



WORKBOOK 1

THE JOURNEY

AWARENESS EXPERIENCE

WELCOME

Why do I do what I do? How can I break unhealthy patterns in my life? Why is there a gap between what I believe about God and what I experience day to day?

These are not just personal questions—they are deeply human ones, striking at the very heart of the struggle we face in becoming wholehearted followers of Christ. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Romans, gives God's people this powerful exhortation:

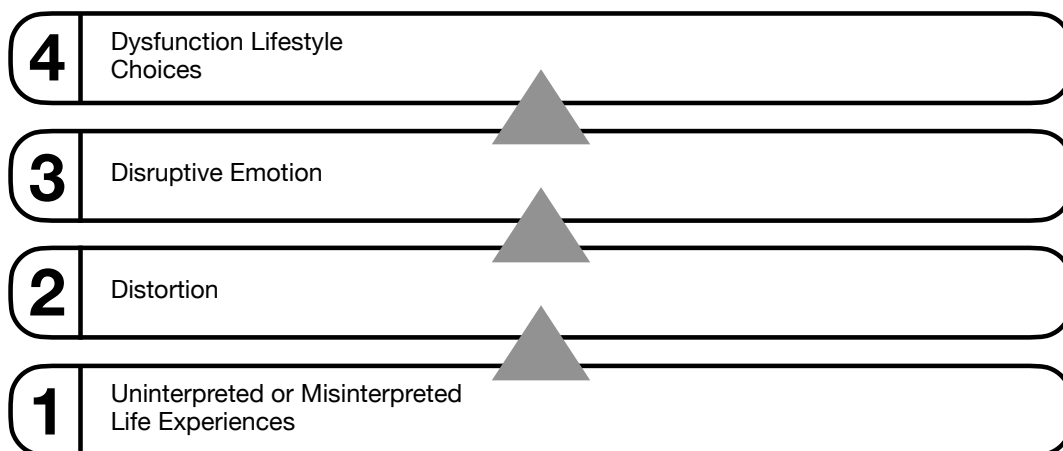
"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."
(Romans 12:2)

This verse reveals something vital: the pathway to freedom in Christ involves transformation, and that transformation involves our whole being.

The Greek word used here for "mind" is ***nous*** (νοῦς). It refers not just to our thoughts, but to our **entire way of perceiving, interpreting, judging, and deciding**. God's desire is for comprehensive renewal in each of these areas—so that we don't just believe the truth, but fully experience it and live it out.

No one is born with a fully formed mind. Our thinking and perceptions are shaped over time, primarily through emotionally rich experiences—especially in our earliest years. The way we interpret and respond to those experiences profoundly influences how we see ourselves, others, and even God.

When those early experiences go uninterpreted or are misinterpreted, they can lead to distorted beliefs, disruptive emotional patterns, and dysfunctional behaviors. (Framework for Healing diagram below)



Left unchallenged, these distortions can grow into a faulty worldview, reinforced by deeply rooted habits that hinder our growth and freedom. **Therefore, a critical step in our transformation process is to prayerfully explore what has shaped and influenced the formation of our minds.**

“We are not as objective as we'd like to believe we don't see the world as it is we see the world as we are.” —Steven Covey

“God cannot heal the person you pretend to be.” —John Tyson

“God let me know myself, let me know You.” —Augustine

Paul continues to build on the theme of renewal in Philippians 3:13-14. ***“But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” NIV***

Paul was not suggesting that we lock away memories or try to erase them— he mentions his greatest gains and his deepest shame regularly in the New Testament. (Acts 22; Acts 26; Philippians 3; 1 Timothy 1). **He was describing a renewal process that was setting him free from being defined, controlled, or distracted by his past.**

And considering the broader context of Philippians 3—where Paul urges us to place no confidence in the flesh—**this renewal process also includes freedom from being defined, controlled, or distracted by people’s approval or by our own need to perform.**

God's desire is that we would become a people who are truly free—with nothing to prove, nothing to gain beyond what he promises to give, and nothing to lose.

