

ORIGINAL DESIGN RESTORED

An Interactive Workbook

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Katie Tramonte

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Welcome!

Welcome to this workbook! I am so happy for you that you have chosen to take this particular step in your lifelong journey of healing and growth. What you will find in these pages are a handful of tools and experiences that will invite you to reflect on your life, connect with God, and practice new ways of living and being.

Before we begin this process together, I want to share with you a bit about what this workbook is and isn't. This workbook flows out of the core content of our Original Design Restored (ODR) Intensives, which are cultivated spaces to pursue healing, growth, and transformation. While I want everyone to be able to come to an ODR Intensive, I realize that is not possible for everyone, so this workbook is a way to make our core content available to anyone. While I have learned so much more about healing, growth, and transformation since developing our core content in 2018, the tools in this workbook still act as a foundation for transformation. This workbook will not cover every aspect of healing, growth, and transformation. This workbook is not a replacement for therapy and mental health services. This workbook is a tool for healing and transformation. It is meant to act as a foundation for that pursuit.

So, as we begin, I want to invite you to give yourself to this process, holding nothing back, but allowing all that comes to the surface to be met with your own acceptance and also the powerful love of God. This workbook is a facilitated journey toward healing and transformation. It is a practical step toward allowing God to be present with you in your life in real, everyday ways. It is an invitation to step beyond white-knuckling life and into transformation and freedom. It is an invitation into the presence and power of Jesus for Him to love, guide, and empower you to what He has for you in this life.

If you are disciplined enough, you can white knuckle the outside of your life to look pretty attractive.

You can. Church folk have been doing it for centuries. You can with enough will power, white knuckle your outsides to look righteous, but no man can change the soul. No one can change the intentions of the heart, which is why Jesus' teachings were so horrifying...Jesus is going to make it a matter of the heart.

- Matt Chandler, "Fear and Faith"¹

How This Works

This book is a guided journey into transformation in the presence of and by the power of Jesus. What you will find here is a guided journey of healing, transformation, wholeness, and freedom. This journey is meant to be actively engaged with honesty and vulnerable surrender. You will get from it what you put into it. You are being invited to engage wholeheartedly in the process at hand, holding nothing back, but allowing God to renew.

This guided journey is divided into three main sections, with one short preparation section at the very beginning of this workbook. The three sections are: “Gospel Paradigm,” “Personal Narrative,” and “Experiential Learning.” As you journey through the “Gospel Paradigm” section, you’ll be internalizing spiritual truths about the Gospel, transformation, and walking with Jesus. In the “Personal Narrative” section, you’ll be engaging your own life story, reflecting on it, gaining insights from it, and pursuing a safe space to share it. Finally, as you navigate the “Experiential Learning” portion of this book, you’ll be gaining tools for transformation that you can engage throughout life going forward. These three sections are meant to be completed in order as they build upon one another.

Within each chapter are distinct parts. You will find these same rhythms flowing through every chapter. Each chapter will begin with an inspiring quote followed by a personal story. These will be followed with intentional space for you to become self-aware before you begin reading. The next (and central) part of every chapter will be focused content intermixed with reflective questions. Finally, there will be music recommendations as a way to pause and reflect as you close each chapter.

In summary, this entire book is meant to be a guided journey. This book does not accomplish transformation on its own. The content of this book is simply to create a cultivated and facilitated space for you to connect with God over your own life and story. He will walk with you through these pages as you invite Him to do so. He is strong enough to see you through every single aspect of your story...all the pain, struggle, delight, and dreams. And in Him, true and lasting transformation can be found.

Supply List

There are a few materials you will need to gather in order to complete some of the activities in the pages ahead. Below are the materials you will want to have on hand:

- Pen or pencil
- 3 different colors of pens
- Paper or cardstock
- Various art supplies (Sharpies, colored pencils, stickers, washi tape, etc.)

PREPARING
FOR
WHAT
LIES

Ahead

Self-Aware

The soul's worth...doesn't come from earning or proving. Image doesn't matter. Outrunning the emptiness doesn't work for long. Each soul, every soul is worthy because God made every soul, and because of His love, His Son came to earth and walked among us, because God's love for us is so deep and wide and elaborate that He wants to be with us, to walk with us, to teach us how to live in that love and worthiness.

- Shauna Neiquist, Present Over Perfect¹

I had gathered three other women to join me for a specific type of retreat: a story-telling retreat. They were each prominent faith leaders in their own neighboring communities but were all strangers to each other. We spent that retreat weekend sharing our life stories with each other and allowing one another to speak truth and life back into those stories. There was a sacredness in the privilege of holding the most precious moments of one another's stories. There was healing in the words that were spoken. There was freedom in the truths that were proclaimed. There was comfort in others sitting in our own story with us. There was acceptance in the kindness that was offered.

It was there, at that weekend, that an idea began in my heart. I began to dream of what it would be like to make space for other women to face the beauty and pain of their own stories in the presence of God with the hope of healing, transformation, and freedom. What would happen in our lives if we experienced true transformation? What would happen to the way we live, the way we go about our everyday realities, the way we interacted in our relationships, the way we love, parent, work, and dream...what would happen if we were actually being made whole? What would the ripple effect be in the next generation if those of us in this generation had the courage to face ourselves and our stories, inviting God to change us and set us free?


My dream is for us as a generation to have the courage to face ourselves in the presence of God and be transformed to be more and more aligned with our design so that we can live here and now in ever-increasing wholeness and beauty, both for our own selves and also for those who follow after us.

What we're about to do here in these pages isn't just wishful thinking. We aren't just hoping that by wanting to be different we'll be different. This isn't positive thinking thrown out into the universe at large in hopes of something returning to us. This isn't behavior modification. This isn't a "moral gospel," a set of rules to count yourself "right." This is you unearthing the deepest truths about yourself, laying them bare before the loving God, and in faith, inviting Him to realign you to the fullest expression of who He has designed you to be...who **He** made **you** to be. This is you looking directly at your soul and acknowledging what's real right now...as well as what already has been and what could possibly be. It is acknowledging the pain, struggle, and false paradigms you've lived from while simultaneously hoping for healing, wholeness, and freedom. It is engaging real spiritual power to change you from the inside out.

Before we can even begin the journey of transformation, though, we must first become self-aware.

This can be difficult to do because so many of us have spent a lifetime cultivating distractions to keep ourselves from knowing what's happening on the inside. We've tried to drown out the pain, the fear, and the insecurity by keeping ourselves busy with responsibilities, relationships, work, entertainment, and obligations. If we can keep life loud enough, maybe we won't have to acknowledge what's really happening inside us. If we can keep our souls distracted, maybe we won't have to face ourselves...maybe we won't have to feel what's real and the pain of what has been. The problem with this, though, is that we will never experience change. We will never experience healing if we continue on in this way. We will never actually experience freedom at its fullest.

What's even worse is that all those struggles, all those wounds, all those difficult things about your story will catch up to you. Maybe not now. Maybe not today. But one day. And when they do catch up to you, if you haven't faced them by your own choice, they will catch you off guard, and they will face you in the most inconvenient way. So, it's simple, really. Either choose to deal with your story today and let it surface in the presence of God by your own choice, or have it overtake you someday in some undesirable way. Your greatest hopes and clearest callings will get tripped up and even taken out by the stuff you leave undealt with in your own life. These undealt with things...the lies you've believed, the wounds you've received, and the sin you've done...have the potential to trip you up and come out as "sideways" (as Jo Saxton says) in your life when you leave them undealt with. When left alone, these things will cost you your freedom. But if we face them, then we have the possibility of finding freedom: "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free."²

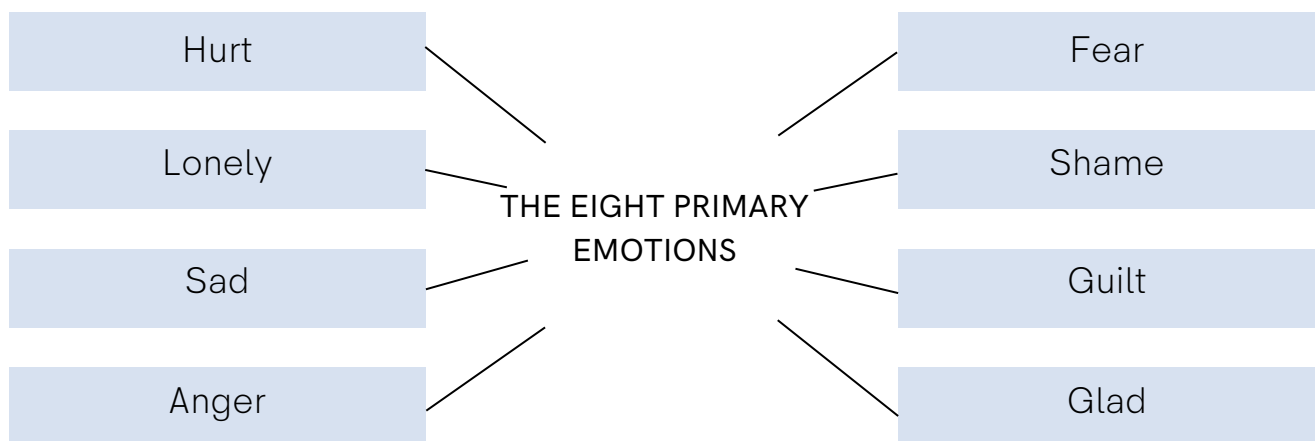
 So, how do we start? How do we begin this journey of facing ourselves and engaging the transformation of our very souls? We start by waking up on the inside. We start by finding out what's under the surface. And we do that by listening. To become self-aware, we start by acknowledging our emotions and finding out what they tell us.

When we harbor our emotions instead of healthily acknowledging them and constructively processing them, we do damage to ourselves and/or those around us. We do not bypass our emotions by tucking them away; rather, we still express them, only they come out in ways in which we do not get to steward them. Our emotions will be expressed, one way or another. When not healthily processed our emotions often come out as secondary expressions like rage, depression, dissociation, apathy, addiction, anxiety, numbing, stress, and/or physical struggles (headaches, insomnia, etc.), to name a few. And while these things just listed do not always stem from unprocessed emotions, unprocessed emotions can lead to these things.

Beginning to face yourself and all that is within you and your story is quite daunting, so we'll take it slow. The first thing I'm going to ask you to do is to simply name how you're feeling. It has been said that there are eight primary emotions that have the same facial response across the globe. Below you'll find a list of the eight primary emotions.³

But let me back up. There are no "right" or "wrong" feelings. There can be right and wrong things you *do* with your feelings, but the feelings themselves are simply indicators from the soul of what is happening inside you. Feelings are meant to inform us. Once we are informed of our feelings (self-aware), we are meant to interpret those feelings. Interpreting our feelings means understanding what they are telling us and determining how we want to live by making choices regarding them. We take responsibility for ourselves. Without being curious about our feelings, we will most often react to them or reject them. The goal is to acknowledge them (become self-aware of the emotion), interpret them (find out the why behind the emotion), and then respond to them (make choices about what to do with the emotion).

But before we can even allow our feelings to inform us, we must first become aware of what we are feeling. So often, we say we are, "Good" or "Okay" or "Fine." We so often lie to ourselves and others with these socially acceptable words. So, as an exercise in waking up on the inside, I'm going to ask you to pause whatever it is you are doing, to be still and silent for thirty seconds and to become aware of the emotions that surface in those moments. If none come, then you probably need to be still and silent longer until you feel. In the space provided below, take a moment now to name any and all emotions you just felt. The list below can be used as a tool to help you name your feelings. Feel free to use it as needed throughout this workbook and in life. It also can act as a springboard as you learn to identify deeper nuances of these eight primary emotions. For example, you may feel "sad," but if you explore that feeling further, you may discover that you specifically feel disappointment or grief or purposelessness. If you do an Internet search, you can quickly find a myriad of "feelings charts" and "feelings wheels," which may be helpful tools in identifying your emotions with more precision. For now, though, simply begin with these eight primary emotions as you learn to listen to what you feel.





What are you feeling?

