

Career, Business & School Life

Sobriety & Resilience · The Recovery Files

Building a Professional Life Worth Living in Recovery

A Resiliency Intensive for Sustained Recovery

Embrace, Empower & Evolve — The Recovery Files

Your progress 0 of 6 parts done · Survive · Getting by, staying safe · Strive · Growing, building, risking · Thrive · Purpose, legacy, impact

In this workbook

- Part 1 · The Crossroads: Career, Purpose & Recovery After Year One
 - Check-in: Purpose & Values Alignment
 - Exercise: Professional Voice Explorer
 - Exercise: Recovery-Informed SWOT Analysis
- Part 2 · Professional Identity in Recovery: Who You Are Beyond the Diagnosis
 - Check-in: Professional Identity & Confidence
 - Exercise: The Gaps & Gifts Inventory
 - Exercise: The Disclosure Decision Framework
- Part 3 · Recovery Skills Are Professional Skills: The Transfer That Nobody Talks About
 - Check-in: Recovery Resilience Applied Professionally
 - Exercise: Recovery-to-Professional Skills Transfer
- Part 4 · The Balancing Act: Work, Life, and Recovery Without Burning Out or Checking Out
 - Check-in: Work-Life-Recovery Integration
 - Exercise: Workplace Boundaries & Triggers
 - Exercise: Daily Work-Recovery Check-In (7 Days)
- Part 5 · Building a Legacy: Purpose, Contribution & the Long Game of Recovery
 - Check-in: Growth & Professional Development
 - Exercise: Recovery-Informed Goal Setting
 - Exercise: Professional Values Alignment Audit
 - Exercise: Professional Legacy Blueprint

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 5 · READING

The Crossroads: Career, Purpose & Recovery After Year One

You are sober. You have survived the crisis, navigated the chaos, and built a foundation. Now comes a question that recovery alone cannot answer: What are you going to do with this life you have reclaimed?

For many people in sustained recovery, the professional dimension of life becomes one of the most complicated, charged, and transformative arenas they will navigate. Whether you are returning to a career you held before addiction derailed it, rebuilding from scratch after losing everything, starting something new because sobriety gave you the clarity to realize you were in the wrong field all along, or pursuing education you never thought possible — the professional realm is where recovery meets the real world in all its complexity.

Here is what makes this territory unique for people in recovery: you are not starting from zero. You are starting from something much more complicated.

You may be starting with gaps in your resume that prompt uncomfortable questions. With professional relationships that were damaged or destroyed. With credentials that expired while you were using. With financial wreckage that limits your options. With a criminal record that closes doors before you can knock on them. With years of experience in an industry that is saturated with the substance culture that nearly killed you.

These are real obstacles, and minimizing them helps no one.

But you are also starting with something that most of your professional peers do not have: the self-awareness, emotional intelligence, resilience, accountability, and capacity for honest self-assessment that sustained recovery develops.

You have learned to show up when you don't feel like it. To ask for help when you're stuck. To be honest about what you don't know. To sit with discomfort without running from it. To take responsibility for your mistakes without being destroyed by them. To rebuild trust through consistent action over time. To maintain discipline when motivation falters.

These are not just recovery skills — they are among the most valuable professional skills in existence.

The gap between recognizing that intellectually and actually living it professionally is what this intensive is designed to bridge.

The central challenge of this stage is integration. Not treating your recovery life and your professional life as separate compartments that must be kept apart, but weaving them together into a coherent whole — a life in which who you are at a meeting and who you are at a meeting at work are recognizably the same person. A life in which your professional growth is not a distraction from recovery but an expression of it. A life in which the purpose, discipline, honesty, and service that characterize good recovery also characterize good work.

This is not a career planning workbook. This is a recovery-informed exploration of what it means to build a professional life worth living — one that uses the unique strengths your recovery has given you while honestly addressing the unique challenges your history presents.

It is an invitation to stop settling for survival and start building something that matters.

Reflection Questions

1. Where are you right now in your professional or academic life? Are you rebuilding, maintaining, transitioning, or starting something new? How does each of these positions connect to where you are in recovery?

2. What professional obstacles do you face specifically because of your history with addiction? Be concrete — resume gaps, damaged relationships, financial limitations, criminal record, industry triggers. Name them without minimizing or catastrophizing.

3. What professional skills has your recovery given you that your peers might lack? Be specific — not just "resilience" but exactly what form that resilience takes in a work context.

4. How integrated are your recovery life and your professional life right now? Are they two separate worlds, or are they parts of one coherent whole? What would fuller integration look like?

5. If you could design the professional chapter of your life without any of the limitations your history has created, what would it look like? Now — what elements of that vision are actually achievable despite those limitations?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 1 OF 5

Purpose & Values Alignment

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

1. My current work or studies align with what genuinely matters to me — not just what pays the bills or fills the time

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

2. I can clearly articulate why I do what I do beyond "I need a job" or "I need to stay busy in recovery"

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

3. I feel a sense of meaning and purpose in my daily professional or academic activities

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

4. My career or educational choices reflect who I am becoming in recovery, not who I was in addiction

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

5. I have moved beyond using work as a replacement addiction — I can distinguish passion from compulsion

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

6. I feel that my professional life contributes to something larger than my own survival

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

7. My work allows me to express my core values, not just tolerate their absence

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

8. I have intentionally chosen my current path rather than defaulting to it out of fear or convenience

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Professional Voice Explorer

Identifying the Voices That Shape Your Professional Self

Why This Matters

You carry multiple internal voices into your professional life — some that sabotage you and some that serve you. The Imposter tells you that you don't belong. The Shame Carrier tells you to hide your past. The Comfort Settler tells you to play it safe. But the Growth Driver and Recovered Professional offer genuine wisdom. Identifying which voice is driving your professional decisions is the first step to choosing better.