This workbook is entirely focused on comprehensive renewal in Christ. This first step is designed to help us better understand how our story—especially from birth through age 13—has shaped how we perceive and interpret life. **By fully investing in this process, we open ourselves to encountering God in powerful, life-changing ways.** While we can experience transformation on our own, it often becomes more impactful when shared with people we trust. God never intended for us to walk alone—He uses others to encourage, support, and strengthen us. So consider inviting a couple trustworthy friends to share this journey with you. If that's not possible, remember this—no matter your circumstances, God promises to meet us as we turn to Him with our whole heart.

Renewal is not about striving, approval, or performance; it's about allowing God to reshape how we perceive, feel, and live—so that His truth becomes not only what we believe, but also what we consistently experience.

LET'S START

First, let's build out your family of origin

Your family of origin is made up of the key people who shaped your early life. This commonly includes a mother and father, but we also want to include anyone else who played a significant role in your upbringing. Regardless of your family structure, we're most interested in understanding who filled these important roles for you.

We also want to include other individuals who had a meaningful influence on your life during your childhood, which we define as birth through age 13.

Focus on the people you spent the most time with or who had the greatest influence on your life during that season. Aim to identify 2–4 individuals who were most pivotal in shaping your early experiences. Record what you can, and don't worry if you have more information for some than for others.

Who primarily played the role of your mother growing up?

A mother figure can take many forms beyond the traditional role of a biological mom. These are individuals who played a nurturing, guiding, or caregiving role in your life, whether consistently or during specific moments.

Enter Mother's Information:

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Did you have a father figure during your childhood?

A father figure can come from many sources beyond a biological dad. These are individuals who provided guidance, protection, or stability, whether consistently or during specific periods of your life. They may have been a source of support, wisdom, or strength when you needed it.

Enter Father's Information:

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Let's add others that come to mind

While your family of origin typically includes those you grew up with, other influential people may have significantly shaped your experiences and development. These individuals might not fit traditional family roles but still played a vital part in your story.

If needed, use the QR code on page 45 of this workbook to download the individual exercises for collecting content about multiple influential people from your early years.

Person's Information:

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Person's Information:

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Relationship: _____

YOUR MOTHER

What did your mother experience within her family of origin?

Below is a list of common experiences people encounter within their families. Select all the options that apply to what you have learned about your mother's family dynamics. If necessary, add more content in the blank spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Absent parents	Emotional abuse	Performance-based worth
Addictions	Emotionally cold	Physical abuse
Affair	Feeling unloved	Poverty
Alcohol abuse	Fighting/yelling	Religious extremism
Belittling	Food issues	Self-centeredness
Comparisons	Frequent moves	Sexual abuse
Controlling	High stress	Step-parents
Death	Hoarding	Strict parenting
Demanding	Mental illness	Toxic relationships
Demeaning	Neglected	Unkindness
Divorce	Overbearing	Wealth
Drug abuse	Passive parenting	Early responsibility

How did these experiences impact her life and the way she treated those around her?

Tell us about your mother's interactions with others

Based on your experience, describe how she usually related to people around you. Later, we'll look more closely at how she interacted with you.

On each line, circle the word that best describes the person who played the role of mother. If neither word fits well, use the "Better Description" column to write your own answer.

Description	Opposite	Better Description
Caring	Indifferent	
Passive	Dominant	
Controlling	Subordinate	
Self-aware	Unaware	
Emotionally distant	Connected emotionally	
Affectionate	Cold emotionally	
Present	Not available	
Discouraging	Empowering	
Positive	Cynical	
Unreliable	Trustworthy	
Hypocritical	Genuine	
Fair	Biased	
Sincere	Contrive	
Dismissive	Supportive	
Honest	Deceptive	
Selfish	Generous	
Respectful	Inconsiderate	
Neglectful	Attentive	
Open-minded	Unreceptive	
Hopeful	Discouraged	
Discontent	Patient	
Nurturing	Neglectful	
Balanced	Erratic	

Description	Opposite	Better Description
Resentful	Forgiving	
Accountable	Blaming	
Grateful	Unappreciative	
Confrontational	Peaceful	
Cooperative	Defiant	
Secure	Insecure	
Critical	Encouraging	

What distortions did she develop from her experiences as a child?

Below is a list of common distortions that often arise from early life experiences. These are ways people have learned to perceive themselves, others, and the world around them. Take a moment to think about your mother's upbringing and select all the distortions you believe she may have developed based on what you know about her childhood.

