



# WORKBOOK 2

## THE JOURNEY

AWARENESS EXPERIENCE

# WELCOME

**After years of struggle, many of us begin to believe a powerful lie...** that real, lasting transformation is out of reach. We look back on our failures and think we just didn't try hard enough or didn't have the discipline to change. Over time, we may even start to believe that real, lasting change just isn't possible in this life.

But as we enter **Step 2** of the awareness process, **we need to ask God to shift our thinking**. Instead of letting past disappointments shape our expectations, we can begin to find hope in God's power and His commitment to transform our lives.

**“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” —Matthew 22:37-40**

God has designed us to center our lives on loving Him and loving others. But what do we do when we feel stuck, sinful, and defeated?

**“Apart from Me, you can do nothing.” —John 15:5:**

This isn't a reminder that we need help—Jesus is teaching us that we can do nothing without Him. Could it be that the failure we feel is normal, considering that true life transformation is impossible through self-effort?

**When God calls us to love Him with all that we are, He's not giving an impossible command—He's promising to supply everything needed to make this type of life a reality**, which includes healing us where we've been wounded, restoring what's been broken, and transforming anything in us that keeps us from loving Him fully.

Our job is not to force change—it's to surrender to the One who changes us. God is both the One who saves and the One who heals... He is fully committed to our transformation.

**Life change begins with trusting God to do what we cannot do for ourselves.**

# Distortions 1

Begin this section by referring back to Workbook 1, pages 21 and 22. Review each of the distortions you identified, locate them on this page, and circle them.

PERFORMANCE-BASED DISTORTIONS	TRUST/SAFETY-BASED DISTORTIONS
<b>Core belief:</b> "I must succeed or excel to be valuable."	<b>Core belief:</b> "People will ultimately harm or reject me."
My worth is determined by my performance.	I can't be vulnerable and be safe.
I have to be perfect to be valued.	People can't be trusted; they'll inevitably hurt me.
My success is entirely my responsibility.	If I feel unsafe, I must <i>be</i> unsafe.
My achievements define who I am.	If I let my guard down, I'll definitely get hurt.
Everything depends on me.	Men/women cannot be trusted or are not safe.
If I'm not the best, I've failed.	Sharing my problems just makes them worse.
APPROVAL-BASED DISTORTIONS	SELF-WORTH-BASED DISTORTIONS
<b>Core belief:</b> "My worth is determined by the acceptance or validation of others."	<b>Core belief:</b> "There's something inherently wrong or unlovable about me."
My value is dependent on meeting and exceeding your expectations.	I'm inherently worthless.
I'm only okay if you're okay with me.	There's something fundamentally wrong with me.
My value hinges on your approval.	I am powerless to change the things I hate about myself.
No matter how hard I try, I'll never meet your expectations.	I don't belong anywhere.
What people think of me defines who I am.	Nobody cares enough to truly understand me.
Conflict always makes things worse.	I'm unloved and will never be loved.
My value depends on how I'm perceived.	I'll always be the outsider.
CONTROL-BASED DISTORTIONS	If anyone truly knew me they would reject me.
<b>Core belief:</b> "I must manage everything to avoid failure or exposure."	I'm completely alone.
I can't make mistakes or show weakness and be valued.	
I have to be in control to protect myself.	
I'll do whatever it takes to avoid being powerless again.	
If I don't control everything, everything will fall apart.	
It's all on me.	

## Distortions 2

Now, from the work you completed on the previous page, choose the three distortions that have most significantly impacted your life. Ideally, select them from different distortion categories. If that's not possible, do your best to choose distortions that are distinct from one another. Write them in the rectangles below.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, designed for writing the first distortion.A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, designed for writing the second distortion.A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, designed for writing the third distortion.