We will begin every chapter with a space for you to journal what you are feeling. Not only will this practice unearth the things going on inside of you as we are walking out this journey of transformation, but this practice will also make self-awareness become more comfortable and easier to access. As you journal what you are feeling at the beginning of each chapter, you'll be training yourself to pay attention to what is going on inside of you; this will, in turn, enable you to actually interpret what you're feeling and make choices in life about those feelings, rather than simply reacting to life unaware of what's really happening under the surface. This ongoing self-awareness will pave the way to ongoing transformation being possible.

You have officially begun this journey of transformation, healing, and wholeness, which is fabulous. Before we go further, though, you have an important question to answer: What do you want from this process? This is a guided journey for your soul, not a quick read. You will gain from this guided journey what you put into it. If you float over the top of the content, that is most likely what you'll gain from this journey; however, if you dive deep and invest yourself into this process, what you can gain from this journey is almost limitless. What do you want to have received by the end of this guided journey? What do you hope for from this process? Write below one sentence that summarizes your answer to the question.



What do you want from this process?

Our next step in preparation for our journey is engaging a whole person perspective. You exist in three parts: body, soul, spirit. Whole person perspective is the belief that you exist in three realities of yourself and that the three work together synergistically, each impacting the others. The body is your physical being. The soul is the collective of the mind, will and emotions: the you of your personal existence. The spirit is the spiritual reality of you; it is the part that if/when a person surrenders her life to Jesus comes alive and awake and connected to God. These three realities of ourselves are each identifiable as separate; however, you as a person exist within the interconnectedness of the three. You are a whole person. So, when engaging the process of healing and transformation, it is vital to have a whole person perspective and become aware of the three parts of you...how you exist in each and how each impacts the other.

While our process here primarily engages your soul, you will find that we cycle back to the spirit often as I ask you to listen to God and to surrender to Him. This is because your spirit is the part of you that is awake to and connected to God and hears the Holy Spirit. It is the part that is meant to rule over and inform the rest of your being. Both the soul and spirit are housed in the body and both impact it and are impacted by it. The body can also inform you of what is happening in your soul and spirit as you pay attention to what you feel in your body when you name your emotions and/or sit in certain memories.

As you engage the content in this book and the contents of your soul, you'll most likely be seeing things about yourself and in your story that you haven't yet. There is One who can handle anything you uncover. The truth of spiritual realities is that Jesus is in authority over everything.⁴ Wherever you are spiritually today, the bottom line is that Jesus is in ultimate authority over all spiritual realities and spiritual beings. So, wherever you are today spiritually, He is in authority over everything. This means that He can carry anything you lay out in these pages. He can navigate anything you offer up in vulnerability. There is nothing more powerful than Him. So, before engaging any more of this process, I want to invite you to release yourself to Jesus and to trusting Him fully in the process that lies ahead of us in the coming pages.

Guided Prayer

With your hands open in your lap, your eyes closed, settling your soul into a prayer posture, release your whole self to Jesus, trusting Him with the process ahead.

As we close out this step of preparation, take a deep breath. You are allowing yourself to engage the possibility that God could heal you and change you. You've begun to become self-aware; you've named what you want out of this, and you've released yourself to Jesus. This entire chapter is the waking up of your soul.

In the end, you are the only one responsible for what you do with *your* life. You are *not* responsible for the wounds others have inflicted on you. You are *not* responsible for the wrongs that have been done to you. You are *not* responsible for the false beliefs others have passed along to you. But you *are* responsible for pursuing the healing and transformation of it all.

You don't always have a choice about what has happened to you in your life or even some of the things that are happening in your life, but you *do* have a choice about what you will do about it. You have a choice to take responsibility for your life and pursue the transformation of it, having faith that God Himself can change the trajectory of your story.



Do you feel like you have choice regarding the direction and details of your life? Why or why not?



What would it look like to take responsibility for your life and engage your agency over the trajectory here forward?

Selah

At the end of every chapter, you will see this section titled, “Selah.” The word Selah in Scripture means to pause and reflect. We will engage that practice here and at the end of every chapter.

In each “Selah” section, you will find music suggestions that pair well with the content of the chapter you’ve just finished. I’d recommend finding a quiet space for ten minutes or so after each chapter to pause and reflect in the presence of God as you listen to these songs.

“Lay It All Down” by Will Reagan

“Walk on Water” by Britt Nicole

Part 1

Gospel Paradigm

Hope for Change

Everything I've done, forgiven
Born again, new chance at livin'
There's hope for change,
No longer locked up or just stuck the same.

- Artist M.D., "Restoration"¹

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

Although I had grown up going to church, the Gospel itself was not super clear to me until my late twenties. For so long, it had seemed the Gospel was simply something you were supposed to accept to get saved. In the churches I grew up attending, the Gospel was presented as a set of beliefs to ascribe to. Practically speaking, my functional faith framework from childhood through early adulthood was essentially that you asked Jesus into your heart to be saved (by grace, through faith), only, from that point on, you were then to try really hard to be good. While no one ever explicitly “taught” me this, my experience of the Christian life (and what I observed of church people) was that following Jesus meant trying with all of yourself to be a really good and moral person. It’s as though the grace-thing ended as soon as you were saved, and it was up to you from that point on to be a good Christian.

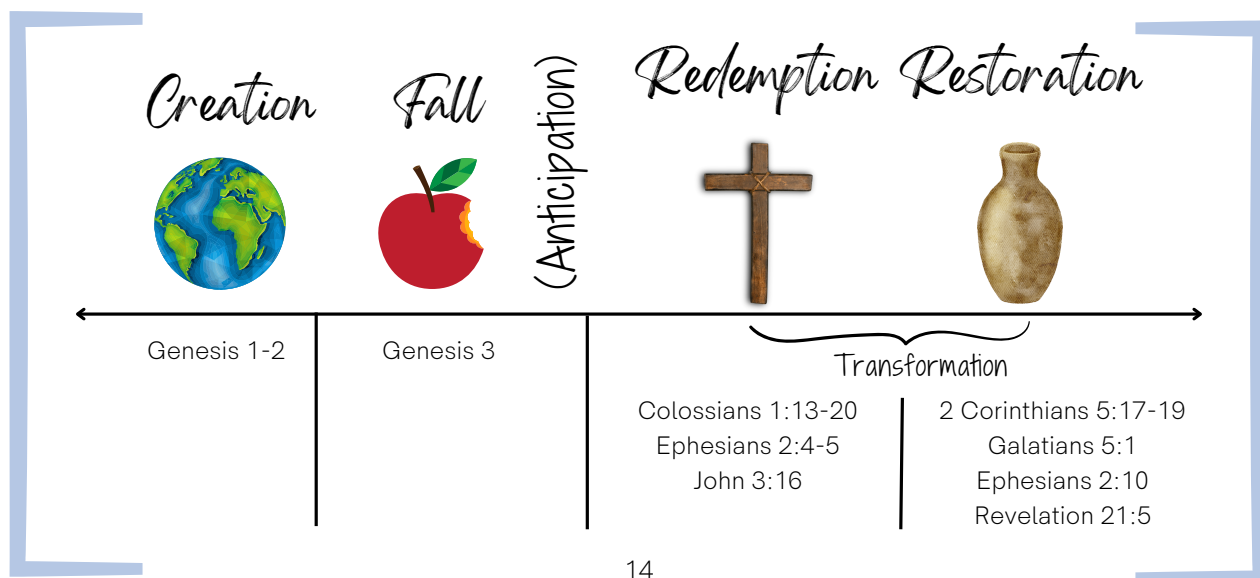
It wasn’t until I failed at my first full-time ministry job that I began to learn that grace was for all of life. As a young teenager, I had surrendered to a calling to full-time ministry. And by my mid-twenties, I was walking that out but crumbling inside. I look back now and recognize that in that season, I was experiencing burnout for the first time. In that place of burnout (and not knowing I was experiencing burnout), I had become aware that because of my roles in my church work, I was no longer “loving God and loving people.” I was failing at the very thing Jesus had said the Christian faith was all about...the whole point of my calling.

When I shared my internal reality with my sister, her response was that no job was worth this (losing what it means to follow Jesus). My conversation with her freed me to quit my ministry job, so that I could rediscover what it meant to love God and love people.

However, in quitting, I felt like a failure. It was through failure, through burnout, that God began to show me what living a life of grace could be like. He began to show me that He accepted me and had good plans for me even though I couldn't keep going on with what I had been giving myself to. He began to take me on a new journey of learning to live a life characteristic of the Gospel. My understanding of the Gospel shifted from something purely for conversion to something that was meant to encompass all of life. In the years following, as I heard solid teaching and preaching on the story arc of the Gospel and its applications to everyday life, my heart awakened to the truth that transformation in real life was possible. My story and struggles now had a greater story over them...a story of hope and restoration...a story that wasn't just for me to make it to Heaven, but a story that was for me now, today.

It is this story arc of the Gospel that we will engage together in this chapter. This chapter is the backdrop to where we will be going throughout the rest of this workbook. Whatever your spiritual background, please sit in this chapter with me, giving each portion full attention. This Gospel framework acts as the paradigm through which we will look at everything else we'll be doing through this workbook.

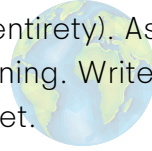
This next section has the foundation of solid Bible study, but I'll also be asking you to sit in each portion to really feel and experience each passage. It's really a mash-up of Bible study and experiential learning. It is significant for you to genuinely walk through each portion to personally internalize and incorporate its depth. I invite you to not skim the material, but to engage it as though you are coming to these truths for the first time. In your responses, search for real and tangible ways to communicate what you read in the passages of Scripture we'll be looking at. How do these verses actually look and feel? What do they truly mean? Please avoid the cliché answers, but instead, express real-life, meaningful explanations for your answers in this next section.



To begin, please take some time to read through each passage listed below and journal in response to each one, personally unpacking the meaning of what's in the passage until you can explain it in everyday language. Write your journaling on the Gospel Worksheet, which is at the end of this chapter. You will be using the Gospel Worksheet for the next two exercises. This will allow you to collect all your thoughts in one location.

CREATION

Please read Genesis 1-2 (both chapters in their entirety). As you read, write down everything you observe in these verses. Describe what is happening. Write down key words that epitomize what is happening in Creation on the Gospel Worksheet.



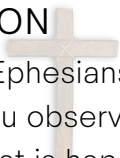
FALL

Please read Genesis 3 (the entire chapter). As you read, write down everything you observe in these verses. Describe what is happening. Write down key words that epitomize what is happening in the Fall on the Gospel Worksheet.



REDEMPTION

Please read Ephesians 2:4-5, Colossians 1:13-20, and John 3:16. As you read, write down everything you observe in these verses. Describe what is happening. Write down key words that epitomize what is happening in redemption on the Gospel Worksheet.



RESTORATION

Please read 2 Corinthians 5:17-19, Galatians 5:1, Ephesians 2:10, and Revelation 21:5. As you read, write down everything you observe in these verses. Describe what is happening. Write down key words that epitomize what is happening in restoration on the Gospel Worksheet.



To engage the Gospel experientially, continue using the Gospel Worksheet found at the end of this chapter. You will be using this to take more notes as you complete the following exercise.

Once you have the Gospel Worksheet, please listen through “The History Project” (which can be found on most music platforms but also can be found as a free download at www.artistmd.co). You may choose to listen to one track at a time or listen straight through the 17-minute album. Either way that you choose to listen, as you listen or after you listen, write on your Gospel Worksheet what stood out to you about each part of the Gospel in each track.

When you stop to fully let yourself into the Gospel story, it is astounding. The story of God making a way of redemption for a fallen and broken world is mind-blowing. The Gospel, when you really get into it, is a story of love and grace. You cannot earn your rescue. You cannot even earn your restoration. You can take personal responsibility to make choices to live in agreement with what God is at work on in your life; however, even restoration is beyond pure will-power. Sometimes we get things mixed up and believe it's on us to earn right standing with God. However, there's no such thing as a "moral gospel" (the idea that by being moral, you earn your salvation). The Gospel is grace alone. It is love. Righteousness is from Jesus. And our life after redemption is still grace and love. As soon as we interject our human effort into the Gospel story, we've marred it. We've made it about something it's not. If we think we need to add something by our efforts to the story of the Gospel in our own lives, we must reframe our understanding back to the only thing that makes us acceptable to God: the covering of Jesus' blood alone. If we have that, we have everything.