As you review the list:

- Focus on patterns or beliefs you associate with her behavior or outlook.
- Select all that seem relevant—there's no need to narrow it down to just one.
- If you're unsure about a specific distortion, trust your instincts. You can revisit this later if needed.
- Your selections will help us better understand the beliefs and perspectives that shaped her.
- If necessary, add more content in the blank spaces below.

Conflict always makes things worse.
I can't make mistakes or show weakness and be valued.
I can't be vulnerable and be safe.
People can't be trusted; they'll inevitably hurt me.
I don't belong anywhere.
I have to be perfect to be valued.
My value is dependent on meeting and exceeding your expectations.
I have to be in control to protect myself.
I'll do whatever it takes to avoid being powerless again.
I'll always be the outsider.
I'm completely alone.

I'm only okay if you're okay with me.
I am powerless to change the things I hate about myself.
I'm inherently worthless.
If anyone truly knew me, they'd reject me.
Everything depends on me.
Men/women cannot be trusted or are not safe.
My success is entirely my responsibility.
My value depends on how I'm perceived.
My worth is determined by my performance.
My value hinges on your approval.
My achievements define who I am.
No matter how hard I try, I'll never meet your expectations.
Nobody cares enough to truly understand me.
I'm unloved and will never be loved.
There's something fundamentally wrong with me.
Sharing my problems just makes them worse.
If I'm not the best, I've failed.
What people think about me defines who I am
Its all on me
If I don't control everything, everything will fall apart
If I feel unsafe, I must be unsafe
If I let my guard down, I'll definitely get hurt

What disruptive emotions did you see at play in her life based on these distortions?

Emotions can reveal the impact of distorted beliefs and unprocessed experiences. Below is a list of common disruptive emotions that may have influenced your mother's behavior and interactions. Reflect on your observations of her life and select the emotions you believe were driven by her distortions.

As you make your selections:

- Consider the emotions that seemed to frequently surface in her actions or responses.
- Choose all that are applicable—there's no limit to how many you can pick.
- Don't overthink individual choices; trust your instincts—you can always change your answers later.
- If necessary, add more content in the blank spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Abandonment	Distance	Insignificance	Sadness
Aggression	Embarrassment	Irritation	Sarcasm
Alienation	Emptiness	Isolation	Shame
Anger	Fear	Jealousy	Skepticism
Anxiety	Fearfulness	Judgment	Submission
Apathy	Fury	Loneliness	Suspicion
Awfulness	Guilt	Loathing	Terror
Avoidance	Hatred	Mad	Threat
Aversion	Hesitation	Neglect	Victimization
Criticism	Hostility	Overwhelmed	Violation
Depression	Humiliation	Powerlessness	Vulnerability
Despair	Hurt	Rage	Withdrawal
Detest	Inadequacy	Rejection	Worthlessness
Devastation	Indifference	Remorse	Worry
Disappointment	Inferiority	Resentment	Frustration
Disgust	Infuriation	Revulsion	
Disrespect	Insecurity	Ridicule	

What dysfunctional behaviors or coping mechanisms did you see from her when she was dealing with difficulties in her life?

Consider the actions or habits you observed as she navigated difficult situations. Select any behaviors that seem relevant. If necessary, adjust wording or add more content in the black spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Betrayal of trust through infidelity	Obsessing over news and politics
Using alcohol to numb or shield from emotions	Leaning on pornography as an escape
Burning bridges in relationships	Projecting inner turmoil onto others
Turning to harsh criticism	Engaging in self-harm as an outlet for emotional pain
Exerting control as a defense mechanism	Emotional spending to soothe pain
Reacting defensively instead of listening	Shutting down emotionally when overwhelmed
Retreating into destructive fantasies	Turning sports into an emotional crutch
Misusing drugs to escape or cope	Avoiding through constant performance
Overindulging in food for comfort	Becoming overly dependent in relationships
Binging on media for distraction	Workaholism as an escape from self
Pushing the body through compulsive exercise	Passive-aggressive communication
Seeking thrill through gambling addiction	Emotional suppression through humor
Relying on hobbies as a way to avoid feelings	Over-apologizing
Chasing the high of risk and reward through gambling	Compulsive people-pleasing
Escaping life's weight through avoidance	Avoidance of confrontation
Constant hypervigilance as a shield	Lying (including self-deception)
Choosing isolation over vulnerability	Over-scheduling to avoid reflection
Ruminating on the past	Chronic procrastination
Internalizing harmful self-talk	Gaming addiction
Pursuing perfection as a shield from flaws	

To what extent was your mother involved in your life?

