relationship, our willingness is a critical ingredient. Thus God's ability to reconcile requires our response.

While there can be many different scenarios that create the walls of separation amongst family members, the real thing that separates is sin. Where sin and shame exist, family members protect and hide from each other. They drift apart, and end up functioning in their own survival mode. Instead of being supportive, relationships become threatening.

Understanding those issues is necessary before a remedy can be applied. Reconciliation is not discounting problems or minimizing their influence. Rather its confronting them, owning responsibility when necessary, and giving or receiving forgiveness for wrong doings. This is how we are reconciled back to God, and it's also how we are reconciled with each other.

Because reconciliation requires the ability to do this mutually, many snares can occur. Even if one family member enters into heart transformation, the others may not. When this occurs, reconciliation is not actually possible because it requires a movement on both sides. Tools of redemption can be used, however, and this is the journey of recovery that must occur on an individual basis from here on out.

In this chapter, we are going to look at what reconciliation involves, and how it would look should it appear in the family system. It is meant to offer hope, direction and an understanding of God's agenda. Most families will begin the journey of reconciliation when both have received individual support and recovery,

thus it normally doesn't occur immediately. However, by understanding the purpose, families can learn to embrace the process with hope, rather than feel overwhelmed by its enormous task.

A BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF REBUILDING

A vivid biblical account of rebuilding and restoration is offered to us in the book of Nehemiah. While it was referring to the spiritual condition of the nation of Israel, it can absolutely apply to our own families. For many years, Jerusalem had been under the control of oppressive leadership. They had lost their free will as a result - thus they couldn't walk in the integrity of their God-given identity. As restoration began to occur, Jerusalem and the temple were brought back under God's control. However, the rebuilding was far from over. Despite the end of the oppressive leadership, Jerusalem had lied in ruins. It was as if the people didn't know how to rebuild, and continued to live in a state of survival, disarray and confusion. They didn't understand how to move from one condition to another.

Nehemiah was a man with a heart for Jerusalem, and a belief that God could fix it. Thus, when he learned of the tragic condition of his beloved city, he was deeply moved to action. Nehemiah wasn't going to simply function in the rubble and get comfortable with its abnormal condition. Rather, he was overwhelmed with a holy burden for his city to be made right. Of all the people affected, this one man's burden began the process of a radical transformation.

He began to visualize what God intended for Jerusalem, and how far away from God's purposes it had become. Yet his focus didn't remain on the rubble. Instead it shifted to the reality of who God was. Let's read:

“O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses. "Please remember what you told your servant Moses: 'If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.' "The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Nehemiah 1:5-11

The plea of Nehemiah was a call to God to take action. He created an environment that made God's response to him irresistible. He didn't emphasize the wrongs exclusively, but he certainly acknowledged the sin and rebellion of His people. He begged for forgiveness. He asked for God to bring reconciliation amongst his people. As Nehemiah poured his heart before the Lord, He focused primarily on the character and promises of God. Nehemiah turned from the nature of the damage of the sin and corruption, to the nature of God. He believed that Divine favor was necessary in order to gain the resources to rebuild. He believed God would come to his assistance.

God's grace was the reward of that transaction; it provoked a full restoration. God forgave the sins of the nation and provided the resources necessary to allow Nehemiah to rebuild.

Despite God's favor, the threat of opposing forces immediately tried to dismantle the project. The Bible says that enemies showed up to the scene of destruction and began to mock Nehemiah and discourage the efforts, deeming them "useless." Had Nehemiah allowed the pressure of those attacks to deter him, the walls would have never been restored.

Nehemiah didn't trust in human efforts or plans, He trusted in the God who had given him a promise, and who owned all the resources of heaven and earth to assist Him. Therefore, Nehemiah's only real threat was leaving God's authority and venturing into an independent mode of survival.

This remarkable story has a happy ended, and it contains incredible truths that apply to our storm site. Like Nehemiah, we too will need to be willing to pray over and come to an honest assessment of the damage that was done, and the way it hurt God, others and ourselves. We need to seek forgiveness. Nehemiah spoke on behalf of his people. We too can enter the throne of grace as intercessors to the needs of everyone. We just can't actually do anything to try to change their heart. We furthermore can't force the reconciliation of the relationship itself. But what we can do is use prayer as a weapon of true change. We too can receive the resources and assistance of God Almighty. Above anything, we must believe God wants more than for us to live amongst the rubble. We must believe His power is above the storm itself.

Using Nehemiah, let's break down the components of what rebuilding required (to put this in the proper perspective, we recommend reading the book of Nehemiah in the Old Testament)

REPENTANCE

Nehemiah approached God with humility on the basis of sin condition. Imagine if he blamed his fellow brothers and sisters, asking God to punish them for what they had done wrong, while asking Him to grant favor personally. Had that occurred, restoration of the city itself would never have happened. Nehemiah may have gone on with life, but without the reward of total restoration.

Nehemiah's plea wasn't filled with resentment, but brokenness and sadness. This cry from his heart was felt and understood by God. Nehemiah was willing to face the consequences that had occurred with God's solution, not condemnation, shame or guilt.

In our own circumstances, anger is most likely a reaction to the violation and sin that has occurred. However, thorough recovery, we learn that anger is actually an expression of pain. Through healing, God can work through that pain and then give family members an overall burden to see the family restored. This may not happen right away, and the best possible starting point is individual recovery and restoration.

Meditation Point:

Can you look at your own family and see the damage that has occurred and feel the sadness and grief over what had been? Are you angry? Do you struggle with blaming? Have you been able to walk in the reality of God's forgiveness?

PRAYER

The purity of prayer matters to God. It isn't in the words that are spoken, but in the attitude of the condition of the heart. Nehemiah knew his God. He also knew the sin that had occurred. But in the moment, he

understood that God was bigger than the damage. He was bold to ask God to bypass circumstances and bring divine provision. Because his heart was in the right place, God honored his prayer.

We are promised in the Word that God will respond to our prayers when they are prayed from a pure spirit.

Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. - Matthew 7:7-8

That's why our own process of recovery is so essential; it puts us in a position where our prayers can flood heaven. At the same time, prayers don't rely on us, they rely on grace. Thus, the attitude of the heart is dependency.

Meditation point:

Do you feel confident of grace? Are you afraid to ask God for provision? Why? Does the overwhelming nature of the storm feel too much?

Application:

Spend some time talking with God about this and ask Him to help you. Then you have the option to come boldly to throne of grace and ask for help and divine resources.

So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most. - Hebrews 4:16

CLAIM A PROMISE

Nehemiah demonstrated a powerful tool of redemption. He prayed and made a request to God based on the very promise He had given. He spoke back that promise before the Lord. How could the Lord deny His own Word? The answer is that He couldn't. God was obligated to fulfill His promise. And He did. Nehemiah was the vessel that allowed God to move forward.