That said, God does want to work in our lives to have even more of His fullness brought about in and through us. We have the opportunity every day to make choices to be more and more aligned to His design; however, never do our actions bring us any more acceptance by Him. If we follow Jesus, we are already accepted. Yet, if we're still here on earth, there is still more of Him we can access through the process of transformation. Our choices do lead to more (or less) experience of Him and the fullest life He offers.

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18

The emphasis of this workbook is the process of transformation. If you have picked up this workbook, my guess is that you have a sense of something in your life that needs healing, change, or growth. My guess is that you're already aware of the evidence of the Fall in your own life and story. So, while we've walked through an overview of all the parts of the Gospel here in this section, we will be primarily engaging the process of transformation here forward. However, as we do, you will notice evidence of creation and evidence of the fall interwoven throughout our future exercises together. So, although much of what we engage forward will lean into transformation and restoration, those processes have connections to creation and the fall, and they all come under the authority of redemption.

In summary, the Gospel story is the story of all time, the metanarrative of the entire Bible, but it is also the story of my life and your life. It is the story of our everyday existence. You enter earth at the fall because you entered a world that was already in motion with brokenness, pain and sin; yet, you also feel the echoes of creation all around you. There is something that calls out to you that there is more...more peace, goodness, wholeness, and beauty. When you follow Jesus, you experience redemption.

And as you pursue the ongoing transformation of your soul by God and experience the resulting outcome of freedom and wholeness, you experience restoration. On an even smaller scale than your whole life, the Gospel is the story of your every single day. It is the story of taking the ordinary pain and struggle to Jesus and having Him redeem and restore even the most basic things.

It is vital to take the *whole* Gospel story into account when we make this the framework for our lives, or we get a broken Gospel. Interestingly, various groups of Christians do lean toward particular aspects of the Gospel, often leading to lopsided faith paradigms. What follows is not a blame-game toward any specific denomination but an observation of the tendencies of various groups of Christians. My hope is to invite all of us to embrace the whole Gospel over our life and living.

To explain this concept more clearly, I'll give examples of each lopsided focus. Certain belief systems focus on creation (the natural world) as ultimate, worshipping nature as god, worshipping the creation instead of the Creator, losing the rest of the Gospel story in the process. Then there are certain groups of Christians who have a tendency to emphasize the "fall" as the most important aspect, ultimately tending toward faith paradigms heavy in legalism and sin management. Still, other groups of Christians put their emphasis on the redemption portion of the Gospel, creating a faith experience that is almost solely about being converted and getting others converted, too, creating a very myopic faith that misses growth and transformation. Finally, other groups of Christians uphold restoration as the most important aspect of the Gospel, proclaiming our freedom, as though nothing broken needs to be acknowledged any longer once you are a follower of Jesus, yet missing the transformative process of the Gospel...the whole ongoing arc of the Gospel. When we overemphasize any one aspect of the Gospel, we miss the whole story that was meant to impact us and be lived out as an ongoing arc in our everyday lives. I share these tendencies in hopes of inviting you to a whole Gospel perspective.

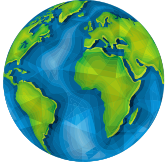
Transformation is accessible from the moment we are redeemed throughout the rest of our lives here on earth. Ideally, transformation would be happening continually. It is available to every follower of Jesus. The process of transformation requires its own chapter, though, to be fully unpacked.

Selah

The History Project, by Artist M.D.

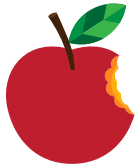
Gospel Worksheet

Creation



Genesis 1-2

Fall



Genesis 3

(Anticipation)

Redemption



Colossians 1:13-20
Ephesians 2:4-5
John 3:16

Restoration



Transformation

2 Corinthians 5:17-19
Galatians 5:1
Ephesians 2:10
Revelation 21:5

Transformation

...I am an impassioned believer that you will never full-on desire and chase Jesus until you understand and have seen your own depravity. And it's only in that moment when you understand how dark this thing goes that finally grace becomes this really powerful agent in the heart.

- Matt Chandler, "Fear & Faith"¹

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

We traveled back to my hometown for Easter, which was the perfect mixture of exposure to relational realities where, I, for the first time, owned in my own soul that I was entrenched in codependent ways of relating. I remember awakening in my own soul to how deep and far back in my personal history these patterns went and how intensely they were impacting my current relational realities, from my marriage to my friendships to my family of origin. I recognized codependency as a disordered way of being and asked God to do whatever it took to break these patterns off of me. I didn't want to live and relate like this anymore, so I cried out for Him to free me.

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 14:26

This next quote comes from a sermon I listened to a long time ago, before I was married, before I had kids, before I had really begun my own journey of transformation, yet it resonated deeply with me even then. This was before I knew anything about cycle breakers or epigenetics or generational trauma. I just heard Matt Chandler speak the truth of his personal wrestling with the things in him and in his personal history to make a different way for his children. That sermon served as a foreshadowing of what my own journey someday would hold. One of the most dynamic quotes from that message was this:

So that our lives serve both the purposes of God in our generation and the purposes of God in the next generation... What if I have to struggle with and fight these things for the next 50 years? What if I never fully get whole, but my son does, because I fought? What if I have to plead with Christ in the middle of the night, what if I have to wrestle the dark things in me for the rest of my life, but my son doesn't have to and neither does my daughter? Healing will be mine, on this side or the next. That's not for me to decide... But what if my lot is to struggle, wrestle, hurt so there would be a new legacy of Chandler men born?

-Matt Chandler, "What Faith Does"²

So, how do we change the trajectory of our legacy? What is transformation? How does it occur? Transformation is the process of change. Transformation is what happens when we face what is broken, sinful, painful, ugly, hurting, dissonant, and false in us, acknowledge it, surrender it to Jesus, and allow the power of God to actually heal, free, make whole, integrate, and bring truth into our very existence, living new by the power of the Holy Spirit.

True transformation is not white knuckled effort. True transformation happens in the soul and is evidenced outwardly, not the other way around. We do have a role to play in the process of transformation, but we'll never be able to actually change our souls on our own. That level of change is beyond us and requires Divine power. We simply are not able to overcome our fallen humanity at the deepest levels. Yes, we can work hard to improve our lives, but we cannot change our own souls. And to be truly considered transformation, change must happen within the soul.

There are two ways to view transformation, with only one of them leading to comprehensive transformation. First, there is the cycle of human effort with ourselves as the central role. In this cycle, we want something to change; so, we try to change it, we fail, then we feel guilty, then we try harder...only to fail again and start the same cycle over again. But the second cycle of transformation has God as the central role, so when we fail, we confess (acknowledge the misstep), repent (reorient ourselves to living aligned with God), and believe (have faith that by God's power we can be made new in this area of struggle).

Because God has the central role in this cycle of transformation, we either experience freedom from that failure OR we may fail again only to receive God's grace and the opportunity to begin again in the confess/repent/believe cycle, free of the weight of guilt and shame because He has already carried it all for us through the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus.



As we consider the concept of change, what does it stir in you? What do you want changed, healed, or restored? What would it be like to be free of that overarching lie, that haunting wound, that binding sin that seems to follow you everywhere?

Pause for a moment and rest yourself in the presence of God. Imagine yourself living fully freed of those lies, wounds, and sins that have weighed you down, limited you, and cost you much. If you were truly free, **what would you be like?** If you were truly free, **what would your life be like?** **How would that feel?**

Remove your internal self-editor and write everything that comes to mind...no one else needs to see this; this is just between you and God.

If change is possible, then understanding how it works is necessary. True transformation, the change that happens in your soul and expresses itself from your soul outward as a ripple effect to your ways of living and being, happens at the convergence of these three things: Jesus' blood making peace, the power of the Holy Spirit, and your personal choices. When these three realities are at work together, transformation begins to happen. If you remove any one of these components, full transformation is not actually happening.

If you have Jesus' blood covering you and access to the power of the Holy Spirit but continue to make destructive choices, you will not experience transformation. If you have Jesus' blood covering you but simply try hard to make good personal choices devoid of the power of the Holy Spirit, you will not experience true, soul transformation...you'll just be a follower of Jesus who is white-knuckling good behavior. If you do not have Jesus' blood covering you, then you do not have access to the Holy Spirit's power, and you will not experience true, soul transformation...you'll just be white-knuckling good behavior. Jesus' blood making peace, the power of the Holy Spirit, and your personal choices work synergistically to bring about true transformation. When Jesus' blood covers you and you find yourself redeemed (transferred from the Kingdom of Darkness to the Kingdom of Light) **and** you access the power of the Holy Spirit (who is meant to lead you into all truth and act as a guide) **and** you personally make choices that align with how God wired life to be best lived, you will begin to experience true transformation at the deepest level...you will be stepping toward freedom, healing, wholeness and full living.

So, to make this become real to you, please walk through the following passages of Scripture, writing on the Transformation Boxes below with what you see evidenced in these verses about what God said about each of these elements of transformation.

How Transformation Works

As you read write down everything you observe in these verses. Describe the role that "Jesus' blood making peace" plays in the process of transformation.

JESUS' BLOOD MAKING PEACE

2 Corinthians 5:18-19, Colossians 1:20, 1 John 1:9

As you read, write down everything you observe in these verses. Describe the role that the "power of the Holy Spirit" plays in the process of transformation.

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

John 16:13-15, 2 Corinthians 3:16-18

As you read, write down everything you observe in these verses. Describe the role that “your personal choices” plays in the process of transformation.

YOUR PERSONAL CHOICES

Galatians 5:1, James 1:22-25



As you processed through those verses, what stood out to you? What did you notice that would make a difference in how you are pursuing transformation in your own life?

What if we are called to acknowledge our pain, to confess our inability to beat it? What if we're called to admit our weakness and declare that only God's strength is sufficient?

- Rebekah Lyons, You Are Free³

Selah

“Restoration” by Artist M.D.
“To the Very End” by United Pursuit

Meeting With Jesus

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

John 14:6

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

I was sitting in a therapist’s office sharing a painful memory, when he asked me to close my eyes and ask Jesus where Jesus was in that memory. I quickly sensed where Jesus was in relation to the remembered room and the people in it. I relaxed in the peace that came when I saw Jesus there with me and saw Jesus’ response to the situation. I felt so safe, so seen, and so loved by Jesus. And a smile came across my face.

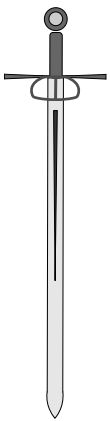
While that moment above happened in a therapy session, what I am describing there is what I refer to as “imaginative prayer.” There are other names for similar styles of prayer: healing prayer, listening prayer, Theophostics, Sozo, and God Encounters. These are all types of prayer in which an individual meets with God in a spiritual interaction, inviting Him to speak into, reveal truth, and give insight in an imaginative space.

Before we move into the details of imaginative prayer and how it works, I want to share with you a handful of stories from people who have practiced this style of prayer. These stories are snippets from imaginative prayer sessions they have had and were willing to share. I hope that imaginative prayer becomes more tangible as you read through these stories.



I was praying with a friend around the time I was about to get married. I saw an image of my heart in a cage with a padlock on it. I saw Jesus standing there as well, and I asked Him if He would unlock it. I saw Him in my imagination unlock the cage, and as He did, I saw my heart shining forth and washing away darkness. I felt such relief, hope, and peace. There was more to the experience, but that moment really did unlock my heart in a new way going forward in life.

I was given instructions to ask the Lord if He would meet me somewhere. I instantly knew where I would want to meet the Lord and asked Him if we could meet there. It was a very peaceful and restful space. There was no agenda; it was just being with the Lord. At some point, I asked Him if my kids could come be here with us, too, and He said yes. I got to watch Him bless my kids and then play with them. He made promises to me in that space that I can remind myself of and experience that same peace outside of that space. But I've also intentionally gone back to that place often with the Lord as a way of experiencing just being in His presence with no pressure to be or do anything.



I was sitting in a friend's living room. He was trained in imaginative prayer and I was just sitting on his couch, sharing about a very painful moment in my life. He asked me if I had ever asked Jesus where He was during that moment, because a lot of my hurt stemmed from feeling abandoned by the Lord. I knew that it wasn't in His character to abandon me, but I didn't understand why I felt so defeated and alone in that moment. When I was led through imaginative prayer, God showed me that Jesus was just outside the door of that room, fighting off the evil that was trying to enter and create more chaos and pain. He gave me a picture of Jesus with a sword, physically fighting an evil army trying to get in. It has brought healing for that moment and trust back into my relationship with God.