Now take a moment to reflect on your mother's role and involvement in your life. Was she actively present, offering support and guidance, or was her involvement more distant or minimal?

Circle the option that best describes her level of engagement:

Not Present: She was completely absent, with no involvement in my life
Rarely Present: She was hardly around, with very minimal or sporadic involvement
Occasionally Present: She was present at times but not consistently involved
Moderately Present: She was somewhat involved, with regular but not deep engagement
Frequently Present: She was often involved, playing a significant role in my life
Fully Present: She was deeply involved and consistently engaged in my life

YOUR FATHER

What did your father experience within his family of origin?

Below is a list of common experiences people encounter within their families. Select all the options that apply to what you know or have learned about your father's family dynamics. If necessary, add more content in the blank spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Absent parents	Emotional abuse	Performance-based worth
Addictions	Emotionally cold	Physical abuse
Affair	Feeling unloved	Poverty
Alcohol abuse	Fighting/yelling	Religious extremism
Belittling	Food issues	Self-centeredness
Comparisons	Frequent moves	Sexual abuse
Controlling	High stress	Step-parents
Death	Hoarding	Strict parenting
Demanding	Mental illness	Toxic relationships
Demeaning	Neglected	Unkindness
Divorce	Overbearing	Wealth
Drug abuse	Passive parenting	Early responsibility

How did these experiences impact his life and the way he treated those around him?

Tell us about your father's interactions with others

Based on your experience, describe how he usually related to people around you. Later, we'll look more closely at how he interacted with you.

On each line, circle the word that best describes the person who played the role of father. If neither word fits well, use the "Better Description" column to write your own answer.

Circle your selections:

Description	Opposite	Better Description
Caring	Indifferent	
Passive	Dominant	
Controlling	Subordinate	
Self-aware	Unaware	
Emotionally distant	Connected emotionally	
Affectionate	Cold emotionally	
Present	Not available	
Discouraging	Empowering	
Positive	Cynical	
Unreliable	Trustworthy	
Hypocritical	Genuine	
Fair	Biased	
Sincere	Contrive	
Dismissive	Supportive	
Honest	Deceptive	
Selfish	Generous	
Respectful	Inconsiderate	
Neglectful	Attentive	
Open-minded	Unreceptive	
Hopeful	Discouraged	
Discontent	Patient	
Nurturing	Neglectful	
Balanced	Erratic	

Description	Opposite	Better Description
Resentful	Forgiving	
Accountable	Blaming	
Grateful	Unappreciative	
Confrontational	Peaceful	
Cooperative	Defiant	
Secure	Insecure	
Critical	Encouraging	

What distortions did he develop from his experiences as a child?

Below is a list of common distortions that often arise from early life experiences. These are ways people have learned to perceive themselves, others, and the world around them. Take a moment to think about your father's upbringing and select all the distortions you believe he may have developed based on what you know about his childhood.

As you review the list:

- Focus on patterns or beliefs you associate with his behavior or outlook.
- Select all that seem relevant—there's no need to narrow it down to just one.
- If you're unsure about a specific distortion, trust your instincts. You can revisit this later if needed.
- Your selections will help us better understand the beliefs and perspectives that shaped him.
- If necessary, add more content in the blank spaces below.

Conflict always makes things worse.
I can't make mistakes or show weakness and be valued.
I can't be vulnerable and be safe.
People can't be trusted; they'll inevitably hurt me.
I don't belong anywhere.
I have to be perfect to be valued.
My value is dependent on meeting and exceeding your expectations.
I have to be in control to protect myself.
I'll do whatever it takes to avoid being powerless again.
I'll always be the outsider.
I'm completely alone.