Application:

Find a promise that you believe God has given to you or your family, and then speak it back to God. Even while you can't see it, keep it in the forefront and continue to believe in what it offers. For example, Jeremiah 29:11 says "for I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." This promise can be prayed back to God.

WAIT FOR GOD'S RESOURCES

Nehemiah had to wait for God to produce the resources. Once he did, Nehemiah was moved into action. Nehemiah understood he was operating through God's provision. Thus, his confidence was based on what

God could do, not what he could do. In our own situation, we too must learn to operate from God's provision rather than survival mode. We must be more set on God directing than us responding to crisis in unhealthy ways. Because this is so difficult at first, support and recovery is necessary.

Meditation Point: *Are you ready to wait for God's provision? Do you struggle with grabbing the control reigns and trying to fix it yourself?*

UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLE AND ALLOW OTHER PEOPLE TO PERFORM THEIR OWN ROLE

In Nehemiah, once he got to work on the project, he had to facilitate redemption by allowing each family to take ownership of a gate. Had he been solely responsible for the entire project, it would have never gotten done.

We too will need to claim ownership of our part, but resist the temptation to own other people's problems. For family members accustomed to overcompensation, this can challenge us immensely.

Application:

Define your part in clean-up and recovery as you see it right now. Define the addict's part. (We will address this through family planning in a details manner)

OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES

Nehemiah dealt with troubles both externally and internally. The enemies of Israel actually scoffed and mocked Nehemiah. They threw language of discouragement to upset his plans. They tried to speak shame over the rebuilding team, and rip away the very promise God had granted them. And if that wasn't enough, this team began to give up and walk in defeat. Nehemiah had to cling to truth, and rely on the reality that God was controlling the situation. If he lost focus, the project may have failed.

We will face challenges that are originated in the demonic realm. The enemy uses people to discourage us and try to defeat God's plans for us. It may be people within our own family system. It doesn't make them "evil" but it can mean that there are two competing systems. Because all family members will not necessary seek recovery at the same time, the family may have varying degrees of darkness and light within the same family system.

The concept of walking in the light was introduced in Chapter 8. It needs to be emphasized once again that the dark isn't necessarily an immoral lifestyle. In fact, darkness and light are referring to two operating systems (See Table 3.1). When these competing systems are at war in one family, there will not necessarily be peace in the home initially. In fact, Luke 12:51-53 reminds us that a sort of "war" can erupt:

Do you think I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I have come to divide people against each other! From now on families will be split apart, three in favor of me, and two against-or two in favor and three against. 'Father will be divided against son and son against father; mother against daughter and daughter against mother; and mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.'

These astonishing words of Jesus don't mean that families need to remain in this condition, but it does reflect the disruption that occurs when there are two competing systems. While restoration is always the heart of God, a time of turmoil and separation can occur not as a direct result of the addiction, but as a direct of result of the spiritual change. This doesn't mean the person or people living in darkness are evil or bad - it just means they are walking in a form of denial and using coping mechanisms to deal with life outside of God's purposes (Chapter 8). They may or may not be Christians. Sometimes Christians walk in varying levels of denial.

It must be understood that darkness hates the light because it reveals (John 3:20), but the conflict should be met with love and compassion. When a family member begins to walk out of survival living and into God's light, it isn't a license to use Jesus to control, shame or force change. In fact, doing so reflects the system of darkness. Only true and genuine love and the empowerment of the Spirit eradicates darkness.

Table 3.1 Darkness Versus Light

The System of darkness	The System of Light
Covers, hides, lacks honesty	Opens, reveals, sees everything in light of truth
Human control devises system	God's authoritative Word and His Spirit is guidance and reference point. Control is given to Him
Adaptive roles cover	All coverings are removed, identity is establish in Christ
Shame motivates, says not good enough,	Grace covers wrongdoings, sin and says "you are okay, I'm okay" - God's grace is enough
Refuses to forgive; resents	Receives and offers forgiveness for sin
Emotional turmoil	Begins to experience peace and joy despite circumstances
Uses unhealthy coping	Begins to feel, grieve and rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to bring comfort
Religious activity to look good	Authentic brokenness; all effort relies on the cross

Please understand, the purpose of this book is not to bring separation by exposing this dynamic, but to overcome the darkness by bringing it into the open. This difficult truth causes more breakdowns in the

family system following recovery then we can adequately address in this book. Before you feel disappointed or despair, it must be clear that the light consumes the darkness; the darkness cannot consume the light. All light can do is leave and then darkness is the natural result. This means as long as light enters into the family system, the whole system may eventually become consumed by it. It's very presence is the flicker of hope - even though it may originally be met with resistance.

In the meantime, there may be difficulties, but each member that experiences the light will be filled with the peace, power and goodness of the Holy Spirit. They will find the reward to be Him. It will give them the ability to persevere and to learn to love with Calvary love - a love that recognizes the human condition as in need of redemption.

When Nehemiah completed the project, it was dedicated unto the Lord. God's holy city had been reinstated to its purpose and identity. What an awesome celebration! While you are going through the "in between" season of this journey of rebuilding, keep the goal in mind. Also, keep the author of redemption as the One who is fully capable of bringing the rebuilding project to fruition. Set your heart, affection and attention on Him and Him alone. No matter the opposition, no matter the resistance, no matter the nature of the circumstance, your God IS enough!

A Prayer to Encourage in the Rebuilding

God,

I want to be aligned with You and Your resources for rebuilding. However, when the obstacles start to attack me, help me see You. Teach me to respond and walk through the process of rebuilding with you holding my hand and guiding me. Be stronger and bigger than any of the challenges we have in our family or relationships. I can't fix _____, but I can bring the needs of my family before you. I can declare that I can do all things through You! I can believe in the promise that You have given to me. And please confirm a special promise for me so I can cling to it even when I can't see it with my eyes. Fulfill Your own plans for our family! Bring us back to Your created design! We will honor, praise and serve you!
In Jesus name - Amen

Meditation point:

Is there anyone in your family that may continue to live in denial? Are you afraid of exposing yourself? Do you still want to hide? Are you ready to live in the light of Gods' system?

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO BE CHRIST-CENTERED?

The task of rebuilding is a very different journey. It requires a new system be resurrected in place of the former. It also requires that the point of regulation of homeostasis of the family itself receive a new source of centering.

Even while we wait for God's divine resources, we can begin to visualize the goal of the construction site. God's heart operates so utterly differently than the adaptive mentality of the addiction-based family system, that these principles may almost seem impossible or unattainable. But ironically, these are conditions that would make the family return to a normal and healthy homeostasis. Like the physical body having a place of true health and wellness when all parts are functioning as designed, we need to see what the healthy family centering point entails.

But before looking and reviewing these principles, remember that this is the goal, it is not the current reality. Thus, we are looking to plead with God as Nehemiah did to begin to rebuild our own "city" into His created design.