At the most basic level, what we'll be doing here is simply a style of prayer. It is you talking with God. It is your spirit connecting with the Holy Spirit. It is prayer. This connection is possible through the covering of Jesus and the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is a type of prayer that sets your imagination apart for holy purposes in prayer. It is reclaiming your imagination as a canvas for God's artistry in your internal world.

This type of prayer can be done as a form of guided prayer, where someone else walks you through the steps, allowing you to engage an internal posture of rest and receiving. Or this type of prayer can be done by yourself alone with God, inviting Him to speak. I will be outlining this style of prayer in this chapter and inviting you to try it for yourself.

But first, in this type of prayer, it is important to know two key components. The spiritual world has a few dynamics that are important to understand and pay attention to:

First, Jesus is the ultimate authority over all things and all spiritual beings.

Second, there are real spiritual beings that are opposed to Jesus and His work.

There are real spiritual hierarchies, with Jesus being supreme above all. Whether or not you consider yourself to be a follower of Jesus, it is vital that you enter this prayer space under His covering. If you do not, you leave yourself vulnerable to other spiritual beings interjecting fallacies in your prayer experience. If you do enter this prayer space under the authority of Jesus, there is still discernment needed in your prayer experience...understanding that what He reveals will be both in line with Scripture and with His character (kindness, love, never shaming). If anything is not in line with those two things, there may be an oppositional spiritual reality to reject from your prayer space. You do this rejecting (or commanding away) by telling whatever evil spiritual being is interjecting into your prayer space to go be submitted to the feet of Jesus by the name, blood, and authority of Jesus. Hearing messages that do not align with the character of God and/or feeling blocked in an imaginative prayer session is not at all uncommon. You are engaging real, spiritual things, which means there will at times be opposing spiritual forces of evil. At the end of this chapter, I've included a more detailed prayer of how to command away spiritual forces of evil.

Ultimately, imaginative prayer is simply talking with God, a form of prayer. What follows is a set of steps to walk through as you engage this type of prayer. If you've never prayed in this style before, it may feel a bit unusual at first; however, I encourage you to give it a try. Read through the steps once. Set aside time for yourself to restfully enter into a prayer space. If music helps you settle in, I recommend turning on *Soaking in His Presence by William Augusto*.

Imaginative Prayer

With imaginative prayer, you are simply setting apart your imagination as a place to meet with Jesus. In as much as God created any part of you, He created your imagination as well. Because he designed your imagination, you can trust that it can be engaged for holy, prayerful purposes under Jesus' authority and under the discernment of your own spirit as it is connected to the Holy Spirit. What follows is a simplified step-by-step approach to meeting with Jesus in this way.



Note: This style of prayer explained here was largely developed through imaginative prayer sessions that I participated in with my husband, Val Tramonte, and from insights gained through the "Encountering God Training" by Rhonda Calhoun.^{1,2}

Now is your opportunity to try out this style of prayer. Set aside time to walk through the steps and meet with Jesus in a spiritually imaginative way. In the following reflective journal space, write down what this experience was like for you as well as anything God shows you or speaks to as you pray.



What was this prayer experience like for you?



What pictures, imagery, words, verses, etc. did God show you as you prayed?

COMMANDING AWAY SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL

If you find yourself in a prayer session where what is being shown or spoken is inconsistent with the character of God (kindness, love, never shaming) and/or feels like you're blocked, you may need to pause and command all forces of evil away again. That would sound like this:

Person (audibly stating): "I command all spiritual forces of evil away from this space by the name, power, blood, and authority of Jesus. Go be submitted to the feet of Jesus for judgment there. You are not welcome here. Go now."

Person (praying): "Holy Spirit, please push out from this space everything that is not of you. Holy Spirit, please fill every space here with your presence and your peace."

If you continue to feel blocked or the messages you are hearing are inconsistent with who God is, reach out to a trusted friend to pray with you over the areas of incongruence and blockage or reach out to us at ODR. Jesus is the authority over all spiritual realities, and He has good for you.

Selah

Soaking in His Presence by William Augusto

Part II

Personal Narrative

Mapping Your Life

Out of our pain we will heal our world. This isn't a trite saying; it is truth. Because whatever we failed to receive as children are the very things we most want to give. So we don't dig up the past without just cause. We dig up the past because it is some of the most fertile material in our lives.

- Jennie Allen, *Restless*¹

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

I sat in the backroom of our house a few nights in a row, mapping my life story. I had memories jotted down into simple phrases on post-it notes, which were randomly placed everywhere on a piece of poster board. My soul was heavy as I felt again some truly painful seasons. I let myself into the pain and allowed myself to be lost in it for a few days, making space for sadness over what had hurt. I saw my strengths again, too. I was created for meaning: the moments of my life combined with my gifts and interests came together to show a whole picture of how my life has been woven together since early on. I was awakening to significance and purpose in things I had not otherwise connected until this point. Mapping my life allowed me to see my story from a whole new vantage point, one that allowed me to take in the entirety of it and interpret it in a new way with fresh vision for the future.

Materials Needed

For this chapter, you'll need the following:

- ▶ Blank paper
- ▶ Three separate colors of pens

(These can be any color; however, in this chapter, I'll be referring to red, green, and black pens.)

Often to move forward, we must look back to see where we've been and how we arrived at where we are. In this chapter, I am inviting you to join me in mapping your life story as a way of reflecting on where you've been. While we use a much more extensive life map process for our Original Design Restored Intensives, we'll engage a similar but simpler process here in this chapter.

I'll be inviting you to reflect on what has shaped you, both the good and the difficult. It is when we look back and see what has shaped us that we can more effectively make choices about how we want to keep or release those things going forward. Looking at our life story can help us identify lack that needs filling up and name gifts that we've been given to lean into. Before we begin this process, though, there is a welcoming Jesus into the process with you that I'd like to invite you to engage.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Psalm 139:13-16

Before you were even born, God saw all the days of your life. All the pain, all the passion, all the purpose and power your life would hold. He designed you so specifically. With great purpose, He wove together your personality and preferences. He planted in your heart soul-stirring longings. He planned for you to be drawn to certain people, places, things, and passions. You were not by chance.

While your entrance into the world placed you immediately in a broken reality, God knew all that would happen in your life (the good and the difficult) and was longing for the redemption and restoration of your story...of you.

Through this chapter, you will be walking back into your story, remembering it and piecing together the narrative that is your life. You will be looking for what God has been doing all along, tying together themes He's been at work in, identifying pieces of your design, and stepping toward the healing of wounds and the breaking off of lies.

Note: As you remember, if at any point in the process of remembering you find yourself stuck in the process or weighed down by a memory (or memories), please reach out to a trusted friend or spouse, schedule an appointment with a therapist, and/or schedule a Sozo session (if available in your area).

Take a moment to pause and reflect on the following questions, journaling your answers to them in the space provided below:



As you consider going into your story, what scares you most?



As you consider going into your story, what excites you most?

As we begin this journey, God wants to join with you in it, walk with you, speak to you, guide you through every memory and all that He has in store for you. To truly engage your own story, to truly let yourself go into and feel what is really there, to actually meet with God in it, there is a releasing of yourself to the process and to God. A surrender. Author Jennie Allen describes surrender as “receiving our lives.”¹² In order to receive the story God is writing in and through your life, there is a necessary surrendering to Him. Will you do that? Today, before we go any further?

Will you take a few minutes to surrender yourself, your story, and this journey to Him?
Will you ask Him to walk into your story with you?
Will you surrender yourself wholly to Him?

Before moving forward, please take some intentional time to release yourself to Him, to surrender yourself to God, to receive your life, and to believe that He is at work in the story that is being written in and through your life.

As you pray, ask Jesus if there is anything He wants you to know or see in this moment of surrender. Turn off your internal self-editor, and in the space provided below, write down anything you sense from Him. It could be a word, a verse, a picture, or even an awareness of His presence.

Now that you have welcomed Jesus into the process and have released yourself to whatever the Holy Spirit may want to show you as you remember back through your story, it's time to get reflective and creative. To begin mapping your life story, grab a few pieces of paper and your three pens of various colors.

On a sheet of paper, draw a black line down the middle, with a dot at the far left to mark your birth. Then draw a little arrow to the far right of the paper to mark the future you have not yet lived but is yet to come. (There is a sample life map at the end of this chapter to give you a visual.). This line is the timeline of your life that you've lived until now. In a moment, you'll begin marking significant events and relationships on your timeline. As you mark these significant events and relationships, write the positive, life-giving moments in green on one side of the line (see the sample life map), and write the negative, painful moments in red on the other side of the line. This will allow a powerful visual for you as you see your life laid out this way.

Your life is telling a story. It has been telling a story since before you were born. It has a narrative. Every day of your life, you've been living out this story. Throughout the story, there have been significant moments, memories, people, events, experiences, accomplishments, failures, hurts, hopes, wounds, and dreams. These significant moments have been shaping you in some way or another.

These significant moments have been called “life turns.”³ These are moments (or relationships or events) that significantly shifted the course of your life, whether positively or negatively. It could have been a conversation that impacted what you believed (whether a truth or a lie) or an experience that “taught” you something about yourself (again, it could have been a true or false self-perspective) or a relationship that brought deep encouragement or deep pain. These significant moments are moments that shaped your life story, how you lived it, and what you believed about yourself, God, others, and the world.

To go forward and shape a new path, we must look backward first. Others have written extensively about the importance of remembering and have even given prompts as to what to remember:

“As you reflect, think of:

- ▶ The events in your life that influenced who you are today.
- ▶ The people who influenced and shaped your life.
- ▶ The significant circumstances that affected your life direction.”⁴

“...[I] recommend that you make every effort to remember and share your story. What did you live? Who were the important people in your childhood? How did they influence you? What are your best memories? What are your most painful memories? How have your painful memories influenced your way of connecting?”⁵

As we begin to remember our stories, this remembering is meant to be an active process with the Holy Spirit. As you released yourself to God in the last step, in this step, will you take a moment to invite the Holy Spirit into your process? When we invite the Holy Spirit into our remembering, He brings to mind the very memories He wants us to walk into. Rest yourself in the reality of His presence in your remembering. You are not alone in your remembering. He is with you.

Take time now to begin writing on your timeline those shaping moments, memories, circumstances, relationships, accomplishments, failures, wounds, and dreams. Place the positive, life-giving ones on one side of the line in green and the negative, painful ones on the other side of the line in red. As moments and memories and people come to mind, avoid judging why those things are coming to mind and instead write them down and engage curiosity over why they came to the surface. Seemingly insignificant moments or memories sometimes shape us more than we realize. Write down whatever comes to mind as you remember what shaped you both positively and negatively.

Pause here to work on your life map and return to the chapter once you have finished.

It is because of His love that we can travel back into our stories, that we are free to ask for healing and wholeness, that we are created to cultivate our design and offer it to the world around us, that we have the space to ask Him to walk with us and show us all that He sees. Once you begin to reach the end of mapping your life timeline, start asking Him for further clarity and insight over what you have lived.

Remembering and recording your life story are such huge steps toward restoration. In this next and last part of the mapping your life timeline, you will take some time to begin reflecting on your story. Before we begin, though, will you take some time to invite Jesus into this part of the process?

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Colossians 1:17

Jesus holds all things together. He holds your whole story together. Every bit of it. As He holds your story together, He wants to heal, restore, transform, and bring wholeness to you. We are primarily restored by spiritually engaging with Jesus as we reject false paradigms (lies) we've lived from, repent of our own sin, offer our emotional wounds to Him, and reclaim parts of our design that have been lost, attacked, or even destroyed. Because of Jesus' rescue of us, we can release ourselves to Him and participate in the process of Him making us new.

"The God who lives within holds all things together, even our frayed, distorted, broken realities. Because he loves us, we can surrender everything we are to him, embracing the gift that we are... we can trust that surrender is our best option. Then change will come. God will do it. We don't muster up the energy to change. Instead, we rest in the life that is ours in Christ."

-Richard Plass and James Cofield, *The Relational Soul*⁶

Mapping our life story is such a powerful experience. Equally as powerful is beginning to reflect on, process, and interpret our life story. We will be processing our own life stories in the coming chapters. For now, you will engage in an overview reflection on your life by looking for the main gifts and griefs in your life story.

