

Handling Criticism from Family

February 18

While in addiction recovery, our home is where many of us feel the most vulnerable, most closely scrutinized. Family members are fearful and desperate to know if we are done with those meetings. What are they for? Why are we going to so many? Everyone expects a new normal. They want a new normal without the addictions, without the leaving behavior, the lying, the stealing, the missing work and the not coming home behaviors. And they want it now. They've had enough. They don't understand the nature of our disease and are afraid of what they don't know. But trust is not reinstated overnight. The Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* reminds, "Yes, there is a long reconstruction period ahead."

In recovery, we accept handling criticism from family members as our responsibility because we made the situation what it is. We know we must rely upon our Higher Power and the village that is recovery to redirect our thinking process and regain a foothold in sobriety.

We must not be in denial of the role we once played in our family's disposition. We have an obligation now to allow them to feel their feelings. Just like us, they are entitled to their emotions and opinions. Our responsibility today, regardless how anyone else feels, is to find a balance of open communication and loving kindness as we stay in recovery and meet family needs.

Our family does not fully understand our journey of recovery because they've not experienced it, but they have watched us fall again and again. We need to show them love and tolerance, and forgive ourselves as we stay the course, one day at a time.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

God, help me forgive myself enough to let go of what others don't understand. Today I ask only to be helpful, useful and kind.

"Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier. Be the living expression of God's kindness: kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile."—Mother Teresa