

If your loved one is not ready, you can't force them, nor should you. An angry, hurt teenager may not welcome your amends at this time. It will need to happen on their timeline- not yours. A distraught spouse may not have been able to work through their grief, hurt, anger that your addiction brought the family. They may not be ready when you get there. You can reach out, state your intent and ask them to let you know when they may be ready and willing to hear the amends.

You have worked hard to get to this point. Your loved ones will have needed to work hard in order to be ready. It can't be forced because you are ready. This step and healing only comes when everyone gets there.

## **Making Amends in Recovery Why it is so Important**

Working step 8 and 9 puts you in touch with your own humanity again. You begin to feel empathy and compassion for the people you have hurt as the result of your addiction. It makes you more mindful of your place in the world.

When you were in the midst of your addiction, you likely caused people harm. You downward spiraled and took casualties with you. People you loved were hurt. You made a mess out of your life your problems spilled over onto the lives of people you care about the most.

Some of the common behaviors of addiction that hurt others include:

A lack of control to stay away from the substance. This can mean that you may steal, cheat, and lie to anyone to get the substance.

You're less social and abandon commitments.

You ignore your relationships and stop working on them.

You ignore risk factors, which can put people in your life in jeopardy of being harmed.

You become uninterested in your hobbies and activities.

You miss important obligations like work. This can cause you to lose your job. If you have a family and you lose your house, you are affecting everyone.

Risk taking tendencies.

If you're withdrawing, you may become extremely agitated and act negatively to those around you.

You may sleep all day.

You keep secrets.



# **Tri County Recovery**

## **Sex Addiction Making Amends**

v 1.0.0.4



**Tri County Recovery**  
of the Path to Healing and Recovery Group

SAA - From Shame to Grace

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The First 7 steps of recovery are all about you. The 8th and 9th step are about getting right with others.

Step 8 - We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

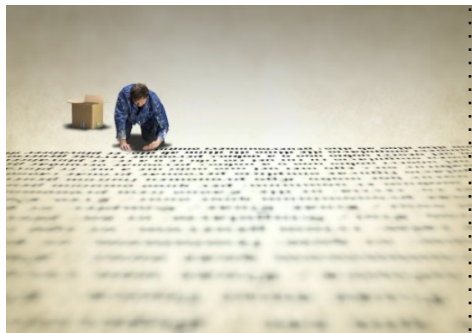
Step 9 - We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

Sex addicts often feel unworthy of their partner's respect and love. Many feel unworthy to have their partner in their life at all after everything they've put them through.

As understandable as it is to feel guilt and shame about your past sexual behaviors and the deception that went with it, you still have inherent worth. Although it's unrealistic to expect it from your partner, you are worthy to be acknowledged and honored for the effort you've made to change your behavior and repair the damage done to your relationship.

As a sex addict, you may feel as though you will

never get out from under the painful feelings of shame and remorse over your past behaviors. If remorse



turns into toxic shame, you will struggle to maintain sobriety and may even allow your partner to abuse you.

Your partner has a right to create boundaries for herself and she has a right to leave the relationship, but she doesn't

have a right to abuse you — ever. There is no justification for abuse of anyone, no matter what they've done.

The concept of a living amends is a mindset about the amends process that helps addicts gain a sense of progress and forward movement in what sometimes feels like an endless experience of shame, remorse, and regret.

Remorseful words like "I'm sorry," and an 8th & 9th step amends process (in 12-step recovery) can go a long way toward making things right, but neither of these comes close to a living amends.

***What is a living amends? Here are some examples of what it looks like:***

- \* regular engagement in recovery activities (12-step meetings, step work, group or individual therapy, workshops, and fellowship with recovery peers)
- \* sustained (and sometimes imperfect) sobriety/abstinence from inner circle behaviors
- \* regular recovery check-ins with your partner
- \* willingness to hear your partner's triggers and her feelings about them, without defensiveness
- \* willingness to engage in trust-building behaviors such as transparency around your phone and computer use or keeping your partner regularly informed of your whereabouts and activities
- \* willingness to eliminate some activities for a temporary amount of time (for example, business travel, mixed gender social or business activities that don't include partners, use of phone apps, or use of electronic devices in certain situations)
- \* overall reduction in defensiveness

or presenting yourself as a victim because you are in a repair and rehabilitation "season" in your relationship

- \* greater level of engagement and participation with home and family activities

As an addict, when you're engaged in most of these activities — even imperfectly — you are making the best amends possible. By showing up, doing the work, and continuing to do "the next right thing," you will make more progress toward trust-building and repair than with any amount of words.

Recovery work is redemptive and virtuous.

If you are a person in recovery, you have certainly traveled a long recovery journey: acknowledged your powerlessness, taken a personal inventory, shared your character defects and then eventually arrived at Step 9: Making Amends. Many find this step anxiety producing, yet freeing. You are at a spot in your recovery where you are able to take accountability for the hurt that your actions have caused others and to make amends.

What if your amends aren't welcomed at the time that you are ready to take this significant step? What if your spouse or your teenage child does not want to hear or accept it? What if they are not ready? What if they can't? As you will have needed support through this, so will they. It is important that everyone in the family unit receives counseling and/or attends appropriate meetings to get the support and knowledge that they will need on this journey. Your loved ones will have suffered consequences as a result of your actions. They will have experienced hurt, sadness, betrayal and anger. This list may go on and on.

Step 9 involves making amends whenever possible, EXCEPT when it may hurt others.