GIFTS

Take some time to simply look at your timeline. Rest your soul in the presence of Jesus and listen to the Holy Spirit. As you look at your whole life story, what gifts do you see? What positive, life-giving, soul-thrilling themes do you see woven throughout your life? What are you good at? What do you love doing? When have you thrived? Who are the people who have positively impacted you? List in the space provided below the central gifts you've been given in your life.

Take a few minutes to thank God for the gifts He's given you in this life.

GRIEF

Take some time to look again at your timeline. Again, still yourself in the presence of Jesus and listen to the Spirit. What places of grief do you see? What painful, broken, soul-aching themes do you see woven throughout your life? Where have you experienced loss? Who has hurt you? What wounds have you sustained? What patterns do you keep doing even though they bring death to your life? List in the space provided below the central griefs (places of pain) you've experienced in your life.

“We must come home to our own soul, our pain, our limits, and our losses if we are to engage more deeply in true-self living. We must give our soul time to grieve. We can't keep trying to escape our own life. The life we have is the life we've got. It is the only life we will ever have.”

-Richard Plass and James Cofield, *The Relational Soul*⁷

Take a few minutes to ask God to heal, fill, and make whole the grief you've experienced in life.

To close out today as you step away from processing your gifts and griefs, ask God for a word, picture, or Scripture that He would like to give you today, something from Him for you right now. Write down a quick note of whatever He shows you.

...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

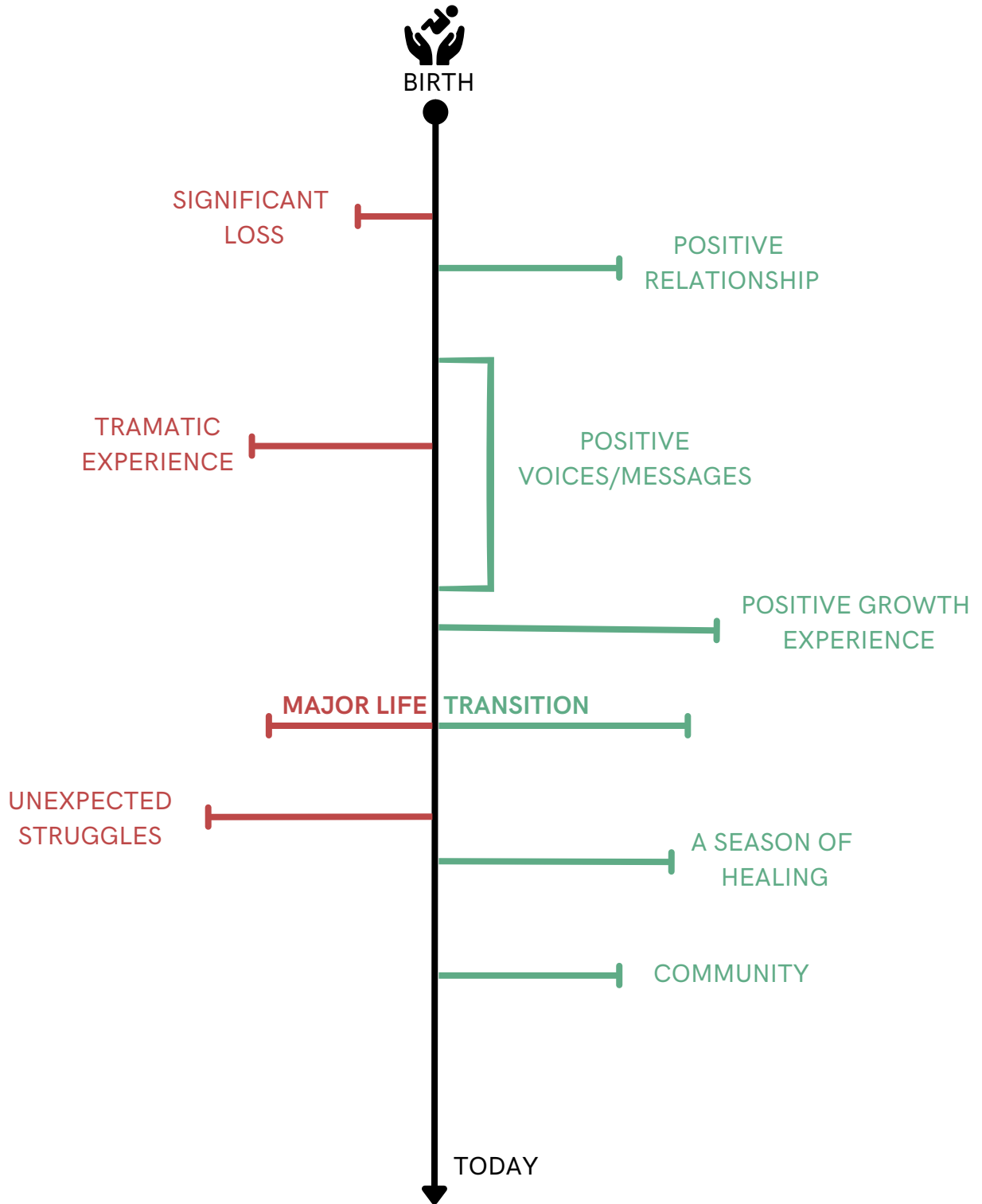
Philippians 1:6

Note: As you remember, if at any point in the process of remembering you find yourself stuck in the process or weighed down by a memory (or memories), please reach out a trusted friend or spouse, or schedule an appointment with a therapist, and/or schedule a Sozo session (if available in your area).

Selah

“Rescue” by Lauren Daigle

Life Map



Sharing Your Story

Remembering and telling our story takes us home to ourselves. There is no possibility of soulful relationships without an integrated soul that has embraced its story (the good, the bad, the ugly).

- Richard Plass and James Cofield, *The Relational Soul*¹

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

We sat at a coffee shop, me with my life map laid out full of color and her with a notepad in hand. I was self-conscious about how long it would take to tell my story...and it did take a long time. I have a tendency to include a high-level of detail in the telling of...well, anything. But she stayed with me through the whole, highly detailed retelling of my life. I went into the meeting fairly sure that I understood most of what had happened in my life...even the painful events; however, I left that meeting with three truths that she had seen in my story that I had never seen before. This woman was a life coach and had not known me for very long; however, she, by the power of the Holy Spirit, had unlocked key things that had been hidden to me in my own story that sparked me into further freedom and fuller living in the years to come.

Something significant happens in us when we share our stories with others who are attuned to us. Attunement is more than paying attention. Attunement is when we connect with and make space for another person in such a way that she feels seen, known, and accepted. Attunement is one person grasping in a knowing way what another person is communicating. Attunement allows the speaker to feel seen, heard, understood, and known.

When sharing painful experiences in a safe, attuned interaction, the one sharing can experience healing (as can the one listening, too). There is power in sharing our stories in safe settings with those who are attuned to us, with those who are listening deeply with their heart, mind, soul, and spirit.

While we have a much more extensive, facilitated story-sharing session at our Original Design Restored Intensives, for our purposes in this chapter of the workbook, I will ask you to choose two friends with whom you will share a brief version of your story and invite their life-giving feedback (within specific parameters). In telling our story to someone else, we have the opportunity to see a fresh perspective on our own lives. So often we're so deep into our own story that often we cannot see it fully. Inviting others to see in allows us the opportunity to see what we don't see. It allows others to bear witness to what we've lived.

This sharing of our life story is sacred and is not to be approached lightly. For this reason, we will keep our story-sharing brief within the context of this workbook; however, I highly encourage you to pursue an opportunity to share a more extensive version of your story in a facilitated setting. A facilitated setting would include sharing with a therapist or with a life coach or in a facilitated group setting like what we make space for at an Original Design Restored Intensive or in a Confessional Community as described in *Soul of Desire* by Curt Thompson. These should be spaces that are facilitated by someone skilled in healthy sharing and feedback parameters. I'll share a few parameters and boundaries that we use at an Original Design Restored Intensive to give you a sense of what that feels like.

To prepare for sharing your story, you will need to do two things:

First, prayerfully consider at least two people with whom you feel safe and could gather together to share a brief version of your story. Second, you will need to review your life timeline and choose 5-7 of the most significantly shaping moments/memories on your timeline.

As for choosing your two (or more) people, it will be vital to choose people who can allow you to have the space and freedom to grow and change and express things about your life that they may not have known before. It is also vital to choose people who can respect confidentiality and can attune to you as you share. Set aside a time for the three of you to meet together for the sole purpose of sharing your story timeline and receiving feedback. Make a point to have this time together be free of interruptions and distractions. Prepare them for the sharing session to be both confidential and within specific feedback parameters. Ideally, they would be working through this workbook as well; however, it is not vital that they are for you to share your story with them.

Now that you are ready to share your story, share with those receiving your story the feedback parameters that can be found at the end of this chapter. I suggest copying those feedback parameters and giving your story listeners a paper copy to refer to throughout the story-sharing session.

The progression of a story-sharing session is to make sure everyone understands confidentiality and the feedback parameters and is willing to abide by those boundaries. Next, one person will pray over the time together (both for protection from spiritual attack and for insight from God). Then, you will spend approximately 10-15 minutes sharing a brief version of your life story based on your timeline. Your sharing will be monologue style, only you will be talking for the entirety of those minutes (there will be time for the listeners to ask questions at the end during the feedback time). Once you have finished sharing, the listeners are then invited to ask clarifying questions and share feedback based on the feedback parameters below.

Once feedback has been shared, as you close in prayer, have each person in the group pray a releasing prayer of both the story and feedback shared, allowing each person to remain whole after such a vulnerable and connected experience together. A releasing prayer that I heard John Eldredge share and that I use often sounds like this, “I give everyone and everything back to you, Jesus.” Praying releasing prayer similar to this at the end of a sharing session allows each person present to remain whole, helping to prevent codependency, enmeshment, and over-responsibility.

"No matter what our experience, it is important to keep in mind one crucial thing when it comes to our stories: it isn't enough to review them on our own. We must share them with another. We must do so because we are relational beings who are both hurt and healed by our relationships. We must have the presence of others to help us see ourselves well. We need help even with our own story!"

-Richard Plass and James Cofield, *The Relational Soul*²

Selah

“Take a Moment” by United Pursuit

FEEDBACK PARAMETERS

At an Original Design Restored Intensive, we ask that all feedback throughout the Intensive be offered within the following parameters. We emphasize that feedback must not be in the form of advice nor pulled into someone else's personal experience.

All feedback will be framed in one of these three topics and will sound like this:

Gifts (qualities, characteristics, strengths that the person possesses)

"A gift I see in you..."³

examples

"A gift I see in you is kindness."

"A gift I see in you is strength."

"A gift I see in you is perceptivity."

Truths (as seen in the person's story)

"A truth I see in your story..."

examples

"A truth I see in your story is the love of God over you."

"A truth I see in your story is your wisdom in difficult circumstances."

"A truth I see in your story is you developing your gifts well."

Redemptive Restoration (places where God's healing-hand could shift something difficult, such as a lie believed, a wound received, a sin pattern)

"I wonder if..." (redemptive restoration feedback)⁴

examples

"I wonder if it would be helpful to tell your husband how you feel."

"I wonder if there is a dream worth pursuing (in what you shared)."

"I wonder if it would be helpful to strategize for self-care."

In addition, you are welcome to ask questions for further understanding of what someone has shared.


Who You Are

It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.

- e.e. cummings

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.

 What are you feeling?

At the start of a personal-development weekend I was attending in my early thirties, I entered cautiously, unsure that I could really trust what was happening in the room. I knew that this weekend would be about identity, but I felt that I couldn't trust anyone else's words to me about my identity because then my identity would be coming from external input. Gaining identity from others was something I had been doing my whole life and was intentionally undoing, since that's how I had defined myself most of my life. I'd formed my identity around who other people said I was. So, I wrestled with the tension of being at a training on identity but feeling like I didn't want to gain my identity from others. However, in those early moments of that weekend, before anyone else had spoken anything to me about my identity, I sensed God speaking to my soul my identity in one word. This word, this identity, this spiritually deposited descriptor brought peace and struck a chord deeper than any word anyone else had ever spoken to me.

