

Celebrate Recovery Lesson 4 Sanity

Main Street UMC

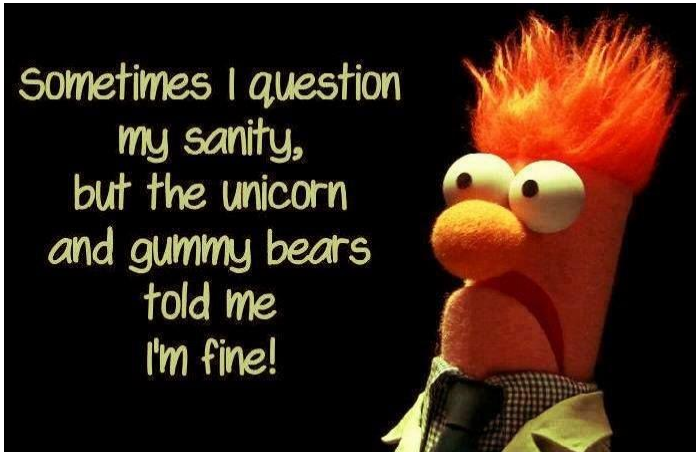
Lesson 4 Sanity

Principle 2: Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me recover.

“Happy are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4)

Step 2: We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

“For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13)



Introduction

We spent our first month on Principle 1. We finally were able to face our denial and admit that **we are powerless to control our tendency to do the wrong thing** and that our lives had become unmanageable —out of control!

Now what do we need to do? How and where do we get the control? The answer is to take the second step on our journey of recovery.

The second step tells us that we have come to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. “Wait a minute!” you’re saying. “I spent an entire

month hearing that to begin my recovery I had to face and admit my denial. Now you’re telling me that I must be crazy? That I need to be restored to sanity? Give me a break!”

No, Step 2 **isn’t saying that you’re crazy**. Let me try to explain what the word *sanity* means in this step.

As a result of admitting our powerlessness in Principle 1, we can move from chaos to hope in Principle 2. We talked about that in our last teaching session. Hope comes when we believe that a power greater than ourselves, our Higher Power, Jesus Christ, can and will restore us! Jesus can provide that power where we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors. He alone can restore order and meaning to our lives. He alone can restore us to sanity.

Sanity

Insanity has been defined as “doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result each time.”

Sanity has been defined as “wholeness of mind; making decisions based on the truth.”

Jesus is the only Higher Power who offers the truth, the power, the way, and the life.

The following acrostic, using the word *sanity*, shows some of the gifts we receive when we believe that our true Higher Power, Jesus Christ, has the power and will restore us to SANITY!

Strength

Acceptance

New Life

Integrity

Trust

Your Higher Power

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The first letter is S, which stands for STRENGTH.

When we accept Jesus as our Higher Power, we receive strength to face the fears that, in the past, have caused us to fight, flee, or freeze. Now we can say, *“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear” (Psalm 46:1–2) and “My mind and my body may grow weak, but God is my strength; he is all I ever need” (Psalm 73:26, GNT).*

Relying on our own power, our own strength is what got us here in the first place. We believed we didn’t need God’s help, strength, or power. It’s almost like we were disconnected from our true power source — God!

Choosing to allow my life to finally run on God’s power — not my own limited power, weakness, helplessness, or sense of inferiority — has turned out to be my greatest strength. God came in where my helplessness began. And He will do the same for you!

The next letter, A, stands for ACCEPTANCE.

Romans 15:7 (GNT) says, *“Accept one another, then, for the glory of God, as Christ has accepted you.”*

When we take Step 2, we learn to have realistic expectations of ourselves and others. We learn not to relate to others in the same old way, expecting a different response or result than they have given us time and time again.

We begin to find the sanity we have been searching for. We remember to pray and ask God “to give us the courage to change the things we can and to accept the things we cannot change.”

As our faith grows and we get to know our Higher Power better, it becomes easier for us to accept others as they really are, *not as we would have them be!*

With acceptance, however, comes responsibility. We stop placing all the blame on others for our past actions and hurts.

The next letter, N, stands for NEW life.