VISION FOR CHRIST CENTERED

A healthy, Christ-centered family has elements that honor God, and bring His reality into a sick and broken world. God's will is that His name be honored, thus He's moved to action as our desires align. This family can be the light shining in the darkness that can help the world know God is real. If you are a child of God (which you most likely are if you are reading this book), then it is one of your deepest desires to walk out your family relationships as God intended. But if it doesn't immediately come to fruition, or if these plans are shattered for any reason, remember, that you can align yourself personally to exist as a member of God's family. Thus, these principles don't require the family join in order for them to be real and activated in you. We are going to look at some the critical areas or reconciliation and a healthy centering on Christ.

The home is centered upon and operates through the truth - both in the Word and through Spirit.

As we have learned already, truth is not in the context of religion, but authentic relationship. This ability to walk in truth will affect each person individually, giving them the ability to grow and nurture their own relationship with The Lord. It will also create an authentic and vulnerable atmosphere all family members, giving them permission to expose weaknesses rather than cover them.

The most important initial ingredient for transformation of the family system is to stop concealing, hiding, pretending and walking around the problems, and start opening, sharing, communicating and speaking feelings. Obviously, if one member is ready for this and the others aren't, some difficulties can emerge. Thus, this may need to first happen in recovery. Some vulnerability isn't possible when a person on the other side of the relationship is unhealthy. However, that doesn't mean the family member in recovery can't learn to inject a truth-based system.

Laura was a chief enabler in recovery. She had poised herself as strong, together and in control from the beginning. But through recovery, that outward role had to be taken off. Now Laura began to direct conversations based on truth. She voiced her inability to align with things that opposed her belief systems. She furthermore wasn't able to coat everything over. In fact, Laura was processing pain and was seemingly weak instead of strong. This confused and upset the other members.

Truth invaded this home. While the family struggled with her adjustments, Laura began to bring a pure heart into the home. Rather than exploit her sense of righteousness ("I'm good and your bad"), she lived a life that had been softened through Jesus. Truth didn't just force her to tell everyone what was wrong. Instead, it gave her permission to remove her faulty costume and introduce herself authentically to the world around her. The pain of this was immense as Laura was vulnerable to rejection.

However, over time, her weakness became meekness. She became more and more equipped to be strong in the Lord. Though her change in roles at first came with difficulties, the entrance of truth and the love eventually broke down the walls of denial, and brought everyone to seek help and be healed.

Holy Spirit love is present - and its influence is active.

Truth without love is like a clanging cymbal. It will be obnoxious, harsh and without compassion. That's why where there is truth, love must be wrapped tightly around it.

Love has been interpreted in many different ways under the influence of addiction. For the enablers, love may have been compliance and the desire to do things to please the addict. It may have been lying in order to appease and protect the problems members were facing. When real love strikes a person, it brings a holy standard alongside it. Love is something very different than it was in the role survival. The love of God is based on His unconditional affection for the human race. He is intentional, kind, caring, compassionate, gentle, graceful and good. Yet He is radically opposed to darkness. Love will not co-sign, allow or align with sin. That is because sin wrecks the human heart. A God that loves will not allow our enemy to prey on us with His blessing or approval. He will warn, protect and adamantly do anything He can to rescue us from it.

In the same manner, authentic love will engage with people as they are - loving them without condition. It will recognize their sinful mentalities as something that will hurt them and everyone. Therefore, the focus isn't just on self-protection from the person engaged in sinful behaviors, but concern for the condition of that person's heart. Like Nehemiah, family members can bear a holy grief for the family member they love.

Truthfully, and sometimes painfully, love isn't based on good conditions. Love will manifest the very most when its presence comes against darkness and sin. This is Calvary love - it loves in a condition of being unlovable.

It is impossible for the family to immediate switch to this sort of love. It will take time to nurture love, mature and grow in it because it's not human love, but agape love: the love derived from the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, we can't feel despaired by the requirements of love. In reality, love redeems. It is the most powerful influence on earth. This is what the Word says:

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

A love like this is unstoppable. If you don't yet house that, it simply means you have a journey to behold! (*The Christian Codependence Recovery Workbook: From Surviving to Significance* and *A House that Grace Built* walk through these principles step by step.) If all family members eventually housed pure love, then intimacy, wholeness and purpose would allow that family to reflect God's design by default. That's why it's God's core agenda: to love Him and each other.

The home operates through freedom.

The overall operating system of a healthy family is first and foremost based on the principle of freedom. Each family member's right to think, feel and make choices is considered sacred. Ultimately, it is understood that it is the objective for everyone to be aligned with God through the power of Holy Spirit, not

merely managed at an external level to accommodate the family itself. Thus, family members don't directly try to change other member's thoughts, feelings or choice.

This has the potential to lead to difficulties when the controlling figures in the family aren't ready to release that role. If a member still tries to maintain control (especially if they are in the lead role of the family), it is difficult to learn how to be controlled by God, yet to honor and respect those roles.

Being controlled by the Spirit is the goal our own journey of recovery. This control can never be traded off in exchange for a human being's mandates. However, it doesn't mean we can do whatever we want using Jesus' name as justification. It means we have to learn to align our thoughts, feelings and choices to the Spirit - and then respond to human control in accordance to that.

In truth, where love exists, submission will follow. Where love exists, control is unnecessary because love responds for the betterment of the others. But since love is pure, it by default will not submit to sin or to a faulty control base. It will submit to a person in order to honor them, love them and display that their needs matter.

George desired to maintain control of the home following his son's rehab. But Joshua was no longer willing to be under the dominant rule of a system that continued to assault and shame him. However, God's love in Joshua could recognize that George had spiritual opposition, and needed God's redemption and love. Therefore, rather than disrespect his father's authority structure, he had to learn to respond in loving ways. When his dad said things like "Joshua, you are stupid, you always have been stupid," Joshua had to learn to respond in love. "I'm sorry you feel that way. I don't see myself like you do."

But Joshua couldn't only defend against unhealthy control; he needed to learn to honor and submit whenever possible. When Joshua had the opportunity, he would inject a meaningful way to express love to his dad, to submit to something his dad requested.

Joshua went so far as to move from the home in order to honor his need to stop depending on his parents. But he didn't detach. He remained available and involved by choice, not because he needed them to fulfill his own agenda.

Over time, Joshua affected his dad. His dad came to know Jesus, and experienced his own freedom as a result. Reconciliation occurred.

While it may not seem attainable, it only takes one heart that has been injected with this powerful love to overcome the forces of darkness in someone else. Love is very, very powerful. That's why the Word says we can't overcome evil with evil, but need to overcome it with good (1 Peter 3:9).

The home validates God-ordained roles and responsibilities, encouraging each member to grown respectively in their individual purpose, while holding people lovingly accountable to their roles.

In honoring these roles, compensation can be done out of necessity, but it won't ever obstruct the fundamental purpose and plan of the family through God's heart. Furthermore, a person is not their role - thus their unique and individual identity highlights and accentuates the role, it doesn't replace it.

