Process Fifteen

The Faster Scale:
Preventing Relapse

PROCESS FIFTEEN GOALS

To Understand the Process By Which you Relapse Into Your Self-Destructive Behaviors

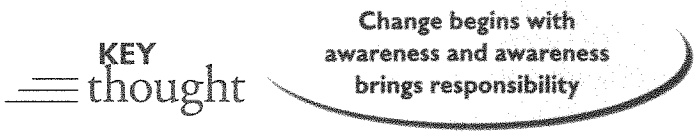
To Begin to Experience Freedom Through Seeing the Pattern of Your Coping Behaviors and Understanding What They Are There For

To Understand What a Relapse is For You

I. MAIN POINT: WHY DO YOU REPEAT BEHAVIORS THAT ARE DESTRUCTIVE AND SINFUL?

THE FASTER SCALE for preventing relapse came as a result of searching for an answer to the above question from Romans 7. Working with addicts for the last 30 years has been exciting, frustrating, and sad. So many of them tried so hard to change and were motivated by the devastating consequences of their addictions, yet still relapsed. The Faster Scale is the result of the effort to unravel the mystery of relapse. This tool has proven to be very accurate in predicting and preventing relapse by identifying and intervening in pre-relapse behavior patterns. It can also be a tool for healing through understanding what your addictive behaviors are there for and what they are protecting you from.

> *Romans 7:15, 19-20, 25: For what I am doing I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.*



Let's start by defining a couple of terms:

ADDICTION Repeating a destructive behavior in spite of the negative consequences that are harmful to both yourself and others. Addiction is a loss of control. Using this definition, basically everyone has an addiction to something, from caffeine to cocaine, from sugar to heroin, from anxiety to anger, and so on. **It is what you do to cope.** Sometimes we will use the term "coping behavior" rather than addiction.

RECOVERY Means to return to a formerly healthy state, i.e. to return to the person you were before you were wounded, betrayed, experienced pain, and came up with coping behaviors to function. Jesus tells us that we are to be like children, who in their most innocent role have the ability to trust, believe all things, love, and exhibit the fruits of the Spirit. **Recovery is a process of identifying your fears and moving toward resolving them.** This process restores your ability to trust, love, and respond appropriately. The bottom line of recovery is learning to trust again.

RELAPSE Is to simply fall back into something that is harmful to yourself and others that you told yourself you wouldn't do again. Whether it is alcohol, anger, anxiety, depression, drug use, over eating, negativity, sex, work, etc. Relapse is repeating the very thing you don't want to do.

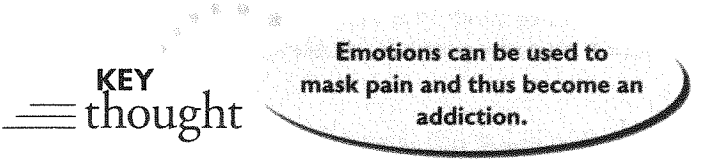
> *James 4:17: Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

What does the Bible/Jesus say about addictions, recovery, and relapse? Think of stories like David.

SELF EVALUATION: RELAPSE

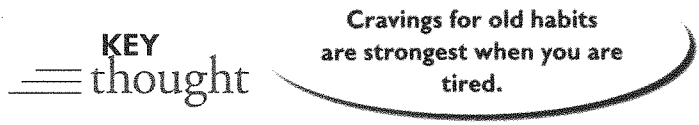
What is the thing in your life that you currently fall back into after promising yourself you won't? What has God been challenging you with?

It will be helpful if you review your work in Book 1, Process 2: What is Broken?



