

The Ten Steps of Log Removal

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Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. (Matthew 7:1-5, *New American Standard Bible*)

Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults – unless, of course, you want the same treatment. That critical spirit has a way of boomeranging. It's easy to see a smudge on your neighbor's face and be oblivious to the ugly sneer on your own. Do you have the nerve to say, "Let me wash your face for you," when your own face is distorted by contempt? It's this whole traveling road-show mentality all over again, playing a holier-than-thou part instead of just living your part. Wipe that ugly sneer off your own face, and you might be fit to offer a washcloth to your neighbor. (Matthew 7:1-5, *The Message Bible*)

1. We admitted that the logs in our eye (character defects) were hurting us and those around us – that they were making our lives unmanageable.
2. Experienced God's understanding, sympathy and forgiveness.
3. Took full responsibility for the removal of our logs (repentance).
4. Asked God for the desire and power (grace) to remove our logs.
5. Began to understand the origin of our logs – our in-born temperaments, our growing-up experiences (including painful things that happened to us), and the choices we have made along the way.
6. Accepted how deeply rooted our logs are, and how much work it will take to remove them.
7. Grew in our understanding of how our logs (character defects, or defense mechanisms) are maintained.
8. Entered into a program of log removal, involving both personal and communal spiritual disciplines.
9. Persevered in the slow and difficult work of log removal, with the help of God, our community and other resources.
10. Having had our vision clarified by the removal of our logs, we continued to apply the habits of log removal to all areas of our lives, and carried the message of log removal to others.