

The Ripple Effect

Resentment & Harm

Step-Working Guide · The Recovery Files

In this workbook

1. **The Ripple Effect** — key ideas, worksheet

Each topic's scored self-assessment and mind map are in the app.

TOPIC

The Ripple Effect

KEY IDEAS

The Ripple Effect

Addiction is Not Victimless

Harm caused to others represents far more than occasional hurt feelings; it encompasses the systematic pattern of damage addiction creates in relationships, families, and communities.

Examining this harm is essential not for self-punishment, but for taking full responsibility and preparing for the freedom of amends.

Broken Promises

Erosion of Trust

Systematic pattern of making agreements, commitments, or promises to family members that were failed due to drinking or its consequences.

This destroys the foundation of trust essential for relationships, often teaching loved ones that our word means nothing.

Dishonesty & Deception

The Web of Lies

Extensive lying, fabrication, and deception to hide drinking, cover up consequences, and maintain the ability to use.

We forced others to live in a false reality, questioning their own perceptions and living with constant uncertainty.

Financial Harm

Theft & Instability

Taking money, resources, or opportunities from others. Stealing, borrowing without repayment, or creating financial hardship.

Financial harm violates basic security and trust, often creating long-term consequences for those who depended on us.

Emotional Abuse

Psychological Wounds

Verbal abuse, manipulation, unavailability, or creating emotional chaos. Using guilt or threats to control others.

These wounds are often invisible but can last longer than physical ones, creating fear and anxiety in those who love us.

Neglect & Abandonment

Absence of Care

Failing to provide proper care, support, or presence for dependents, partners, or parents who needed us.

We were physically present but emotionally absent, forcing others to take on responsibilities that were rightfully ours.

Professional & Social

Community Impact

Damaging reputations, failing professional duties, embarrassment in social settings, or violating ethical standards.

Addiction spreads harm beyond the family into our workplaces and communities, affecting our standing and the wellbeing of others.

Legal & Institutional

Systemic Consequences

Creating legal problems, expenses, or liabilities that affected family members, employers, or others.

Our actions often dragged innocent people into legal or institutional complications, causing stress and financial burden.

Taking Responsibility

The Path to Repair

Full acknowledgment of harm without excuses, willingness to make amends, and commitment to changed behavior.

We move from guilt to accountability. We repair what can be repaired and accept responsibility for what cannot, ensuring we never repeat the harm.

WORKSHEET**Harm Caused Worksheet**

Accountability & Amends Planning

INVENTORY**Core Harm Recognition**

1. Which dimension of harm resonates most powerfully with your experience?

2. What specific instances have you been most reluctant to acknowledge?

3. How has your understanding of "harm" evolved in recovery?

4. What patterns do you notice in how you minimized harm in the past?

5. How did character defects (pride, fear, selfishness) enable this harm?

FAMILY**Relationship Impact**

6. Spouse/Partner Damage (Trust, Emotional, Financial):

7. Children Impact (Neglect, Modeling, Emotional):

8. Parents/Extended Family Impact:

9. Friends & Social Circle Damage:

10. Professional/Community Reputation Damage:

FINANCIAL

Financial & Material Harm

11. Money stolen or borrowed without repayment (List specifics):

12. Property damaged or destroyed:

13. Indirect financial costs to others (Legal fees, lost jobs affecting family):

14. Plan for Restitution (How will you pay it back?):

AMENDS

Amends Planning

15. People requiring Direct Amends (Face-to-Face):

16. Situations requiring Living Amends (Changed Behavior):

17. Situations requiring Indirect Amends (Where contact is unsafe/impossible):

18. How will you handle negative reactions or lack of forgiveness?

MAPPING

Harm Ecosystem Map

List specific examples for each category:

Broken Promises/Trust:

Dishonesty/Deception:

Financial Theft/Harm:

Emotional Abuse:

Physical Harm/Endangerment:

Neglect/Abandonment:

ACTION

Accountability Action Plan

Priority Amends (Who needs to be addressed first?):

Consultation Plan (Who will guide you?):

Behavioral Changes (What stops today?):

Timeline:

Note: Always consult with your sponsor before making direct amends, especially if it might cause further harm.