

Apprentice Group Meeting Guide – Preparing to Make Amends (Step 8)

This week has some difficult homework. Decide what will work best for your group:

1. Do the homework before your discussion. Talk through the guide, then share what you wrote.
2. Talk through the guide and do the homework after your meeting. You can share next week.

“Are we all ready?” - *If you haven't yet read through this guide, take a look now.*

“How are we all doing?”

1. *High, Low & Buffalo*
2. *This has been a difficult and emotional series. How is everyone holding up?*

“Shall we dive in?” – *Read 2 Cor. 3:17-18 out loud. Take a few seconds, then read it again.*

“Let's take a moment.” (Silence) – *Take a few minutes to “tune” your heart towards Jesus.*

“Can someone read this next part out loud?”

We cannot ask for forgiveness if we are not willing to forgive those who hurt us.¹ A key part of step 8 is forgiving others and asking for forgiveness. Remember, there is a difference between forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration.

Forgiveness is something you do within your heart.

- You acknowledge the hurt to God and surrender your ‘right’ to hang on to it.
- You forgive each time the hurt comes to mind.

Reconciliation happens when we address and resolve the hurt with the other person, but the relationship is not ‘back to normal.’

- This needs to be done with wisdom, discernment, and in health.
- Today or this week may not be the best time to initiate this conversation.

Restoration is when trust in the relationship has been restored.

- This cannot happen without transformation. There must be a change in the behaviour that caused the original hurt before you can have restoration.
- In other words, *forgiveness* and *reconciliation* might not result in *restoration*.
- You might not become friends with those who bullied you, or return to an abusive spouse, or entrust money to those who stole from you in the past.

Do we all see the difference between forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration?

¹ See Matthew 18:21-35. Jesus says we will not be forgiven if we do not “forgive our brother or sister from our heart.”

“Who would like to go first?” - *Share one at a time – Set a timer if you’d like.*

1. Last week we discerned patterns in our pain and sin (our ‘defects of character’) and asked Jesus to transform us. Consider this past week. When did you notice Jesus working in you?
2. Consider your story. When have you experienced forgiveness for something specific? What was it like to be forgiven?
3. When have you experienced reconciliation or restoration? How did it happen?
4. How difficult is it for you to forgive? For you to ask forgiveness?
5. Jesus calls us to forgive every time we remember our hurt.² Reflect on the list of people you wrote in your resentment inventory. Are you willing to forgive them? Can you acknowledge the hurt that they caused *and* surrender your ‘right’ to hang on to it?
 - *If so, pray this prayer for each person:*
 - i. “Jesus, I forgive _____ for _____. Please forgive them in the same way that you have forgiven me.”
 - ii. *For example:*
 1. “Jesus, I forgive **my teacher** for **making fun of me.** Please forgive them in the same way that you have forgiven me.
 - *If not, pray this prayer:*
 - i. “Jesus, show me how I have been forgiven by you and others. Teach me to forgive _____ the same way you forgave me.”
6. If you have done the homework in advance, share with your group. Share at least the 3 names you wrote. If you’d like to share more, you can. Remember, we are *not* making amends this week.

“Thanks for sharing _____. Can I pray for you.” (Prayer)

“Alright, who’s next?” (Everyone Takes a Turn Sharing and Being Prayed For)

“Thanks everyone! Same time next week?” (Confirm Next Meeting & Wrap it Up)

² Again, Matthew 18:21 – 35. Jesus tells Peter to forgive as often as “seventy times seven.”

Step 8 Homework – Preparing to Make Amends

*Making amends is not a one-time decision but an ongoing process. Answer these questions for three different people / situations. Especially consider those you resent. However, this is **not** for processing ‘scars’ (hurt that has healed), ‘scabs’ (hurt that is healing), or someone who has abused you.*

Take a moment to pray: *Holy Spirit, where should I start?*

Person #1 - Who did you hurt? _____

What did you do? (Be specific)

What defect(s) of character do you notice in your actions?

Are you willing to make amends?

- ☐ Yes, I’m willing
- ☐ Not entirely, but I’m willing to be willing. *Jesus, help my unwillingness!*
- ☐ No, I’m not willing

What is your motivation for wanting to make amends with this person?

Healthy Motivation	Unhealthy Motivation
☐ To ‘clean my side of the street,’ expecting nothing in return	☐ To get something in return
☐ To live at peace with everyone, as far as it depends on me	☐ To hear them say something kind, nice, or reassuring to me
☐ To acknowledge the wrong I’ve done and ask for forgiveness	☐ To hear them admit all the things they did wrong too
☐ To obey Jesus’ command to ‘be reconciled’ ³	☐ To make everything go back to normal ⁴
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____

³ Matthew 5:23-24

⁴ This may happen, but it can’t be our motivation. We are only responsible for our actions, not the other person’s response.

Person #2 - Who did you hurt? _____

What did you do? (Be specific)

What defect(s) of character do you notice in your actions?

Are you willing to make amends?

- ☐ Yes, I'm willing
- ☐ Not entirely, but I'm willing to be willing. *Jesus, help my unwillingness!*
- ☐ No, I'm not willing

What is your motivation for wanting to make amends with this person?

Healthy Motivation	Unhealthy Motivation
☐ To 'clean my side of the street,' expecting nothing in return	☐ To get something in return
☐ To live at peace with everyone, as far as it depends on me	☐ To hear them say something kind, nice, or reassuring to me
☐ To acknowledge the wrong I've done and ask for forgiveness	☐ To hear them admit all the things they did wrong too
☐ To obey Jesus' command to 'be reconciled' ⁵	☐ To make everything go back to normal ⁶
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____

⁵ Matthew 5:23-24

⁶ This may happen, but it can't be our motivation. We are only responsible for our actions, not the other person's response.

Person #3 - Who did you hurt? _____

What did you do? (Be specific)

What defect(s) of character do you notice in your actions?

Are you willing to make amends?

- ☐ Yes, I'm willing
- ☐ Not entirely, but I'm willing to be willing. *Jesus, help my unwillingness!*
- ☐ No, I'm not willing

What is your motivation for wanting to make amends with this person?

Healthy Motivation	Unhealthy Motivation
☐ To 'clean my side of the street,' expecting nothing in return	☐ To get something in return
☐ To live at peace with everyone, as far as it depends on me	☐ To hear them say something kind, nice, or reassuring to me
☐ To acknowledge the wrong I've done and ask for forgiveness	☐ To hear them admit all the things they did wrong too
☐ To obey Jesus' command to 'be reconciled' ⁷	☐ To make everything go back to normal ⁸
☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____

⁷ Matthew 5:23-24

⁸ This may happen, but it can't be our motivation. We are only responsible for our actions, not the other person's response.