

Why do I feel so guilty?

If I didn't do anything wrong - (false guilt)

Why do I feel so bad anyway? It is natural. Unless I am a cold and heartless individual I hurt when others hurt and even feel like I may have caused it. In a damaged relationship or time of hurt, I may feel guilty for things like: I may have been able to stop it; I should have seen this coming; I wish I could have done something different; if only . . .

I must keep in mind that everyone is responsible for their own choices and I did not make them do this. I did not force them to act that way. I will not take responsibility for **their** actions.



Now what can I do?

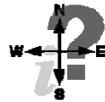
- Ask the one who caused this to forgive me for anything I may have done to contribute to the problem. It sounds strange but may open doors for them to repent and for me to heal.
- Ask God to forgive me of anything I may have done or failed to do that makes me feel so guilty.
- Forgive myself for any part I may have had in contributing to or not preventing this problem.

When I have turned it all over to God, what right do I have to hold on and keep beating myself up with an issue that is now His? Turning loose of these feelings is very hard, but very necessary for me to be able to move on in the healing process.

David paints a beautiful picture of the loving and caring Father as a Shepherd who tends to us as His loved ones in Psalm 23.

If I did cause the problem - (real guilt)

I messed up. I sinned. I made a really bad choice. I must take responsibility for my actions! Yes, maybe it wasn't ALL my fault, but I really know deep down inside that I am the one at fault.



Now what can I do?

- Repent. Stop whatever caused the problem and turn around from the pattern
- Ask forgiveness of those I have hurt. I will start with those closest to me. They may not accept it at the moment but if they really love me, they will. Regardless, I must try.
- Sincerely ask God to forgive me for the action and consequences.
- Forgive myself.

The consequences will still be there. I cannot go back and change the past. I can change the present and future.

David, the great king and example in the Bible messed up big time by adultery, murder, and pride. When he realized it he asked for and received forgiveness. Read Psalm 51 for a beautiful message of penitence.

Paul reminded us of that deliverance in **Colossians 1:13-14(NIV)** *For he has rescued us from the dominion of*

darkness and brought us into the Kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.



Why don't I feel better yet?

I am still too close to the problem and still feeling the pain I have caused and likely worried about the consequences of my actions. My emotions get in the way of allowing the healing power of God to work in me. However, I know that I can get better as long as I will trust my Maker to allow it happen. We generally are not equipped to "turn off" feelings. It takes time and opportunity for healing.

Psalms 27:14(NIV) *Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.*

Colossians 3:15(NIV) *Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

How Can I "Turn off" the constant replay in my head?



➤ Prayer

I likely am not strong enough at this moment to deal logically with all these emotions by myself. I must turn it over to my God! Paul reminds us of this in

Philippians 4:6-7(NIV) *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

➤ Support of friends

My true friends really want to help but may not know when or how. I must give them an open door, especially those who have been down this same painful road.

Galatians 6:2(NIV) *Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

➤ Replace those thoughts with visions of "The New Me"

Continuing to dwell on the past, which I cannot change, does no good and keeps the wound raw. Every time I go back there I must replace that thought with something clear, bright, positive, exciting. Something like:

- ✓ "With God's help I will be doing _____ within the next year".
- ✓ "I am looking forward to _____".
- ✓ "My family and I are working toward _____".
- ✓ "I will start a program to make myself feel better physically by _____".

None of this is easy or fast but it is a necessary step toward finding peace and moving on in my new life.

We are here to help you!

We would sincerely like the opportunity to talk with you more about this subject and share what God's word says about it. As Jesus said in **John 8:32(NIV)** *Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

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We simply seek to share the message of love, hope, forgiveness and peace found through Jesus Christ.

For more information please contact us:

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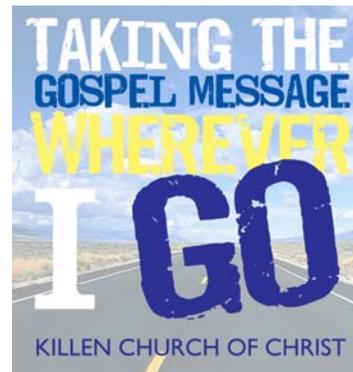
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Why do I feel this way?

