

Fear-Based Decision Making

Deep Dives · The Recovery Files

From Paralysis to Purpose — Rebuilding Trust in Recovery

Breaking the Fear Cycle — The Recovery Files

Fear-Driven · Avoid, freeze, cling, catastrophize · Trust-Based · Choose, act, release, grow

In this workbook

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Each reading is followed by its check-in questions and exercises, in the same order as the app. Your scored results are shown in the app.

PART 1 OF 4 · READING

What Is Fear-Based Decision Making?

Fear-based decision making is the pattern of allowing fear — rather than values, vision, spiritual guidance, or recovery principles — to be the primary driver of your choices. It is the habit of organizing your entire decision-making process around what you are afraid of rather than what you are moving toward. And for people in early recovery, it is one of the most dangerous and least recognized obstacles to sustainable change.

Here is the paradox that makes fear-based decision making so insidious: it feels rational. When you choose to avoid risk, stay in a familiar situation, or postpone change until you have more certainty, it feels like you are being smart, careful, responsible. But beneath that appearance of prudence is a decision-making engine powered entirely by fear — and fear, left unchecked, will keep you circling the same drain that brought you to recovery in the first place.

Consider how addiction itself operates. At its core, active addiction is a fear-based system. You use substances to avoid emotional pain, to prevent withdrawal, to escape the consequences of your own behavior, to forestall the terrifying prospect of facing life without your primary coping mechanism. The entire architecture of addiction is built on avoidance — and avoidance is fear's favorite strategy.

When you enter recovery and remove the substances, the avoidance system does not automatically shut down. It simply redirects. Instead of using substances to avoid pain, you begin using decisions to avoid risk. Instead of numbing fear with chemicals, you manage fear with paralysis, overthinking, and clinging to security.

This is why people in early recovery often look like they are "doing everything right" while making almost no real progress. They attend meetings but avoid sharing. They have a sponsor but avoid calling. They know what changes need to be made but find endless reasons to postpone them. They are sober — but they are still being run by the same fear-based operating system that powered their addiction.

The good news is that fear-based decision making is not a character flaw — it is a pattern. Patterns can be recognized, understood, and changed. But the first step is recognition: seeing clearly how fear has been making your decisions for you, often while wearing a disguise of rationality, caution, or common sense.

Reflection Questions

1. How does the concept of fear-based decision making land for you? Can you see this pattern operating in your own recovery?

2. Think about a recent decision you made. Was it driven more by what you were trying to avoid or what you were trying to create? Be honest.

3. Can you trace a connection between the avoidance patterns of your addiction and the avoidance patterns in your current decision making?

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how much of your current decision making is driven by fear rather than by values, vision, or spiritual direction?

5. What is the most important decision you are currently avoiding in your recovery? What fear is keeping you from making it?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 1 OF 5

Avoidance-Driven Choices

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I make most decisions based on what I want to avoid rather than what I want to create

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. When faced with a choice, my first thought is about what could go wrong rather than what could go right

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I choose the option that feels safest even when another option might serve my recovery better

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. I regularly say no to opportunities because I am afraid of the potential consequences

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. I prioritize preventing failure over pursuing meaningful growth in my recovery

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

6. I find myself choosing paths of least resistance rather than paths of greatest potential

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

7. Fear of negative outcomes influences my decisions more than hope for positive outcomes

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

8. I often realize I have been running from something rather than moving toward something in my choices

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Decision Audit — Fear vs. Trust