I wonder about you and your identity. Maybe you, too, have carried masks over your soul for far too long...words and messages others have named you as but are not truly who you are. Some may be dreadfully negative, while others aren't bad at all. Maybe you've even prided yourself in what others have said about you, yet deep in your soul there's a dissonance with others' definition of you versus what you know to be your truest self.

I wonder if you sat alone in quiet for five minutes what words God Himself might speak to you about who you are. Let's actually do that right now. Find a quiet spot. Be still and ask God, "Who do you say that I am?" Just wait for Him to respond. Write the word(s) that come as you sit alone in prayer.



I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful. I know that full well.

Psalm 139:14

Let me share an example with you. My "false identity," the identities about myself I picked up from others (whether spoken or not) sounded like this: *good girl - perfect - perfectionist - hard worker - good daughter - too sensitive - awkward - not as pretty - leader - bossy - panicky - stressed - overwhelmed - smart - intelligent - logical*. Some of these words were really affirming; while some were incredibly discouraging. None of them were what God wanted to tell me when I finally sat with Him alone to name who I am, silencing all the other voices. His key words have been: WARRIOR and TREASURE. That's a very different identity than the ones I picked up along life's way. When I let a few trusted others into my story, to offer feedback or lead me through guided prayer sessions, the words have sounded like: *tender - strong - brave - beautiful - wholehearted - peaceful - faithful, present mom - beloved, loving wife - cherished daughter of God*. These are also very different identities than the ones I had picked up along life's way. The identity God bestows and others see in you when carefully holding your story ought to feel like life, peace, love, and empowerment. Your own soul must resonate with them. If a word or descriptor doesn't feel this way, don't include it. If something is negative or tearing down, don't include it. Identity should always be a calling forward to who you truly are. It is bestowed by God and recognized by others. It is not a burden to live up to nor a shaming curse placed upon you. It is a hopeful rising up toward whole-expression of self as created in the image of God Himself. You as an artistic expression of God's goodness.

For this next portion, you will need thirty minutes of uninterrupted time and a few supplies. At a minimum, you'll need a pen/pencil and paper; however, this will be a creative endeavor, so I recommend also gathering cardstock, markers/colorful pens, colored pencils, washi tape, stickers, and/or any other art supplies you'd like to use.

Once you are settled with your supplies and have set aside time and space, create an artistic representation of your identity. Start with the key word or words that you sensed God saying about who you are. Then surround that word with the other words you know to be true of you (or words others have shared with you that resonate with you as true and life-giving and empowering). This can be as simple or as creative as you like. Your words could simply be a list or could be worked into an artistic representation of your core identity. Take time, though, to make a representation of your identity on a piece of paper or cardstock. Let it be the things you know to be true of yourself, even if you've been hiding or running from some of them. Put only your truest self in words on this paper, not the masks you've been carrying through life. Creatively represent on this paper the person God Himself made you to be.

Once you have this creative expression written down on a piece of paper, my next challenge is for you to take it into a private space with a mirror: a bedroom closet or a bathroom. Face yourself in the mirror and tell yourself that you are these things. Every statement you say will start with an, "I am..." For example, when I have done this, looking myself in the mirror, I have said, "I am a beloved and loving wife" and "I am tender, strong, brave, and beautiful." Say them once to yourself just to practice hearing yourself say these things. Then, when you are ready, I want you to invite Jesus into the space with you and say these things to yourself in the mirror knowing He is right there with you. If He is right there with you and this is who He has made you to be, there will be a different gravitas to your voicing these truths than if you just rattle off a list. Speak this as an embracing and owning who God designed you to be. Let this be an expression of your truest self.

Close your time speaking to yourself in a mirror with prayer, asking Jesus to make these true of you and to empower you by His Holy Spirit to live from the truth of your identity.

Finally, please speak these truths to yourself in the mirror, inviting Jesus to be with you, every day for the next thirty days as you continue to work through the remainder of this workbook.

Selah

"Steeple Outro" by David Crowder Band

"You Say" by Lauren Daigle

"Daughter" by Sleeping at Last

Part III

Experiential Learning

Tools For Healing

If you don't heal from what hurt you, you'll bleed on those who didn't cut you.

- Unknown

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

I was a bridesmaid in my friend's wedding, flying from Oklahoma to Southern California, only my connecting flight between the two was cancelled, so as I was travelling, my husband rebooked me on the next flight, which had me leaving somewhere in the middle of the night from middle America in the middle of a rainstorm. I boarded the plane and sunk into my row, exhausted. Two other women sat with me and began to share their own stories of the last few days. Each of us was drained, each of us trying to get to where we needed to be. In those dark hours up in the sky, we each began to share more of our stories...the stories of our lives...and one of the women, in particular, left me feeling that there had to be a better way for faith to impact life. She shared her marriage struggles and everything she had tried to do to make her marriage work, only for it to ultimately end. She shared, looking directly at me, that she had even tried attending a Bible study, looking for answers and insight...but even they couldn't help. I was young, newly married, and mostly unaware of actual tools for transformation. I felt inadequate and ill-equipped. How does Christianity actually intersect with real life, with the hard things, with the places of struggle and pain?

It's been many years since that night on the plane. I wish I could go back to that conversation with the tools I now have. I wish I could give her better answers as to why the Bible study failed and what would offer hope. But even more than that, I want to shift my focus forward to us now. What do we do with the pain and struggle we face? What practical tools do we have to pursue the transformation of ourselves and uncover a life of hope? Christian clichés are inadequate. It is time to be equipped to live out restoration in every area of our lives. We must connect with the Living God and engage the very change of ourselves through the power of the Holy Spirit by looking square in the face at the things that haunt us and hold us back.

“Mental and emotional healing can take longer than physical healing, because emotional ailments often stay hidden for much longer and therefore have deeper roots.”

- Rebekah Lyons, *You Are Free*¹

The lies, wounds, and sin left undealt with in our lives are some of the very things that cost us our dreams. These three things, when we choose to not face them and to not surrender them to transformation in Jesus, are the things that hinder us, cost us our calling, and cause ripple effects of destruction in our life. But. When we choose to bravely face what lies just under the surface, bring it to the light, and let Jesus bring healing, transformation, and freedom, we get to walk into transformed living.

Every person has places that, when left undealt with, are causing pain in their own lives and possibly damage in the lives of those around them. And if you sit with it long enough, you can begin to feel the shadows of lies, wounds, and sins that are directly creating fallout in your own life. No one is exempt. We all have lies we've believed, wounds we've received, and sin we've done. The goal, though, is not to give into shame by hiding these things, pretending that they don't affect us; rather, the goal is to bring them to the light and let the love and grace of Jesus bring freedom to every area of our lives. He already knows about it and died for the redemption of it, so let's run forward to embrace His redemption of *all* things, including you and me.²

When women attend an Original Design Restored Intensive, I often encourage them to hold nothing back. I share about how you will get out of the Intensive what you put into it. This is true for you, too, as you work through this workbook. This is especially true as we enter into the next portion of this process. As you face lies, wounds, and sin, my invitation to you is to hold nothing back.

LIES BELIEVED

We all believe lies at some point. These are false beliefs about ourselves, others, the world, God, how we should live, etc. Until we go after these lies to dismantle them, they remain an influence on us and how we live. So, we are going to go after the lies and break them down in the light of Truth Himself.

“If we keep running from our true selves, we’ll continue on a slow and steady spiral to the point where we’ll look in the mirror one day and not know our truth from our lies. We won’t remember who we really are. Secrets have the power to paralyze us as long as they remain locked up deep inside. We must be willing to encounter the past honestly with a community of trusted friends who will walk with us through the process.”

- Rebekah Lyons, *Freefall to Fly*³

LIES

We understand from the Scripture that we have an enemy who is the “father of lies.”⁴ He comes to steal, kill, and destroy.⁵ He is like a roaring lion seeking whom He may devour.⁶ His lies sneak in to destroy us and dismantle us from living our God-given design.⁷ When we believe lies, we live from them...and living from lies brings death and destruction. It is vital to acknowledge that we have a real enemy who wants to destroy us.⁸ We are in an actual battle for our lives, ultimately fighting for our lives to be lived under truth, restoration, and freedom in Jesus.

TRUTH

As we walk into this process, it is important to understand that you are not responsible for the false beliefs (lies) you were given as a child, but as an adult, you are responsible for pursuing the transformation of them.⁹ Transformation of these lies will come through identifying the lies you believe, rejecting them, and asking God to replace the lies with truth. As you do this, it is important to also recognize that the lies you’ve believed have impacted how you live. You live out what you believe. When you believe false paradigms, you live from them. Your life reflects those paradigms. As you reject these lies and ask God to replace them with truth, take time to also ask Him to transform how you live...that you would live from truth. Transformation happens by the combination of Jesus’ blood having made peace, the power of the Holy Spirit, and your own personal choices. You will be able live from truth by engaging both the Holy Spirit’s power and by consciously making choices aligned with truth. It takes both.

DECONSTRUCTION - RECONSTRUCTION

So, basically, facing the lies we've believed in our lives and pursuing Jesus' transformation of them is a "deconstruction-reconstruction" process. As you face the lies you've believed and replace them with truth, you'll be deconstructing whole paradigms you've lived in and reconstructing new paradigms based on the truth the Holy Spirit reveals. And as you engage in the "deconstruction-reconstruction" of these paradigms, how you live your whole life will be impacted. You have the opportunity to be truly transformed in the process.

SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND FREEDOM

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

John 16:13

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:17-19

I want to invite you into your own deconstruct/reconstruct process, facing the lies you've believed and lived from in your own life. Remember that you are not responsible for the lies you've received, but you are responsible for facing them and pursuing the transformation of them.

Set aside 15-20 minutes for reflective prayer. First, ask God to reveal to you the lies you believe. In silence, wait and listen, letting His Holy Spirit show you lies. Write down any that come to mind in the left column. Then, ask Him to begin to speak truth to the lies you've listed. Write any counteracting truths He shows you across from the lie it is meant to replace. Consider what it would be like to live free from the lies that have bound you for so long. Then, as you counteract each lie with truth, ask Him to dismantle the lie you've believed and ask Him to give you power to begin to build a new way of living based on the truth He revealed.

You will find a half-page worth at the end of this chapter to work through these lies and truths. When you are finished with this exercise, return to the chapter to move on to the next exercise.

WOUNDS RECEIVED

This next portion, I step into with great care, knowing that some of these wounds that I'm asking you to offer to Jesus are beyond comprehension. The pain, rejection, abandonment, and abuse are heart-wrenching. I am so sorry that it happened. This exercise here in this chapter is a short blip toward healing; however, some of the wounding you've faced is huge. I do not want to rush past the magnitude of what you experienced.

I also want to speak to those of you who think your wounds are too small or too silly to be acknowledged. Please silence that shaming voice that tells you to not name the wound. I invite you to press into even the smallest wounds that the Holy Spirit brings to the surface. Because no matter how great or small the wound is in terms of some arbitrary "measurement," if it hurt you, it *is* a wound, and to be healed, it must be given attention and proper care.

Thus suffering completely fills the human soul and the conscious mind, no matter whether the suffering is great or little. Therefore, the "size" of human suffering is absolutely relative.

- Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*¹⁰

Essentially, if it hurt you, it needs healing. And often, the things that hurt us from long ago that haven't been healed impact us, our life, and our relationships far more than we realize. Now is the time to pursue healing of the things that have hurt you.

To understand the approach we will take in this workbook, will you imagine for a moment that your soul is like a bank account? Imagine now that people have made deposits and withdrawals in the bank account of your soul. The wounds you've received are like withdrawals. Some of us have had such extensive withdrawals taken from us that even our soul feels as though it's dipped far into the negative, as though we're always scrambling to emotionally "make ends meet." But we can never quite do it. Or we hold onto those withdrawals, knowing that those people who hurt us rightfully owe us, yet feeling as though we're never getting paid, always coming up short. The truth is that even if amends have been made, the person who hurt us cannot fully fill up the debt owed. Amends do not fully repay emotional debt. There is something more needed to fill up the debts of our soul, to heal the wounds of our hearts. Until we engage what can fully fill and heal the soul, we walk around with struggling emotional bank accounts, engaging life from soul poverty. In that poverty of soul, we enter relationships with low emotional bank accounts, looking for something or someone to fill our account and heal our wounds. Something has to change for us to be filled back up, for us to be healed. But no human can fully fill up another's soul account. Only the power of God can fully heal and fill through the process of forgiveness. This is not meant as spiritual bypassing, but rather, this concept is meant to be taken to a practical level.

