

Bridging the Divide

[Vision board](#) · [Recovery Timelines](#) · [The Recovery Files](#)

Printable fill-in version: write your answers on the lines. The interactive board, its charts and your saved entries stay in the app.

THE RECOVERY FILES

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

From Man Rules → Principles of Recovery

A Character Mapping Intensive for Men in SUD Recovery

Assessment

0/40 questions

Worksheets

sections complete

Overall

bridge crossed

What This Intensive Is About

Most men enter treatment carrying a set of unwritten rules they learned long before addiction — rules that said "never ask for help," "handle it alone," "don't show weakness," "feelings are for the weak." These rules didn't start as problems. They were survival tools.

But somewhere along the way, those same rules became the walls that kept you in your addiction and out of your life.

This intensive is a map for crossing from the shore where the man rules live — isolation, armor, silence — to the shore where recovery principles live: honesty, vulnerability, openness, surrender, connection. The bridge between them is made of character work. And you build it one plank at a time.

Your Domain Scores

Man Rules Grip 0%

Recovery Principle Openness 0%

Character Awareness 0%

Connection & Support 0%

Willingness to Grow 0%

☐ Self-Assessment 40 questions across 5 domains ☐ Worksheets 10 interactive exercises

The Bridge Assessment

Rate each statement honestly. There are no right or wrong answers — only your truth.

How to Use This Assessment

For each statement, rate how true it is for YOU right now — not how you wish it were, and not how you think you should answer. The goal is an honest picture of where you stand today. Your score shows you how far along the bridge you already are, and where the next planks need to be

placed.

Man Rules Grip

1 I believe asking for help is a sign of weakness.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

2 I feel uncomfortable showing emotion in front of others.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

3 I have been told — or I tell myself — that real men don't cry.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

4 I handle problems alone rather than reaching out.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

5 I feel I must always appear in control, even when I'm not.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

6 I have used substances to suppress emotions I felt I shouldn't show.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

7 I feel shame or embarrassment when I am vulnerable.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

8 I judge other men who openly express feelings.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

Man Rules Grip Score 0%

Recovery Principle Openness

1 I am willing to be honest about my struggles with at least one person.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

2 I can ask for help without feeling like a failure.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

3 I am open to guidance from others in my recovery.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

4 I can name and express my emotions without shutting down.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

5 I believe surrendering control can lead to real freedom.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

6 I see vulnerability as a strength, not a weakness.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

7 I am willing to follow direction even when I disagree.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

8 I feel I can be my authentic self in recovery settings.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

Recovery Principle Openness Score 0%

Character Awareness

1 I can identify specific character traits that have helped fuel my addiction.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

2 I recognize patterns in my thinking that keep me stuck.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

3 I take honest responsibility for harm I've caused.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

4 I see a difference between who I was and who I am becoming.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

5 I believe my character can change through recovery work.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

6 I have identified values I want to live by in recovery.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

7 I understand how my upbringing shaped my "man rules."

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

8 I am willing to examine uncomfortable truths about myself.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

Character Awareness Score 0%

Connection & Support

1 I have at least one person I can be honest with about how I really feel.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

2 I engage with a recovery community (meetings, group, sponsor).

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

3 I allow others to support me without feeling like a burden.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

4 I am willing to make amends to people I have harmed.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

5 I reach out before a crisis rather than only when desperate.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

6 I believe I deserve connection and support.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

7 I can receive care from others without deflecting or minimizing.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

8 I have or am building a network of people who support my recovery.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

Connection & Support Score 0%

Willingness to Grow

1 I am open to changing beliefs that no longer serve me.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

2 I am willing to do uncomfortable things to grow.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

3 I understand that the rules I was raised with may be limiting my recovery.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

4 I am actively taking steps to build new character traits.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

5 I seek out feedback even when it is difficult to hear.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

6 I see my addiction as a teacher, not just a problem.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

7 I believe a different life is possible for me.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

8 I am committed to closing the gap between who I was and who I want to be.

☐ Not at all ☐ A little ☐ Somewhat ☐ Quite a bit ☐ Very much

Willingness to Grow Score 0%

Assessment Reflection

1 Looking at your scores, which domain surprised you most — and why?

Write your honest reflection...

