

WEEK 8 DAY 1

MAIN POINT:

Falling down doesn't make you a failure. Get back up!

KEY SCRIPTURE:

"The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

(Lamentations 3:22-23)

A NEW DAY CAN START RIGHT NOW

PRAYER: God, if I slip, help me set aside my embarrassment, run back to you, and open up to those you have placed in my life to help me recover.

Relapse can be a part of recovery. It is easy to let the cares of the day and temptations of the world grab our attention. We can be lulled into a false sense of security about our addictions or sin patterns. We think, "I've got this." We may even proclaim, "I don't struggle with *that* anymore. I doubt that I ever will again!"

When life's pressure mounts, our familiar coping mechanisms call to us. We can get careless and allow old patterns to overtake us, becoming complacent about the very reason(s) that brought us to *re:generation* in the first place. The slip may start as a drink at the end of a stressful day, losing our temper with loved ones, or looking too long at an online advertisement just a few clicks away from pornography. Then, a slip gives way to relapse. Relapse leaves us covered in shame as our thoughts condemn us:

"Oh no. Not again."

"I was doing so well! I hadn't binged in 45 days. Now I'm back at square one. What's the use in even trying?"

"Everyone will be so disappointed. I don't think I can face going back to group and telling people that I messed up . . . again."

Do these sound familiar? When slipping into sin gives rise to shame, we are tempted to give up on recovery, rather than once again receiving God's forgiveness and power. It can be easy to consider isolating and walking away from the very people who understand us most and who can offer help: those in recovery with us.

In moments of relapse, we must remember that falling down doesn't mean we fail. However, staying down often does. God graciously gives us second chances. And third, fourth, even hundredth chances. His mercies are new every morning. A new day can start right now. We can return to him and the people he has placed around us in recovery.

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APPLICATION: List areas of life where you have slipped back into old patterns. Ask God for the courage to be honest with those in recovery alongside you. Pray that God would build a team around you committed to seeing you get well.