Imposter 8 patterns →

☐ Fraud Detector ☐ Qualification Doubter ☐ Success Deflector ☐ Comparison Trap ☐ Waiting-to-Be-Found-Out ☐ Luck Attributor ☐ Over-Preparer ☐ Achievement Dismissal

Shame Carrier 8 patterns →

☐ Gap Explainer ☐ Resume Avoider ☐ Interview Dreader ☐ Disclosure Agonizer ☐ Past Mistake Replayer ☐ Second-Guesser ☐ Trust Doubter

Comfort Settler 8 patterns →

☐ Good-Enough Acceptor ☐ Risk Avoider ☐ Dream Minimizer ☐ Excuse Maker ☐ Change Resister ☐ Routine Clinger ☐ Ambition Suppressor ☐ Safety Prioritizer

Addict Mind at Work 8 patterns →

☐ All-or-Nothing Thinker ☐ Instant Gratification Seeker ☐ Burnout Denier ☐ People-Pleaser ☐ Boundary Avoider ☐ Chaos Creator ☐ Procrastinator ☐ Escapist

Growth Driver 8 patterns →

☐ Skill Builder ☐ Opportunity Seeker ☐ Feedback Learner ☐ Network Expander ☐ Purpose Connector ☐ Resilience Applier ☐ Confidence Builder ☐ Service Oriented

Recovered Professional 8 patterns →

☐ Perspective Holder ☐ Empathy Leader ☐ Grit Demonstrator ☐ Accountability Expert ☐ Honest Communicator ☐ Values Aligner ☐ Contribution Maker ☐ Legacy Builder

Professional Voice Reflection

1. Which voice category is loudest in your professional life right now? Give a specific recent example of what it said and what happened as a result.

2. Look at the patterns you selected — are they clustered in the sabotaging voices (Imposter, Shame, Comfort Settler, Addict Mind) or the empowering voices (Growth Driver, Recovered Professional)?

3. Think of a specific professional decision you're currently facing. Which voice is driving your default response? Which voice SHOULD be driving it?

4. What would your Recovered Professional voice say to your Imposter right now? Write that conversation.

5. Identify one specific professional situation this week where you will intentionally choose to listen to the Growth Driver or Recovered Professional voice instead of the default.

YOUR EXERCISE

Recovery-Informed SWOT Analysis

Your Professional Landscape Through a Recovery Lens

How This Differs

A standard SWOT analysis looks at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A recovery-informed SWOT adds a critical layer: distinguishing between challenges that are universal and challenges that are specific to being a person in recovery, and recognizing strengths that recovery has uniquely developed. This honest differentiation prevents both minimizing recovery-specific obstacles and failing to leverage recovery-specific strengths.

Strengths: What Recovery Has Built In You

RECOVERY-BUILT STRENGTHS — Skills, qualities, and capacities that your recovery specifically developed

e.g., Accountability, distress tolerance, honest self-assessment, showing up consistently, asking for help, emotional intelligence...

PRE-EXISTING STRENGTHS — Skills and talents you had before addiction that have survived or been restored

e.g., Education, technical skills, creativity, work ethic, industry knowledge, natural ability...

Weaknesses: What Needs Honest Attention

RECOVERY-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES — Obstacles that exist specifically because of your addiction history

e.g., Resume gaps, damaged professional relationships, criminal record, lost credentials, imposter syndrome, disclosure anxiety...

UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT AREAS — Professional weaknesses that exist regardless of recovery status

e.g., Public speaking, technical gaps, leadership experience, time management, networking skills...

Opportunities: What Is Available to You

1. What professional or educational opportunities are currently available to you that weren't available during active addiction?

2. What industries, roles, or fields specifically value the skills that recovery has given you (e.g., counseling, peer support, social work, leadership, healthcare)?

3. What networking, mentoring, or professional development resources exist within the recovery community that you haven't yet leveraged?

4. What opportunities might open up if you could release the shame and fully own your recovery as a professional strength?

Threats: What Requires Vigilance

1. What workplace environments, cultures, or situations pose a genuine risk to your recovery? Be specific.

2. What professional pressures (deadlines, client entertainment, travel, toxic colleagues) could become relapse triggers if unmanaged?

3. What pattern from active addiction (people-pleasing, overwork, chaos-seeking, avoidance) is most likely to show up in your professional life?

4. What external threats exist — economic conditions, industry changes, discrimination — that could affect your professional trajectory?

SWOT Synthesis & Action

1. How can you leverage a specific STRENGTH to address a specific WEAKNESS? Name the pairing.

2. How can you leverage a specific STRENGTH to capitalize on a specific OPPORTUNITY? Name the pairing.

3. What THREAT requires immediate attention, and what recovery skill can you apply to manage it?

4. Based on this analysis, what is your single most strategic professional move for the next 6 months?

PART 2 OF 5 · READING

Professional Identity in Recovery: Who You Are Beyond the Diagnosis

One of the most insidious effects of addiction is what it does to professional identity. During active use, many people experience a gradual erosion of their professional self. The skilled attorney becomes someone who can barely function in court. The promising student becomes someone who stops attending class. The talented nurse becomes someone who diverts medication. The creative entrepreneur becomes someone who can't follow through on anything.

The identity shift is not sudden — it's the slow, grinding destruction of professional competence and confidence that occurs as the substance takes more and more cognitive, emotional, and physical real estate.

In recovery, the restoration of professional identity doesn't happen automatically. Getting sober clears the substance from your system, but it does not automatically clear the shame, the self-doubt, the imposter syndrome, or the belief that you are fundamentally different from — and less capable than — professionals who didn't detour through addiction.

These beliefs persist in recovery like ghosts in a house that has been cleaned but not renovated. The mess is gone, but the damage to the structure remains visible.

The imposter phenomenon deserves special attention in recovery contexts. Standard imposter syndrome involves doubting your accomplishments and fearing exposure as a fraud despite evidence of competence. Recovery imposter syndrome adds a devastating layer: "I am a fraud not just because I doubt my abilities, but because I have a secret — my history with addiction — that if exposed would confirm everyone's worst suspicions about me."