I'm only okay if you're okay with me.
I am powerless to change the things I hate about myself.
I'm inherently worthless.
If anyone truly knew me, they'd reject me.
Everything depends on me.
Men/women cannot be trusted or are not safe.
My success is entirely my responsibility.
My value depends on how I'm perceived.
My worth is determined by my performance.
My value hinges on your approval.
My achievements define who I am.
No matter how hard I try, I'll never meet your expectations.
Nobody cares enough to truly understand me.
I'm unloved and will never be loved.
There's something fundamentally wrong with me.
Sharing my problems just makes them worse.
If I'm not the best, I've failed.
What people think about me defines who I am
Its all on me
If I don't control everything, everything will fall apart
If I feel unsafe, I must be unsafe
If I let my guard down, I'll definitely get hurt

What disruptive emotions did you see at play in his life based on these distortions?

Emotions can reveal the impact of distorted beliefs and unprocessed experiences. Below is a list of common disruptive emotions that may have influenced your father's behavior and interactions. Reflect on your observations of his life and select the emotions you believe were driven by his distortions.

As you make your selections:

- Consider the emotions that seemed to frequently surface in her actions or responses.
- Choose all that feel applicable—there's no limit to how many you can pick.
- Don't overthink individual choices; go with what resonates.
- If necessary add more emotions in the blank spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Abandonment	Distance	Insignificance	Sadness
Aggression	Embarrassment	Irritation	Sarcasm
Alienation	Emptiness	Isolation	Shame
Anger	Fear	Jealousy	Skepticism
Anxiety	Fearfulness	Judgment	Submission
Apathy	Fury	Loneliness	Suspicion
Awfulness	Guilt	Loathing	Terror
Avoidance	Hatred	Mad	Threat
Aversion	Hesitation	Neglect	Victimization
Criticism	Hostility	Overwhelmed	Violation
Depression	Humiliation	Powerlessness	Vulnerability
Despair	Hurt	Rage	Withdrawal
Detest	Inadequacy	Rejection	Worthlessness
Devastation	Indifference	Remorse	Worry
Disappointment	Inferiority	Resentment	Frustration
Disgust	Infuriation	Revulsion	
Disrespect	Insecurity	Ridicule	

What dysfunctional behaviors or coping mechanisms did you see from him when he was dealing with difficulties in his life?

Consider the actions or habits you observed in him as he navigated difficult situations. Select any behaviors or coping strategies that seem relevant. If necessary, adjust wording or add more content in the blank spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Betrayal of trust through infidelity	Obsessing over news and politics
Using alcohol to numb or shield from emotions	Leaning on pornography as an escape
Burning bridges in relationships	Projecting inner turmoil onto others
Turning to harsh criticism	Engaging in self-harm as an outlet for emotional pain
Exerting control as a defense mechanism	Emotional spending to soothe pain
Reacting defensively instead of listening	Shutting down emotionally when overwhelmed
Retreating into destructive fantasies	Turning sports into an emotional crutch
Misusing drugs to escape or cope	Avoiding through constant performance
Overindulging in food for comfort	Becoming overly dependent in relationships
Binging on media for distraction	Workaholism as an escape from self
Pushing the body through compulsive exercise	Passive-aggressive communication
Seeking thrill through gambling addiction	Emotional suppression through humor
Relying on hobbies as a way to avoid feelings	Over-apologizing
Chasing the high of risk and reward through gambling	Compulsive people-pleasing
Escaping life's weight through avoidance	Avoidance of confrontation
Constant hypervigilance as a shield	Lying (including self-deception)
Choosing isolation over vulnerability	Over-scheduling to avoid reflection
Ruminating on the past	Chronic procrastination
Internalizing harmful self-talk	Gaming addiction
Pursuing perfection as a shield from flaws	

To what extent was your father involved in your life?

Take a moment to reflect on your father's role and involvement in your life. Was he actively present, offering support and guidance, or was his involvement more distant or minimal?

Circle the option that best describes his level of engagement:

Not Present: He was completely absent, with no involvement in my life
Rarely Present: He was hardly around, with very minimal or sporadic involvement
Occasionally Present: He was present at times but not consistently involved
Moderately Present: He was somewhat involved, with regular but not deep engagement
Frequently Present: He was often involved, playing a significant role in my life
Fully Present: He was deeply involved and consistently engaged in my life

TURNING THE LENS INWARD

Tell us about your mother and father's interactions with you.