II. THE FASTER SCALE

The Faster Scale is the heart of the original GENESIS PROCESS FOR RELAPSE PREVENTION WORKBOOK, upon which this book is based. It is a neurochemical model of relapse presented in the form of a behavioral scale for relapse awareness. Before you actually fall back into destructive, sinful behaviors, many neurochemical, biological, psychological, and social changes take place. During this pattern, chemical changes speed up your body and dull both physical and emotional pain. It is a process of avoiding unwanted thoughts, feelings, and memories by increasing anesthetizing emotions such as anxiety and anger. The pattern can become unconscious and habitual. (Review your work in Book 1: Process 2) Emotions can be used to mask pain and thus become addictive. You can become addicted to any emotion. For example, anxiety has a neurochemical effect similar to that of cocaine, in that it speeds you up and dulls the awareness of pain. However, it also depletes coping neurochemicals, which can result in a diminished ability to handle stress, depression, and exhaustion. It is in this state of depletion that the cravings for old addictive coping behaviors are generated. Relapse is right around the corner.



Every letter in the word **"FASTER"** stands for one of the steps in this self-sedating sequence. The scale reflects a progression of behaviors and emotions that can mask pain and avoid fear. The scale can explain what you go through neurochemically in your mostly unconscious descent to relapse. Anger, excitement, and anxiety release adrenaline, and other chemicals, which speed up the body and temporarily numb the awareness of pain. But there is a price. After speeding up, you get irritable, ticked off and then exhausted. Have you relapsed because you felt the hopelessness of exhaustion? Remember your last words and feelings before you relapsed.

On the next page is the Faster Scale as it appears in the Appendix. In the following exercise you will look at it one section at a time.

THE FASTER SCALE

RECOVERY (Acceptance, Gratitude, and Grace): No current secrets; Resolving problems; Identifying fears and feelings; Keeping commitments to meetings, prayer, family, church, people, goals, self; Being open; Being honest; Making eye contact; Reaching out to others; Increasing in relationships with God and others; Accountability.

F - A - S - T - E - R

"F" = FORGET PRIORITIES (Denial, Flight, A Change in What's Important, How You Spend Your Time and Thoughts): Secrets; Less time/Energy for God, meetings, church; Avoiding support and accountability people; Superficial conversations; Sarcasm; Isolating; Changes in goals; Obsessed with relationships; Breaking promises/commitments; Neglecting family; Preoccupation with material things, T.V., entertainment; Procrastination; Lying; Over-confidence.

"A" = ANXIETY (Getting Energy from Emotions): Worry; Using profanity; Being fearful; Being resentful; Replaying old, negative thoughts; Perfectionism; Judging others' motives; Making goals and lists you can't complete, Poor planning; Mind reading; Fantasy; Masturbation; Pornography; Co-dependent rescuing; Sleep problems; Trouble concentrating; Seeking/creating drama; Gossip; Using over-the-counter medication for pain, sleep and weight control.

"S" = SPEEDING UP (Out-running Depression): Super busy; Workaholic; Can't relax, Driving too fast; Avoiding slowing down; Feeling Driven; In a hurry, Can't turn off thoughts; Skipping meals; Binge eating (usually at night); Overspending; Can't identify own feelings/needs; Repetitive, negative thoughts; Irritable; Making excuses for "having to do it all"; Dramatic mood swings; Lust; Too much caffeine; Over-exercising; Nervousness; Difficulty being alone or with people; Difficulty listening to others; Avoiding support.

"T" = TICKED-OFF (Getting High on Anger; Aggression): Procrastination causing crisis in money, work or relationships; Sarcasm; Black and white - all or nothing thinking, Feeling alone; No one understands; Overreacting; Road rage; Constant resentments; Pushing others away; Increased isolation; Blaming; Arguing; Irrational, Can't take criticism; Defensive; People avoiding you; Having to be right; Digestive problems; Headaches; Obsessive (stuck) thoughts; Can't forgive; Feeling grandiose (superior); Intimidation.

"E" = EXHAUSTED (Out of Gas, Depression): Depressed; Panicked; Confused; Hopeless; Sleeping too much or too little; Can't cope; Overwhelmed; Crying for "no reason"; Can't think; Forgetful; Pessimistic; Helpless; Tired; Numb; Wanting to run; Constant cravings for old coping behaviors, Thinking of Using Drugs and alcohol; Seeking old unhealthy people and places; Really isolated; People angry with you; Self-abuse; Suicidal thoughts; Spontaneous crying; No goals; Survival mode; Not returning phone calls; Missing work; Irritability; No appetite.