This double-layered imposter experience can be paralyzing. It leads to chronic under-reaching, where you apply for jobs below your capability. It leads to over-compensation, where you work twice as hard as everyone else to prove you deserve to be there. It leads to hypervigilance about disclosure, where enormous mental energy goes into managing who knows what about your past.

All of this energy that could be channeled into actual professional growth gets redirected into impression management and damage control.

Here is the truth that recovery eventually teaches: your professional identity is not your job title, your salary, your office, or your resume. Your professional identity is the constellation of values, skills, commitments, and contributions that you bring to whatever work you do.

And that constellation has been fundamentally enriched — not diminished — by your experience with addiction and recovery.

The empathy you bring to client relationships. The accountability you bring to team dynamics. The persistence you bring to difficult projects. The honesty you bring to problem-solving. The humility you bring to leadership.

These are not consolation prizes — they are competitive advantages that your colleagues who took the easier road do not possess.

Rebuilding professional identity in recovery requires three concurrent processes.

First, grief — honestly mourning the professional years, opportunities, relationships, and credentials that were lost or damaged by addiction. This grief is real, it matters, and it cannot be skipped.

Second, reclamation — identifying and owning the professional skills, knowledge, and capabilities that survived addiction and have been strengthened by recovery.

Third, reinvention — building new professional capabilities, relationships, and aspirations that reflect who you are becoming rather than who you were.

This three-part process is not linear. You will cycle through grief, reclamation, and reinvention multiple times. But each cycle moves you closer to a professional identity that is authentic, integrated, and resilient.

Reflection Questions

1. How did your addiction affect your professional identity? What specific skills, roles, relationships, or credentials were damaged or lost?

2. Do you experience "recovery imposter syndrome" — the fear that your professional competence is undermined by your hidden history? Where does this show up most acutely?

3. What professional strengths has your recovery genuinely enhanced? Not in theory — in your actual day-to-day professional experience?

4. Where are you in the three-part process of grief, reclamation, and reinvention? Which phase needs the most attention right now?

5. If you could release the shame about your professional history and simply own your full story — including the addiction and the recovery — how would your professional confidence change?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 2 OF 5

Professional Identity & Confidence

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

1. I struggle with feeling like I don't belong in professional or academic environments because of my history
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
2. I spend significant energy hiding my recovery status or managing how others perceive my past
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
3. I doubt my ability to succeed professionally because of years lost to active addiction
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
4. I compare my career progress to peers who didn't have substance use issues and feel inadequate
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I fear that if colleagues or professors knew my full history, they would lose respect for me
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
6. I hesitate to pursue promotions, leadership roles, or advanced education because I feel undeserving
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
7. I minimize my professional accomplishments because my inner critic says "anyone could do that"
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
8. I struggle to trust my own professional judgment because of poor decisions I made during active use
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

The Gaps & Gifts Inventory

Honestly Assessing What You Lost and What You Gained

Why Both Matter

Recovery requires honesty about both sides of your professional ledger. The Gaps are real — years lost, relationships damaged, opportunities missed. Denying them is delusional. But the Gifts

are also real — perspectives gained, strengths forged, wisdom earned. Ignoring them is self-sabotage. This inventory honors both.

The Time Gap

1. How many years of professional or educational development did you lose to active addiction? Be specific about what those years could have produced.

2. How does this time gap affect your professional self-talk? What does the Critic say about lost time?

3. What is the honest truth about lost time — not the catastrophic version or the minimized version, but the accurate assessment of its real impact on your professional trajectory?

4. People change careers, go back to school, and start over for many reasons — not just addiction. How does reframing your "lost time" as a "different path" change your perspective?

The Relationship Gap

1. What professional relationships were damaged or lost during active addiction? Mentors, colleagues, clients, references?

Assess honestly...

2. What has your experience rebuilding professional trust taught you about trust in general?

Assess honestly...

3. What new professional relationships has recovery made possible that wouldn't have existed in active addiction?

Assess honestly...

The Gifts: What Recovery Gave Your Professional Self

1. What professional perspective do you have now that you could never have had without the experience of addiction and recovery?

2. What professional strengths are directly attributable to your recovery journey — not skills you would have had anyway, but capabilities that were forged specifically by the recovery experience?

3. How has recovery changed the way you define professional success? Is your definition healthier now?

4. What contribution can you make to your field or workplace that only someone with your specific combination of professional knowledge AND recovery experience could make?

5. If you had to write a letter of professional recommendation for yourself — from your recovery to your career — what would it say?

YOUR EXERCISE

The Disclosure Decision Framework

When, How, and Whether to Share Your Recovery Status Professionally

The Complexity

Disclosure of recovery status in professional settings is one of the most nuanced decisions people in recovery face. There is no universal right answer. The right decision depends on context, relationship, industry, legal protections, and personal readiness. This framework helps you think through the decision systematically rather than making it impulsively.

Your Current Disclosure Status

1. Who in your professional or academic life currently knows about your recovery? How did they find out (your choice or circumstance)?

2. What has been the result of disclosures you've made so far — positive, negative, or neutral? Be specific about each.

3. Who in your professional life do you actively hide your recovery from? What energy does that concealment require?

4. What is your default approach to disclosure right now — open, completely private, or situational? How well is it working?

The Decision Framework

For each professional relationship or context where disclosure is a consideration, work through these questions:

1. PURPOSE: What would disclosure accomplish? (Building trust? Explaining gaps? Seeking accommodation? Connecting authentically? Helping others?)

2. RISK: What could go wrong? (Stigma, discrimination, changed perception, gossip, loss of opportunities?) Be realistic, not catastrophic.

3. PROTECTION: What legal protections exist? (ADA, workplace policies, educational accommodations?) What protections don't exist?