Decision #1

1. What was the decision you made (or avoided making)?

2. What fear was involved? What were you afraid would happen?

3. What would a trust-based choice have looked like in this situation?

4. Why did fear win? What made the fear feel more compelling than trust?

5. Which fear dimension was operating? (Avoidance, paralysis, security, catastrophizing, etc.)

6. What was the actual outcome? Did fear's prediction come true?

7. If you could remake this decision from a place of trust, what would you choose?

Decision #2

1. What was the decision you made (or avoided making)?

2. What fear was involved? What were you afraid would happen?

3. What would a trust-based choice have looked like in this situation?

4. Why did fear win? What made the fear feel more compelling than trust?

5. Which fear dimension was operating? (Avoidance, paralysis, security, catastrophizing, etc.)

6. What was the actual outcome? Did fear's prediction come true?

7. If you could remake this decision from a place of trust, what would you choose?

Decision #3

1. What was the decision you made (or avoided making)?

2. What fear was involved? What were you afraid would happen?

3. What would a trust-based choice have looked like in this situation?

4. Why did fear win? What made the fear feel more compelling than trust?

5. Which fear dimension was operating? (Avoidance, paralysis, security, catastrophizing, etc.)

6. What was the actual outcome? Did fear's prediction come true?

7. If you could remake this decision from a place of trust, what would you choose?

Decision #4

1. What was the decision you made (or avoided making)?

2. What fear was involved? What were you afraid would happen?

3. What would a trust-based choice have looked like in this situation?

4. Why did fear win? What made the fear feel more compelling than trust?

5. Which fear dimension was operating? (Avoidance, paralysis, security, catastrophizing, etc.)

6. What was the actual outcome? Did fear's prediction come true?

7. If you could remake this decision from a place of trust, what would you choose?

Decision #5

1. What was the decision you made (or avoided making)?

2. What fear was involved? What were you afraid would happen?

3. What would a trust-based choice have looked like in this situation?

4. Why did fear win? What made the fear feel more compelling than trust?

5. Which fear dimension was operating? (Avoidance, paralysis, security, catastrophizing, etc.)

6. What was the actual outcome? Did fear's prediction come true?

7. If you could remake this decision from a place of trust, what would you choose?

PART 2 OF 4 · READING

The Seven Dimensions of Fear-Based Decision Making

Fear-based decision making is not a single behavior — it is a constellation of interconnected patterns, each representing a different way that fear infiltrates and controls the decision-making process.

****AVOIDANCE-DRIVEN CHOICES**** occur when you make decisions primarily to prevent feared outcomes rather than pursue positive goals. The question driving every choice becomes "What am I afraid will happen?" rather than "What am I being called toward?" You spend all your energy running from what you fear rather than running toward what you value.

****CHANGE PARALYSIS**** is the experience of remaining trapped in unsatisfying, unhealthy, or even dangerous situations because change requires trusting unknown outcomes. The known problem feels safer than the unknown possibility. The paralysis is maintained by the belief that "at least I know what I'm dealing with here."

****SECURITY ATTACHMENT**** involves rejecting opportunities for growth that require letting go of financial, emotional, or social securities. The recovering person feels destabilized and clings to whatever remains constant — even when that constancy is actually stagnation.

****MISTAKE PREVENTION**** is the paralysis that occurs when fear of making the wrong choice prevents making any choice at all. This dimension is driven by perfectionist thinking — the belief that there is one right answer, and that choosing wrong will lead to catastrophe.

****FAMILIAR SUFFERING CHOICE**** is perhaps the most counterintuitive dimension — the active preference for known pain over unknown possibility. The recovering person has developed survival strategies for this specific type of pain. Unfamiliar growth has no such strategies, and that lack of preparation feels dangerous.

****CATASTROPHIC THINKING**** involves automatically imagining worst-case scenarios whenever change or spiritual guidance is considered. This thinking pattern magnifies potential negative outcomes while completely dismissing potential positive ones.

****ANALYSIS PARALYSIS**** is the substitution of endless thinking for necessary action. The person researches, plans, weighs options, consults experts, makes lists, reconsiders, and starts over — all while taking no concrete action.

These seven dimensions rarely operate in isolation. You might be catastrophic about relationships, paralyzed about career changes, and security-attached about finances — all at the same time. The key is identifying which patterns are most active in your specific recovery.

Reflection Questions

1. Which of the seven dimensions did you identify with most strongly? What was it about that description that resonated?

2. Can you give a specific example from your own life for at least three of the seven dimensions?

3. Which dimension are you most likely to experience as "rational" or "responsible" rather than recognizing it as fear-based?