Healthy roles were addressed briefly in the previous chapter. What's important to understand is that God-ordained roles aren't rule-oriented, but heart-based. Men are called into their role because God created them for leadership, and placed a desire in them to be respected. They will never be satisfied until that role is aligned. Women are created to be honored, loved and provided for not out of obligation, but out of desire. A woman that operates outside of that role will never be satisfied until it is fulfilled. The sadness of broken roles may make us want to point fingers at how people have failed us. But really, it's an opportunity to allow God to "fill in the gaps."

We can be our roles first and foremost with God. He can nurture and develop us and give us satisfaction. But prayerfully, over time, we can re-align in our human roles, or let God prepared us for future healthy relationships.

Learning to remove the adaptive role and replace them with His authentic identity is an individual journey of healing that cannot be addressed fully in this material, but is addressed extensively in our other material. We encourage you to seek additional assistance to learn how to transform from the role of survival, into the role of God's identity and significance (see Chapter 10).

The home has a fundamental system of grace where problems, inadequacies and sin have a remedy through forgiveness.

Grace is not an allowance of sin, but a willingness to love a person beyond their flaws and wrongdoing. A system of grace filters others through the perspective of Jesus - meaning that where they are weak, they know that Jesus can be strong. Grace also fundamentally knows that Jesus defeated sin, and has the remedy to deal with it. Forgiveness is not merited by behavior or duty, but through a humble dependence on Him.

It can be difficult to create a dynamic of grace where shame is still present. That's because shame will attempt to discredit and break down the power of grace. Shame will focus on what's wrong, inadequate or broken. It will point to wrongdoing and sin, and everything that doesn't measure up. When one person is operating by grace, and the other by shame, it can seem unfair and difficult to learn how to mingle together.

However, grace is more powerful. It must not fall victim to the tactic of shame. Shame can only try to intimate the heart by pointing to flaws. But grace has Jesus set upon it to cover those inadequacies and shortcomings. Grace rules as we seize it and walk under its influence by keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus.

The home operates by mutual respect, where boundaries are used to designate individual rights and protect the safety of all members involved.

A boundary distinguishes lines of responsibility. Just as a fence between yards draws the property line, so does each member have their own distinct lives: body, soul and spirit.

Visualize two homes side by side, with a fence to designate separation. Each home owner is responsible for its upkeep. By ownership, property rights are awarded. Thus, anyone who enters it must ask permission.

Entering into someone else's house, even in the name of "helping" without permission is a boundary violation. Cleaning your neighbor's house may be helpful, but not when that task has not been authorized. In truth it would be deeply disrespectful (and illegal) to barge into someone's house to "help" in this way.

The enablers of the family tend to have this mentality. All the while, the addict may resent the help, but then become dependent and entitled to it. This promotes an environment eventually where the addict personality no longer has to be responsible because someone else is "cleaning, cooking and doing their laundry". There is no incentive or natural consequences to take ownership of this responsibility of upkeep when it is already being done.

The addict oftentimes has more outward violations. In fact, while the family member is cleaning the addict's "house", the addict may jump the fence and steal or destroy their unattended property. The family members feels doubly betrayed: they feel unappreciated for their efforts, and violated by the assault of the addict. No wonder there is such turmoil! No one understands or respects personal rights. Everyone feels intruded upon and violated.

All this needs to be untangled. A boundary will need to decide what is rightfully "mine", and "yours". It will go into other areas including responsibility, identity, emotions and behaviors. Through boundary planning, personal property has to be reclaimed. Enablers often have extreme neglect of their own "side of the fence" focusing on cleaning the someone else's messes. Therefore, turning this around will be challenging, but will ultimately allow everyone to align and find the opportunity to rebuild.

Eventually, through healthy boundaries, fences of respect can be established. This system of respect will take time develop, but it is at the heart of reestablishing a healthy home. "We" had become an enmeshment because boundaries no longer existed. Through recovery, family members must become separate entities physically, emotionally and spiritually, working together in relationship.

Ironically, boundaries do not separate, but prepare for true intimacy. True familial love can only occur when members are whole and healthy, and can see self and others as precious. Thus while boundaries seem to separate, they actually prepare for the intimacy that allows closeness in an authentic way.

We are called to be One with Jesus - the closest and most intimate form of a relationship. Yet Jesus honors our unique individuality. He establishes us as a person, and respects our ability to make choices.

When a family walks into this level of healing, the sweetest, most beautiful reflection of God's hearts can be experienced. (For more information about boundaries as it relates to addiction, please refer to Chapter 7. Our other materials will address boundaries in detail).

BACK TO WHOLENESS

While families may each have their own dream or idea of a healthy family system, those ideas and dreams must be surrendered at the foot of Jesus. The journey to come into alignment may come with all sorts of difficulties. Since we cannot change other people, your bigger job right now will be to find freedom, remain free, disconnect from wrongful mentalities, and reconnect to God's system. We can have hope that God can and will make this occur. However, our hope must never become secure in another family member's change. It must never focus on the external. It must remain and stay on being satisfied, secured and in the presence of God's love. The most important step in this process, therefore, is not to concentrate how your family member must change: but to stand ready, willing and available to be positioned as a vessel God can use to carry light and to bring freedom.

A Prayer for Healing

Lord Jesus,

I can't move an inch unless I'm dependent on You. I don't want to stay in the survival mentality, but I realize that moving into a place of reconciliation may not occur on my own timeframe. Help me resist the urge to bypass my own needs and to focus on my family member. Help me walk and embrace the tools that you want to offer to me and our family. Make my heart soften to You so I can listen for your direction, be comforted by You when I'm hurting and find healthy resources that will lead me into personal transformation. I believe you have good plans for us; plan to prosper us and not to harm us. Plans to give us hope and a future. Please make me ready for this, and provide supernatural grace to allow You to hold and carry what is broken, missing or invalidated in the "in between" season of change.

In Jesus Name - Amen

CHAPTER TWELVE

FAMILY PLANNING

At the site of the storm where rubble had laid, new plans form vision, hope and the motion of rebuilding. All building projects begin with a plan. Blueprints allow the structure of the site to be established and all necessary resources supplied. These plans must be facilitated by a general Contractor who will string together a wide range of resources and levels of expertise. Should multiple crews create multiple versions of the plan, chaos will quickly erupt. One blueprint will overtake the other, until several versions collide and disrupt any sort of normal building process. In fact, the greatest necessity of any building project is to agree on the finished design, and then to build step by step to attain that goal. Then, all the contributors to the project will be working towards that one plan.

The complexities of rebuilding the family system after the storm of addiction are just as intense as a physical construction site. And the first thing that needs to happen to move forward is for the family to develop a plan that contains one set of blueprints. If multiple family members have different ideas of what the family needs to do in recovery, chaos can break out. What one family deems as an appropriate goal may compete with a very different agenda. Thus, all family members being able to express needs, develop boundaries and build healthy expectations is essential.