2 Which Man Rules still have the strongest grip on you right now?

Write your honest reflection...

3 Which Recovery Principle feels most foreign or uncomfortable to you?

Write your honest reflection...

4 What would it take to move your lowest score up by just one point?

Write your honest reflection...

Bridge Worksheets

10 exercises to walk you across the divide

Man Rules Origins Map

☐ Character Inventory ☐ Bridge Crossing Exercises ☐ Recovery Principles in Action ☐ Identity Reconstruction ☐ Accountability & Amends Map ☐ Building Your Support Shore ☐ Who Am I Becoming? ☐ Daily Bridge Check-In

Letter to Your Old Rules

A farewell — and a declaration of who you are choosing to become

The Letter Exercise

This is one of the most powerful exercises in this entire intensive. You are going to write a letter — directly to the Man Rules that shaped you. Not a letter of hatred, because many of those rules kept you alive. But a letter of honest farewell. You will name what they gave you, what they cost you, and why you are choosing to leave them behind as you cross the bridge. This can also be shared in group or with your counselor for profound discussion.

Part 1 — What the Rules Gave You

Before you release something, acknowledge what it gave you. These rules were not invented to harm you — someone passed them down because they genuinely believed they would protect you. What did they do for you?

1 Write about a time the Man Rules actually protected you or helped you survive.

Acknowledge what was given...

2 What would have happened to the younger version of you without some of these rules?

Acknowledge what was given...

3 Complete this: "The rules served me by..."

Acknowledge what was given...

Part 2 — What the Rules Cost You

1 Write about the relationships the rules damaged or destroyed.

Count the cost honestly...

2 What did the rules cost you emotionally — what feelings were you never allowed to have?

Count the cost honestly...

3 How did the Man Rules make you easy prey for addiction?

Count the cost honestly...

4 Complete this: "The rules cost me..."

Count the cost honestly...

Part 3 — The Letter Itself

Now write the letter. Address it directly to your Man Rules. Tell them what they gave you, what they cost you, and that you are choosing to leave them behind — not out of shame, but out of commitment to the man you are becoming. Begin with: "To the rules I was raised by..."

Dear rules I was raised by... (write freely — this is for you)

Close the letter with a declaration: "From this point forward, I am a man who..."

Man Rules Origins Map

Where did your rules come from? Who taught you how to be a man?

Why This Matters

Our 'man rules' weren't invented by us — they were passed down, modeled, enforced, and sometimes beaten into us. Understanding where a rule came from doesn't excuse the damage it caused, but it does help us stop treating it as gospel truth. This exercise maps the origin of each rule so you can decide, for the first time as a free adult, whether you actually want to keep it.

"Never ask for help"

1. Who first taught you this rule? (father, coach, peers, media, culture, etc.)

2. Describe a specific memory where this rule was taught or enforced. What happened?

3. How did this rule protect you when you were young? What was it guarding against?

4. How has this rule hurt you as an adult — and how did it fuel your addiction?

5. What would your life look like if you released this rule? What becomes possible?

Rate the grip this rule still has on you today (1 = almost gone, 5 = iron grip):

"Never show weakness"

1. Who first taught you this rule? (father, coach, peers, media, culture, etc.)

2. Describe a specific memory where this rule was taught or enforced. What happened?

3. How did this rule protect you when you were young? What was it guarding against?

4. How has this rule hurt you as an adult — and how did it fuel your addiction?

5. What would your life look like if you released this rule? What becomes possible?

Rate the grip this rule still has on you today (1 = almost gone, 5 = iron grip):

"Don't cry"