4. How do multiple dimensions interact in your life? Can you trace a situation where several operated together?

5. If you could eliminate one dimension of fear-based decision making from your recovery right now, which one would make the biggest positive difference?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 2 OF 5

Change Paralysis

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I remain in situations I know are unhealthy because change feels too risky

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I stay in unsatisfying circumstances because at least I know what to expect

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I postpone necessary changes because I cannot guarantee a positive result

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. I choose known misery over unknown possibility when facing important decisions
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I resist making changes even when my current situation is clearly not working
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
6. I wait for certainty before making moves that my recovery program suggests
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
7. I find reasons to delay changes that I know are important for my growth
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
8. I have remained stuck in the same patterns because change requires trusting the unknown
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 3 OF 5**Catastrophic & Analytical Thinking**

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I imagine worst-case scenarios whenever I consider making a change in my recovery
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
2. I focus on everything that could go wrong rather than what could go right when facing decisions
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
3. I magnify potential risks while minimizing potential benefits of trust-based choices
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
4. I over-analyze decisions to the point where I never actually make them
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I use research and planning as a way to maintain the illusion of control over outcomes
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
6. I substitute intellectual understanding for spiritual trust in my decision making
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
7. I expect negative outcomes whenever guidance suggests unfamiliar directions
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
8. I postpone action while gathering information to prevent all possible mistakes
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE**Personal Fear Dimension Map****Avoidance-Driven Choices**