SETTING EXPECTATION

Planning sets the course for healthy expectations. Imagine if you expected a general contractor to build a three-bedroom ranch home, and he instead built you a ten-bedroom mansion. Even though his plans may have been grand, your expectations and needs rested around the three-bedroom. To stretch your budget and fill the house with furnishings would go beyond your capabilities with such an extravagant design.

Expectations are the major battle families face early in recovery. Hopefully by now you have learned to see this process through a broader perspective in order to achieve more realistic expectations. Family members will need to form an idea of "building" that aligns with the other members involved in the planning to make sure they are working towards the same blueprint. If expectations are too high on either

side, disappointment and failure will surely arise. Not only that, but the family will find themselves unable to live up to the new goal.

These expectations revolve around daily schedules, recovery activity, family availability, goal setting, spiritual needs, emotional needs and simply the awkwardness of changing roles and responsibilities. While planning offers a goal, there is a level of flexibility required by all involved. Also, it cannot be wrought under one person's control, otherwise the system heads back to the faulty-centering we have already discussed. In fact, Jesus is the only One authorized to set the forces of change in motion; He is the General Contractor. But how He works happens in the heart.

Most often, family members would prefer to read a list of exactly what to expect and what to do to make things right. However, the planning and expectations that are set can't have specific "how to" lists. That's because the heart and healing are involved, and everyone will be in their own state of construction. Any fixing, manipulation, control or forced behavior will result in a very negative pattern. Because people can't be told what to do without any allowance of grace and change, a plan should contain room for corrections, and space to grow into the purposes.

Even with sobriety, it must be understood that everything will not be perfect right away. There may be days when rebuilding is clear, and attitudes are healthy. There may be other days when negative mentalities seem more prevalent than anything new. Sometimes it can feel like three steps forward, and two steps back. Construction sites are messy, and mentalities run deep. This is to be expected to a degree.

However, there can be expectations about sobriety that are clear and distinguished. Expectations about other major behavioral issues can also be expressed. For example, if an addict also had a pornography addiction, that behavior can be considered just as unacceptable as the use of substance.

It's entirely common for an addict to switch addictions in the beginning phases of recovery. This might include food, sugar, work, exercise, codependency, etc. The mentality of addiction has to gradually be transformed by the Holy Spirit. For an addict, this is a journey. Non-threatening patterns of compulsive behavior may need to be granted allowances. Behaviors that are inappropriate, such as sex addiction, should not be allowable. They threaten intimacy, respect and closeness, thus they are never acceptable.

BOUNDARIES IN RESPONSIBILITY

If you recall in the book of Nehemiah, families were assigned gates to fix. These gates were extremely important in the building process because while the wall was being established, the gates were the link to the outside world. They were also the place where threats were the most vulnerable.

Like Nehemiah, family members will need to set before their own "gate" and learn how to work to secure their own part of the family system. The moment they leave their post and jump to help fix or resolve someone else's gate, they leave their own portion unkept. They also threaten the process because that unsolicited help will feel like control and may stir up conflict.

Therefore, like an actual construction site, it's imperative to follow the guideline of the overall plan, and then work to secure each part. If your job is to perform plumbing work, then you aren't authorized to handle the electrical needs of the job. Family members are only qualified by God to do a designated part. Responsibilities may overlap when necessary, but they should align in a fair and reasonable way as God intended. If that's not possible, a family member that lacks the availability of other roles needs to build an even stronger recovery and church community base.

PREPARING FOR CONFLICT

The gate building in Nehemiah was extremely conflict-oriented because outside threats were constantly looming. Until those walls and gates were secure, the city remained in a vulnerable condition. In the same manner, even as the family attempts to rebuild, there will be many ways the enemy would like to come and disrupt the plans. The family can easily lose focus and resort back to survival and adaptive roles, thus be unable to build something new. This focus and perseverance can only be done through helpful support that leads to God dependency.

WHEN PEOPLE FAIL

The truth is that the family will struggle to maintain a new goal, and sometimes will fail in various ways. This will happen as controlling mentalities, disrespect, lack of submission, unhealthy emotions, and other unhealthy behaviors manifest. That's why the most important ingredient in family planning is to have an understanding of grace. Grace isn't about getting the job done right, but understanding that most of the time we are incapable of it. Grace is a power source, but it is also a covering. Grace doesn't rely on human strength, it relies on the resources of God. It furthermore understands that failure is part of the journey, and therefore uses it to overcome those shortcomings and swallow up sinful mentalities that continue to linger. Grace learns to find strength in weakness.

We must come to understand how strong, capable and loving our God is, and how weak incapable and unable we are apart from Him. Yet through the empowerment of grace, we can do all things. God doesn't rescue us from the challenges, but as we walk with Him, we become equipped and strengthened. Had He just rescued us from everything, we'd never mature, grow and learn how to handle life in a healthy way. When we "mess up", He stands right by to instruct, teach and work to make it right. He wants to bring this formula into the family system so that everyone can walk with this awareness and level of humility.

As we mentioned already, God's grace doesn't allow sin; rather it covers it. The family will need to learn to let people fail to a degree, and trust that Jesus will be able to deal with weaknesses. These are typically issues of the heart. However, when that failure will bring toxic contaminants into the home and disrupts the building process itself, the other members most certainly have the right to establish guidelines and consequences.

RELAPSE PLANNING

In all the conversation about building, it is essential to have a contingency plan should relapse in substance use (or toxic behaviors such as pornography) occur. This plan doesn't need to be implemented, and prayerfully won't have to be. Instead, it offers a mode of storm prevention should the site come under the attack of active addiction. The family has every right in the world to protect the rebuilding process, yet that protection must remain under God's jurisdiction, not the faulty methods of adaption that had taken place in Chapter 6. Prayerfully, your family won't have to face this difficulty. But because relapse is common, it is a necessary step in planning.

Sometimes relapse is part of the journey towards long-term sobriety and recovery. Therefore, it doesn't have to be an "all or nothing" experience. Relapse doesn't have to last, nor does it need to throw the family back into an addiction-centered formation.

By understanding that addiction steals the addict's life; the family can decide how to love the addict by hating and refusing addiction. If the addict truly wants freedom, they will agree to this. However, if the

addict is resisting recovery, there is a good chance that an affection for the drugs or alcohol remains and they will resist a plan. Also addicts fear control by family members, thus they may perceive planning as tool of control. That's why this process needs to be done in a respectful manner for everyone involved.

There is nothing you can do as a family member to prevent an addict from using. However, the family can establish an environment that will make that choice intolerable. It must be noted that relapse isn't just the drug or alcohol, it's a mindset. The addict typically picks up the substance after the mind had been immersed in an entire thought system that began to justify its enticement. Addicts become compulsively obsessed with the idea of using before taking a drink or hit. Like a forbidden lover, they draw ideas and plans on how and when to implement its introduction. In reality, they are back to medicating pain or trying to attain pleasure in a faulty way. They are looking towards a counterfeit method to attain peace and joy. Therefore, real relapse prevention is a matter of the affections of the heart. The real remedy is securing affection Jesus, and being driving by His desires.

