



REPAIR

Repair Practice Guide

Returning to Connection After Relational Hurt

A Deeper by Design Practice Guide from
Renovi Relational Therapy

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Repair is how trust learns that a hard moment does not have to be the final moment.

A guided practice for staying present, getting curious, owning impact, and choosing a more connected way forward.

Purpose

Conflict and relational injury are part of every meaningful relationship. Repair is the practice of returning to a moment of disconnection with enough honesty, humility, and care to understand what happened and choose what comes next.

Repair is not pretending the hurt did not happen. It is not rushing to forgiveness, demanding access, or forcing reconciliation. Repair begins with truth, accountability, and safety.

The REPAIR Pathway brings together the earlier movements of the Renovi Flow. We Reveal what is happening beneath the reaction. We Remember the history and protection that came online. We Reframe the meaning of the moment. Then we practice repair - not as a perfect script, but as a way of turning back toward truth and connection.

The posture of repair

Stay present. Stay curious. Stay humble.

- ☐ Slow down before solving.
- ☐ Own your part without owning everything.
- ☐ Choose connection moves over protective moves.
- ☐ Listen for impact, not only intent.
- ☐ Make room for another person's reality.
- ☐ Respect limits, timing, and safety.

Before you begin

Choose one specific moment. Start small enough that you can stay grounded. If the relationship involves intimidation, coercion, violence, retaliation, or ongoing abuse, do not use this guide to initiate a vulnerable conversation. Prioritize safety and qualified support.

Repair is a practice, not a performance. The goal is not to say every word perfectly. The goal is to become more honest, accountable, and available for what healing requires.

The RRT REPAIR Pathway

Move through the pathway in order. Each movement prepares you for the next. You may pause, return to an earlier step, or complete the reflection privately before deciding whether a conversation is wise.



RECALL THE MOMENT

Name what happened without exaggeration, motive-reading, or blame.



EXPLORE YOUR INNER WORLD

Notice emotion, body, meaning, history, and protection.



PAY ATTENTION TO IMPACT

Listen for how the moment landed, including what you did not intend.



APOLOGIZE CLEARLY

Name your action, own its impact, and express genuine remorse.



IMAGINE A BETTER WAY

Picture the connection move that could replace the old protection.



RENEW YOUR INTENTION

Choose a specific practice and return consistently over time.

Repair becomes possible when we can tell the truth about the moment, understand what happened inside us, care about impact, own what is ours, and practice a different way.

Choose your moment

What interaction, rupture, or missed moment do I want to revisit?

☐ Partner or spouse

☐ Parent or family member

☐ Coworker or team member

☐ My own relationship with myself

☐ Friend

☐ Child or teen

☐ Church or community relationship

☐ Other: _____

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RECALL THE MOMENT

Name the moment simply. Begin with what could be seen or heard.

Repair starts with a shared point of reference. Describe one moment rather than the whole relationship. Separate observation from interpretation so there is room for curiosity.

What happened?

Describe what a camera or microphone could have recorded.

What did I say, do, or fail to do?

What happened next?

Facts or story?

☐ Specific time or interaction

☐ Words like always or never

☐ Character label

☐ Observable words or actions

☐ Assumption about motive

☐ Prediction about the future

Try: 'When _____ happened, I noticed that I _____.'

My grounded description of the moment:

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EXPLORE YOUR INNER WORLD

Get curious about what happened beneath your reaction.

Your reaction may have been trying to protect something important. Curiosity helps you understand the reaction without excusing behavior that caused harm.

What did I notice?

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| ☐ Hurt | ☐ Anger | ☐ Fear |
| ☐ Shame | ☐ Sadness | ☐ Loneliness |
| ☐ Tight chest | ☐ Heat or flushing | ☐ Numbness |
| ☐ Racing thoughts | ☐ Urge to defend | ☐ Urge to withdraw |

What story did I begin telling myself?

What older experience, fear, or expectation did this moment resemble?

What was I trying to protect - my worth, voice, safety, belonging, control, or something else?

Protective move -> connection move

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|---|---|
| ☐ Defend -> become curious | ☐ Attack -> name the softer truth |
| ☐ Withdraw -> ask for a pause and return | ☐ Fix -> listen before solving |
| ☐ Control -> make a clear request | ☐ Appease -> speak honestly and kindly |

What I most needed, feared, or wanted in that moment was:

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PAY ATTENTION TO IMPACT

Make room for how the moment landed, not only what you meant.

Intent matters, but it does not erase impact. Listening for impact is not agreeing with every interpretation. It is taking another person's experience seriously enough to understand it.

A grounding reminder: I can care about the impact without collapsing into shame or rushing to defend my intent.

If you are preparing privately

How might my words, tone, silence, timing, or behavior have affected the other person?

What might they have needed from me in that moment?

What part of their experience am I tempted to argue with or minimize?

If you are listening in conversation

☐ I can stay present without interrupting.

☐ I can reflect what I heard before explaining.

☐ I can ask what mattered most.

☐ I can tolerate discomfort without making them reassure me.

Try: 'I want to understand how that landed for you. What felt most painful or disconnecting?'