4. RELATIONSHIP: Is this person trustworthy? Have they demonstrated non-judgmental attitudes? Would disclosure strengthen or complicate the relationship?

5. TIMING: Is now the right time? Is this disclosure driven by strategy or impulse? Would waiting change the calculus?

6. SCOPE: What specifically needs to be shared? You can disclose "I'm in recovery" without sharing your full history. What is the minimum disclosure that serves the purpose?

7. RECOVERY: Will this disclosure support or threaten your recovery? Will it reduce shame or create new vulnerability?

Disclosure Scripts: Preparing What to Say

Write prepared responses for common professional situations. Having these ready reduces anxiety and prevents impulsive over- or under-disclosure.

The Resume Gap Question: "Can you tell me about this gap in your employment?"

The Social Pressure: "Come on, just one drink — we're celebrating!"

The Direct Question: "Do you drink?" or "Why don't you drink?"

The Deeper Connection: A trusted colleague asks what's changed about you

PART 3 OF 5 · READING

Recovery Skills Are Professional Skills: The Transfer That Nobody Talks About

There is a conversation that happens in boardrooms, classrooms, and leadership seminars every day that people in recovery would recognize immediately if they heard it — because they have been practicing these very skills in meetings, with sponsors, and in their daily recovery work for years.

The business world calls them "soft skills," "emotional intelligence," "executive function," and "leadership competencies." Recovery calls them survival.

Consider accountability. In recovery, accountability means calling your sponsor when you're struggling, admitting when you've relapsed in your behavior even if you haven't relapsed with a substance, making amends to people you've harmed, and taking an honest inventory of your character defects. In the professional world, this same accountability looks like owning mistakes before anyone else discovers them, giving credit where it's due, providing honest project status updates instead of optimistic fiction, and seeking feedback that might be uncomfortable. The skill is identical. The context is different.

Consider distress tolerance. In recovery, you learn to sit with cravings without using, to tolerate emotional pain without numbing it, to endure the discomfort of growth without retreating to old patterns. In the professional world, this same distress tolerance looks like staying calm in a crisis, making thoughtful decisions under pressure, tolerating the uncertainty of a major project or career transition, and managing conflict without either escalating or withdrawing. Executives pay consultants thousands of dollars to develop the distress tolerance skills that you built in a church basement with a Styrofoam cup of bad coffee.

Consider honest self-assessment. Recovery demands rigorous, ongoing examination of your thoughts, behaviors, motivations, and patterns. Step Four is essentially a comprehensive performance review of your entire life — conducted with ruthless honesty. In the professional world, this same capacity for self-assessment is what separates leaders who grow from leaders who stagnate. The ability to accurately identify your strengths and weaknesses, to recognize when your ego is driving a decision, to see patterns in your professional behavior that are producing results you don't want — this is rare and extraordinarily valuable.

Consider showing up consistently. Recovery teaches you that feelings are not facts, that commitment means showing up whether you feel like it or not, and that small actions repeated daily produce transformational results over time. This is exactly what professional success requires — but most people without recovery backgrounds struggle to internalize it because they've never had to practice it with their survival at stake.

The tragedy is not that these skills don't transfer. They transfer beautifully.

The tragedy is that most people in recovery don't recognize the transfer. They compartmentalize — "recovery is where I practice principles, work is where I pretend to be normal." This compartmentalization robs them of their greatest professional asset: the authentic, battle-tested

character that recovery has forged.

When you bring your full recovery self to your professional life — not by disclosing your history to everyone, but by actually applying the principles you've learned — you become a more effective, more trustworthy, more resilient professional than you could ever have been without the recovery experience.

The skills are already in you. This intensive will help you recognize them, name them, and deploy them intentionally in your professional life.

Reflection Questions

1. Which recovery skill do you already apply in your professional life without necessarily recognizing it as a recovery skill? Give a specific example.

2. Where are you compartmentalizing — practicing recovery principles at meetings but not at work? What would it look like to close that gap?

3. Which professional challenge you currently face could be addressed by a recovery skill you already possess? Name the challenge, name the skill, and describe how you would apply it.

4. Do you think of your recovery experience as a professional asset or a professional liability? What would need to change for you to see it as a genuine competitive advantage?

5. If you could bring one recovery principle into your next workday with full intention and awareness, which would it be and how would you apply it?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 3 OF 5**Recovery Resilience Applied Professionally**

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

1. I recognize that the skills I developed in recovery — honesty, accountability, perseverance — are professional assets
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
2. I can navigate conflict at work without either people-pleasing or exploding
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
3. I handle criticism and rejection without catastrophizing or spiraling into shame
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
4. I practice the same principles at work that I practice in recovery — showing up, doing the work, asking for help
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I demonstrate emotional intelligence that many colleagues lack because of the self-awareness recovery has given me
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
6. I recover from professional setbacks more effectively because I know how to recover from much harder things
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
7. I bring authentic leadership qualities to my work because recovery has taught me integrity under pressure
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
8. I understand that professional growth, like recovery, is a long game that requires patience and consistency
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE**Recovery-to-Professional Skills Transfer**

Mapping the Skills You Already Have to the Work You Want to Do

The Transfer

Every major recovery skill has a direct professional application. This exercise makes those connections explicit — so you stop underestimating what you bring to the table and start deploying your full capability.

Rigorous Honesty (Step Work, Inventory)**PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION**

Transparent communication, accurate self-assessment, ethical decision-making, honest reporting

How have you applied — or could you apply — your commitment to honesty in a professional context?

Accountability (Making Amends, Sponsorship)

PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION

Owning mistakes, following through on commitments, giving and receiving feedback, reliability

Give a specific example of how your recovery accountability has shown up in your work or could show up.

Distress Tolerance (Sitting with Cravings)

PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION

Performing under pressure, managing conflict calmly, tolerating uncertainty, patience during transitions

When have you used distress tolerance at work? How does it compare to using it in recovery?