"R" = RELAPSE: Returning to the place you swore you would never go again. Giving up; Giving in; Out of control; Lost in your addiction; Lying to yourself and others; Feeling you just can't manage without your coping behavior; at least for now. The result is usually shame, condemnation, guilt, and aloneness.

THE ROAD TO HELL IS PAVED
WITH GOOD INTENTIONS

–SAINT BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

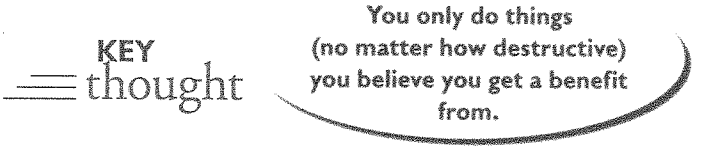
II. SELF EVALUATION: THE FASTER SCALE EXERCISE

Instructions: The following is an outline for the self-evaluation exercise in each section of the Faster Scale. For each section you will take the following steps.

1. Underline all the behaviors in each section that you identify with now or in the past.
2. Circle the most powerful behavior and transfer it to the self-evaluation worksheet.
3. Answer three questions:
   a. How does this behavior affect me (how do my feelings and actions change)?
   b. How does it affect my relationships?
   c. Why do I do this? (What is it there for; what benefit do I get from it; what is motivating me?)

Proverbs 20:5 (KJV): Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

The last question (c) is often the most difficult. It may even be impossible to answer on your own because it has to do with the limbic coping and survival brain. The reason you do something self-destructive is usually a mystery (like Romans 7:15 -25). There is a place inside you that believes that you need the behavior to survive. This is the key reason why you can't change alone. The answers are in you, but you will need God and others to help you find them. The question to ask is: What would I feel or experience if I didn't do this? What is it there for? What do you **believe** would happen if you gave it up? (What is the negative consequence of giving it up?) *I suggest you pray, and ask God to help you answer these questions and be able to SEE what is underneath your behaviors.* Do the best you can on your own. In your group you will help each other see deeper.



James 1:5: "...but if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

SELF EVALUATION EXAMPLE: THE FASTER SCALE

Mary has a problem with ANXIETY; she circled WORRY as the most powerful thing she could identify within the ANXIETY section of the FASTER scale.

1. Circle the behavior you identify most powerfully with and write it here:
   Worry

2. Answer these three questions:

a. How does this behavior affect me? (How do I act and feel) I have a knot in my stomach a lot of the time. I have a difficult time relaxing and feel that I should be doing something else. I'm never quite sure that what I am doing is the "right" thing. I feel scared and guilty most of the time. I have no peace and I feel like I'm failing God because I should be a better Christian and be able to rest in Him, but I can't seem to.

b. How does it affect my relationships? It is hard to relax around me because I tend to push other people as hard as I push myself. People comment that they feel inferior around me because I'm constantly "doing" and seem so together and efficient. They also say that I can make any task stressful. My sister says just being around me makes her tired. They probably think I don't need them because I can do it all myself.

c. Why do I do this; what is it there for? (The benefit) Worry gives me the energy to feel in control and powerful. I don't need to risk trusting anyone else because they will either reject me or let me down. I don't have to trust God either; He might give me an answer I don't like if I let Him be in control. The bottom line is that I use worry to speed up and get energy. I'm afraid if I gave it up I would be depressed, not get anything done and feel worthless, like I have no value. Somehow it makes me feel important.

Philippians 4:12-13 (The Message): I'm just as happy with little as with much, with much as with little. I've found the recipe for being happy whether full or hungry, hands full or hands empty. Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am.