1. Who first taught you this rule? (father, coach, peers, media, culture, etc.)

2. Describe a specific memory where this rule was taught or enforced. What happened?

3. How did this rule protect you when you were young? What was it guarding against?

4. How has this rule hurt you as an adult — and how did it fuel your addiction?

5. What would your life look like if you released this rule? What becomes possible?

Rate the grip this rule still has on you today (1 = almost gone, 5 = iron grip):

"Handle it alone"

1. Who first taught you this rule? (father, coach, peers, media, culture, etc.)

2. Describe a specific memory where this rule was taught or enforced. What happened?

3. How did this rule protect you when you were young? What was it guarding against?

4. How has this rule hurt you as an adult — and how did it fuel your addiction?

5. What would your life look like if you released this rule? What becomes possible?

Rate the grip this rule still has on you today (1 = almost gone, 5 = iron grip):

"Always stay in control"

1. Who first taught you this rule? (father, coach, peers, media, culture, etc.)

2. Describe a specific memory where this rule was taught or enforced. What happened?

3. How did this rule protect you when you were young? What was it guarding against?

4. How has this rule hurt you as an adult — and how did it fuel your addiction?

5. What would your life look like if you released this rule? What becomes possible?

Rate the grip this rule still has on you today (1 = almost gone, 5 = iron grip):

"Feelings are weakness"

1. Who first taught you this rule? (father, coach, peers, media, culture, etc.)

2. Describe a specific memory where this rule was taught or enforced. What happened?

3. How did this rule protect you when you were young? What was it guarding against?

4. How has this rule hurt you as an adult — and how did it fuel your addiction?

5. What would your life look like if you released this rule? What becomes possible?

Rate the grip this rule still has on you today (1 = almost gone, 5 = iron grip):

"Real men don't talk about problems"

1. Who first taught you this rule? (father, coach, peers, media, culture, etc.)

2. Describe a specific memory where this rule was taught or enforced. What happened?

3. How did this rule protect you when you were young? What was it guarding against?

4. How has this rule hurt you as an adult — and how did it fuel your addiction?

5. What would your life look like if you released this rule? What becomes possible?

Rate the grip this rule still has on you today (1 = almost gone, 5 = iron grip):

"Never ask for directions / guidance"

1. Who first taught you this rule? (father, coach, peers, media, culture, etc.)

2. Describe a specific memory where this rule was taught or enforced. What happened?

3. How did this rule protect you when you were young? What was it guarding against?

4. How has this rule hurt you as an adult — and how did it fuel your addiction?

5. What would your life look like if you released this rule? What becomes possible?

Rate the grip this rule still has on you today (1 = almost gone, 5 = iron grip):

Origins Map Summary

1 Which man rule had the earliest origin in your life? Who planted it and how old were you?

Your summary reflection...

2 Which rule do you now understand was a protection — and not the truth about who you are?

Your summary reflection...

3 Which rule did the most damage to your relationships and contributed most to your using?

Your summary reflection...

4 Write a statement to your younger self about one of these rules — what would you tell him now?

Your summary reflection...

Character Inventory

An honest look at the traits that fed your addiction — and their antidotes

What Is a Character Inventory?

A character inventory is not about beating yourself up. It is about seeing clearly. The traits below are not moral failings that make you a bad person — they are patterns that developed for a reason, and patterns that can change. For each one, you'll look honestly at how it showed up, where it came from, the harm it caused, and the new trait you're building in its place.

Dishonesty / Deception → Honesty

PATTERN TO RELEASE

Dishonesty / Deception

TRAIT TO BUILD

Honesty

How did Dishonesty / Deception show up in your life and addiction? Give a specific example.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Who was harmed by this pattern — including yourself?

Be honest — no one grades this...

Where did this pattern come from? How did it serve you at first?

Be honest — no one grades this...