Showing Up Consistently (Daily Practice)

PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION

Reliability, work ethic, consistency over time, discipline without external motivation

How does your recovery practice of "showing up regardless of how you feel" translate to your professional consistency?

Asking for Help (Sponsorship, Fellowship)

PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION

Seeking mentorship, asking questions, delegating, admitting what you don't know, collaboration

How comfortable are you asking for professional help? Is it easier or harder than asking for recovery help? Why?

Emotional Intelligence (Self-Awareness Work)

PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION

Reading the room, managing relationships, empathy, conflict resolution, leadership presence

How has your recovery self-awareness given you professional emotional intelligence that others lack?

Service Orientation (Helping Others)

PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION

Team orientation, client focus, mentoring, organizational citizenship, community building

How does your recovery service ethic show up in how you approach work and colleagues?

Long-Game Thinking (One Day at a Time + Vision)

PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION

Strategic patience, incremental progress, delayed gratification, career planning, persistence

How does recovery's "one day at a time" philosophy inform your approach to professional goals and timelines?

Skills Transfer Summary

1. Which recovery-to-professional transfer surprised you most? Which skill were you already applying without realizing it?

2. Which transfer feels most underdeveloped — where you have the recovery skill but haven't yet deployed it professionally?

3. If you wrote a "Recovery Skills" section on your resume (not literally, but for your own confidence), what would the top 5 bullet points say?

4. Choose one recovery skill to intentionally apply at work this week. Name the skill, the specific situation, and how you will apply it.

PART 4 OF 5 · READING

The Balancing Act: Work, Life, and Recovery Without Burning Out or Checking Out

There is a pattern so common in recovery that it should have its own name: Work Substitution.

It goes like this. The substance is removed. The hours that were previously spent obtaining, using, and recovering from substances suddenly become empty. The emotional energy that was consumed by the addiction needs somewhere to go. Work fills the vacuum.

The recovering person throws themselves into their career or education with the same intensity, obsessiveness, and single-mindedness that characterized their relationship with the substance. From the outside, it looks like success. From the inside, it's the same disease wearing a different suit.

Work addiction in recovery is particularly dangerous because it is culturally rewarded. Nobody stages an intervention for the person working eighty hours a week. No one sends you to treatment for never taking a vacation. Your boss celebrates your dedication. Your family is relieved you're "doing something productive." Your recovery community may even praise your ambition.

But underneath the productivity, the same dynamics are operating: avoidance of uncomfortable emotions, need for external validation, compulsive behavior that feels like a choice but isn't, inability to stop despite mounting consequences, and the gradual neglect of relationships, health, and recovery practices that should be non-negotiable.

The opposite pattern is equally destructive: professional paralysis driven by fear. Some people in sustained recovery become so afraid of stress triggering relapse that they avoid professional challenges altogether. They stay in jobs that are beneath their ability. They decline promotions. They don't apply for schools that would challenge them. They keep their professional lives small and manageable, sacrificing growth for perceived safety.

While this pattern doesn't produce the same visible crisis as work addiction, it produces a different kind of suffering: the slow erosion of self-respect that comes from knowing you're capable of more but refusing to reach for it.

The path between these extremes is what recovery-informed professional life actually looks like. It requires several ongoing practices.

First, honest self-monitoring: regularly checking whether your relationship with work is healthy or compulsive. Questions like "Am I working this hard because I want to, or because I'm avoiding something?" and "What would I have to feel if I stopped working right now?" reveal the true motivation behind professional intensity.

Second, non-negotiable recovery maintenance: treating your recovery practices — meetings, therapy, sponsorship, spiritual practice, self-care — as appointments that cannot be cancelled for work, just as you would not cancel dialysis because of a deadline. The professionals who sustain the longest, most successful careers in recovery are not the ones who sacrifice recovery for work.

They are the ones who protect recovery at all costs and let their work benefit from the stability that protection provides.

Third, genuine integration: building a professional life that is consistent with your recovery values rather than competing with them. This means choosing work environments that support your wellbeing. Setting boundaries that protect your sobriety. Building relationships with colleagues that are authentic. Pursuing professional goals that excite you without consuming you. And measuring professional success not just by external metrics — salary, title, grades — but by internal metrics: Am I growing? Am I contributing? Am I showing up as the person recovery is helping me become?

The balancing act is not a destination. It is a daily practice of awareness, adjustment, and recalibration. Some weeks the balance will tip toward work. Some weeks it will tip toward recovery. The skill is not maintaining perfect equilibrium — it's recognizing the imbalance quickly and correcting it before it becomes a crisis.

Reflection Questions

1. Have you experienced Work Substitution — replacing the substance with compulsive work? What did it look like, and what were the consequences?

2. Have you experienced professional paralysis — keeping your career small to avoid stress? What opportunities have you declined out of fear rather than genuine disinterest?

3. What is your current relationship with work — healthy engagement, compulsive overwork, fear-based avoidance, or something else? Be honest.

4. What are your non-negotiable recovery practices that you refuse to sacrifice for work? If you don't have any non-negotiables, what should they be?

5. How do you define professional success right now? Is your definition recovery-informed, or is it driven by the same compulsive metrics that characterized your addiction (more, bigger, faster, never enough)?

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 4 OF 5

Work-Life-Recovery Integration

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

1. I maintain healthy boundaries between work and recovery without sacrificing either one
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
2. I can manage work stress without it threatening my sobriety or recovery practices
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
3. I take breaks, use vacation time, and rest without guilt or fear of falling behind
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
4. I have strategies for managing workplace triggers — stress, conflict, celebrations with alcohol, toxic dynamics
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I do not use work as an escape from doing recovery work, feeling emotions, or addressing personal issues
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
6. My recovery supports my professional life, and my professional life supports my recovery
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
7. I can say no to professional demands that compromise my wellbeing or recovery
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
8. I have at least one person at work or school who knows about my recovery and supports it
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Workplace Boundaries & Triggers

Protecting Your Recovery While Building Your Career

Why This Is Non-Negotiable

Your recovery comes first — not because your career doesn't matter, but because without recovery, your career doesn't exist. This exercise maps your specific workplace triggers and builds concrete boundary strategies for each one. This is not about being fragile. This is about being strategic.

