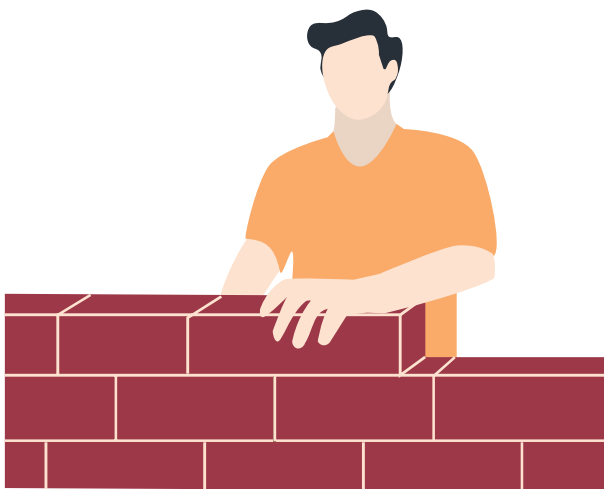


5 Essential Skills for the First Six Months of Recovery

1 Open Mindedness *You don't have all the answers*

- We may be knowledgeable in many areas, but we must let go of the idea we know what's best when it comes to fighting addiction
- Find 3-5 people you trust and listen to what they have to say
 - Therapist, recovery coach, sponsor, peer support meetings, church group
- Even if you think differently, listen to what they have to say
- Doing things differently is going to feel uncomfortable at first
- Just acknowledge it and stay with it



2 Humility and vulnerability

- When we are actively using, we put up walls of defense. Those walls must come down
- We must show ourselves in an authentic vulnerable way and people will connect with us
- It's almost impossible not to like someone who is being genuine with you
- Building relationships is biologically and spiritually needed for healing
- Learning to be vulnerable is the first step in rebuilding those relationships
- It's not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less
- When you are wrong, promptly admit it

3 Honesty

When we are using, we are not being honest with ourselves or those around us

- A lie becomes a reflex, it just comes out
- If you find yourself doing that, come back around and say “you know what that just came out, the truth is...”
- Tell the truth no matter the outcome
- Let go of the consequences

Not in a hurtful way, don't hide behind honesty as a reason to be mean

- Take time to reflect instead of jumping to an answer
- No need to be overelaborate, be straight forward



4 Distress Tolerance

Along the way you're going to find out that you can deal with difficult emotions

- Feelings are temporary.
- In the middle of them it does feel like they are going to last forever but they will pass
- There is another solution to whatever it is other than drugs or alcohol.
- Learn to sit with uncomfortableness
- Learning to be okay when you don't feel okay
- Remember why you're doing this in the first place

5 Patience

You're going to have to practice the first 4 skills over and over

- You will need patience to practice these
- It's not because we don't know how to treat substance abuse, the problem is that people don't want to do what it takes
- Acknowledge your feeling and address it
- Remind yourself that things worthwhile, take a while
- Distract yourself and avoid allowing yourself to obsess