THE FASTER SCALE: RECOVERY

Recovery is a state of surrender to Gods will for your life. It is an attitude of acceptance of life on God's terms. Accepting both the good and the bad with faith in God's love and receiving His help through other people. People in recovery have no current secrets. They can identify what they are struggling with and communicate their plan to resolve it. They show integrity by keeping their commitments. People in recovery have short and long-term goals. They are open and honest with themselves and others. Most importantly, because they are not so focused on their own needs, they are able to see the needs around them and are reaching out to others. They recognize that they grow by giving to others. People in recovery have worked hard to be healthy and want to quickly resolve problems that rob them of their sense of peace. They know that they can't do life alone; they value and practice accountability. They can see and are working on the "log in their eye."

Luke 6:42: "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye."

NOTES

SELF EVALUATION: RECOVERY

1. In the following paragraph about recovery underline your positive behaviors and the affect they have.

Recovery (Acceptance, Gratitude, and Grace)

No Current Secrets • Resolving Problems • Identifying Fears and Feelings • Keeping Commitments: to Meetings • to Prayer • to Family • to Church • to People • to Goals • Self: Being Open • Being Honest • Making Eye Contact • Reaching Out to Others • Increasing in Relationships with God and Others • Accountability

2. Circle the most powerful good behavior you do in Recovery and write it here:

_____

3. Answer these three questions.

a. How does this behavior affect me? (act and feel) _____

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b. How does it affect my relationships? _____

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c. Why do I do this? (benefit) What motivates me to do this? (What is it there for?)

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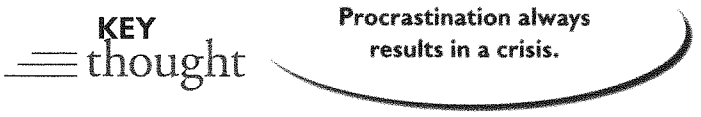
THE FASTER SCALE: FORGET PRIORITIES

Matthew 6:33: "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

The first sign of turning away from recovery onto the road to relapse is a change in plans and in what is important. The primary thing that always seems to start the descent into relapse is secrets. Secrets not only start you avoiding what's right, they also isolate you from God and people. (Review Book 1, Process 6: Secrets).

You know that biblically your priorities are basically to be God, family, ministry and then everything else. Either consciously or subconsciously, as you start facing new fears, you can also begin to find a way to avoid them. New priorities are usually exciting, releasing chemicals in the limbic system that speed up the body and diminish fear or boredom. You begin to avoid simple life responsibilities and commitments. Procrastination is the most common feature of this stage. For example: You have made a commitment to spend more time with God and family. You know you need to take better care of yourself with diet and exercise. You have decided to become more involved with what your church is doing. All these things are hard things and require sacrifice and discipline. However, other things keep coming up that you have to deal with. Procrastination, confusion and denial can be ways to avoid the "hard things." It can become a habitual way of postponing the challenge of these commitments."



SELF EVALUATION: FORGET PRIORITIES

1. In the following paragraph underline the behaviors that you identify with now or from your past.

"F" = FORGET PRIORITIES" (Denial, Flight, A Change in What's Important, How You Spend Your Time and Thoughts)

Secrets; Less time/energy for God, meetings, church; Avoiding support and accountability people; Superficial conversations; Sarcasm; Isolating; Changes in Goals; Obsessed with relationships; Breaking promises/commitments; Neglecting family; Preoccupation with material things, T.V., Entertainment; Procrastination; Lying; Over-confidence.

2. Circle the behavior you identify most powerfully with and write it here:

_____

3. Answer these three questions.

a. How does this behavior affect me? (act and feel) _____

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b. How does it affect my relationships? _____

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c. Why do I do this? (benefit) What motivates me to do this? (What is it there for?)

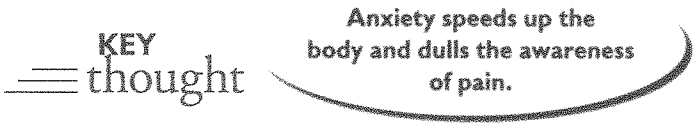
THE FASTER SCALE: ANXIETY

> *Mathew 6:25-27: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you should wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?*

The second stage of increased neurochemical release is brought about by drama. In this stage, old tapes and resentments are played over and over again. In recovery circles this is called "blaming people, places, and things for your problems and feelings." Criticizing the behavior and motives of others directs attention away from you and your problems.

