

Perfectionism and Control

Control, Surrender & Resistance

Step-Working Guide · The Recovery Files

In this workbook

1. **Perfectionism and Control** — key ideas, worksheet

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

TOPIC

Perfectionism and Control

KEY IDEAS

Perfectionism and Control

The Illusion of Management

Perfectionism is a paralyzing challenge in recovery. It reflects a fear of imperfection that prevents us from taking meaningful but imperfect action, maintaining the illusion that we can control outcomes.

Paralysis by Analysis

Waiting for 'Perfect'

We may avoid amends because we can't find the 'perfect' words, or delay step work until we feel completely ready. This perfectionism masks fears of failure and inadequacy.

Control and Surrender

The Core Conflict

Trying to manage others' responses or guarantee specific outcomes prevents authentic surrender. We exhaust ourselves trying to control things that are not our responsibility.

All-or-Nothing Thinking

The Trap of Absolutes

Viewing recovery as either total success or total failure prevents us from recognizing progress. Growth happens in the messy middle, through mistakes and learning.

Embracing Imperfection

Action Over Perfection

The path forward involves taking imperfect action. 'Good enough' action is infinitely better than perfect inaction. We learn to find peace with outcomes beyond our control.

Authentic Engagement

Courage to Be Real

Letting go of perfectionism allows us to show up authentically. We develop resilience by navigating mistakes and finding deep satisfaction in effort rather than just results.

WORKSHEET

Perfectionism and Control Worksheet

MAPPING

Mapping Patterns**Perfectionist Paralysis**

Examples (e.g., avoiding amends until perfect):

Outcome Control Attempts

Examples (e.g., rehearsing conversations to control response):

All-or-Nothing Thinking

Examples (e.g., one mistake ruins everything):

Excessive Planning

Examples (e.g., research instead of action):

REFLECTION

Deepening Understanding

What category of perfectionism affects you most powerfully?

What factors tend to intensify your perfectionism?

What early warning signs indicate emerging paralysis?

ACCEPTANCE

Developing Acceptance

What strategies help you take action despite perfectionist fears?

How do you distinguish between healthy preparation and procrastination?

What would satisfaction in effort and progress look like?

PLAN

Action Plan

Specific pattern to address:

Goal for imperfect action:

Small, manageable action steps:

Timeline for implementation:
