

Accountability and Denial Ladder

<p>Self Esteem A realistic self-esteem - which includes acknowledgment of one's abusive history, is possible only after the establishment of a lifestyle of accountability.</p>	<p>Depression and/or Grandiosity - Reoffense Those offenders who neglect to become accountable do so with knowledge of their underlying inappropriateness. Some offenders compensate for self-esteem flaws through grandiose social charm.</p>
<p>Commitment to Safety and Accountability Offenders who are adequately aware of healthy shame, remorse, empathy are better able to maintain safety and accountability. Such commitment becomes the basis for an improved sense of oneself.</p>	<p>Careless, Reckless, or High-Risk Lifestyle Offenders who have failed to become accountable for actions and feelings do not adequately embrace the principles of safety and accountability. These offenders will seek high-risk situations.</p>
<p>Empathy Offenders who understand their own painful feelings are better able to understand the disruptions they have caused in the feelings of others. Concern for the welfare of others leads to commitment to safety.</p>	<p>Callousness Empathy is both unnecessary and impossible for those offenders who have reduced or avoided the discomforting feelings that stem from more concrete forms of accountability.</p>
<p>Remorse Awareness and sensitivity to the wrongs one has committed can become the foundation for an improved lifestyle. Healthy remorse for abusiveness can only occur after accepting the disquieting feelings that result from examining one's abusiveness.</p>	<p>Entitlement Offenders who attempt to avoid or reduce feelings of shame and guilt do not show genuine remorse. Instead, they feel entitled to prioritize their own convenience, comfort, and need to feel good over the value of personal discomfort regarding their gross misdeeds.</p>
<p>Accountability for Feelings of Shame Intense uncomfortable feelings are a natural result of acknowledging abusive behavior, damage to persons, other people's concerns, and one's dangerousness. The ability to admit shameful feelings leads to improved honesty and better relations. Healthy shame can serve to reduce inappropriate sexual arousal.</p>	<p>Self-centered Charm The desire to avoid or reduce intense uncomfortable feelings leads to evasiveness and dishonesty in relationships, and increases the sense of shame and alienation that offenders live with. The desire to avoid painful feelings can lead to a variety of addictive behaviors - including sexual offending.</p>
<p>Accountability for Deviant Arousal/Potential Offenders cannot be considered safe until they acknowledge and manage their personal shortcomings (i.e., dangerousness). This includes welcoming the concerns of other people and demonstrating a commitment to safe boundaries.</p>	<p>Denial of Dangerousness Offenders sometimes minimize their risk potential with statements such as "I didn't know any better" when in fact they knew enough to keep secrets. Those who continue to deny their dangerousness insure their ability to re-offend.</p>
<p>Accountability to Other People's Concerns Offenders who can account for the harm done to victims much more able to account for the safety concerns of other members of the community. Answering to such concerns leads to a safer lifestyle for the offender.</p>	<p>Disregard or Victim Stance Towards Concerns Many offenders resent the need to be accountable to the concerns of their community. Neglecting this piece serves to prevent the offender from acknowledging his underlying inappropriateness and limits his ability become safer.</p>
<p>Accountability for Harm to Victims and Others Careful examination and ownership of the harm and disruption done to victims can only occur in the context of complete accountability for behavior, and is necessary to proceed to higher levels of accountability and safety.</p>	<p>Deny/Minimize Harm or Idealize the Relationship There are many reasons that offenders feel tempted to minimize the harm and disruption they have caused their victims, including having enjoyed their relationships with their victims, and wishing to avoid acknowledging bad feelings.</p>
<p>Accountability for Intent and Awareness Like all behavior, inappropriate behavior is purposeful. Admission of the purpose or goal of deviant behavior parallels the open recognition of problematic nature of these behaviors. Accurate accountability includes the open acknowledgment of their planful series of choices leading up to the behaviors.</p>	<p>Denial of Intent and Awareness The development of a safe lifestyle depends upon the ability to reliably choose not to offend. However, learning to make a difference choice will not make a difference if the original behavior was not a choice.</p>
<p>Accountability for Inappropriate Behavior Accountability means owning all incidents and all details of abuse, along with methods of control manipulation and secrecy. Surrender of denial and secrecy prepares the offender to no longer enjoy the abuses or compartmentalize shame and awareness of the resulting problems.</p>	<p>Secrecy/Denial Inappropriate Behavior Minimization, denial, and secrecy serve to protect the offender's ability to get away with (and enjoy) the abuse. Failure to account all details of abusiveness will prevent the offender from achieving higher levels of accountability and from becoming safer.</p>