

[Ajahn Sucitto's advise on dealing with karma after committing a crime.](#)

(I am paraphrasing a conversation with Ajahn Sucitto sometime during 2010. I asked for advise on behalf of an inmate who was very concerned about the negative karma he created due to his crime. These are the steps Ajahn Sucitto outlined for dealing with concerns over unskillful karma.)

Guilt is a wasted emotion. Guilt leaves us mired in shame and powerlessness. Remorse allows us to see the wrong we have done and propels us towards action. Action in this case is doing everything possible to make sure a criminal act does not happen again. This is taking control of one's karma.

1. Admit completely and without reservation the wrong that was done.
2. Understand fully the emotional component that was present when the crime was committed. Know it intimately. Be able to recognize this emotional state when it arises again.
3. Replace the habitual reaction to this emotional state with skillful mental and physical behavior.
4. Resolve to never again react in a harmful manner when this emotional state arises.
5. Forgive yourself and if appropriate, seek the forgiveness of others.