Describe your parents' interactions with you

Based on your own experiences, explain how your mother and father treated you and interacted with you. Focus only on your personal experiences with each of them.

Work through the list twice—once for your mother and once for your father. Mark responses with “**M**” for your mother and “**F**” for your father. If neither word fits well, use the “Better Description” column to write your own answer.

Description	Opposite	Better Description
Caring	Indifferent	
Passive	Dominant	
Controlling	Subordinate	
Self-aware	Unaware	
Emotionally distant	Connected emotionally	
Affectionate	Cold emotionally	
Present	Not available	
Discouraging	Empowering	
Positive	Cynical	
Unreliable	Trustworthy	
Hypocritical	Genuine	
Fair	Biased	
Sincere	Contrive	
Dismissive	Supportive	
Honest	Deceptive	
Selfish	Generous	

Description	Opposite	Better Description
Respectful	Inconsiderate	
Neglectful	Attentive	
Open-minded	Unreceptive	
Hopeful	Discouraged	
Discontent	Patient	
Nurturing	Neglectful	
Balanced	Erratic	
Resentful	Forgiving	
Accountable	Blaming	
Grateful	Unappreciative	
Confrontational	Peaceful	
Cooperative	Defiant	
Secure	Insecure	
Critical	Encouraging	

Which distortions apply to you?

Below is a list of common distortions that arise from early life experiences. Review the list and select any distortions that describe your own beliefs or patterns.

- Choose the ones that fit best with your experiences.
- Pick as many as you think apply—there's no need to hold back.
- Choose what seems to fit best—rewrite as necessary.
- If necessary, add more content in the blank spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Conflict always makes things worse.
I can't make mistakes or show weakness and be valued.
I can't be vulnerable and be safe.
People can't be trusted; they'll inevitably hurt me.
I don't belong anywhere.
I have to be perfect to be valued.
My value is dependent on meeting and exceeding your expectations.
I have to be in control to protect myself.
I'll do whatever it takes to avoid being powerless again.
I'll always be the outsider.
I'm completely alone.
I'm only okay if you're okay with me.
I am powerless to change the things I hate about myself.
I'm inherently worthless.
If anyone truly knew me, they'd reject me.
Everything depends on me.
Men/women cannot be trusted or are not safe.
My success is entirely my responsibility.
My value depends on how I'm perceived.
My worth is determined by my performance.
My value hinges on your approval.
My achievements define who I am.
No matter how hard I try, I'll never meet your expectations.

Nobody cares enough to truly understand me.
I'm unloved and will never be loved.
There's something fundamentally wrong with me.
Sharing my problems just makes them worse.
If I'm not the best, I've failed.
What people think about me defines who I am
Its all on me
If I don't control everything, everything will fall apart
If I feel unsafe, I must be unsafe
If I let my guard down, I'll definitely get hurt

Explore your disruptive emotions

Emotions can reveal the impact of your beliefs and unprocessed experiences. Below is a list of common disruptive emotions that may have shaped your responses and interactions throughout your life.

As you make your selections:

- Reflect on the emotions that frequently surface in your own actions or reactions.
- Choose all that resonate with your experiences.
- Trust your instincts and go with what feels relevant.
- If necessary, add more content in the blank spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Abandonment	Distance	Insignificance	Sadness
Aggression	Embarrassment	Irritation	Sarcasm
Alienation	Emptiness	Isolation	Shame
Anger	Fear	Jealousy	Skepticism
Anxiety	Fearfulness	Judgment	Submission
Apathy	Fury	Loneliness	Suspicion
Awfulness	Guilt	Loathing	Terror
Avoidance	Hatred	Mad	Threat
Aversion	Hesitation	Neglect	Victimization
Criticism	Hostility	Overwhelmed	Violation
Depression	Humiliation	Powerlessness	Vulnerability
Despair	Hurt	Rage	Withdrawal
Detest	Inadequacy	Rejection	Worthlessness
Devastation	Indifference	Remorse	Worry
Disappointment	Inferiority	Resentment	Frustration
Disgust	Infuriation	Revulsion	
Disrespect	Insecurity	Ridicule	

What dysfunctional behaviors are present in my life?