SYMPTOMS OF RELAPSE

Families can begin to see the obvious signs of relapse. Usually the behavior of the addict in relapse will change. There might be long extensions of absence, or sometimes totally leave for days on end. In recovery, we call this "going out." Drug addicts especially tend to reconnect with an entire culture of drug use when the relapse occurs.

When a family has spent resources and invested their heart into the desire of sobriety, relapse can be infuriating. It can also be emotionally exhausting and provoke feelings of hopelessness. However, relapse doesn't have to be the end. In some cases betrayal can be so intense that deeper long-term damage will occur. Each family will need to decide how to ultimately deal with a relapse. These principles were reviewed extensively in Chapter 7.

Even if relapse is sometimes a learning experience for the addict, there is one necessity it will have in that lesson: painful consequences. The only motivation for an addict to stop using is to see the reality of what it does. Being dropped back into the cycle of addiction must be uncomfortable. If the family resorts back to survival living, everyone will go back to the system that had allowed it in the first place. In some ways, this may be comfortable, and that's a temptation to be resisted.

All relapse requires new intervention, followed by a new recovery plan. An addict cannot simply have one drink or one hit and then go back to life as normal. The motions are set in place, and without a strong program, it will result in full-blown using.

It must be understood that an addict should not participate in any addictive agents. A heroine addict may convince the family that alcohol is okay to use: but the heroine wasn't really the problem, the mindset of addiction was. Therefore, alcohol can not only become a physical dependency, but will keep the addict unable to recover and deal with the rooted issues.

How the family responds to relapse will be very impacting to the addict. Through a relapse plan, some preplanned actions steps can be taken. This includes:

- The living situation (if applicable) should be discussed should the addict use
- Financial support
- Any other areas that had been brought to surface

The goal of the family will be to not enable, while offering the addict freedom from control and the ability to make choices. The need of the addict will be to "come to their senses" and learn for once and all that addiction will destroy them, and the advantages of sobriety far outweigh any advantages a high could ring.

DRUG TESTING

If a relapse is not so obvious, but there is a clear pattern of behavior changes, it should be a fair request that the family is able to agree upon drug testing. There are a variety of options available on the market and through healthcare and treatment facilities that can assist with this.

However, if families hover over the addict with drug tests readily available, control will begin to cause the addict to feel threatened. The family should not be authorized to have a drug test in hand at every given moment. However, a fair and reasonable agreement can be decided through family planning that can assure the family of sobriety if:

- Long absences from the home occur without any justifiable excuse
- Anger, unhealthy emotions and isolation become pre-dominant and extend for weeks on end
- Physical symptoms are present that indicate relapse as it correlates the drug itself
- Recovery activities cease

Ideally, the addict in sobriety will see addiction as a deadly condition; thus be in agreement that if these signs are in place, it may indicate the "disease" has come to life. In the family plan, the addict can help secure sobriety by warning the family of what a relapse might entail, and asking the family to hold him or her accountable if or when it occurs.

Addicts who are using and in full blow addiction will lie and be manipulative. If testing has been agreed upon, it must be understood that not every doctor's office will be an acceptable environment for this occur. That's because the drug addict will try every tactic possible to produce a clean test. This can include consuming something before the test, hiding urine somewhere inside clothing or bags or other sneaky tactics. Thus drug testing should be done at a location (or at home) that will include monitoring of the specimen being produced. Drug and alcohol treatment facilities can normally offer these services in addition to some medical clinics.

ADDICTION AND RECOVERY

Overall, families will need to learn that addiction and recovery have two separate needs. When in recovery, the addict will be going through a transformation process where God touches and captivate the heart. When in addiction, the addict will be going through a process of inner death – where he or she is separated from Him and experiences the negative consequences of the addiction cycle. By learning that both cycles have different needs and requirements, the family members can learn to embrace their own part according. To demonstrate this, please review the charts on pages _____. These will highlight the two motions that addiction and recovery cause. In family planning, it must be understood that two plans will be used:

1. Addiction plan: this must be an actual plan of intervention as discussed in Chapter 7
2. Recovery plan: this must be an actual plan based on recovery principles (we will cover this plan in this chapter).

The Active Addiction

The need to blame

The stronghold of denial

Emotional and mental manipulation (“head games”)

Manifestation of anger (through words or violence)

Chronic lying

Defensiveness

Immoral behaviors (cheating, stealing, sexual, etc.)

Secretiveness

Isolation

Unavailability

Bondage (no longer a choice to use drugs/alcohol)

Addiction is Interrupted When:

Family and friends set consequences for behavior

Addict is forced to feel ramifications of bad choices

Addict deals with overwhelming loss - nowhere to turn

Addict faces the potential of a marriage loss

Addict faces the potential of a job loss

Addict faces serious health problems

Addict faces serious criminal and legal problems

Addict has a spiritual encounter - conviction by the Holy Spirit



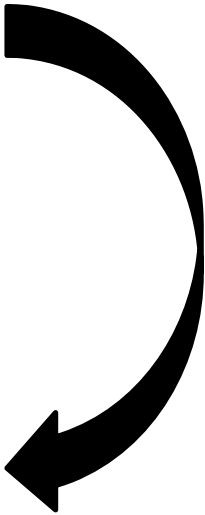
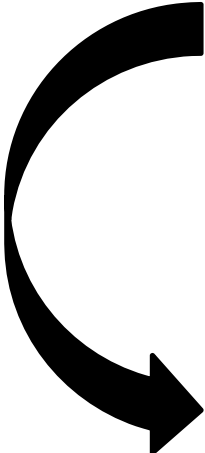
BOTTOMING OUT
“COME TO YOUR SENSES”

Leads to repentance, recovery

The Recovery Process

Owning responsibility
Facing truth
Understanding and dealing with emotional pain
A willingness to walk in truth
The desire to turn from immorality
Vulnerability and transparency
Honesty
Connection to others
Freedom to make right choices
Freedom to be the person God intended them to be

The Process Involves:



Surrender (Step 1)
Hope (Step 2)
A spiritual awakening (Step 3)
Uprooting Unhealthy Issues
Emotional and spiritual maturity
Support from others going through the same thing
Grace - from God, self and others
The separation of behaviors from core identity
Forgiveness - giving and receiving
Embracing identity in Jesus Christ

Recovery Is Interrupted When:

Substance is introduced to system (immediate affect)
Stop working a program (gradual or immediate)
Focus switches to new or difficult relationship (gradual or immediate)
Return to willful immoral lifestyle (gradual or immediate)
Stop being open, honest and transparent (gradual)
Allow bitterness and resentments into heart (gradual)



Leads back to

ADDICTION

Requires new "bottom"

WRITING A FAMILY PLAN

The following pages contain resource to assist in family planning. How or when these can be used depends on individual circumstances. You cannot force planning to occur. If you are dealing with an addict who doesn't want accountability or structure in recovery, you may need to create your own boundaries to deal with this. Thus, you will work on your own plan apart from the addict. Just the same, if you are scared or skeptical of involvement in this process because of past hurts and pain, you shouldn't be manipulated to fill this out. You do have a choice. Just understand that this isn't to hurt or favor one side over the other. It's to begin to have a difficult and sometimes painful dialogue. It allows for proper expectations to be set in a healthy way.