What does Honesty look like in practice for you? Describe one small action you could take this week.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Selfishness / Self-centeredness → Generosity

PATTERN TO RELEASE

Selfishness / Self-centeredness

TRAIT TO BUILD

Generosity

How did Selfishness / Self-centeredness show up in your life and addiction? Give a specific example.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Who was harmed by this pattern — including yourself?

Be honest — no one grades this...

Where did this pattern come from? How did it serve you at first?

Be honest — no one grades this...

What does Generosity look like in practice for you? Describe one small action you could take this week.

Be honest — no one grades this...

False Pride / Arrogance → Humility

PATTERN TO RELEASE

False Pride / Arrogance

TRAIT TO BUILD

Humility

How did False Pride / Arrogance show up in your life and addiction? Give a specific example.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Who was harmed by this pattern — including yourself?

Be honest — no one grades this...

Where did this pattern come from? How did it serve you at first?

Be honest — no one grades this...

What does Humility look like in practice for you? Describe one small action you could take this week.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Control / Manipulation → Surrender

PATTERN TO RELEASE

Control / Manipulation

TRAIT TO BUILD**Surrender**

How did Control / Manipulation show up in your life and addiction? Give a specific example.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Who was harmed by this pattern — including yourself?

Be honest — no one grades this...

Where did this pattern come from? How did it serve you at first?

Be honest — no one grades this...

What does Surrender look like in practice for you? Describe one small action you could take this week.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Isolation / Withdrawal → Connection**PATTERN TO RELEASE**

Isolation / Withdrawal

TRAIT TO BUILD**Connection**

How did Isolation / Withdrawal show up in your life and addiction? Give a specific example.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Who was harmed by this pattern — including yourself?

Be honest — no one grades this...

Where did this pattern come from? How did it serve you at first?

Be honest — no one grades this...

What does Connection look like in practice for you? Describe one small action you could take this week.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Resentment / Anger → Forgiveness

PATTERN TO RELEASE

Resentment / Anger

TRAIT TO BUILD

Forgiveness

How did Resentment / Anger show up in your life and addiction? Give a specific example.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Who was harmed by this pattern — including yourself?

Be honest — no one grades this...

Where did this pattern come from? How did it serve you at first?

Be honest — no one grades this...

What does Forgiveness look like in practice for you? Describe one small action you could take this week.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Fear / Avoidance → Courage

PATTERN TO RELEASE

Fear / Avoidance

TRAIT TO BUILD

Courage

How did Fear / Avoidance show up in your life and addiction? Give a specific example.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Who was harmed by this pattern — including yourself?

Be honest — no one grades this...

Where did this pattern come from? How did it serve you at first?

Be honest — no one grades this...

What does Courage look like in practice for you? Describe one small action you could take this week.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Shame / Self-loathing → Self-compassion

PATTERN TO RELEASE

Shame / Self-loathing

TRAIT TO BUILD

Self-compassion

How did Shame / Self-loathing show up in your life and addiction? Give a specific example.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Who was harmed by this pattern — including yourself?

Be honest — no one grades this...

Where did this pattern come from? How did it serve you at first?

Be honest — no one grades this...

What does Self-compassion look like in practice for you? Describe one small action you could take this week.

Be honest — no one grades this...

Character Inventory Summary

1 Which character trait has caused the most harm in your life and relationships?

Summarize your character work...

2 Which trait are you most motivated to change right now — and why?

Summarize your character work...

3 What is ONE character trait you want to be known for by the end of your first year in recovery?

Summarize your character work...

4 Write a 3-5 sentence honest self-description: not who you were at your worst, but who you are in this moment of willingness.

Summarize your character work...

Bridge Crossing Exercises

Walk from each Man Rule to its Recovery Principle — one crossing at a time

How to Use These Exercises

Each crossing below pairs a Man Rule you likely carry with the Recovery Principle that replaces it. You won't delete the old rule overnight. But with each exercise you complete, you build one more plank on the bridge. Work through these in order, or start with the one that scares you most.

