

Step 8: Make A List of All Persons We Have Harmed and Become Willing To Make Amends to Them All

As we've stormed through the world, convinced that everyone has wronged us, convinced that everyone owes us, and convinced that we are somehow entitled to have intruded on the lives of others, we have managed to leave a great deal of destruction in our wake.

In Step 8, it's time to take inventory of those who we have wronged and begin to understand the magnitude of what we've done.

In this list, we will include all that we have treated unfairly including:

- Children
- Parents
- Extended family
- Friends
- Employers
- Past coworkers
- Pets and animals
- Creditors
- Institutions



Mark's Personal Journey with Step 8

"My experience over the years with Step 8 and Step 9 has brought tremendous freedom and power from the guilt and shame I have carried that was caused by my own inconsiderate, selfish behaviors. Through attempting to make amends, I have learned just how forgiving people can be. Institutions and people I owe money to just want to be paid back. People I've treated terribly just want me to be responsible. It is the action of this step that leads to a new sense of power and direction."

The Role of Step 8 in the Recovery Process

Until we have made amends with those whom we have harmed, we will continue to live a fragmented life. This fragmentation keeps us feeling shameful, guilty, and isolated; which is exactly what the addict inside of us desires. Like any abusive relationship, if the addict part of our self can keep us feeling isolated and powerless, it has won.

Assessing the Wreckage

Step 8 is the beginning of a process of healing the damage I have caused to my fellow human beings while I selfishly lived my life based on self will. It requires taking a look at all the family, friends, creditors, employers, and all others that I have harmed through my actions. When I've finished this list, making sure to leave no one out, I begin to make the phone calls to set appointments to clear up this wreckage from my past.

12 Steps in 12 Months:

A Practical Guide to Implementing the Principals of the 12 Step Program into Your Life
Brought to you by the Mark Houston Recovery Center