As with anything, you can always adapt this to your own needs, and customize this however may be suitable. The real purpose of this is to openly discuss, communicate and plan with healthy expectations. In and of itself, a plan can't implement change, and it certainly can't affect the heart directly. External plans can't affect the internal needs. However, it acts as a source of understanding and guidance for everyone involved.

If you don't have a facilitator to assist in this process, such as a counselor or sponsor, you may want to learn more about recovery first. It is understandable to not want to be forced into decision making if you are still experiencing confusion,

This plan is only for the family who enters into the mode of recovery. One active addiction occurs; this plan is no longer effective. Family must prepare to write and plan on intervention and personal boundaries instead (see the previous page).

As with everything, you can seek the assistance of the Holy Spirit to aid you. You don't have to weak this alone. It's critical to find human beings (preferably who understand redemption in Jesus Christ) to help you also.

MAKING A PLEDGE

In the book of Nehemiah and throughout the Old Testament, Gods' people dedicated the completed construction site to the Lord. This happened when the temple was rebuilt, and also when the walls of Jerusalem were reestablished. Dedicating a process such as the family's rebuilding project to The Lord is a sacred act. God doesn't take such a pledge lightly. Therefore, it's something that can't be imposed or expected. If the family mutually can agree on a plan and both desire to sign the pledge that is included in this chapter, it is in a way of making a covenant with the Lord. This is not an emotional transaction; it is a spiritual transaction. Not only does it bring honor to The Lord, but it takes authority away from addict-centered family based and onto Him. It is a decision of the heart to leave the old and let God bring forth the new.

AFFECTING THE WORLD

Addiction doesn't only affect the immediate people in the family system. Addiction affects the community, the body of Christ and future generations. How we choose to respond to addiction is an individual mandate. When God can raise one or all family members out of the debris of addiction and assign solution, He can bring hope to a larger audience. There is a world hurting and waiting to see if the God of the Bible we claim is real. Step 12 in the 12 step program revolves around bringing the message of freedom to others.

Right now, a testimony in and of itself isn't the goal: authentic solution and recovery must first be received in order to be offered. But your response to the promises and purposes of God has much more ramifications than you can even imagine.

Addiction most likely wasn't in your life plan. It wasn't something you signed up, wanted or even thought you'd have to deal with. But it happened – to you and millions and millions of other family members. As horrible as it is, you don't have to remain the victim of the scene of rubbish when you have the author of redemption working on your behalf. The God of the Bible redeems. The God of the Bible rises people up and rebuilds in the very places the enemy intended to destroy. This is your chance and opportunity to know Him, to respond to His call and make His power made known around you. Like Nehemiah, you can be the generation that sees the wall rebuilt in your own family. Don't settle for second best. Don't allow the lies of the enemy to speak louder than the truth of God. You matter to God. He is bigger, and He is able.

This is what the Word implores us:

Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live – Deuteronomy 30:19

A Prayer of Pledge When My Family Isn't Ready

Lord,

I establish a covenant with you, even if I can't pursue the restoration of my family right now. I believe that you can clean up my own storm site and bring forth purpose and blessing despite what those around me do. Bring me into the healing process, and allow me to be free to walk in identity and purpose. I commit to my own gate of rebuilding. I believe that you are bigger than the threats that will assault me. I trust you for the task of rebuilding. I pray that you give me a holy burden like Nehemiah to plead and beg for the restoration of my family. Remind me of the building of those walls when I see my own circumstances as hopeless. They are not hopeless! Not when you are able to work!

In Jesus name – Amen

A prayer when the family is ready to mutually seek planning

Father,

We offer to your our home and our hearts. We lay down our own agenda, and pick up your leadership. We ask that you would lead us through our discussion of planning. Give us compassion and concern for each other. Help us not only look after our own needs, but to look upon them. Allow no manipulation or control to set the parameters of this conversation. May it be covered and anointed with Your Holy Spirit. Give us teachable and reachable hearts to be humble, honest and vulnerable. Allow us to own personal responsibility and be accountable rather than driven to blame. Allow us to honor you, and prepare for you to rebuild our lives. Make us a family that can symbolize your power and glory. When conflicts hit, remind us of Nehemiah and the endurance he displayed because he knew his God. May we trust you and know in the same manner. May we know that you are faithful to complete that which you began.

In Jesus Name – Amen

FAMILIES IN ADDICTION RECOVERY PLAN

Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live – Deuteronomy 30:19

ADDICTS IN RECOVERY

MEETINGS AND SUPPORT:

- I will secure a sponsor and work closely with him or her to transition to a life of sobriety
 - I will need to attend _____ meetings a week. I need your support.
 - I will need to add these additional things to my week to assure I can remain sober:
-
-
-

LIVING SITUATION (CHECK HERE IF N/A)

I need to be physically absent from drugs and alcohol. I am concerned of triggers and potential snares in my recovery process. I'd like to discuss our housing situation (if applicable)

The home I'm returning to will contain:

- Alcohol use
- Drug use
- Prescription Meds

I feel that I:

- Can work with this
- Cannot work with this

I have decided that I will need to live at: (home, etc)

This plan is permanent temporary

If temporary, I plan to live here for _____

These plans may change under these conditions:

- I later realize it is an environment where I am not safe and cannot remain sober.
 - If I relapse, I may need another setting
-

EMOTIONAL NEEDS

I am dealing with emotional issues that are new and raw. I need you to understand that my emotions are still not always stable. Please allow me space and time. To help honor and facilitate

both sides of the emotional healing process, I am asking for you to understand this. I would like to agree on some set parameters.

- Please allow me to deal with emotions without trying to change my emotions.
- Please understand that I can't handle all the emotional problems we have in our relationship at one time.
- When emotional issues arise and bring strain, please let me work through my recovery plan to deal with them.

- _____

- _____

- _____

- _____

CHOICES

I need to make decisions based on God's direction. I will seek to respect my family and others when I make these decisions. I need to learn the benefit or consequences of my choices. I ask that you please allow me the space to make these choices. At the same time, I wish to respect your right to make choices. I would like to cease any control I used in our relationship to get what I wanted.

