

Family Forgiveness

April 12

This is an area that tugs at the hearts of many who are addicted, both in and out of recovery. Who knows better than we do the hurt we inflicted on those closest to us as we look at the wreckage of our past? Tortured by the memory of our own transgressions, our need for forgiveness from our families never ever leaves us.

In sobriety, we ask ourselves how long it will take to return our lives to normalcy. As we become convinced we have changed, we wonder why the family doesn't rally around us with pats on the back for doing something that comes naturally to normal folks. We ask, "What will it take for us to find forgiveness?"

The answer is not a straight line. While active in our disease, we harmed everyone. Like a bull in a china shop, we wrecked all hope, trust, and understanding others initially gave us so freely. For many of us our destructive behavior went on for years. Each time we rammed through life, telling lies and blaming others, we isolated ourselves a little more. When we looked up, we found everyone had left.

Some of us protested, "But I did my activities at home, alone!" Our families cried, "Yes, and you didn't need your wife, your husband, or your children; you were never there for us when *we* needed you."

If restitution comes—it won't be on our time.

It took time for our families to lose faith and disregard us. It will take time, now, for them to find the trust and faith they once had and believe in us again. Until then, we stay the course and maintain sobriety no matter what. We accept what is and continue to make living amends at every opportunity.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

In recovery, we rise to a new level of mutual self-respect and love that cannot be made real without facing and fixing the facts of our harms, especially to those closest to us. We must be responsible.

"Sincere forgiveness isn't colored with expectations that the other person apologizes or change. ... Love them and release them. Life feeds back truth to people in its own way and time." — Sara Paddison