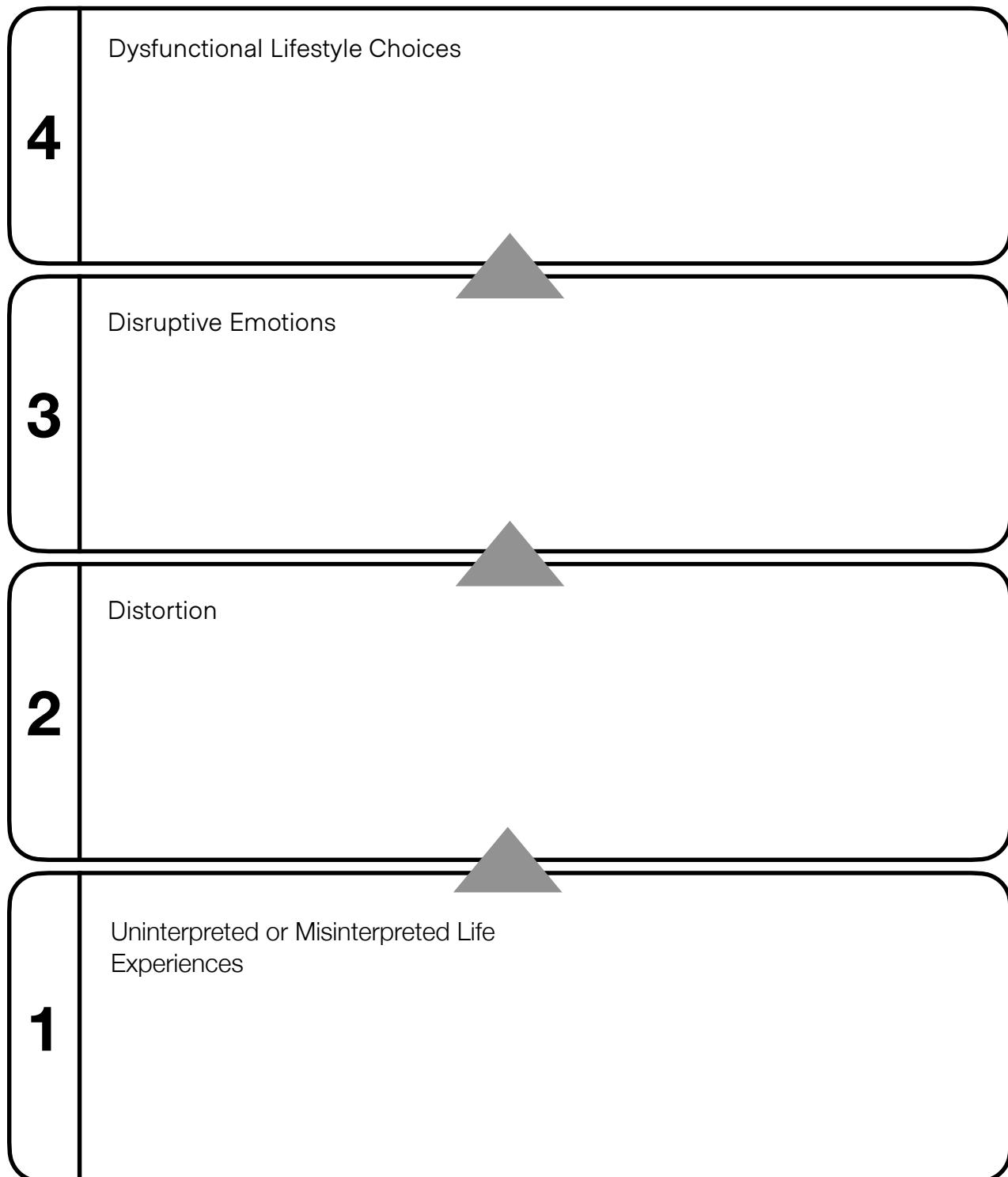
# Framework for Healing Build-out Instructions

**Step 1-** Choose one of the three distortions from the previous page. Write it in RECTANGLE 2 of your build-out template on page 6.

**Step 2-** Reflect on the last time you attended an event that reinforced the distortion you've selected. How did it make you feel? Example: Distortion – "My worth is determined by my performance." Event – "My poor performance leaves me thinking I'm worthless." **Choose six disruptive emotions from the list below—or add your own—and write them in RECTANGLE 3 on the same build-out on page 6.**