Choosing based on what to avoid rather than what to create

1. Rate this dimension in your life (1-10)

2. Give a specific recent example of this dimension operating

3. Where did this pattern originate? What taught you to respond to fear this way?

4. What would it look like to respond differently — with trust instead of fear?

Change Paralysis

Remaining trapped because change requires trusting the unknown

1. Rate this dimension in your life (1-10)

2. Give a specific recent example of this dimension operating

3. Where did this pattern originate? What taught you to respond to fear this way?

4. What would it look like to respond differently — with trust instead of fear?

Security Attachment

Rejecting growth that requires releasing current securities

1. Rate this dimension in your life (1-10)

2. Give a specific recent example of this dimension operating

3. Where did this pattern originate? What taught you to respond to fear this way?

4. What would it look like to respond differently — with trust instead of fear?

Catastrophic Thinking

Imagining worst-case scenarios when change is considered

1. Rate this dimension in your life (1-10)

2. Give a specific recent example of this dimension operating

3. Where did this pattern originate? What taught you to respond to fear this way?

4. What would it look like to respond differently — with trust instead of fear?

YOUR EXERCISE

Catastrophic Thinking Challenge

Catastrophe Challenge #1

1. The Decision or Change You Are Considering:

2. The Catastrophic Prediction — What does your fear say will happen?

3. Evidence SUPPORTING the catastrophe:

4. Evidence AGAINST the catastrophe:

5. Realistic probability (0-100%): How likely is the catastrophe to actually occur?

6. What is the BEST-case scenario that your catastrophic thinking is ignoring?

7. What is the MOST LIKELY outcome — neither worst nor best case?

8. If the worst case DID happen — could you survive it? What resources would you have?

Catastrophe Challenge #2

1. The Decision or Change You Are Considering:

2. The Catastrophic Prediction — What does your fear say will happen?

3. Evidence SUPPORTING the catastrophe:

4. Evidence AGAINST the catastrophe:

5. Realistic probability (0-100%): How likely is the catastrophe to actually occur?

6. What is the BEST-case scenario that your catastrophic thinking is ignoring?

7. What is the MOST LIKELY outcome — neither worst nor best case?

8. If the worst case DID happen — could you survive it? What resources would you have?

Catastrophe Challenge #3

1. The Decision or Change You Are Considering:

2. The Catastrophic Prediction — What does your fear say will happen?

3. Evidence SUPPORTING the catastrophe:

4. Evidence AGAINST the catastrophe:

5. Realistic probability (0-100%): How likely is the catastrophe to actually occur?

6. What is the BEST-case scenario that your catastrophic thinking is ignoring?

7. What is the MOST LIKELY outcome — neither worst nor best case?

8. If the worst case DID happen — could you survive it? What resources would you have?

Catastrophe Challenge #4

1. The Decision or Change You Are Considering:

2. The Catastrophic Prediction — What does your fear say will happen?

3. Evidence SUPPORTING the catastrophe:

4. Evidence AGAINST the catastrophe:

5. Realistic probability (0-100%): How likely is the catastrophe to actually occur?

6. What is the BEST-case scenario that your catastrophic thinking is ignoring?

7. What is the MOST LIKELY outcome — neither worst nor best case?

8. If the worst case DID happen — could you survive it? What resources would you have?

YOUR EXERCISE

Familiar Suffering Inventory

Relationships

1. What is the current situation in this area that causes you pain or dissatisfaction?

2. What makes this suffering "comfortable"? Why does it feel safer than change?

3. What is this familiar suffering costing you — emotionally, physically, spiritually, relationally?

4. What change would improve this situation? What would growth look like?

5. What fear prevents you from making that change? What is the unknown you cannot face?

6. Complete: "I am choosing to stay in ____ because at least I know ____, even though it is costing me ____."

Career/Employment

1. What is the current situation in this area that causes you pain or dissatisfaction?

2. What makes this suffering "comfortable"? Why does it feel safer than change?

3. What is this familiar suffering costing you — emotionally, physically, spiritually, relationally?

4. What change would improve this situation? What would growth look like?

5. What fear prevents you from making that change? What is the unknown you cannot face?

6. Complete: "I am choosing to stay in ____ because at least I know ____, even though it is costing me ____."

Living Situation

1. What is the current situation in this area that causes you pain or dissatisfaction?

2. What makes this suffering "comfortable"? Why does it feel safer than change?

3. What is this familiar suffering costing you — emotionally, physically, spiritually, relationally?

4. What change would improve this situation? What would growth look like?

5. What fear prevents you from making that change? What is the unknown you cannot face?

6. Complete: "I am choosing to stay in ____ because at least I know ____, even though it is costing me ____."

Recovery Program

1. What is the current situation in this area that causes you pain or dissatisfaction?

2. What makes this suffering "comfortable"? Why does it feel safer than change?

3. What is this familiar suffering costing you — emotionally, physically, spiritually, relationally?

4. What change would improve this situation? What would growth look like?

5. What fear prevents you from making that change? What is the unknown you cannot face?

6. Complete: "I am choosing to stay in ____ because at least I know ____, even though it is costing me ____."

Health & Self-Care

1. What is the current situation in this area that causes you pain or dissatisfaction?

2. What makes this suffering "comfortable"? Why does it feel safer than change?

3. What is this familiar suffering costing you — emotionally, physically, spiritually, relationally?

4. What change would improve this situation? What would growth look like?

5. What fear prevents you from making that change? What is the unknown you cannot face?

6. Complete: "I am choosing to stay in _____ because at least I know _____, even though it is costing me _____."

PART 3 OF 4 · READING

From Fear-Based to Trust-Based: Rebuilding Your Decision-Making System

Trust-based decision making is not the absence of fear. It is the refusal to let fear be the final authority in your choices. It is the capacity to acknowledge fear — to feel it fully, name it accurately, and understand its message — while making decisions based on values, vision, spiritual guidance, and recovery principles rather than on fear's demands.

****Step 1: Developing Awareness****

Most fear-based decisions happen so automatically that the person does not even recognize fear as the driver. Before you can change the pattern, you must see it. This requires developing the habit of pausing before decisions and asking: "What is the fear here? Is this decision being driven by what I value or by what I'm afraid of?"

****Step 2: Separating Legitimate Caution from Fear-Based Avoidance****

Not every cautious decision is fear-based. Legitimate caution involves assessing real risks with accurate information. Fear-based avoidance involves magnifying imagined risks, ignoring potential benefits, and choosing inaction to prevent discomfort. The distinction is crucial: caution asks "What is actually at risk here?" while fear asks "What is the worst thing that could possibly happen?"