Although anxiety is thought of as a negative feeling, it releases adrenaline and others chemicals that speed up the body and dull pain. You only do things that you believe you get a benefit from. The benefit from anxiety is **getting energy from emotions.** When you choose to worry, especially about things or people you can't control, you feel an emotional charge, an anxious adrenaline rush. Remember, anxiety and stress are just other words for fear. Fear diminishes your ability to see and resolve problems and can effectively shut down communication with God and others. Faith and worry cannot exist in the same mind at the same time.

You know that things like worry, judging, pornography (lust), and resentments (unforgiveness), are not only destructive, but the Bible says they are sin. So why do we do them? Because they generate anxiety which, neurochemically, is very similar to an amphetamine, which is addictive. Keep in mind that I am not talking about normal anxiety like being stuck in traffic on the way to the airport. Anxiety addiction will have you waking up and going to bed anxious. It is not dependent on circumstances; almost any situation can be used to create it. It is a daily reality.



SELF EVALUATION: ANXIETY

1. In the following paragraph underline the behaviors that you identify with now or from your past.

"A" = ANXIETY (Getting Energy from Emotions)

Worry; Using profanity; Being fearful; Being resentful; Replaying old, negative thoughts; Perfectionism; Judging others' motives; Making goals and lists you can't complete, Poor planning; Mind reading; Fantasy; Masturbation; Pornography; Co-dependent rescuing; Sleep problems; Trouble concentrating; Seeking/creating drama; Gossip; Using over-the-counter medication for pain, sleep and weight control.

2. Circle the behavior you identify most powerfully with and write it here:

_____

3. Answer these three questions.

a. How does this behavior affect me? (act and feel) _____

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b. How does it affect my relationships? _____

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c. Why do I do this? (benefit) What motivates me to do this? (What is it there for?)

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THE FASTER SCALE: SPEEDING UP

Psalm 46:10a (NIV): Be still and know that I am God.

The next level of neurochemical anesthetic is attained when feelings of fear or depression are subconsciously avoided by speeding up, usually by being super busy. The problem is that these powerful chemicals that give you energy are not inexhaustible. You don't get something for nothing. As you begin to run out of them, the result is fatigue and depression. Most of us have a great fear of depression, because when you are depressed you can't function and cope. We call this **"running from the bear."** If your self worth is based on your performance, avoiding depression can be a survival behavior because when you can't function you believe you have no value. Check your false beliefs in Process 4.

The main characteristic of this stage is the inability to slow down or relax. This stage is where food can become part of the pattern. You may work too much without eating regular meals during the day and binge at night. Sitting down during the day and eating a regular meal will slow you down. Slowing down can let the unwanted thoughts, feelings, and memories (the bear) creep into your awareness. Of course, all of this creates more stress (fear), which is what escalates the cravings for comfort foods (sugars, fats, and carbohydrates), so you binge at night to relax. Consuming more caffeine and sugar is another way to speed up. Working long hours, staying up late, over or under-eating and compulsive spending are also ways that you speed up, out-run depression, and deny that you have physical or emotional needs.

When I do the weekend church seminars I sometimes ask the question, "Raise your hand if you know you need to simplify your life," usually about 80% of people raise their hands. Then I ask, "How many of you feel powerless to do so," and about the same numbers of people raise their hands. Why do you think that is?

SELF EVALUATION: SPEEDING UP

1. In the following paragraph underline the behaviors that you identify with now or from your past.

"S" = SPEEDING UP (Out-Running Depression)

Super busy; Workaholic; Can't relax, Driving too fast;
Avoiding slowing down; Feeling Driven; In a hurry,
Can't turn off thoughts; Skipping meals; Binge eating (usually at night);
Overspending; Can't identify own feelings/needs; Repetitive,
negative thoughts; Irritable; Making excuses for "having to do it all";
Dramatic mood swings; Lust, Too much caffeine, Over excercising;
Nervousness, difficulty being alone or with people;
Difficulty listening to others; Avoiding support.