In the pit of our hurts, habits, and hang-ups, we were at our very bottom. We know the feelings expressed in **2 Corinthians 1:8–9 (TLB):** *“We were really crushed and overwhelmed, and feared we would never live through it. We felt we were doomed to die and saw how powerless we were to help ourselves; but that was good, for then we put everything into the hands of God.”*

The verse goes on to say, “God ... alone could save us ... and we expect him to do it again and again.”

The penalty for our sins was paid in full by Jesus on the cross. The hope of a new life is freedom from our bondage! *“When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. He is not the same any more. A new life has begun!” (2 Corinthians 5:17, TLB).*

The next benefit of this step is the I in sanity: INTEGRITY.

We gain integrity as we begin to follow through on our promises. Others start trusting what we say. The apostle John placed great value on integrity: *“Nothing gives me greater joy than to hear that my children are following the way of truth” (3 John 4, NCV).*

Remember, a half-truth is a whole lie, and a lie is the result of weakness and fear. Truth fears nothing —nothing but

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concealment! **The truth often hurts. But it's the lie that leaves the scars.**

A man or woman of integrity and courage is not afraid to tell the truth. And that courage comes from a power greater than ourselves —Jesus Christ, the way, the TRUTH, and the life.

The T in sanity stands for TRUST.

As we work Step 2, we begin to trust in our relationships with others and our Higher Power. *“It is dangerous to be concerned with what others think of you, but if you trust the Lord, you are safe” (Proverbs 29:25, GNT).*

As we *“let go and let God”* and admit that our lives are unmanageable and we are powerless to do anything about it, we learn to trust ourselves and others. We begin to make real friends in recovery, in our groups, at the Solid Rock Cafe, and in church. These are not the mere acquaintances and the fair-weather friends we knew while we were active in our addictions and compulsions. In recovery you can find real friends, brothers and sisters in Christ, to walk beside you on your journey through the principles —friends whom you can trust, with whom you can share, with whom you can grow in Christ.

The last letter in our acrostic this evening is **Y: YOUR Higher Power**, Jesus Christ, loves you just the way you are! *“While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).*

No matter what comes your way, together you and God can handle it! *“And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out” (1 Corinthians 10:13). “Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens” (Psalm 68:19).*

When we accept Jesus Christ as our Higher Power and Savior, we are not only guaranteed eternal life, but we also have God's protection in time of trials. *Nahum 1:7 says, “The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.”*

Wrap-Up

Recovery is a daily program, and we need a power greater than ourselves — a Higher Power who will provide us with the strength, acceptance, new life, integrity, and trust to allow us to make sane decisions based on His truth!

And if you complete the next principle, Principle 3, your future will be blessed and secure! *Matthew 6:34 (TLB) says, “So don't be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too. Live one day at a time.”*

Let's close in prayer.

Dear God, I have tried to “fix” and “control” my life's hurts, hang-ups, or habits all by myself. I admit that, by myself, I am powerless to change. I need to begin to believe and receive Your power to help me recover. You loved me enough to send Your Son to the cross to die for my sins. Help me be open to the hope that I can only find in Him. Please help me to start living my life one day at a time. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

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Think/write/discuss

1. What wrongs, resentments, or secret sins are keeping you awake at night? Wouldn't you like to get rid of them?

2. What value do you see in confessing, in coming clean from the wreckage of your past?

3. As you obey God's directions for confession, what results do you expect God to produce in your life?

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4. What freedom do you feel because of the words of Romans 8:1 and Romans 3:23-24? What specifically do the phrases, “no condemnation” and “not guilty” mean to you?

5. After you complete Principle 4, you will find four areas of your life begin to improve. You will be able to face the truth, ease the pain, stop the blame, and start accepting God’s forgiveness. In what areas of your life will each of these four positive changes help your recovery?

I can be more honest with:

I can ease my pain by:

I can stop blaming:

I can accept God’s forgiveness because of:

Prayer

“Dear God, we have done much damage in our lives, both to ourselves and to others, and we ask you now to help us examine and to face up to this damage we have done. Help us Lord to match our walk with our talk. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”