"Never ask for help" → Ask for Help / Receive Help

COST OF THE OLD RULE

Isolation, using alone, overdose risk, dying with secrets.

GAIN IN RECOVERY

Connection, safety, being known, shared burden.

THE BRIDGE TRUTH

Asking for help is not weakness — it is the most honest thing a person in pain can do. Your addiction thrived in your silence. Recovery requires speaking.

1 Describe the last time you needed help but refused to ask. What happened as a result?

Write honestly and specifically...

2 What is the worst thing you imagine would happen if you genuinely asked for help today?

Write honestly and specifically...

3 Who is one safe person in your life you could ask for something small this week? What would you ask for?

Write honestly and specifically...

4 Write what it would sound like to ask for help in your own words — practice writing the actual sentence.

Write honestly and specifically...

☐ This Week's Bridge Step: Ask one person for one thing you actually need.

Write how you'll take this step, and with whom...

"Never show weakness / vulnerability" → Vulnerability

COST OF THE OLD RULE

Loneliness behind a mask. Intimacy without authenticity.

GAIN IN RECOVERY

Real relationships. Being loved as yourself, not as your armor.

THE BRIDGE TRUTH

Brené Brown said it plainly: vulnerability is the birthplace of connection. Every authentic relationship you want — with a partner, your kids, a sponsor, God — requires it.

1 What does "being vulnerable" mean to you? When you hear that word, what comes up?

Write honestly and specifically...

2 Describe a time when you let someone see the real you — even briefly. What happened?

Write honestly and specifically...

3 What are you most afraid people would think of you if they really knew you?

Write honestly and specifically...

4 What would you gain — not lose — if you allowed yourself to be seen?

Write honestly and specifically...

□ This Week's Bridge Step: Share one honest feeling with one person today.

Write how you'll take this step, and with whom...

"Don't cry / suppress emotion" → Emotional Honesty

COST OF THE OLD RULE

Emotional explosion or emotional shutdown. Using to cope.

GAIN IN RECOVERY

Emotional range, resilience, authentic living.

THE BRIDGE TRUTH

You did not drink or use to feel better. You used to feel less. Every substance you consumed was a substitute for an emotion you were not allowed to have. Recovery gives you permission to feel.

1 What emotions do you most commonly suppress or stuff down? Make a list.

Write honestly and specifically...

2 Where in your body do you notice suppressed emotions? (chest, gut, jaw, shoulders?)

Write honestly and specifically...

3 When was the last time you cried — or wanted to? What held you back?

Write honestly and specifically...

4 What would it mean for your recovery if you gave yourself permission to feel everything?

Write honestly and specifically...

□ This Week's Bridge Step: Let yourself feel one emotion fully — without fixing it, suppressing it, or numbing it.

Write how you'll take this step, and with whom...

"Always stay in control" → Surrender

COST OF THE OLD RULE

Exhaustion. Failed attempts. The illusion of power in powerlessness.

GAIN IN RECOVERY

Rest. Real power. The ability to accept what you cannot change.

THE BRIDGE TRUTH

The Step One truth is the hardest for men raised on control: you are powerless. But surrender is not defeat — it is the moment when honest humility opens the door that white-knuckling never could.

1 What does "staying in control" cost you — in relationships, in your health, in your recovery?

Write honestly and specifically...

2 Describe a moment when you tried to control your using and failed. What did that tell you?

Write honestly and specifically...

3 What are you still trying to control in your recovery right now? What would happen if you let go?

Write honestly and specifically...

4 What does surrender mean to YOU — not the textbook definition, but your gut understanding?

Write honestly and specifically...

□ This Week's Bridge Step: Identify one thing you're white-knuckling. Tell your sponsor or counselor.

Write how you'll take this step, and with whom...

"Never admit to struggling or failing" → Honesty

COST OF THE OLD RULE

Living a double life. Shame. Distance from people who could help.