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

# Framework for Healing Build-out 1



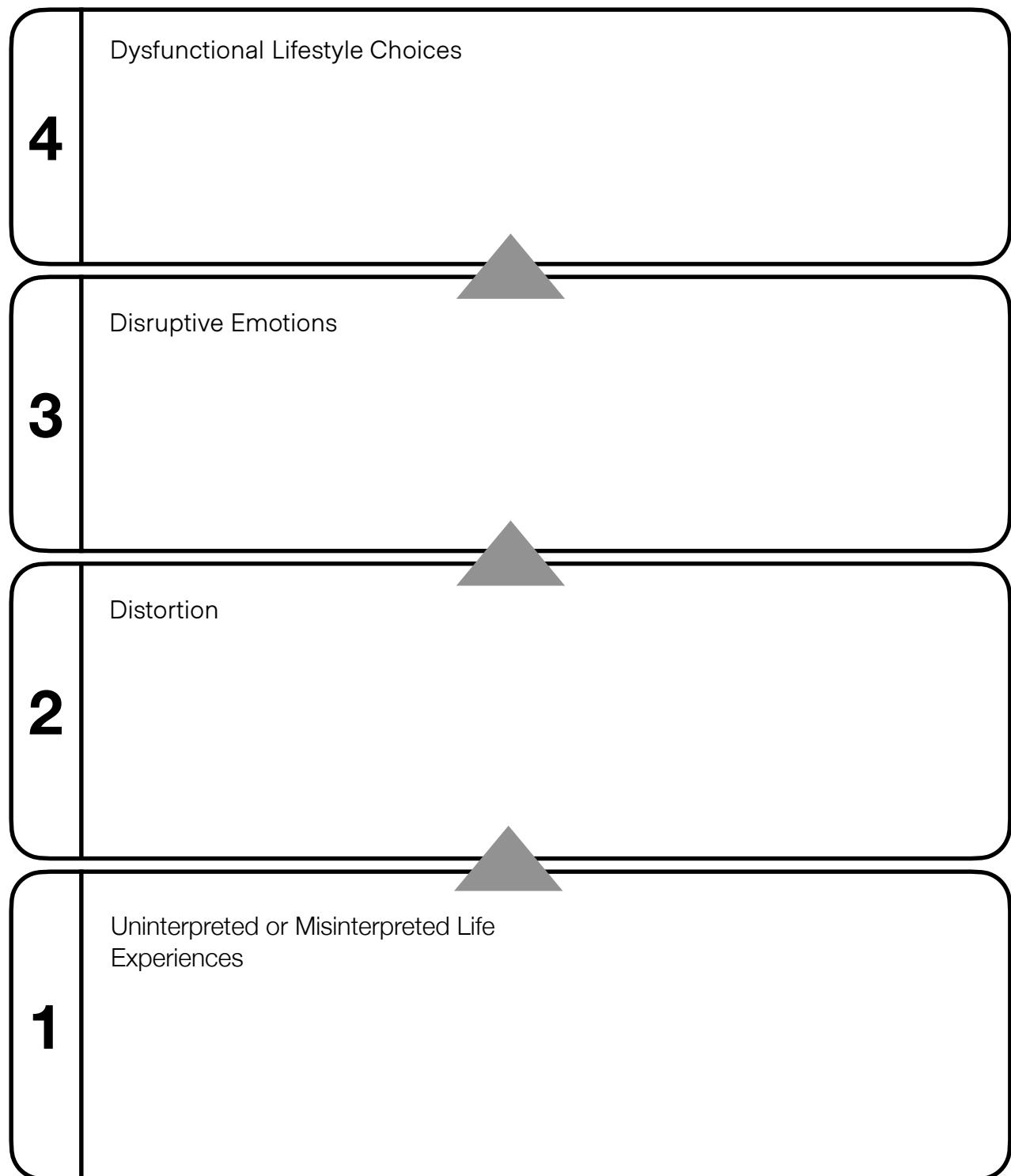
**Step 3-** Now reflect on the last time you were inundated with those emotions. How did you respond or act out? Select six dysfunctional lifestyle choices—these can be ones you create yourself or selected from the list provided. **Write your six choices in Rectangle 4** of your build-out template on **page 6**.