What I hear the impact was:

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APOLOGIZE CLEARLY

Offer ownership without excuses, pressure, or a hidden demand.

A clear apology names the action, acknowledges impact, expresses remorse, and makes room for repair. It does not use 'if,' blame the other person's sensitivity, or require immediate forgiveness.

Build the apology

1. 'I am sorry that I _____. ' 2. 'I can see that it _____. ' 3. 'That was not how I want to show up.' 4. 'What would help now?'

Name what you did - plainly and specifically:

Acknowledge the impact you understand:

Express remorse without explaining it away:

Ask what repair might require, without demanding an answer:

Check the apology

☐ Specific

☐ No 'but'

☐ No blame

☐ No demand for forgiveness

☐ Impact is acknowledged

☐ Change is named

My apology in my own words:

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IMAGINE A BETTER WAY

Practice the response you want available next time.

Repair is more than looking backward. It asks us to imagine what a more grounded, honest, and connected response could look like when a similar moment returns.

Rehearse the moment

If I could slow the moment down, what cue would tell me I am moving into protection?

What could I say or do instead?

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| ☐ Pause and breathe | ☐ Name the softer feeling |
| ☐ Ask a curious question | ☐ Reflect before responding |
| ☐ Request a time-out with a return time | ☐ Make a clear request |
| ☐ Set a respectful boundary | ☐ Ask for support |

Connection moves are not passive. They can be warm, direct, boundaried, and honest.

A better-way script

"When I notice _____, my protective move is usually _____. I want to practice _____ instead. If I get overwhelmed, I will _____ and return by _____."

Write the version that sounds like you:

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RENEW YOUR INTENTION

Turn insight into a small, observable practice.

Trust is rarely rebuilt by one intense conversation. It grows through repeated experiences of honesty, steadiness, follow-through, and respect for the other person's pace.

The pattern I want to interrupt is:

The connection move I want to strengthen is:

One specific action I will practice this week:

How the other person will be able to notice the change:

Support for follow-through

☐ Calendar reminder

☐ Prayer or daily examen

☐ Journal check-in

☐ Trusted friend or mentor

☐ Counseling or coaching

☐ Accountability conversation

☐ Repair check-in date

☐ Boundary or safety plan

Try: 'I do not expect one apology to repair everything. I want my next choices to show that I mean this.'

My renewed intention:

Repair Beyond Couple Relationships

Repair belongs anywhere people share trust, responsibility, or belonging. The same pathway works with friends, family members, coworkers, ministry teams, neighbors, and within your relationship with yourself.

FRIENDSHIP

You canceled repeatedly and the friendship began to feel one-sided.

Own the pattern, listen for impact, and offer a realistic way to reconnect.

WORK OR TEAM

Your feedback was accurate but delivered in a way that embarrassed someone.

Acknowledge the public impact, apologize privately, and change how feedback is offered.

PARENTING

You reacted sharply when your child was overwhelmed.

Regulate, name your tone, affirm that the child did not cause your reaction, and reconnect.

CHURCH OR COMMUNITY

A decision left someone feeling unseen or excluded.

Listen without rushing to defend the process; clarify what accountability and inclusion require.

Plan a repair conversation

☐ Is this the right time?

☐ Am I grounded enough?

☐ Can I listen without arguing?

☐ Is the setting private and safe?

☐ Do I need support present?

☐ Can I respect a no or not yet?

My opening sentence:

What I hope to offer - without controlling the outcome:

Repair, Reconciliation, and Safety

Repair and reconciliation are related, but they are not the same. Repair is the work of truth, ownership, amends, and changed behavior. Reconciliation is the rebuilding of mutual relationship. It requires willingness, safety, and trustworthy participation from more than one person.

You can take responsibility for your part without returning to an unsafe relationship. Forgiveness does not require immediate trust, restored access, silence about harm, or the removal of wise boundaries.

Pause and seek qualified support when there is

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| ☐ Threat or physical violence | ☐ Coercive control or intimidation |
| ☐ Sexual pressure or violation | ☐ Stalking or monitoring |
| ☐ Retaliation for honesty | ☐ Ongoing deception or exploitation |
| ☐ Fear about setting a boundary | ☐ Concern for a child or vulnerable person |

If there is immediate danger, contact local emergency services or a trusted local resource. A licensed clinician, domestic violence advocate, pastor trained in abuse dynamics, attorney, or other qualified professional can help you think clearly about safety and next steps.

A faith-informed reflection

The Christian story holds grace and truth together. Confession names what is real. Repentance turns toward a different way. Forgiveness releases vengeance to God, while wisdom continues to pay attention to fruit, boundaries, and safety. Reconciliation is a gift, not a demand; where it becomes possible, it grows through truth, justice, mercy, and trustworthy change.

What truth is God inviting me to face with humility?

What faithful next step honors both love and wisdom?

A brief prayer

God, give me courage to return to what is unfinished, humility to own what is mine, compassion to listen for impact, and wisdom to know what repair requires. Help my intentions become trustworthy actions, and guide me toward truth, safety, and peace.

Repair does not erase the rupture. It creates a new experience of what can happen after it.