GAIN IN RECOVERY

Freedom. Integrity. Relationships built on truth.

THE BRIDGE TRUTH

"We are only as sick as our secrets." Every hidden struggle, every covered mistake, every lie — these are not just character flaws. They are the foundation on which addiction is built. Honesty tears it down.

1 What is something about your using or your past that you have never told anyone? You don't have to write it — but what would it mean to finally say it aloud to a safe person?

Write honestly and specifically...

2 How has dishonesty (with yourself or others) protected your addiction?

Write honestly and specifically...

3 What would it mean for your recovery to have no more secrets?

Write honestly and specifically...

4 Write one honest statement you've never said out loud. Start with: "The truth is..."

Write honestly and specifically...

□ This Week's Bridge Step: Tell your sponsor, counselor, or group one thing you've been hiding.

Write how you'll take this step, and with whom...

Recovery Principles in Action

Making the principles real — not just words on a wall

Principles vs. Rules

Man Rules are rigid — they don't bend with context, they don't allow for growth, and they don't leave room for humanity. Recovery Principles are different: they are living guides that invite us to apply them fresh in each situation. This worksheet helps you move each principle from the poster on the wall into the decisions of your actual life.

Honesty

DEFINITION

Telling the truth — to yourself and others — even when it is uncomfortable.

1 Where am I being dishonest in my recovery right now?

Apply this principle to your life...

2 What truth would I most need someone else to tell me?

Apply this principle to your life...

3 What does radical honesty look like for me this week?

Apply this principle to your life...

Rate how actively you are practicing Honesty in your recovery right now:

Open-Mindedness

DEFINITION

Willingness to consider ideas, guidance, and feedback that challenge your current thinking.

1 What belief about myself or recovery have I been most resistant to examining?

Apply this principle to your life...

2 Who is someone whose experience I could learn from — if I was willing to listen?

Apply this principle to your life...

3 What would I have to let go of to truly be open-minded right now?

Apply this principle to your life...

Rate how actively you are practicing Open-Mindedness in your recovery right now:

Willingness

DEFINITION

Taking action even when you don't feel like it, don't fully understand it, or are afraid.

1 What are you most unwilling to do in your recovery right now?

Apply this principle to your life...

2 What would willingness cost you? What would it give you?

Apply this principle to your life...

3 Write a prayer or statement of willingness for one thing you've been avoiding.

Apply this principle to your life...

Rate how actively you are practicing Willingness in your recovery right now:

Humility

DEFINITION

Seeing yourself accurately — neither less than nor greater than you are.

1 How has false pride or arrogance contributed to your addiction?

Apply this principle to your life...

2 What does it mean to you to be humble — NOT humiliated?

Apply this principle to your life...

3 In what specific area of your recovery are you most in need of humility right now?

Apply this principle to your life...

Rate how actively you are practicing Humility in your recovery right now:

Surrender

DEFINITION

Releasing the need to control outcomes and accepting what you cannot change.

1 What are you still trying to control in your life or recovery?

Apply this principle to your life...

2 What is one thing that exhausts you because you keep fighting it?

Apply this principle to your life...

3 Write the Serenity Prayer in your own words — what does it actually mean to you personally?

Apply this principle to your life...

Rate how actively you are practicing Surrender in your recovery right now:

Courage

DEFINITION

Taking necessary action despite fear — especially the courage to be honest and vulnerable.

1 What fear is most limiting your recovery right now?

Apply this principle to your life...

2 What would you do in recovery if you knew you would not fail or be judged?

Apply this principle to your life...

3 Describe one courageous action you took in your life that you are proud of.

Apply this principle to your life...

Rate how actively you are practicing Courage in your recovery right now:

Identity Reconstruction

Who are you — when you're not playing by the old rules?