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	Using masturbation as an emotional refuge
Pursuing perfection as a shield from flaws	Gaming addiction

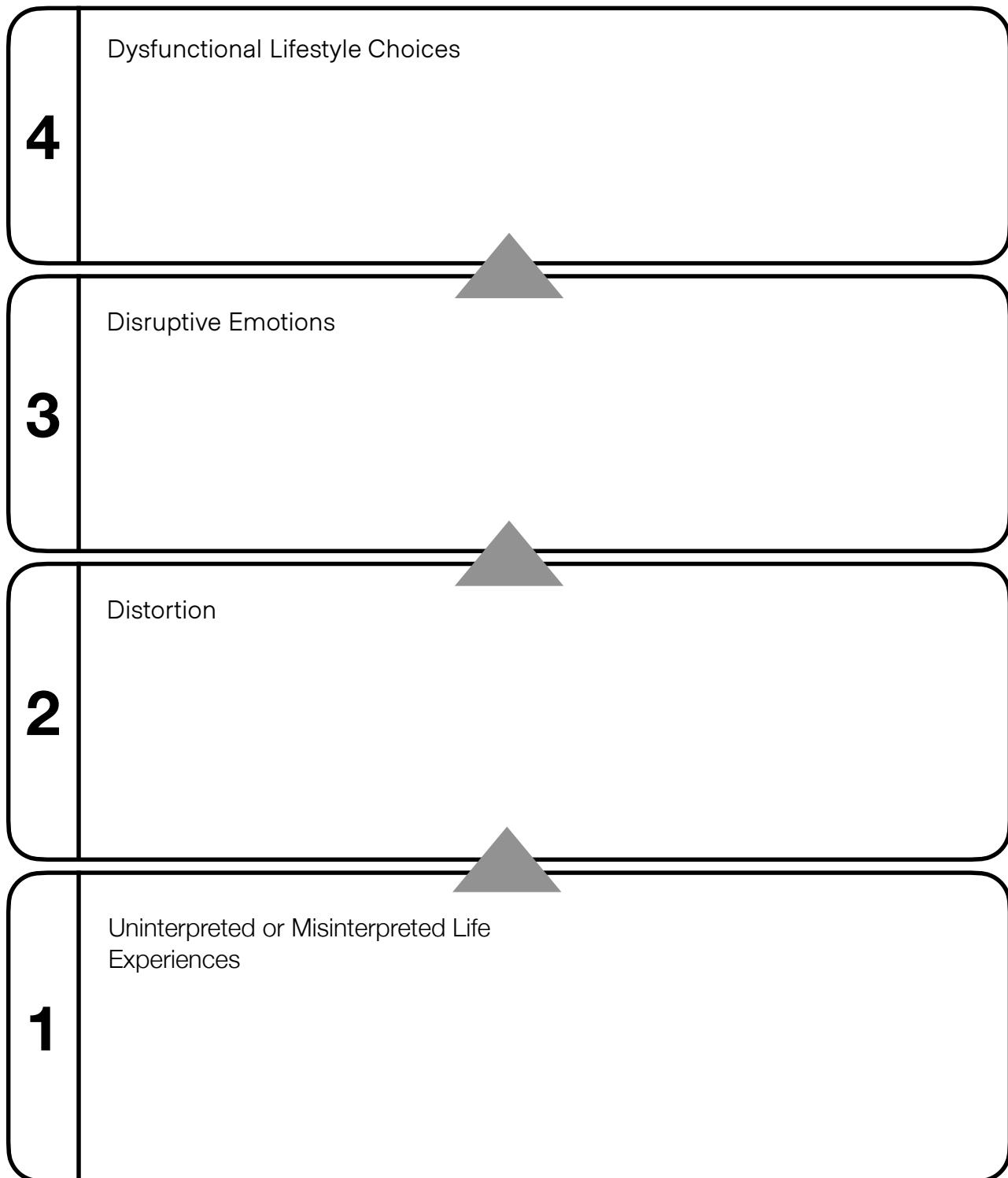
**Step 4-** Where did this all begin? Consider any early life events or messaging that may have contributed to the formation of this distortion. Identify key moments or influences and **document them in RECTANGLE 1** of your build-out on page 6. **If needed, refer back to pages 25-27 in Workbook 1 for additional insight.**

**Step 5-** Now follow the same directions for the other two distortions on page 4, using the build-out 2 and 3 templates.

# Framework for Healing Build-out 2



# Framework for Healing Build-out 3



# PART TWO

## **Some would argue that the best predictor of future success is past behavior... Why?**

When we're faced with something new, we instinctively lean on past experiences to guide us. This reality sheds light on many of our successes and failures.