RESPONSIBILITY

I have been irresponsible as the _____ of our family. These are some of the ways I realize I wasn't available:

I realize that I hurt everyone as a result. I want to learn to regain your trust and be placed in this position. This includes:

I agree to work with you through a method of allowing me back into my role. I also understand that if I do something irresponsible, there may need to be consequences. I feel this should only happen whether or not addiction is present. This includes:

SPIRITUAL NEEDS

I have given my life to the Lord. I have experienced change, but I will not be perfect. Please respect my need to grow and mature in the Lord. I will be participating in some of the following:

- Attending church _____
- Receive spiritual mentoring
- Do daily devotions privately
- Attend bible study _____
- Serve in the body

FINANCES

Respond to only those that apply

- I am dependent on my family financially I am not dependent on the family for finances
- I will fulfill my own role in order to assist the family financially. If I'm in the position of being supported, I will honor your support. (Please note: a husband still is financially responsible for the family even if he is not the "bread winner")
- If I need to find employment, I am committed to looking to any and all options.
- I am committed to spending _____ hours a day seeking a job
- If I do not actively seek employment, I understand that I am a financial burden on my family. This may strain the family and cause for boundaries to be implemented. I agree to be held accountable to do what I can. But please allow me to do this on my own. I need your support, but I need to take responsibility for these decisions.
- I agree to _____ (husband/wife, etc.) making the primary financial decisions.
- I agree that this responsibility must be surrendered if a relapse should occur
- I agree to no longer using my role wrongfully to gain finances from you

RELAPSE

I believe that I will not relapse or ever have to implement this. However, for our protection, I would like to offer this relapse plan. Please remember, I am not my addiction. If I relapse, I will come under a system that hurts me and you. Therefore, I give you permission to hold me accountable (but not control my ability to make choices).

SIX MONTHS

Individual:

Family

1 YEAR

Individual:

Family

5 YEARS

Individual:

Family

MY PLEDGE AND REPENTANCE

I am working through the issues of my heart. I seek to ask you to forgive me for those things I have done wrong against you. I confess this to you:

- I am still processing through this and am not ready to have a discussion right now
- I am ready to confess my wrongs to you

Over time, I want our relationship to be:

FAMILY MEMBERS IN RECOVERY

I want to communicate with you my recovery plans. I am seeking to be supported outside of our family system so that I can adjust to a life with your sobriety, and protect against reentering the cycle.

MEETINGS AND SUPPORT:

- I will secure a sponsor and work closely with him or her to transition to learning how to live with you sober.
 - I will need to attend _____ meetings a week. I need your support.
 - I will need to add these additional things to my week to assure I can support you and myself during this change.
-
-
-

OUR LIVING SITUATION (Check here if NA)

- I no longer wish to live with addiction in my home. I am supporting your recovery, but I no longer want to participate in active addiction. To return to home, I am asking for:
 - Your sobriety
 - Your willingness to test when warning signs are clearly present
 - Your willingness to live in sober housing if you are not stable enough to live here, this criteria includes:

- I would like to continue to allow some substance in our home. This includes:

_____..

EMOTIONAL NEEDS

I have been holding onto the many of the emotional needs of our family, or been trying to avoid them altogether. While you work out your recovery, I also need to work through mine.

- Please understand that I have been hurt and be sensitive to my pain. I cannot necessarily “snap out of it”, but I am committed work through my end.
- Please be sensitive to the emotional needs that have been lacking. I understand that you won’t be able to fix my needs and that you have to concentrate on your own, but still it is helpful to know that you are supportive.

- _____

- _____

- _____

RESPONSIBILITY

I have been overcompensating in the following ways to deal with your addiction:

I am ready to give back the responsibilities that belong to you. This includes:

I would like to work out a process of learning how to do this. But please respect the need to make this transition. I am committed to working together.

FINANCES (IF APPLICABLE)

I have supported you financially, and there are my concerns:

I feel changes needed to be in the following area:

RELAPSE AGREEMENT

I understand that you are not your addiction. I agree to have a relapse plan in place so that I can love you, but not allow your addiction. This plan will be designed with an absolute no tolerance to any substance use.

I agree to these steps in relapse:

- If living in our home, the following action will occur:

- We will not support you financially through a relapse if you cannot support yourself.
- We will not enable you in any way in a relapse
- To create an environment for you to return and be reconciled with us, we want to see this action occur:

GOALS

I would like to share with you my goals in my life and our family (this is only done if mutually agreed upon. Some families would rather not share these at this point).

ONE WEEK

Individual:

Family

ONE MONTH

Individual:

Family

SIX MONTHS

Individual:

Family

1 YEAR

Individual:

Family

5 YEARS

Individual:

Family

MY PLEDGE OF GIVING AND RECEIVING FORGIVENESS

I am working through a process of adjustment. I am working to both offer you forgiveness or to receive forgiveness for the things I may have done wrong.

- I am still processing through this and am not ready to have a discussion right now
 - I am ready to confess my wrongs to you
-
-
-
-

Over time, I want our relationship to be:

I dedicate this plan onto the Lord, on this day _____ of
_____, _____.

Addict Signature:

Family Signature

Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live – Deuteronomy 30:19

A Pledge to Rebuild

- ❖ *We give our family to God. We make Him the head and the centering point of everything we are and will become.*
- ❖ *We trust that God has the task of dealing with our heart issues. We give Him the rightful position of being our Healer, Redeemer, Savior, Heart Changer, Transformer and Guide*
- ❖ *We believe that no matter the condition of our family, God is powerful and big enough to restore it to its God-given design.*
- ❖ *We release our efforts to control our own lives and each other. We recognize that only God is worthy of control.*
- ❖ *We make love the priority of our lives and our relationships. We believe everything else is fruitless if love isn't present*
- ❖ *We realize we can't love without recognizing that God first loved us and gives us the ability to love each other. Instead of pressure each other to love, we commit to love God first in our hearts.*
- ❖ *We respect and honor each other's needs to go through recovery. We commit to avoid expectations that are unreasonable or unfair*
- ❖ *We commit to our own recovery process so that we can stay in the Light and be free in the inside*
- ❖ *We release our adaptive roles, and the methods we used to survive. We ask for grace to help us make those transitions in a positive way*
- ❖ *We commit to learning our God-given roles and responsibilities, and pledge to work them out on a daily basis*
- ❖ *We recognize that only grace empowers us, and we will all fall short. We give allowances for each other weaknesses*
- ❖ *We will not allow substance addiction, deep immorality or other addictive behavioral influence to center our home. We ask that you place spiritual protection around our home and hearts*
- ❖ *We ask that any demonic influence be released and that angels would be sent to guard our home. We believe that your Spirit can cover each of us individually*
- ❖ *We submit to the conviction of Your Holy Spirit to deal with our heart and tell us when we have something that needs to be changed. Keep us in the Light – keep our hearts tender*
- ❖ *We agree to confess our sins to each other, and admit our weakness rather than cover them. We will honor each other's vulnerability*
- ❖ *We promote words that encourage and build up in our home.*

A Pledge of Rebuilding

THIS CERTIFICATE RECOGNIZES THAT OUR FAMILY

*Has committed to move beyond the storm of addiction, and move into
the life God intended on this _____ of _____*

IN THE PRESENCE OF

“Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live – Deuteronomy 30:19

Family Member

Family Member

Family Member

Family Member

Family Member

Family Member