Social Events with Alcohol

Happy hours, client dinners, holiday parties, team celebrations, industry events

1. What workplace social situations involve alcohol? How frequently do they occur?

2. What is your current strategy for managing these situations? Is it working?

3. What specific boundary would protect your recovery without isolating you professionally?

Overwork & Burnout

Excessive hours, inability to disconnect, work-as-identity, perfectionism, fear of saying no

1. What does overwork look like for you? What are the warning signs that you're crossing from dedication into compulsion?

2. How does overwork threaten your recovery specifically? What recovery practices get sacrificed first?

3. What specific boundary around work hours, availability, or workload would protect your recovery?

Workplace Conflict & Stress

Difficult colleagues, unfair treatment, high-pressure demands, toxic culture, criticism

1. What workplace conflict or stress is most likely to trigger old coping patterns for you?

2. How do you currently respond to workplace conflict? Is it a recovery-informed response or an old pattern?

3. What specific strategy will you use when workplace stress reaches a danger level for your recovery?

Professional Shame & Triggers

Background checks, disclosure situations, resume gap questions, credential discussions

1. What professional situations trigger shame about your history? Be specific.

2. How does this shame affect your professional behavior — do you withdraw, overcompensate, or freeze?

3. What specific response have you prepared for when these situations arise? If you haven't prepared one, write it now.

Success & Celebration

Promotions, achievements, recognition — situations where celebrating "normally" might include substances

1. How do you celebrate professional success without substances? Do you have a plan, or do you wing it?

2. Has professional success ever triggered complacency about recovery? What happened?

3. What does recovery-informed celebration of professional achievement look like for you?

Your Boundary Emergency Plan

1. If you could feel your recovery being threatened by a workplace situation, what would be your immediate first action? (e.g., call sponsor, leave the environment, text accountability partner)

2. Who in your professional life knows about your recovery and can serve as a workplace ally? If no one, who could you trust?

3. What is your non-negotiable boundary — the line that, if crossed, would require you to leave a job or school to protect your recovery?

4. Write a personal boundary statement: "I protect my recovery in my professional life by..."

YOUR EXERCISE

Daily Work-Recovery Check-In

7 Days of Monitoring Your Professional-Recovery Balance

The Practice

For seven days, check in at the end of each workday. This practice builds awareness of how your professional life and recovery life interact — where they support each other and where they create tension. Patterns will emerge that inform how you design your work-recovery integration going forward.

Day 1

What was the biggest professional challenge or win today?

Which professional voice was loudest today? (Imposter, Shame, Comfort Settler, Growth Driver, etc.)

Did your professional life support or compete with your recovery today? How?

Did you apply a recovery principle at work today? Which one?

Work-recovery integration rating (1 = completely at odds, 10 = perfectly integrated)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Day 2

What was the biggest professional challenge or win today?

Which professional voice was loudest today? (Imposter, Shame, Comfort Settler, Growth Driver, etc.)

Did your professional life support or compete with your recovery today? How?

Did you apply a recovery principle at work today? Which one?

Work-recovery integration rating (1 = completely at odds, 10 = perfectly integrated)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Day 3

What was the biggest professional challenge or win today?

Which professional voice was loudest today? (Imposter, Shame, Comfort Settler, Growth Driver, etc.)

Did your professional life support or compete with your recovery today? How?

Did you apply a recovery principle at work today? Which one?

Work-recovery integration rating (1 = completely at odds, 10 = perfectly integrated)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Day 4

What was the biggest professional challenge or win today?

Which professional voice was loudest today? (Imposter, Shame, Comfort Settler, Growth Driver, etc.)

Did your professional life support or compete with your recovery today? How?

Did you apply a recovery principle at work today? Which one?

Work-recovery integration rating (1 = completely at odds, 10 = perfectly integrated)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Day 5

What was the biggest professional challenge or win today?

Which professional voice was loudest today? (Imposter, Shame, Comfort Settler, Growth Driver, etc.)

Did your professional life support or compete with your recovery today? How?

Did you apply a recovery principle at work today? Which one?

Work-recovery integration rating (1 = completely at odds, 10 = perfectly integrated)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Day 6

What was the biggest professional challenge or win today?

Which professional voice was loudest today? (Imposter, Shame, Comfort Settler, Growth Driver, etc.)

Did your professional life support or compete with your recovery today? How?

Did you apply a recovery principle at work today? Which one?

Work-recovery integration rating (1 = completely at odds, 10 = perfectly integrated)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Day 7

What was the biggest professional challenge or win today?

Which professional voice was loudest today? (Imposter, Shame, Comfort Settler, Growth Driver, etc.)

Did your professional life support or compete with your recovery today? How?

Did you apply a recovery principle at work today? Which one?

Work-recovery integration rating (1 = completely at odds, 10 = perfectly integrated)

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10

Week in Review

1. Looking at your 7 days of check-ins, what patterns emerge in how your professional life and recovery life interact?

2. Which days had the highest and lowest integration ratings? What made the difference?

3. Did you notice the professional voices shifting over the week as awareness increased?

4. What was the most valuable insight from tracking work-recovery balance for a full week?

5. What one specific adjustment will you make to improve work-recovery integration going forward?

PART 5 OF 5 · READING

Building a Legacy: Purpose, Contribution & the Long Game of Recovery

At some point in sustained recovery, the question shifts from "What do I need to survive?" to "What do I want to build?"

This is not a small shift. It is a fundamental reorientation from deficit-based thinking — always trying to fix what's broken, fill what's empty, repair what's damaged — to asset-based thinking — recognizing what you have, leveraging what you've built, and creating something that didn't exist before.

