

Staying Positive while in Addiction Recovery

How to Deal with Feelings of Guilt and Shame



Image via [Pixabay](#)

When you struggle with addiction to drugs or alcohol, becoming clean and sober is one of the most challenging things you will ever do with your life. It's so difficult, there is a [relapse rate](#) estimated between 40 and 60 percent. One of the most important things a person has to do in their recovery is change their mindset. Addicts typically have a defeatist mindset which is why they turn to escapism through substance abuse. One of the most effective ways to combat this is with positivity.

Of course, it's hard to be [positive](#). We see all the harm and damage that happens in the world and it can get you down. The guilt and shame of your behavior while abusing drugs or alcohol make it even harder. However, being optimistic and seeking happiness in your life is a real world strategy for staying sober. If you want to be proactive in your addiction recovery through positivity, try implementing these strategies into your process.

Give Back to Your Community

If your addiction took everything away from your--friends, family, financial stability-- it may seem like you have nothing to give. But volunteering or giving back to the community helps you see the best this world has to offer. Even better, it shows what you have to offer the world.

[Volunteering](#) is a great way to build self-esteem when addiction has broken you down.

Spend Time with Friends and Loved Ones

As dark as the world can be, spending time with the people you love always makes things a little brighter. Your friends and family are a support group that can help you stay focused on the goal and be positive about what is going on in your life. In fact, studies show that people with close emotional bonds with other are happier. Positive relationships even make you happier than [money](#) can. If your struggles with addiction damaged relationships you have with the people you love, you're not completely out of luck. Reach out to them and apologize for your behavior. Take responsibility and let them know that rebuilding your bond is a priority. With time, you can heal any rifts that addiction tore between you.

Pick Up a Healthy Hobby

You've heard [the saying](#) "idle hands are the devil's workshop." The same kind of principle can apply to an idle mind. If you are bored and inactive, you are more likely to fall into self-destruction. Finding a healthy hobby or passion is a way to combat boredom and stay motivated. Hobbies provide people with goals. Each time you achieve one, you infuse your life with positivity.

Explore The Roots of Your Addiction

Not everything in recovery is fun. Case in point: [therapy](#). It can be emotionally and even physically draining exploring your past and how it affects your behaviors today, but doing the work can help expose the roots of your problems. SwiftRiver states, "*getting to the root of your [addiction](#) will be a confusing and emotional experience, but understanding your substance abuse completely is an important step in conquering it. Additionally, marriage and/or family counseling can help facilitate healthy conversations with your loved ones and pave the way for stronger relationships.*"

If you struggle with addiction to drugs or alcohol, the threat of relapse is real. However, a positive and proactive attitude can help you grow personally and become the person you need to be to make it through recovery. Staying positive isn't easy. In fact, it's a lot of work. Some of that work includes giving back to your community or apologizing to those you've hurt. Picking up a healthy hobby helps motivate you and builds necessary self-esteem for recovery. Finally, explore the roots of your addiction through therapy and self-discovery. It's not easy, but it's worth it.