Do you see the implications of this truth for the Christian life? To the extent that we've relied on self-effort in the past, we will naturally default to self-effort in our attempts to grow as Christians. **However, God has not asked us to try to perform Christ's life and perfection. We have Christ— with all of His perfection— dwelling in us.**

Yet, when we're living with a distorted perspective, discouraged, or pressured, it can feel as though the full responsibility of life rests on our shoulders. In those moments, we often convince ourselves that we must hold everything together and solve every problem. Yes, it is God's will that we learn to persevere but He never intended for us to attempt life independently from Him.

**“For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” —  
Philippians 2:13**

Disruptive emotions—such as fear, anxiety, insecurity, discouragement— are often signals that we're shouldering loads God never meant for us to bear alone.

Romans 8:6 gives us a clear contrast between two very different life experiences:

**The mind governed by the flesh [living independently from God] is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.**

Life and peace naturally grow in the person who allows God to govern them.

**What if the help we've needed from God has been right in front of us all along, but we've been too preoccupied with managing our lives to notice?**

**Hardship doesn't just test us—it reveals us.**

*“When circumstances force us to make an active, practical choice between God and our own self-interest, scripture refers to these occasions as trials. These trials of His are not for His information, but ours; therefore, we ought to make use of the information they provide us.” Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections*

**Step 3** of this renewal journey is about discovering how to move away from distortion, self-reliance, and emotional overload—and move toward a life of surrender, trust, and lasting peace in Christ.

# Casting Care and Receiving Care

**"Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you." — Psalm 55:22**

This verse carries a profound promise, and also a clear exhortation. It suggests that to fully experience the care and provision of Jesus, we must learn to cast our cares upon Him. **Could it be that simple?**

In a biblical context, this idea echoes James 4:2: "**You do not have because you do not ask.**" Our lack of provision may be directly connected to our failure to trust God as our provider. Alternatively, we may not experience relief from our burdens because we refuse to let go of them.

**How, then, do we begin this process of learning to cast our cares on God?**

Hebrews 4:14–16 offers us essential guidance, revealing Jesus as a compassionate and understanding Savior—One who was tempted and tested in every way we are, yet without sin. Because of this, we can come boldly to Him in prayer, bringing every care, every need, and every struggle, and confidently **"approach the throne of grace... so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."**

Fully understanding this invitation begins with a clear view of the true meaning of grace. As Dallas Willard suggests, grace is "*God doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.*" With that in mind, what is this passage truly inviting us to do? It's an invitation to approach the throne of 'I will do it for you' in prayer, to receive mercy and help in our time of need.

## The Counseling Work of the Holy Spirit

In John 16, Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to live within every true Christ follower. Our ability to understand, believe, and apply Scripture depends on His presence and power within us. Even our desire for God—and the strength to live according to His good purposes—is the result of the Holy Spirit working in us (Phil. 2:13).

Another vital aspect of the Holy Spirit's role in our renewal journey is His commitment to personally counsel, guide, and lead us into all truth (John 16:13). God never intended for us to live independently of Him. Instead, He desires that we grow in confidence—not through our own strength, but through the life-changing power of His Word and the ongoing, specific guidance of the Holy Spirit. Yes, God is still speaking, and as Jesus promised, we can hear His voice (John 10:27).

## Prayer

Prayer is a primary way we draw near to God—where we speak honestly from our hearts, listen for His voice, and conform our will to His. It produces both closeness with God (Psalm 62:8; John 15:7) and dependence upon Him (Philippians 4:6; Matthew 6:9–13). Prayer must be rooted in faith that He hears and responds (1 John 5:14–15). It is not about persuading God to do whatever we want, but joining in His purposes, acknowledging our need, giving thanks, and interceding for others (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18; James 5:16).

## Bringing It All Together

In a short time, you've done significant work—examining the relationships that have shaped your life, identifying core distortions, and building personalized frameworks to guide you toward healing. **Now, the next step is crucial: using prayer as the means of bringing all that we've discovered about ourselves before a God who wants to counsel us and transform our lives.** He doesn't just offer guidance—He offers Himself. And as we pray, and cast our cares upon Him we will begin to be impacted by the transformational investments only He can give.