Legacy thinking is recovery thinking applied to professional life over a long time horizon.

In recovery, you learn that lasting change happens through small, consistent actions repeated over months and years. You learn that who you become matters more than what you achieve. You learn that the quality of your relationships determines the quality of your life. You learn that service to others strengthens rather than depletes you.

All of these recovery principles are also the principles of professional legacy.

For people in recovery, legacy takes on particular depth because you have a unique relationship with time. You know what it means to lose years — to look up and realize that a decade vanished into the fog of active addiction.

That relationship with time creates both urgency and wisdom. The urgency says: don't waste this second chance. The wisdom says: don't rush the second chance into another version of the same compulsive pattern that created the first crisis.

Legacy requires patience — the kind of patience that recovery teaches better than any business school.

Consider what your unique professional contribution might be. Not the generic answer — "I want to help people" — but the specific answer that only someone with your particular combination of experience, skills, values, and recovery could provide.

Perhaps it's the social worker who understands addiction from the inside. The attorney who advocates for people in the criminal justice system because she's been there. The teacher who recognizes the struggling student because he recognizes his younger self. The entrepreneur who builds a company culture around the principles of honesty, accountability, and genuine human connection because she knows what happens in organizations that lack them. The nurse who brings compassion to patients with substance use disorders because he remembers what it felt like to be treated as less than human.

Your recovery does not limit your professional legacy. It shapes it. It gives it depth, authenticity, and power that cannot be manufactured.

The question is not whether you can build something meaningful despite your addiction history. The question is what specifically you can build because of it — because of the perspective, the empathy, the resilience, and the radical honesty that recovery has given you.

Legacy also means considering the ripple effect of your professional choices. When you show up to work with integrity, you model integrity for the people around you. When you set healthy boundaries, you give permission for others to do the same. When you pursue growth with patience and persistence, you demonstrate that transformation is possible. And when you bring the principles of recovery into professional spaces — accountability, service, humility, continuous improvement — you make those spaces better for everyone, whether they know about your recovery or not.

You have already proven that you can survive. Now the question is: what will you build with the life you've reclaimed? What will exist in the world because you got sober, stayed sober, and used your sobriety as a foundation for something extraordinary?

Reflection Questions

1. What is shifting — or needs to shift — from "What do I need to survive professionally?" to "What do I want to build professionally?"

2. What is your unique professional contribution — the specific thing you can offer that combines your skills, experience, and recovery in a way that no one else can?

3. How do you relate to professional time? Do you feel urgency (I've wasted so much time), patience (I'm building something that takes time), or some combination? How does each affect your professional decisions?

4. What ripple effect is your professional life currently creating? If you brought more recovery principles into your professional spaces, how would the ripple change?

5. Complete this sentence: "Because I got sober, the world will have ____ that it would not have had otherwise." Be specific and ambitious.

CHECK YOURSELF · CHECK-IN 5 OF 5

Growth & Professional Development

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

1. I actively pursue skill development and learning opportunities beyond what is required
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
2. I have specific, written professional or academic goals with realistic timelines
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
3. I seek constructive feedback and use it to improve rather than taking it as a personal attack
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
4. I invest in professional relationships and networking without it feeling manipulative or transactional
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
5. I am willing to take calculated professional risks — new roles, new industries, new challenges
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
6. I view professional setbacks as learning opportunities rather than evidence of personal failure
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
7. I am developing capabilities that position me for where I want to be, not just where I am
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5
8. I maintain curiosity and openness about my professional or academic future
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

YOUR EXERCISE

Recovery-Informed Goal Setting

Setting Professional Goals That Support — Not Threaten — Your Recovery

The Difference

Standard goal setting asks: What do you want to achieve? Recovery-informed goal setting asks: What do you want to achieve AND will pursuing this goal strengthen or threaten your recovery? Every professional goal must pass the recovery test: Is this goal driven by growth or by the same compulsive, never-enough, external-validation-seeking pattern that characterized my addiction?

Professional Goal #1

The Goal: What specifically do you want to achieve?

Be concrete — what, by when?

The Why: What is the honest motivation? (Distinguish between healthy ambition and compulsive striving)

Why do you really want this? Is it growth or avoidance?

Values Check: Which of your core values does this goal serve?

If it doesn't serve any of your values, reconsider whether it's the right goal.

Recovery Test: Will pursuing this goal strengthen or threaten your recovery? How?

Be brutally honest about the risks and benefits to your sobriety.

Recovery-Informed Action Steps: Break the goal into small, consistent actions (recovery style — one day at a time)

What is the next right thing? Then the next? Then the next?

Support System: Who will support you AND hold you accountable for pursuing this goal in a healthy way?

Name specific people and their specific roles.

Success Metrics: How will you know you're succeeding — using both external measures AND internal recovery measures?

External: promotion, grade, revenue. Internal: peace, integrity, recovery strength.

Professional Goal #2

The Goal: What specifically do you want to achieve?

Be concrete — what, by when?

The Why: What is the honest motivation? (Distinguish between healthy ambition and compulsive striving)

Why do you really want this? Is it growth or avoidance?

Values Check: Which of your core values does this goal serve?

If it doesn't serve any of your values, reconsider whether it's the right goal.

Recovery Test: Will pursuing this goal strengthen or threaten your recovery? How?

Be brutally honest about the risks and benefits to your sobriety.

Recovery-Informed Action Steps: Break the goal into small, consistent actions (recovery style — one day at a time)

What is the next right thing? Then the next? Then the next?

Support System: Who will support you AND hold you accountable for pursuing this goal in a healthy way?

Name specific people and their specific roles.

Success Metrics: How will you know you're succeeding — using both external measures AND internal recovery measures?

External: promotion, grade, revenue. Internal: peace, integrity, recovery strength.

Professional Goal #3

The Goal: What specifically do you want to achieve?

