

Relationship Repair vs Repetition

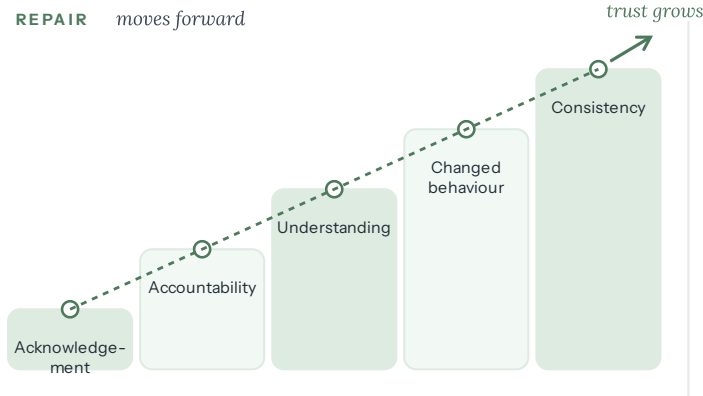
Is the relationship changing?

Every close relationship has ruptures, and what matters most is how they're repaired. But an apology and a warm reunion can feel like repair even when nothing changes. This form helps you tell **genuine repair** apart from **repeated rupture followed by temporary reassurance**.

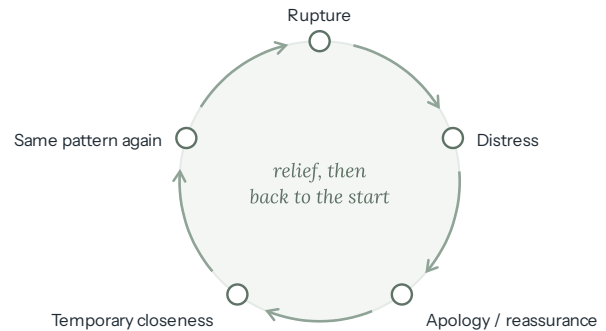
01 Two different patterns

one moves forward, one goes in circles

REPAIR moves forward



REPETITION goes round and round



02 Which looks more familiar?

tick what fits your experience

Repair · the relationship is changing

- ☐ **Acknowledgement** "I see what happened, and how it affected you."
- ☐ **Accountability** Owning their part, without blame or excuses.
- ☐ **Understanding** Curiosity about the impact, not just the incident.
- ☐ **Changed behaviour** Something is actually done differently.
- ☐ **Consistency** The change holds over time, not just for a week.

Repetition · the relationship is cycling

- ☐ **Rupture** Hurt, conflict or a broken promise.
- ☐ **Distress** Upset, anxiety, withdrawal, fear.
- ☐ **Apology / reassurance** "I'm sorry, it won't happen again."
- ☐ **Temporary closeness** Relief, warmth, hope.
- ☐ **Same pattern again** Nothing has changed underneath.

03 Looking at my relationship

bring this to your next session

After the last rupture, what actually happened next?

What happens in me during the "closeness" phase? (relief, hope, doubt...)

Has anything changed in how they behave?

- ☐ Yes, and it's lasting
 ☐ For a while
 ☐ Not really
 ☐ I'm not sure

What would genuine change look like to me, specifically?

04 Tracking the pattern over time

patterns show more clearly than single moments

WHEN	WHAT HAPPENED	WHAT WAS SAID OR PROMISED	DID IT CHANGE?
			☐ yes ☐ partly ☐ no
			☐ yes ☐ partly ☐ no
			☐ yes ☐ partly ☐ no
			☐ yes ☐ partly ☐ no

Worth remembering

Repair takes **both people**, and it takes time; one person can't repair a relationship alone. Change is shown in behaviour, over weeks and months, more than in words. Noticing repetition isn't blame: it's information.

SOURCES

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 Tronick, E. Z. (1989). Emotions and emotional communication in infants. *American Psychologist*, 44(2), 112-119.