## Encouragement

In a world where many are talking about transformation—but far too few are genuinely experiencing it—it's easy to treat the following prayer guidelines as just another program. Another thing to do. Another good idea that won't pan out. But this prayer strategy is a way to apply God's Word—His counsel—to our lives. Be encouraged—hundreds of Christian leaders have successfully applied this very simple method of approaching God in prayer, with tremendous results. **Come, cast your cares on the Lord, for He truly cares for you.**

# Prayer Guidelines

Now fill out the Prayer 1 template on the following page using these simple prompts and confidently approach God in prayer. As you become more familiar with this process you will find less of a need to use our resources to help you engage this prayer process.

## 1- Observe and Interpret

When you become aware that you're feeling disruptive emotion, evaluate the circumstances you're in, determine what triggered you, and write down the details in the **top rectangle on the Prayer 1 template** on page 14. Example: *"I worked tirelessly on a project at work, but my boss took the credit without mentioning my contribution."*

**Now, ask God to help you make the connection between what you're feeling and any underlying distortion that might be driving it.** Example: *Disruptive emotion: anger, frustration, disappointment.*

*Distortion: my value depends on my performance.* Write down the disruptive emotion and distortion in the spaces provided on the same template on page 14.

## 2- Approach God in Prayer

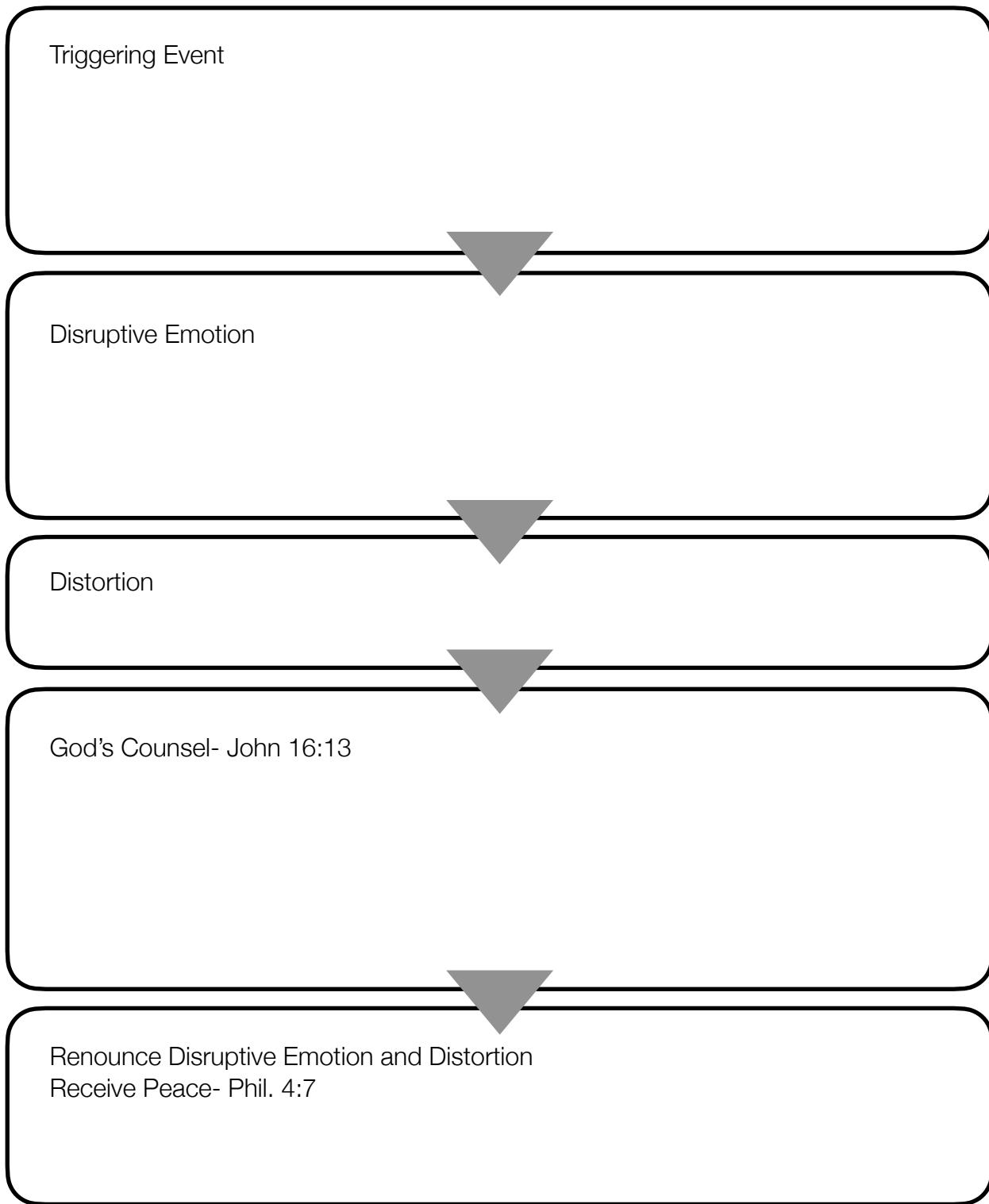
Next, in prayer, approach the throne of *"I will do it for you"* (Hebrews 4:16), and do three things:

