

WHAT'S YOUR SECRET?

Getting Over Addictions.

By Audrey K. Chisholm

So what's your secret? You know, that episode in the DVD of your life that you would never want to be broadcast on Youtube (yep, you're thinking about it right now). The memories that we don't record in our journal or mention in our Facebook notes.

It might be a shameful memory of molestation, rape, incest, verbal or physical abuse. Or maybe an addiction (pornography, gambling, alcoholism, drug abuse), eating disorder, criminal act (shoplifting, gang related activities, hazing) homosexuality, one night stand, sex with someone else's boyfriend or husband, STD, abortion, an illegitimate child, lies, scandals, hypocrisy...etc!!

The good news is that you don't have to live your life in defeat. If you want to change and overcome your past, you can. How do I know? Because I've been there! Here are 5 powerful truths that I discovered during my lowest points that changed my life:

1. **Know you are loved** – The #1 thing I felt during my struggles was that no one cared. It might sound cliché, but there is NOTHING that is so bad that will stop God from loving & caring about you. The Bible is full of murderers, adulterers, prostitutes, and people with pasts that God forgave and gave an incredible future. I'm an example of that! Our bad habits don't just affect us. There are people that look up to you (family, co-workers, neighbors, friends, classmates) and your decision to change can save generations!
2. **Decide you can change** – After you've tried stopping behaviors and failed, you get to a point where you make excuses and begin to accept that this is just the way things have to be. That's not true! I don't care how many times you have failed, its not too late to start over. You'll never experience a life of victory if you keep holding on to your past.
3. **Take action** – Words are not enough!
 - (1) **Pray consistently** (just talk to God). Ask Him to forgive you and help you to change. You cannot do it without Him.
 - (2) **Forgive Yourself** – receive God's forgiveness and forgive yourself! You are not the only person that has struggled with your sin and God wants to turn it into a powerful testimony that will help someone else!
 - (3) **Eliminate temptations** (get a new cell number, cut off the internet if necessary, stop hanging out with detrimental friends, don't go places, watch movies or listen to music that tempts you)
 - (4) **Get busy** (get involved in your church, volunteer, go back to school, find things to eliminate your free time & be productive)
 - (5) **Find friends/family** that do not struggle with your issue that you trust and have them hold you accountable (pray partners, Bible study group)

4. **Be patient** – you didn't start overnight so it will take time. Don't be upset with failures but celebrate small accomplishments (e.g., each day you go without smoking) and make your goal "one day at a time." Track your progress and take note of the thoughts, people, or circumstances that cause you to stumble and avoid them.
5. **Help someone else** – Once you have overcome, don't get amnesia. Remember to show compassion for others in your situation, don't judge them, and be willing to share your story when God leads you in order to help encourage someone else.

This is my #5. I hope this has been a blessing to you. If so, let me know your comments. Audrey@CenterofFaithChurch.com If not, keep them to yourself (smile!).

You Can Make A Difference!

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