

## Sowing and Reaping

**Step 8 - We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**

While in recovery we learn to accept responsibility for our actions, even when we are powerless over our addictions. We come to realize that all our actions yield consequences. Some of us may have fooled ourselves into thinking we could escape the consequences of the bad choices we have made. But with time, it has become clear that God has made accountability a necessary element of healthy living.

***"You will always reap what you sow! Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful desires will harvest the consequences of decay and death. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit" (Gal. 6:7-8).***

The law of sowing and reaping can also work for us. God spoke through the prophet Hosea: ***"Plant the good seeds of righteousness and you will harvest a crop of my love. Plow up the hard ground of your hearts, for now is the time to seek the Lord, that He may come and shower righteousness upon you" (Hosea 10:12).***

This law of sowing and reaping is a natural law and applies to all areas of life. It would certainly be a surprise if you planted corn and pumpkins came up! Every one of our actions produces results. If we gossip about our friends, we will lose their friendship. If we steal, we will face prosecution. If we overeat, we face obesity and ill health. If we work irresponsibly, we will probably lose our job. If we plant to please our own desires, we will reap a crop of sorrow and evil. If we plant to please God, we'll reap joy and everlasting life.

Even after we have been forgiven, we must deal with the consequences of our actions. It may take time to finish harvesting the negative consequences from our past, but we don't have to let this discourage us. Making our list of those we have harmed and being willing to make amends to them all is a step toward planting good seeds. Perhaps these good seeds will be harvested in restored relationships, an increased sense of self-worth, removal of guilt and shame and fear, a new level of trust and intimacy or a healing of emotions.

The law of sowing and reaping is universal and cannot be changed. As we become willing to make amends to everyone we have harmed, we *will*, in time, see these seeds produce a good crop.

### Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. In what areas have I accepted responsibility for my actions? In what areas have I not accepted responsibility?
2. How do I feel about having to be accountable for everything I have done?
3. What positive consequences have I seen from my positive actions and behaviours?
4. Knowing that my actions will always produce consequences, what can I do to ensure that I make good decisions?
5. What kind of seeds am I presently planting?

Adapted from *The Life Recovery Bible* p. 1417