2. Circle the behavior you identify most powerfully with and write it here:

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3. Answer these three questions.

a. How does this behavior affect me? (act and feel) _____

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b. How does it affect my relationships? _____

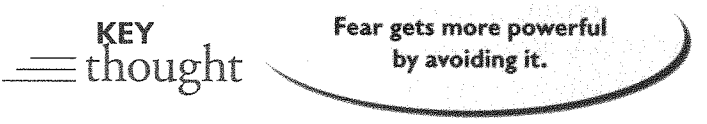
c. Why do I do this? (benefit) What motivates me to do this? (What is it there for?)

NOTES

THE FASTER SCALE: TICKED-OFF

Ephesians 4:26-27 (NIV): In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

Anger causes an increase in many of your brain's most powerful survival neurochemicals, like adrenaline, endorphins, and dopamine. This dominant emotion releases painkillers more powerful than pure heroin. The main role of anger is to anesthetize and cope with fear. When you're angry, you don't feel fear or pain. Anger can give the burst of energy to keep ahead of the bear, which is getting stronger because of denial and procrastination. When you are angry, your ability to understand and solve problems is almost nonexistent. Review Book 1, Process 3: Reacting vs. Responding.



Is anger a good feeling or a bad one? Anger makes you feel big, right, strong, confident, assertive, in control, and unaware of pain. What are the bad feelings? Most people say things like guilt and shame. But this is the response to the damage of the anger after it is over. The results of anger are usually bad but at the time the feeling is a high and can be very addictive. Have you ever known a *rage-aholic*? Remember, neurochemically anger is very similar to and more powerful than cocaine. It can give you that last burst to keep ahead of the bear. Anger is not only an emotional painkiller, but also an effective physical painkiller. You can't separate one from the other.

Anger also keeps you from being vulnerable by making others afraid of you. You may shame, blame and criticize, and intimidate others, pushing them away with an attitude of, "I don't need anyone." Walls of rejection isolate you as you fume trying to control the rage about your unmet needs. The result is that you are pushing people away when you need them the most. Pornography, masturbation, fantasy and constant resentments are common to workaholics and anger addicts because they push people away thus creating the isolation of self-gratification.

SELF EVALUATION: TICKED-OFF

1. In the following paragraph, underline the behaviors that you identify with now or from the past.

"T" = TICKED-OFF (Getting High on Anger; Aggression)

Procrastination causing crisis in money, work or relationships; Sarcasm; Black and white/all or nothing thinking, Feeling alone; No one understands; Overreacting; Road rage; Constant resentments; Pushing others away; Increased isolation; Blaming; Arguing; Irrational, Can't take criticism; Defensive; People avoiding you; Having to be right; Digestive problems; Headaches; Obsessive (stuck) thoughts; Can't forgive; Feeling grandiose (superior); Intimidation.

2. Circle the behavior you identify most powerfully with and write it here:

_____

3. Answer these three questions.

a. How does this behavior affect me? (act and feel) _____

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b. How does it affect my relationships? _____

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c. Why do I do this? (benefit) What motivates me to do this? (What is it there for?)

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THE FASTER SCALE: EXHAUSTED

Matthew 11:28-30 (NIV): "Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

This is the last stage before the body's coping neurochemicals are nearly depleted, making pain, depression, anger, panic, and anxiety unavoidable. Exhaustion can cause you to feel tired, irritable, hopeless, pessimistic, and depressed. Moreover, if a crisis occurs at this stage, you are unable to cope with it. Whatever you have been avoiding through the first four steps has grown into a crisis. Procrastination is starting to catch up with you and you don't have the capacity to deal with it. The bear is on you. Your survival brain will relate your inability to cope with the failure to survive and will generate a craving (focus your attention) on what you did in the past to temporarily feel okay or normal again. If it can't find an old way to cope, it can create thoughts of suicide, which is the ultimate solution to make it all go away. Have you ever had suicidal thoughts? What were your circumstances? Relapse happens from exhaustion. Remember the last words you said before you relapsed, " _____ It. I need a break, I can't handle this." These words say, "I can't cope with life, I need help."