The Identity Crisis of Recovery

One of the least discussed challenges in recovery is identity. For years, your using was central to who you were — how you socialized, how you coped, who you spent time with, what you told yourself about yourself. Early recovery often brings a profound question: 'If I'm not that person anymore... who am I?' This worksheet helps you begin to answer it.

Who I Was: The Man Under the Rules

1 Describe who you were before recovery — your self-image, your role, how you saw yourself as a man.

2 How did the man rules shape that identity? Which rules were most central to who you thought you were?

3 Looking back, what parts of that identity were authentic — actually you — and what parts were armor?

4 What did you lose when you realized the old rules weren't working?

Who I Am Becoming: The Man Under Construction

1 Describe who you are becoming — not who you want to be in 10 years, but who you are right now in this process of change.

2 What values do you want to define the man you are becoming? List at least five.

3 What character traits are you actively working to build in recovery?

4 If your children (or the people who matter most to you) described you in 5 years, what would you want them to say?

My Core Identity Statement

1 Complete this sentence: "Beyond my addiction, beyond the man rules, at my core I am..."

2 What is something you are good at — truly good at — that has nothing to do with using?

3 What do you stand for? What would you refuse to compromise on even when it's hard?

4 Write a 3-5 sentence identity statement: "I am a man who..."

Accountability & Amends Map

Taking honest inventory of harm caused — and the path to making it right

Amends vs. Apology

An apology says 'I'm sorry.' An amend says 'I'm sorry, and here is what I am going to do differently.' The Man Rules taught us to never admit fault — to never be wrong. Amends work is the antidote to that. It is not about self-punishment; it is about cleaning your side of the street so you can walk forward unencumbered.

Amends to Yourself

1 List the ways you have harmed yourself through your addiction and the man rules (health, integrity, dreams abandoned, time lost).

2 What do you owe yourself in recovery? What commitments to your own care are you making?

3 Write an amends statement TO YOURSELF — what would you say to the person you were at your worst?

Amends to Family

1 Who in your family was most harmed by your using and by the emotional walls you built? Describe the specific harm.

2 What is your part in these relationship ruptures — without minimizing or over-blaming yourself?

3 What living amend (changed behavior over time) would mean the most to this person?

Amends to Others

1 Who outside your immediate family have you harmed? List them and the specific harm caused.

2 What amends, if made, would provide the most freedom to YOU — regardless of how they are received?

3 Are there amends you are avoiding? What is the fear or cost that keeps you from making them?

The Living Amend — Character Change

1 An amend is ultimately a change in behavior. What specific behaviors are you committing to change?

2 How does building the new character traits from your inventory serve as a living amend?

3 Write three "I am now a man who..." statements that reflect the living amend you are making.

Building Your Support Shore

No man builds a bridge alone. Who is standing on the other shore waiting for you?

The Recovery Shore

The man rules said: do it alone. Recovery says: you cannot do it alone. Connection is not a luxury in recovery — it is the mechanism. Johann Hari's famous line bears repeating: 'The opposite of addiction is not sobriety. It is connection.' This worksheet helps you map the people standing on the recovery shore, waiting to help you cross.

Your Support Network Map

1 List every person you currently have in your support network (sponsor, counselor, family, friends, group members). Be specific.

2 Who is missing from your support network that you need? (sponsor, therapist, mentor, sober friend, etc.)

3 Which person in your network do you call LEAST, even though they could help? What holds you back?

4 What is one action you will take this week to strengthen or expand your support network?

Learning to Ask

1 Write out the actual words you would use to ask for help from your sponsor, counselor, or a trusted person.

2 What do you need most right now that you have not yet asked for?

3 What has happened in the past when you let people in? What happened when you shut them out?

4 Practice: Write a text or call script for reaching out to someone in your network today.

Giving to Others in Recovery

1 How does helping others in recovery strengthen your own sobriety?

2 What do you have to offer to others who are earlier in the process? (Experience, hope, specific skills?)

3 Who in your recovery community could use your support right now? What is one thing you could do?

Who Am I Becoming?