****Step 3: Practicing Imperfect Action****

One of the most powerful antidotes to fear-based paralysis is the willingness to take action that is imperfect, incomplete, and uncertain. The fear-based decision maker waits for perfect clarity, guaranteed outcomes, and zero risk — conditions that never exist. The trust-based decision maker recognizes that imperfect action in the right direction produces better results than perfect paralysis.

****Step 4: Developing a Trust Practice****

Trust is not a feeling that arrives spontaneously — it is a capacity that develops through repeated experience. This means intentionally making small trust-based decisions on a regular basis: calling your sponsor even when you don't feel like it, sharing honestly at a meeting even when it's uncomfortable, saying yes to an opportunity that scares you.

Each of these small acts of trust builds evidence that contradicts fear's predictions. Over time, this evidence accumulates and begins to shift the default setting from fear to trust.

****Step 5: Building a Spiritual Framework****

For people in recovery, this typically involves prayer, meditation, consultation with a sponsor, alignment with recovery principles, and honest self-examination. The framework replaces the fear-based question ("How do I avoid the worst outcome?") with trust-based questions: "What is the next right thing? What do my values say? What would I choose if I were not afraid?"

The transition from fear-based to trust-based decision making is not a single event. It is a practice — a daily, sometimes hourly, discipline of noticing when fear has grabbed the steering wheel and choosing to return the wheel to trust.

Reflection Questions

1. What is the difference between legitimate caution and fear-based avoidance in your own experience? Can you give an example of each?

2. When was the last time you took imperfect action despite being afraid? What happened? Did fear's prediction come true?

3. What does your current decision-making framework look like? Do you have a process for making important decisions?

4. If you could ask yourself one question before every major decision that would help determine whether fear or trust is driving the choice, what would that question be?

5. Write a personal commitment to trust-based decision making — acknowledging the fear while committing to action anyway.

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 4 OF 5

Trust-Based Decision Capacity

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I can make decisions based on spiritual guidance even when the outcome is uncertain
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
2. I am willing to step outside my comfort zone when my recovery program suggests it
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
3. I trust that growth often requires discomfort and I am willing to experience that discomfort
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
4. I can distinguish between legitimate caution and fear-based avoidance in my decision making
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I have made at least one trust-based decision in my recovery that turned out well
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
6. I believe that following spiritual direction, even imperfectly, produces better results than fear-based paralysis
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
7. I can tolerate uncertainty without needing to control every possible outcome
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
8. I am growing in my ability to make faith-based rather than fear-based choices
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Trust-Based Action Builder

Micro (Small, daily acts of trust)

1. Name a specific trust-based action at this level:

2. What fear does this action confront? What does fear say will happen?

3. What spiritual principle or recovery value supports this action?

4. When will you take this action? Set a specific date or timeframe:

Minor (Weekly trust-stretching actions)

1. Name a specific trust-based action at this level:

2. What fear does this action confront? What does fear say will happen?

3. What spiritual principle or recovery value supports this action?

4. When will you take this action? Set a specific date or timeframe:

Moderate (Monthly courage challenges)

1. Name a specific trust-based action at this level:

2. What fear does this action confront? What does fear say will happen?

3. What spiritual principle or recovery value supports this action?

4. When will you take this action? Set a specific date or timeframe:

Major (Quarterly trust leaps)

1. Name a specific trust-based action at this level:

2. What fear does this action confront? What does fear say will happen?

3. What spiritual principle or recovery value supports this action?

4. When will you take this action? Set a specific date or timeframe:

Transformational (The big decision you've been avoiding)

1. Name a specific trust-based action at this level:

2. What fear does this action confront? What does fear say will happen?

3. What spiritual principle or recovery value supports this action?

4. When will you take this action? Set a specific date or timeframe:

PART 4 OF 4 · READING

The Spiritual Dimension: Faith, Surrender, and Fear

At the deepest level, fear-based decision making is a spiritual problem. It is the behavioral expression of a fundamental orientation toward life that says: "I am ultimately alone, the universe is ultimately hostile, and the only thing standing between me and disaster is my own ability to predict, control, and prevent negative outcomes."