Now it's time to identify the dysfunctional behaviors in your life—the patterns and habits you've developed in response to distortions and disruptive emotions.

As you make your selections:

- Reflect on the emotions that frequently surface in your own actions or reactions.
- Choose all that fit best with your experiences.
- Trust your instincts and go with what seems relevant.
- If necessary, add more content in the blank spaces below.

Circle your selections:

Betrayal of trust through infidelity	Pursuing perfection as a shield from flaws
Using alcohol to numb or shield from emotions	Obsessing over news and politics
Burning bridges in relationships	Leaning on pornography as an escape
Turning to harsh criticism	Projecting inner turmoil onto others
Exerting control as a defense mechanism	Engaging in self-harm as an outlet for emotional pain
Reacting defensively instead of listening	Emotional spending to soothe pain
Retreating into destructive fantasies	Shutting down emotionally when overwhelmed
Misusing drugs to escape or cope	Turning sports into an emotional crutch
Overindulging in food for comfort	Avoiding through constant performance
Binging on media for distraction	Becoming overly dependent in relationships
Pushing the body through compulsive exercise	Workaholism as an escape from self
Seeking thrill through gambling addiction	Passive-aggressive communication
Relying on hobbies as a way to avoid feelings	Emotional suppression through humor
Chasing the high of risk and reward through gambling	Over-apologizing
Escaping life's weight through avoidance	Compulsive people-pleasing
Constant hypervigilance as a shield	Avoidance of confrontation
Choosing isolation over vulnerability	Lying (including self-deception)
Using masturbation as an emotional refuge	Over-scheduling to avoid reflection
Ruminating on the past	Chronic procrastination
Internalizing harmful self-talk	Gaming addiction

Impactful events and messaging

Finally, consider the impactful events and messaging, both positive and negative, that have influenced your life.

Impactful events are experiences or moments that leave a strong, lasting impression—emotionally, mentally, or physically—shaping how we think, feel, or act as we move forward in life.

Messaging is the intentional use of words, tone, and ideas to shape how people understand themselves, others, and the world around them. When influential people use messaging that is negative, controlling, or distorted, it can deeply affect how we see ourselves and our lives—often in harmful ways.

Don't overcomplicate this part of the journey.

Take your time with this section. You don't have to complete it all in one sitting.

- Begin by identifying the childhood memories that stand out—particularly those shaped by the absence of something you needed or by situations where you were expected to handle more than you could manage.
- Keep your reflections simple.
- If you feel stuck, go back and review the sections on each of your parents—particularly the parts about distortions, disruptive emotions, and dysfunctional lifestyle choices. These reflect real experiences and may help trigger memories of your own.

Record your reflections below and on the following pages as needed.

Person(s) Involved	My Age	Event or Messaging	Outcome

Person(s) Involved	My Age	Event or Messaging	Outcome

Person(s) Involved	My Age	Event or Messaging	Outcome

Next Steps

Continue praying, reflecting, and writing down anything that helps you form a clearer picture of the factors that shaped your early life. Use this workbook as a place to collect the insights God gives you in the days and weeks ahead. As new understanding comes, keep evaluating how those early experiences contributed to the distortions you identified on pages 21–22.

You can also use the QR code below to download free copies of any of the individual exercises from this workbook. This is especially helpful if you want to gather insights about multiple influential people from your early years.

When you're ready, download Workbook Two to begin the next phase of your renewal journey.

Need more Resources?

Follow the QR code below or visit www.christlifeusa.org/resources to download copies of the templates in this workbook and other resources.



The Journey Experience and its related resources are spiritual guides, not a counseling program. This resource is designed to create space for you to encounter God and reflect on your past with honesty and hope. While personal in nature, this journey is not a substitute for psychological care from a licensed professional. If you are experiencing significant emotional pain or trauma, we strongly encourage you to seek support from a Christian therapist or counselor to walk with you through the healing process alongside this workbook series. By using these materials, you acknowledge that you are responsible for your own mental and emotional health decisions, and that neither the authors nor ChristLife Ministries is liable for any outcomes that may result.