Your recovery vision — the man waiting for you on the other shore

The Man Across the Bridge

You have been doing the hard work of looking back — mapping the man rules, the origins, the harm caused. Now it is time to look forward. On the other shore of this bridge is a version of you that most people in your life have never met. He is honest. He asks for help. He cries when he needs to. He is present for his kids. He sleeps without substances. He has learned to be a human being, not just a function. This worksheet is about him.

One Year from Now

1 If your recovery is going well one year from today, what does your life look like? Describe it in detail.

Dream honestly and specifically...

2 What relationships have been repaired or rebuilt?

Dream honestly and specifically...

3 What new character traits are visible to the people around you?

Dream honestly and specifically...

4 What would your children, partner, or closest family member say about the man you have become?

Dream honestly and specifically...

The Man I Am Committed to Being

1 List 5 values that will define your life in recovery. For each one, write one specific behavior that expresses it.

Dream honestly and specifically...

2 What is the most important thing you will NEVER go back to — not just the substance, but the way of living?

Dream honestly and specifically...

3 What does being a man of integrity mean to you in practical, daily terms?

Dream honestly and specifically...

Your Recovery Legacy

1 What do you want people to say about you at the end of your life? Start with: "He was a man who..."

Dream honestly and specifically...

2 How does your recovery story — the crossing of this bridge — become something that helps other men?

Dream honestly and specifically...

3 Write a closing statement: Why are you worth the work of crossing this bridge?

Dream honestly and specifically...

Daily Bridge Check-In

A daily tool for tracking your crossing — morning, midday, evening

The Daily Practice

Crossing the bridge is not a one-time event. It happens in the daily choices — the moment you decide to call instead of isolate, to feel instead of numb, to tell the truth instead of hide. This check-in helps you track those moments and see your crossing happening in real time.

Morning Check-In

How are you feeling right now — honestly? (morning check-in)

Man Rule Moments Today:

1 Did I isolate instead of reach out today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

2 Did I suppress an emotion instead of expressing it?

Yes / No — and what happened...

3 Did I refuse help I actually needed?

Yes / No — and what happened...

4 Did I try to control something that wasn't mine to control?

Yes / No — and what happened...

Recovery Principle Moments Today:

1 Did I practice honesty today — even in one small moment?

Yes / No — and what happened...

2 Did I ask for or receive help today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

3 Did I name or express an emotion today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

4 Did I connect with another person in recovery today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

What is the most important thing you will do differently in the next part of your day?

Midday Check-In

How are you feeling right now — honestly? (midday check-in)

Man Rule Moments Today:

1 Did I isolate instead of reach out today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

2 Did I suppress an emotion instead of expressing it?

Yes / No — and what happened...

3 Did I refuse help I actually needed?

Yes / No — and what happened...

4 Did I try to control something that wasn't mine to control?

Yes / No — and what happened...

Recovery Principle Moments Today:

1 Did I practice honesty today — even in one small moment?

Yes / No — and what happened...

2 Did I ask for or receive help today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

3 Did I name or express an emotion today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

4 Did I connect with another person in recovery today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

What is the most important thing you will do differently in the next part of your day?

Evening Check-In

How are you feeling right now — honestly? (evening check-in)

Man Rule Moments Today:

1 Did I isolate instead of reach out today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

2 Did I suppress an emotion instead of expressing it?

Yes / No — and what happened...

3 Did I refuse help I actually needed?

Yes / No — and what happened...

4 Did I try to control something that wasn't mine to control?

Yes / No — and what happened...

Recovery Principle Moments Today:

1 Did I practice honesty today — even in one small moment?

Yes / No — and what happened...

2 Did I ask for or receive help today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

3 Did I name or express an emotion today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

4 Did I connect with another person in recovery today?

Yes / No — and what happened...

What is the most important thing you will do differently in the next part of your day?