This orientation — whether conscious or unconscious — produces the hypervigilance, the catastrophic thinking, the clinging, and the paralysis that characterize fear-based decision making. And it is the orientation that recovery's spiritual principles are specifically designed to transform.

****Surrender as Antidote****

Surrender — the foundational spiritual principle of recovery — is the direct antidote to fear-based decision making. Surrender does not mean giving up or becoming passive. It means releasing the insistence on controlling outcomes and trusting that a power greater than yourself is capable of managing what you cannot.

The fear-based decision maker says: "I must control the outcome or disaster will follow."
Surrender says: "I will do the footwork and trust the results to something greater than my fear."

****Building Trust Through Action****

For many people in early recovery, the spiritual dimension is the most challenging aspect of shifting from fear-based to trust-based decision making. They can understand the concept intellectually but struggle to practice it experientially. This is normal and expected.

Trust is built through small acts of surrender practiced consistently over time, not through sudden enlightenment. Each time you make a decision based on spiritual guidance rather than fear — each time you let go of an outcome you cannot control, reach out when you want to isolate, share honestly when you want to hide — you are building the spiritual muscle of trust.

****Fear and Faith****

The relationship between fear and faith is not one of elimination but of proportion. The goal is not to become fearless — which would be both impossible and unwise, since legitimate fear serves important protective functions. The goal is to become faithful — to develop a spiritual practice robust enough that faith becomes a stronger influence on your decisions than fear.

When faith drives your choices, you are not ignoring danger — you are recognizing that your Higher Power's vision for your life is more trustworthy than your fear's predictions about it.

The great spiritual paradox of recovery is this: you cannot think your way out of fear-based decision making. You must act your way out. And the action required is the very thing fear prevents — stepping into the unknown, releasing control, trusting guidance you cannot verify, and allowing yourself to be led somewhere you have not chosen.

This is terrifying. And it is the path to freedom.

Reflection Questions

1. How would you describe your current relationship with surrender? Is it something you practice or something you understand intellectually but resist practically?

2. What does your Higher Power or spiritual guidance look like in your recovery? How do you access it when making decisions?

3. Can you identify a specific situation where spiritual guidance suggested one direction but fear pulled you in another? Which did you follow? What happened?

4. What small act of surrender could you practice today — one specific area where you could release control and trust the outcome?

5. Write a prayer or meditation statement about fear-based decision making. What do you want to ask for, release, or commit to?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 5 OF 5

Security Attachment

Scale: 1 = Not at all · 2 = A little · 3 = Somewhat · 4 = Quite a bit · 5 = Very much

1. I turn down opportunities for growth because they threaten my sense of financial security

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I hold onto relationships, jobs, or situations that no longer serve me because they feel predictable

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I prioritize material or emotional safety over following spiritual guidance for my recovery

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. I choose familiar limitations over unfamiliar possibilities for improvement

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. I reject changes that require letting go of current comforts even when those comforts keep me stuck

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

6. I define success by how secure I feel rather than how aligned I am with my recovery values

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

7. I cling to what I have rather than reach for what I need because reaching requires releasing

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

8. My attachment to security prevents me from following through on guidance from my sponsor, counselor, or recovery community

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Security Attachment Excavation

Financial Securities

1. What financial security are you clinging to that may be preventing growth?

2. What opportunity have you turned down because it threatened your financial stability?

3. What would you choose if security were guaranteed? How does that differ from now?

Emotional Securities

1. What emotional security are you clinging to?

2. How does your emotional security attachment show up in your closest relationships?

3. What emotional risk would your recovery benefit from that you are refusing to take?

Social & Identity Securities

1. What social role, reputation, or identity are you protecting at the expense of growth?

2. Are you avoiding certain recovery actions to maintain a social image?

3. What would you be willing to do in recovery if you did not care what others thought?