- **In prayer, name the disruptive emotion you're experiencing and the distortion behind it.** Example: *"God I feel angry, frustrated, and disappointed, and I know it comes from believing my value depends on my performance."*
- **Invite God to counsel you and lead you into all truth regarding these emotions and distortions (John 16:13).** Example: *"God You know that what I'm feeling and believing is distorted. What do You want me to see, hear, know, and experience? Guide me into all truth."* **In this step, you are simply naming your distortions and disruptive emotions and inviting God to be your counselor.**
- **Listen attentively and write down the insights God gives you.** As He guides and counsels you, note any Scripture passages He brings to mind, and ask Him to transform your life through them—to move them from your head to your heart. Any other guidance or sense of direction you receive carefully test—God will never lead you in a way that contradicts His Word. If needed, you can later confirm what you're receiving by discussing it with trusted, wise Christ-followers. Chronicle what God's speaking to you in the space provided on the Prayer 1 template on page 14.

## 3- Cast Care and Receive Care

**Now, renounce the distortion and disruptive emotion**, asking God to remove them completely from your life. **Then invite Him to fill you with His presence—He is the peace that guards your heart and mind in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6–7).**

# Prayer 1 — Casting Care / Receiving Care



# Outcomes

**In the early stages of your renewal journey, it is essential to keep your Framework for Healing build-outs in front of you.** Revisit them often. Study their content carefully—especially the distortions and the disruptive emotions they trigger. It's also important to become so familiar with each of the prayer steps that they become a natural part of your daily interaction with God. (**You may find it helpful to review the summarized prayer steps on page 16.**)

**This is not a program; it's a new way of living.** Don't be discouraged by what feels like slow progress—you've lived with old, unhealthy thought patterns for many years. Real change takes time. Also, remember: "God's grace is not opposed to effort—it's opposed to earning" —Dallas Willard. God doesn't heal us so we can perform better; His healing sets us free from every need to perform.

**Ask God to ignite a genuine desire to know Him,** and then establish daily rhythms of seeking Him: fill your mind with His Word, pray, worship sincerely, and learn to rest in His presence... Drawing life from God in this way is essential for experiencing lasting, transformative change.

**Remember, transformation does not depend on your perfect performance. What God desires is your dependence.** He is committed to bringing deep, lasting change to anyone who humbles themselves and turns to Him for help.

**If possible, take this journey with people you trust.** Shared insights, encouragement, and breakthroughs can accelerate your growth and make the journey far more rewarding. If that's not possible, remember that no matter your circumstances, God promises to meet us as we turn to Him with our whole heart.

# Summarized Prayer Guidelines

1. When you become aware of disruptive emotion, evaluate the circumstances you're in and ask God to help you make a connection between how you're feeling and the distortion driving your emotion.
2. Now, in prayer, approach the throne of '*I will do it for you*' (Heb. 4:16) and do three things:
  - Verbalize the disruptive emotion you're feeling and the distortion behind those emotions.
  - Invite God to counsel you and lead you into all truth regarding these emotions and distortions [John 16:13].
  - Attentively listen and write down the insight that God gives you.
3. Now, renounce the distortion and disruptive emotions, and ask God to remove them completely from your life. Then, invite Him to fill you with His presence, becoming the peace that guards your heart and mind in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).

## Need more Resources?

Follow the QR code below or visit [www.christlifeusa.org/resources](http://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 are liable for any outcomes that may result.

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