The truth is, life hasn't changed, but your ability to handle it has. When you've used up these coping chemicals that God gave you to get through a crisis, it takes at least three days to replenish them. Everything shuts down while you manufacture more survival neurochemicals, which is called depression. All of the behaviors in the first four steps can become habitual ways of trying to out-run depression.

SELF EVALUATION: EXHAUSTED

1. In the following paragraph, underline the behaviors that you identify with now or from the past.

"E" = EXHAUSTED (Out of Gas, Depression)

Depressed; Panicked; Confused; Hopeless; Sleeping too much or too little;
Can't cope; Overwhelmed; Crying for "no reason"; Can't think; Forgetful;
Pessimistic; Helpless; Tired; Numb; Wanting to run;
Constant cravings for old coping behaviors,
Thinking of using drugs and alcohol,
Seeking old unhealthy people and places; Really isolated;
People angry with you; Self-abuse; Suicidal thoughts; Spontaneous crying;
No goals; Survival mode; Not returning phone calls; Missing work; Irritability;
No appetite.

2. Circle the behavior you identify most powerfully with and write it here:

_____

a. How does this behavior affect me? (act and feel) _____

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_____

b. How does it affect my relationships? _____

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_____

c. Why do I do this? (benefit) What motivates me to do this? (What is it there for?)

THE FASTER SCALE: RELAPSE

In order to relapse, you first have to be in recovery. My seminar participants often say they can't relate the concept of relapse, especially with drugs and alcohol. A review of their Faster Scale Exercises reveals why they can't relate. They have never stopped their destructive coping behaviors; they've never been in recovery, so they can't identify with relapse! You have to stop using in order to relapse. When I do the 40-Hour Genesis Process Counselor Training Seminars with Christian workers and leaders, they often discover that they have always lived in Steps 2 and 3. Anxiety and being super busy is a normal way of life for them. The same may be true for you. A relapse for you may be anger, profanity, judging, spending, working too much, lust, food, being judgmental, or even TV. It is the behavior you don't like about yourself and want to change but have been unable to thus far.

NOTES

SELF EVALUATION: RELAPSE

1. In the following paragraph, underline the behaviors that you identify with now or from the past.

"R" = RELAPSE

Returning to the place you swore you would never go again. Giving up; Giving in; Out of control; Lost in your addiction; Lying to yourself and others; Feeling you can't manage without your coping behavior; at least for now. The result is usually shame, condemnation, guilt, and aloneness.

Review your FASTER Scale Self-Evaluations.

1. What do you fall back into that you have promised yourself not to? List them in the order of power, with the most powerful first.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. Write a short history of your struggle with the issue from Number 1 above.

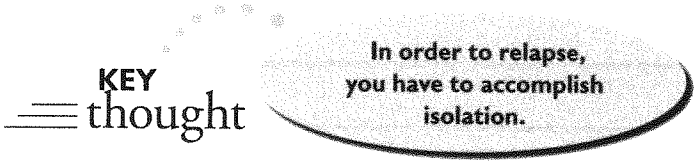
_____

_____

_____

_____

Transfer your answer from number one above to Question 1. in the Practical Application: Commitment for Change section.



All of the steps in the Faster Scale have two things in common: **procrastination and isolation.** As you fail to deal with problems, you move down the FASTER Scale. Crisis comes at a time when you are least able to handle with it emotionally.

The short version of the FASTER Scale is:
Speeding up > Ticked off > Exhausted > Relapse.

Procrastination makes problems worse, and isolation eliminates the support and counsel of your sponsor, friends, family, and church who can help you see the big picture and resolve problems. To interrupt the descent into relapse, you must take responsibility for your recovery by not becoming isolated. The whole process usually begins with a secret, which starts the fall into isolation. Regular accountability is the antidote for isolation and relapse.

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