

Guilt & Shoulds

Some people feel guilty for almost everything. There is quite an addiction to guilt, for in some insane way, guilt is still seen to motivate us. We still believe that a little guilt will get us and others to accomplish things, to be better parents, partners, and friends. We think that if we feel a little guilty, we will be more responsible and do what needs to be done. It is the same principle as someone taking a drink to make himself socially acceptable. At first, only a little drink is required. Then, larger and larger doses are needed until the motivation of drinking becomes a tremendous problem.

It is the same with our addiction to guilt - larger and larger quantities are required. We become so burdened with the guilt we carry to motivate ourselves and others that very little gets done at all. Unfortunately, this only makes us feel guiltier.

It is time to admit our addiction to guilt so we may apply a program of recovery. Just as an alcoholic will see he or she no longer needs a drink to be connected to people and to life, we will see we no longer need guilt to accomplish anything. Indeed, guilt has been the biggest block to the accomplishment of peace, well being, creativity, expression, and loving relationships.

What is guilt? Guilt is the belief that we could have done something better or could be doing something better.

Guilt has its basis in the past and future and is always attached to some kind of **should** - we **should** of, **should** have known better.

When we experience guilt, we are bringing to mind on how we could have lived our lives in a better way. If we dwell on the things we **should** have said, how we could have handled a situation, how we could have done things much differently. Always, when we feel guilty we are dwelling on how we **should** have done things in a much better way. When we feel guilty, we project this guilt into the future. We feel guilty about what we **should** be accomplishing, how we **should** be working harder, how we **should** have more patience, more knowledge, and more expertise. We **should** anticipate how to be doing everything better.

The belief that we should know how to do things better or differently is the core of guilt. Without the belief that we must come up with the "better", guilt would be impossible.

What is the solution to guilt? The solution is to admit "It feels like I could have handled that situation better, in a much more loving or patient way", but I understand that I am here to learn from my experiences and I do not judge myself and others. I'd like to invite God to use whatever has happened so the most healing can occur."

We invite you to give up the belief that you should have known better and that you must know better, so the very best may be present to support you and the ones you love.

Let's recognize our innocence and accept whatever we have done as our experience to learn and to grow, instead to burn out our new opportunities, reliving what had happened in the past. Each day is a new opportunity to live the life at its fullest with no guilt or regrets; after all, we are all innocent in our essence!