Be concrete — what, by when?

The Why: What is the honest motivation? (Distinguish between healthy ambition and compulsive striving)

Why do you really want this? Is it growth or avoidance?

Values Check: Which of your core values does this goal serve?

If it doesn't serve any of your values, reconsider whether it's the right goal.

Recovery Test: Will pursuing this goal strengthen or threaten your recovery? How?

Be brutally honest about the risks and benefits to your sobriety.

Recovery-Informed Action Steps: Break the goal into small, consistent actions (recovery style — one day at a time)

What is the next right thing? Then the next? Then the next?

Support System: Who will support you AND hold you accountable for pursuing this goal in a healthy way?

Name specific people and their specific roles.

Success Metrics: How will you know you're succeeding — using both external measures AND internal recovery measures?

External: promotion, grade, revenue. Internal: peace, integrity, recovery strength.

Goal Setting Reflection

1. Looking at your three goals, are they in genuine balance — or is one area (career, education, money) dominating at the expense of others?

2. Did any goal fail the Recovery Test? If so, how can you modify it so that pursuing it strengthens rather than threatens your sobriety?

3. What is the single most important next action you can take THIS WEEK toward one of these goals?

4. How will you check in with yourself monthly to ensure your goal pursuit remains recovery-informed rather than compulsive?

YOUR EXERCISE

Professional Values Alignment Audit

Does Your Professional Life Reflect What Actually Matters to You?

Why This Matters in Recovery

In active addiction, your values were hijacked — the substance determined your priorities. In recovery, you reclaimed your values. But are those reclaimed values actually reflected in your professional life? Or are you working in a way that quietly violates the principles you've fought so hard to restore? Misalignment between values and work is one of the most underrecognized threats to sustained recovery.

Step 1: Identify Your Professional Values

Tap the values that are most important to you in your professional life. Select your top 5-7.

☐ Integrity ☐ Service ☐ Excellence ☐ Innovation ☐ Collaboration ☐ Authenticity ☐ Growth ☐
 Balance ☐ Impact ☐ Creativity ☐ Leadership ☐ Stability ☐ Independence ☐ Mentorship ☐ Justice ☐
 Compassion ☐ Accountability ☐ Learning ☐ Financial Security ☐ Purpose ☐ Community ☐ Health ☐
 Recognition ☐ Flexibility ☐ Contribution ☐ Challenge ☐ Honesty ☐ Discipline

Step 2: The Alignment Audit

1. List your top 5 selected values. For each one, rate how fully it is expressed in your current professional life (1 = completely absent, 10 = fully expressed). Where is the biggest gap?

2. Which value is most violated or compromised by your current work situation? What is the cost of that misalignment — to your wellbeing, your recovery, your motivation?

3. Which value is most fully expressed in your professional life? How does living that value professionally strengthen your recovery?

4. Are any of your professional values in conflict with each other? (e.g., Financial Security vs. Purpose, Independence vs. Collaboration) How do you navigate that tension?

5. If you could redesign your professional life to be fully aligned with your top 5 values, what would change? What would stay the same?

Step 3: Alignment Action Plan

1. What is one specific, achievable change you can make in the next 30 days to bring your professional life into better alignment with your values?

2. What larger change — one that might take 6-12 months — would produce the most meaningful alignment improvement?

3. What professional decision are you currently facing? How do your values inform the right choice?

4. Write a professional values statement: "In my professional life, I am committed to [values] because [why they matter in recovery]."

YOUR EXERCISE

Professional Legacy Blueprint

Designing What You Will Build With This Reclaimed Life

From Surviving to Building

Legacy is not about fame or fortune. It's about impact — the difference your professional life makes in the world because you got sober, stayed sober, and used your sobriety as a foundation for meaningful contribution. This blueprint makes your professional legacy concrete and actionable.

The 5-Year Professional Vision

Imagine yourself five years from now, having continued to grow professionally while maintaining strong recovery. Be as specific as possible.

What does your professional life look like? Role, industry, responsibilities, daily experience.

What professional achievement are you most proud of? What did it take to get there?

How does your work contribute to others? What impact does it have beyond your own benefit?

How do your professional life and recovery life reinforce each other? What does integration look like?

What professional relationship are you most grateful for? How did you build it?

What skill or capability have you developed that you didn't have when you started this intensive?

Your Unique Professional Contribution

1. What can you contribute to your field or workplace that only someone with your specific combination of expertise AND recovery experience could contribute?

2. If you could solve one problem in your industry, organization, or community — and your recovery perspective gave you unique insight into the solution — what would it be?

3. How could you mentor, support, or open doors for others who are navigating professional life in recovery?

4. What does "leaving things better than you found them" look like in your specific professional context?

Building the Bridge: From Now to Legacy

1. What is the single most important professional step you need to take in the next 90 days to move toward your 5-year vision?

2. What professional skill, credential, or experience do you need to acquire? What is your plan for acquiring it?

3. What professional fear must you face? What would your Recovered Professional voice say to that fear?

4. What are you currently tolerating professionally that is incompatible with the legacy you want to build? What needs to change?

5. Who can help you build this bridge? Name specific people and what you need from them.

Letter to Your Future Professional Self

Write a letter to your professional self five years from now. Your future self has achieved the vision you described above. They are reading this letter and remembering where they started. What do you want to tell them about who you are right now, what you're committed to, and what you hope they've built?

Dear future me, // I'm writing this from a place of [describe where you are now] with a vision of [describe where you're going]...

The Professional Commitment

1. Based on everything you've explored in this intensive — the readings, the assessment, and all ten exercises — what is the single most important commitment you are making to your professional life in recovery?

2. How will you hold yourself accountable? Who will you share this commitment with?

3. What will you do when the Imposter, the Shame Carrier, or the Comfort Settler tries to derail you? What is your response plan?

4. Complete this sentence: "Because I got sober and stayed sober, my professional legacy will be..."