Too often, forgiveness has been taught as “forgive and forget”...to act as though the wrong never happened. That’s not at all what forgiveness is. In fact, quite the opposite. To deeply engage forgiveness, a few things must happen...

First, acknowledge what hurt you. Name it. Recognize that a debt was created in your life by the hurt that was done. Second, when you are ready, transfer that debt to Jesus. When you do this, you are not wiping away what was owed; rather, you are simply transferring what was owed over to Jesus now. What this does is makes the person who wronged you now responsible to Jesus for what they have done...they now owe that debt to Jesus and it is between Jesus and them. If you’ve transferred the debt to Jesus, you also now get to ask Him to fill up the debt that was owed you, to heal the wound that has caused you so much pain. And He can heal the wound. He has limitless resource. He can do all things. He can fill the emotional debts of your soul that others have caused. So, third, as you transfer the debt, in faith, ask Jesus to fill that debt in your life and to heal that wound. Fourth, watch and wait for how Jesus begins to fill and heal. He may engage a variety of people and resources to fill and heal. Finally, when the pain of that wound surfaces, and you’re tempted to want to hold on to it as though the person still owes you, transfer it back to Jesus. As long as you’re waiting for the person to “pay you back” for what they’ve done to you, you’ll always end up short emotionally because the person can never fully fulfill the debt they’ve created. They can apologize, ask for forgiveness, change behavioral patterns, make amends, but they cannot fully pay their own sin debts, nor can they fully heal your soul. Only Jesus can. Continue to transfer it back to Him over and over again if needed.

Before we move forward, let me also say that forgiveness does not equal a lack of boundaries. When you forgive someone who’s wounded you, that simply means that you are going to Jesus for the healing of what hurt you. Forgiveness does not mean you must enter back into the hurtful dynamic. Rather, engaging discernment and wisdom, consider the nature of the wounding. There are many relational realities where it is wise to engage boundaries around yourself regarding the wounding, destructive pattern, and/or person. Boundaries are meant for your own wholeness and health. And boundaries are possible even within traditionally close relationships such as family, friendships, and marriage. Certainly, if abuse is occurring, separation is a healthy boundary.* Forgiveness does not equal trust. Forgiveness does not equal access. Forgiveness equals a transfer of debt from a human owing you to Jesus having the opportunity to heal you.

To practically walk this out, complete the following exercise. With a clear understanding of forgiveness in place, you will find a page at the end of this chapter with templates of bank withdrawal slips. Copy as many pages of this as you like. Then sit with one of your copied pages, and invite Jesus to bring to the surface the wounds He wants to heal. As a wound comes to mind, name it by writing it out on one of the withdrawal slips. This is the naming of the wound itself.

Then consider what was taken from you, what was taken from your life, what was taken from the account of your soul, and write it down on the withdrawal slip. This is the name of what was taken from you as a result of the wounding, the “amount” owed you. Then when you are ready to hand it over to Jesus, prayerfully tell Jesus that you are handing it over to Him, saying that you no longer hold that person responsible to you to pay it back, but they now are responsible to Him for what they’ve done. Ask Jesus to fill up this debt in your life. Then tear up the withdrawal slip. When you are finished with this exercise, return to the workbook for the next section.

SIN DONE

Okay, sin. Here we go. What we are about to work through here is not sin management. “Managing” your sins is not the goal of the Gospel. We were never meant to manage our sins the way we manage our homes, our finances, or our businesses. Management is the wrong approach to dealing with sin, which is why “accountability” often fails. The focus of accountability is not doing the wrong thing. This is not the Gospel. The Gospel is grace and rescue and a way out of sin. It is finding freedom by living by the power of the Holy Spirit under the freeing blood of Jesus. Accountability is you focused and effort focused. The Gospel is God focused. The Gospel is grace focused. The Gospel is freedom focused.

When we try to deal with sin in our human effort, we engage the defeating cycle of fail – feel guilty – try harder – fail again. We white knuckle our attempts to act rightly. White knuckling our behavior does not transform us in the end. Behavior management is not soul change. When we engage the transformation of our souls, true change begins to happen. Only Jesus can do the work of transforming the soul. In a Gospel framework of transformation, we fail – confess – repent – believe – and either move forward into freedom or if we fail again, we have the opportunity to enter His grace to confess – repent – and believe all over again.¹¹

What it means to confess, repent, and believe in terms of sin is simply to confess (acknowledge the misstep), repent (reorient ourselves to living aligned with God), and believe (have faith that by God’s power we can be made new in this area of struggle).

So, whatever it is, the sin that so easily entangles you, the sin that you know is affecting your life more than you ever anticipated, say it out loud to God. Then, ask Him for how to live differently. Ask Him what the way He would have you live (the repentance piece) and go live that way. And as you begin to envision yourself living in the way God provides, ask the Holy Spirit for power to live in this new way, believing that He can give you power to live new.

As He is working this out in you, ask Him who He may want you to voice your process to as another layer to dismantle the hold this sin has on your life. While Jesus Himself is the mediator between God and man,¹² the One to whom we confess, it can be helpful to speak our confession out loud to another person.

Only Jesus can wash your sin away, only He can give you the power to live differently and new, but speaking your struggle out loud to another person can dismantle some of the power it has over you. By speaking it out, you are no longer alone in the dark.¹³

“No matter what you’ve experienced, the pain you’ve felt, the victimization you’ve encountered. When God feels far away, do you see it?

Confession is the gateway to freedom.

That’s it. Every time. This isn’t a one-time, “sinner’s prayer” kind of thing. This is an Every-Moment-You’re-About-to-Lose-Your-Crazy kind of thing. There’s no brilliant formula for being a super-Christian. We are all broken and in desperate need of a Savior.”

- Rebekah Lyons, You Are Free¹⁴

The bottom line is that you cannot save yourself. Jesus died to save you. His power is what sets you free from sin. Confessing your sin is the gateway to freedom from sin. What do you need freedom from? What has its grip on you? Will you confess it to Jesus, ask Him to forgive you, ask Him for a way out, and believe that by His power, you can be set free of this? Set aside time to allow confession to pour out to Jesus, asking Him for a new way, and asking Him for you to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to live in that way. When your time is over, come back to this spot and journal anything He’s shown you in response to your confession.



If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

The tools in this chapter are tools for life. You will never “complete” these tools; rather, you can re-engage them over and over again because as you go through life, new lies, wounds, and sin will surface as you experience new circumstances, relationships, and challenges. New parts of yourself will be uncovered as you grow and change. There will be things that you just haven’t seen yet, and you will find that you will need to re-engage these tools as you do.

I hope you held nothing back. And if you did hold back, I want to ask you to answer to yourself and to God, “Why? Why am I holding back what I’m holding back?” Tell God why, then ask Him for the bravery to bring it to the light in some way, someday.

Selah





“Dare You to Move” by Switchfoot





“Warrior (Remix)” by Hannah Kerr





“Delivered Me” by Headwaters

** If you are experiencing abuse in any relationship, please reach out to licensed trauma therapist, who can help guide you through the next steps to take for your safety and well-being.*

LIES	TRUTH

Withdrawal Slip	
	Date:
Signature _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transferred to Jesus _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Withdrawal (what was taken) _____	
_____	
_____	

Withdrawal Slip	
	Date:
Signature _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transferred to Jesus _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Withdrawal (what was taken) _____	
_____	
_____	

Withdrawal Slip	
	Date:
Signature _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transferred to Jesus _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
 Withdrawal (what was taken) _____	
_____	
_____	

Filling Up

True self-care is not selfish; true self-care is stewardship.

- Katie Tramonte

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

I started having chronic debilitating migraines and experiencing perimenopausal symptoms when I was thirty-three. These were signs that something was “off.” After years of internalizing life stress that had come in a variety of ways, my body was finally communicating an ultimatum to me: either learn how to live differently or self-destruct. My body was telling me that how I was handling life was not working and was actually harming me. My body was benching me.

One night in the intensity of my physical struggles, my husband prayed over me, and certain symptoms stopped permanently in my life from that moment forward, an experience of powerful healing, while other symptoms required me to significantly overhaul my lifestyle. I had to learn how to take responsibility for my emotional state and physical needs. I had to learn how to take better care of myself and how to find peace in the midst of ongoing stress. After significant lifestyle adjustments and by the power of God, over time, the migraines slowed dramatically and my hormones stabilized. I truly had a second chance at living my life.

You can't pour from an empty cup. <<<<

Too often, that's exactly what we're trying to do. When I talk about self-care, I am not actually talking about self-indulgent luxury; rather, I am talking about the responsible stewardship of yourself as a valuable person within the Kingdom of God. When I think of self-care, I am thinking of taking responsibility for yourself so that you'll be able to do the very things God has called you to do on this earth. In my own story, my lack of self-care cost me many days of being present in my life because I physically couldn't show up fully. To clarify briefly, not all physical struggles are a result of lack of self-care; however, for me, mine were. Through prayer, repentance, significantly altering my lifestyle, and learning calming practices, I had the opportunity to live new. I got a second chance. I am passionate about self-care because it is what allows us to have the reserve to do what God has called and made us to do and be. Self-care is stewardship. Self-care is about living, being healthy, and having something left to contribute to the world around us.



So, my question to you is what needs attention in your life? What do you as a person need in order to fill up? Yes, you can run on fumes. Yes, you can push yourself past exhaustion. Yes, your potential as a human being to survive difficult circumstances is profound. However, as much as is possible, given your specific life and situation, are you taking initiative to care for yourself well?

My motivating factor in my journey of caring for myself was my kids. I was not the mom I wanted to be. To show up for my kids as the person I wanted to be, I had to reevaluate my life and reconfigure how I was taking care of myself at the most basic levels first and eventually at deeper levels as the years went on. What is your motivating factor? What is your reason why?

To begin, take a quick self-assessment regarding your overall basic needs. Below is a list of the most basic self-care areas. Please jot down what these areas realistically look like for you, what you actually need, and finally, what would have to change.

	Sleeping	Hydrating	Eating	Physical Activity
Looks Like...				
Actually Need...				
What Needs to Change...				

With that information in mind, fill out the following chart to make a plan for how you will address the changes needed for your most basic self-care needs to be met adequately.



What will you adjust in your life to more adequately meet your most basic self-care needs?



When will you begin (sometime in the next three months)?



What will your reward to yourself be once you've maintained these goals at 80% accuracy for two full weeks?

Now that you're addressing your most basic self-care needs, there is another layer of self-care that also needs to be addressed. This is where we go a step further to address whole-person self-care...this can include everything from your emotional needs to your mental needs to your spiritual needs. This is the question of how you, specifically, in the unique way you are designed, fill up...and how you'll go about making time for that. My most basic recommendation is to find one chunk of time each week that you set aside for whole-person self-care. This could be as minimal as twenty minutes or as extended as three hours. This could look like a myriad of pursuits based on who you are, how you're designed, what your life is like, etc. The goal is not "what" it looks like but that you actually **do** it. I suggest putting your "block" of time on the calendar and keeping it like you would keep a commitment to anyone else. An appointment with yourself to fill up, so that there is more of you. Just like a garden won't grow without adequate water, your soul will stagnate without adequate restoration. Growth of a plant is dependent on watering and sunlight and nutrients. Metaphorically, is your soul getting those things? And just like different plants need different combinations of those things, you, as the unique person you are, will need different combinations of whole-person self-care to flourish. You may not even know yet what most fills you up. Take some chances. If something doesn't fill you up, that's okay, try something else.



To begin, though, pause for a moment and ask yourself what you need to fill up as a whole person?

To make this super practical, block out a chunk of time on your calendar for this next week for whole-person self-care where you intentionally take steps to fill up. Then, look at the list below and circle the things you will do in that space to fill up. There are no right answers; rather, this is meant to fit you in the way that you need to fill up. This is meant for you to recharge. After you circle a few options, fill out the bottom of this page.



- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| GO FOR A WALK | GO FOR A DRIVE | TAKE A BATH | EAT SOMETHING YUMMY |
| JOURNAL | LISTEN TO MUSIC | BE ALONE | READ A BOOK |
| LISTEN TO A PODCAST | WATCH A MOVIE | DRAW/COLOR | TALK WITH A FRIEND |
| CREATE ART | LISTEN TO A SERMON | GO FOR A SWIM | PLAY A GAME |
| TAKE A NAP | PRAY | READ SCRIPTURE | BE STILL AND QUIET |

In my chunk for whole-person self-care time, I will _____ and _____ to fill up.

With the End In Mind

That it will never come again
Is what makes life so sweet...

- Emily Dickinson, "That It Will Never Come Again"

How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our
lives.

- Annie Dillard¹

Live as if you were living already for the second time....

- Dr. Viktor Frankl²

The world is full of people who will go their whole lives
and not actually live one day. She did not intend on
being one of them.

- Curly Girl Designs³

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

After my third son was born, my husband and I went through a course called, “Creating Your Life Plan.” One of the tools we gained from that course was thinking each morning about what we’d do differently if we could live that day over again. This concept was so impacting that I got a cute frame and a dry-erase marker, and I placed them on the mantle of our fireplace so that each morning I could write what I had thought of and see it throughout the day. In so many ways, my days as a stay-at-home mom of three little boys felt like I was giving out so much but not seeing much movement forward. Considering what I’d do if I lived my day over again gave me a centering tool to not simply go through the motions but to call myself forward into each day. In that centering moment at the start of my day, I could envision what I would have wished I’d focused on each day, and I found fulfillment in choosing to live the way I knew I would have wished I had lived if I did it over.

Asking yourself what you’d do differently if you were living today over again is one of the keys to living a more meaningful life and assessing priorities.

- Donald Miller, “Creating Your Life Plan”⁴

Find some quiet space to engage this next exercise. Make sure you have ample time and space to let yourself truly feel your responses to these questions.

Imagine, for a moment, the end of your life. When it is just about to end, and there is nothing left for you to do, nothing more you can do. What will you look back on and wish you could have done differently? What would the you that is then tell the you that is now?

If you reached the end of your life and could go back to this current moment in your life to start over again, what would you tell yourself to focus on? If you lived your life over again, from this moment forward, how would you live? What choices would you make? What would you focus on? Who would you want to be? What would you want your life to be about? How would you live differently than how you are currently living?

Take a moment to engage the Holy Spirit and ask Him to lead you in this process of looking at your life with the end in mind. Freely write everything that comes to mind. Remove your internal self-editor and let your heart pour out on the page everything that surfaces...what you want your life to be and be about from this day forward.

Write out everything that comes to mind in regard to how you would live and what you would have to change.

Then once you've finished writing everything that comes to mind in regard to what your future self would tell now yourself, consider yourself five years from now. Imagine what your life would be like at that five-year-from-now mark if you made changes to how you are currently living based on having the end in mind. If you made those changes now with the end in mind, what would your short-term future look like? Take a few moments to draw a picture or artistic representation of yourself in five years if you implement the advice and make changes with the end in mind. Sketch that hoped-for future. Include the setting, the people, the emotions, etc.

— GET CREATIVE —

Now, based on what you want to begin moving toward and where you actually are, what are the next three practical steps you need to take to see that change in your life? Essentially, what needs to change for you to live more in line with your design and more in line with how you would have wanted to live if you were at the end of your life looking back? These steps need to be specific, measurable, and realistically attainable. List the three next steps in order. Finally, on your list, put a deadline for when you will have taken that step and a reward for if you do take that step by that date.



THE CHANGE TO MAKE:

STEP 1 _____	START BY: _____
--------------	-----------------

REWARD FOR STARTING THIS STEP BY THIS DATE:

STEP 2 _____	START BY: _____
--------------	-----------------

REWARD FOR STARTING THIS STEP BY THIS DATE:

STEP 3 _____	START BY: _____
--------------	-----------------

REWARD FOR STARTING THIS STEP BY THIS DATE:

Now pause to pray and ask God to bring the power of the Holy Spirit into your life in these areas to begin to see these dreams take flight.

Selah

“Beautiful Eulogy” by Beautiful Eulogy

“A Prayer” by Kings Kaleidoscope

Moving Forward

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:17-19

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

I had found a level of freedom from my codependent patterns during one season of my life, only to have to face them on an even deeper level a few years later. Wrestling on deeper levels with the lies we believe, the wounds we've received, and the sins we've done is not a sign of never having been freed; rather, it's a sign of God wanting to take us deeper and free us more fully. It is very much His way of taking us from glory to glory. So, when I had to face my own dysfunction on deeper levels, it wasn't that I had not been freed. I had...to a degree. But there was more. And God who is faithful to complete the work that He began in me took me deeper and further into healing so I could be even freer.¹

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.

Galatians 5:1a

To begin processing where to go once you've finished this workbook, let's first reflect on how far you've come. Through this book, you've mapped your life story, you've shared your story, you've been able to identify lies, wounds, and sins and pursued the healing and transformation of them.

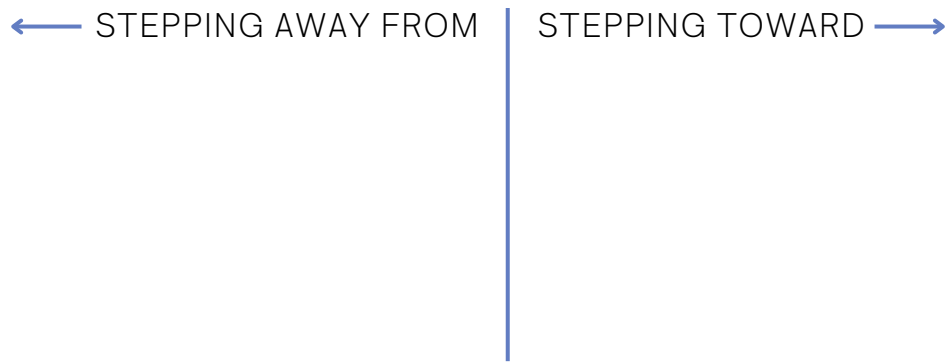
You were able to solidify the truth of who you are in a fresh way. Take some time at this point to sift back through your journal entries throughout this workbook and notice all that you've come through in this process.

Journal anything below that stands out to you as significant places of healing and growth.

As you transition out of this season of focused reflection through the exercises in this workbook, this next section is a way to bridge what you walked out in these pages into everyday living. Below, you'll be listing out the things you've stepped away from and, as a result of the stepping away, what you're stepping toward.

Take a moment to invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you in this process and to bring to mind the things He is actively transforming in your life. In the space provided below, list the things that you are currently "stepping away from" in your life, and across from those, write what you are "stepping toward." For example, maybe you're stepping out of fear and into trust...out of controlling behaviors and into release/love...out of urgency and into calm...out of fear and into bravery...out of self-destruction and into value/self-care...out of blaming others and into personal responsibility...out of shame and into freedom.

Also, to clarify, to be "stepping toward" something does not mean that it has to be perfectly achieved in your life; rather, "stepping toward" is simply meant to represent the places you are currently growing into and being transformed toward. On the other hand, the "stepping toward" column is not meant to be wishful thinking either...if you are not actually taking action in your life/mind/heart toward something, don't write it down. Let this list reflect the very real truth of what you are "stepping away from/stepping toward."



While working through this workbook has been a significant step in your journey of transformation, this is just one step. There are many more things God wants to do in and through you in the coming months and years. What you will find in this chapter is a variety of resources I highly recommend as possible next steps in your journey of healing, transformation, wholeness, and freedom. I suggest choosing one to engage next and setting a timeline for when you will have started it and completed it. There will be space at the end of the chapter to journal that.

TRAININGS

Your One Degree is a training based in Tulsa, Oklahoma, but available online anywhere and is meant to help the participant discover and define the very specific call on his/her life by discerning your energizing experiences, your life story, and your life purpose.

Your Enneagram Coach is an online tool for discovering your enneagram types and then being equipped to navigate what that all means. The online “type test” is free. There are a variety of ways to move forward from there. I recommend the “Discovering You” course as the best place to start if you’re not only interested in your type but also how to see the enneagram through a Gospel lens.

SERMONS

The Village Church Resources website has a wide range of resources available for free; there are three older sermons on this website that flow right alongside the content of this book, making much of what is talked about here even more clearly applicable. The following three sermons would be excellent companions to the content here in this workbook. You can find them by searching by the date under the “Sermons” tab on the Village Church Resources website:

“Obsolete” by Matt Chandler, April 2, 2006.

“Let Us” by Matt Chandler, April 23, 2006.

“What Faith Does” by Matt Chandler, May 7, 2006.

PODCAST

The Sleeping at Last Podcast episodes on the enneagram are the best breakdown of the nine enneagram types. Sleeping at Last's view of the enneagram is to not "pigeon-hole" people into flaws, but to look at our types as a starting point for growth. In addition to listening to their podcast on your own enneagram type, I also recommend listening to all the songs written for each enneagram type.

In the Light by Dr. Anita Phillips is an amazing resource for equipping yourself for your journey of healing. Dr. Anita's voice is gentle yet powerful. Her content exists at the intersection of faith and mental health, which she speaks to from her own broad resources as an academic, psychologist, and follower of Jesus.

Living the Reclaimed Life by Denisha Workizer is a beautiful and enjoyable podcast full of stories of people who have reclaimed their lives through the power of God and, by doing so, offer hope to others who listen. This is a resource for continual encouragement that God is at work restoring lives.

Made for This by Jennie Allen is a great resource for hearing Biblical truth applied to everyday life in practical ways. Allen leads through vulnerability, which makes her podcast especially applicable.

MOVIES

Inside Out is a phenomenal movie to help unearth our emotional reality. I recommend watching this by yourself for yourself. If you really let yourself feel the message of this movie, you'll see things about your own inner workings that you may not have seen before.

Encanto is another phenomenal movie that beautifully and profoundly unpacks dysfunctional family roles all set in a fictional, animated storyline. Through the course of the movie, characters try to live up to their roles and meet the family ideal; however, only when truth is spoken toward that brokenness does healing begin. I highly recommend it!

BOOKS

The Soul of Shame by Curt Thompson, M.D. is one of the most powerful books unpacking how shame is a primary aim of the enemy to dismantle who we are so that we are prevented from creating goodness and beauty in the world the way God designed us to. This book is a phenomenal resource for emotional healing.

The Soul of Desire, also by Curt Thompson, M.D., is a powerful follow-up to his previous book. In *The Soul of Desire*, he unpacks how our desires are meant to be expressions of the goodness and beauty of God. He also unpacks the power of exploring these things within a safe, trusted community which he outlines as a Confessional Community. This is a powerful resource for leaning into who you were made to be and what you were made to create on this earth.

You Are Free by Rebekah Lyons is a carefully guided journey through all the things that stand in our way of the freedom that Jesus offers each of us. Each chapter ends with reflective questions and prayer suggestions. When engaged fully, this book is an excellent resource to processing your life and finding increasing freedom through Jesus.

Freefall to Fly by Rebekah Lyons is an excellent book in which Lyons shares her process and story of God guiding her towards discovering her design and calling during a time of personal difficulty. As she shares her story, Lyons encourages the reader to identify places of their own design and calling.

The Emotionally Healthy Woman by Geri Scazzero is a practical, yet story-filled look at how to not only acknowledge your feelings, preferences, and personality, but to also take responsibility for how you want to live with integrity in light of those realities.

Restless by Jennie Allen is another excellent book where Allen helps the reader identify calling and purpose through her own story, reflecting on the life of Joseph, and prayerfully working through aspects of your own story.

The Relational Soul by Richard Plass and James Cofield is another book resource where the authors help the reader process through origins of pain, guiding the reader toward healing, wholeness, and hope.

More Than Enchanting by Jo Saxton is a thorough look at all that God invites women into as members of His Kingdom. It expands the concept of Biblical womanhood by looking deeper into passages of the Bible about women and then sets us free through practical application of those things into our everyday lives.

INSTAGRAM

Flourishing Homes and Families is a great account to follow on Instagram for practical insights on how to allow your healing journey to shape your parenting practices. The content on this account is both theologically and psychologically solid. They also have a website and online classes.

THERAPY

EMDR is a powerful form of therapy that engages healing through bilateral stimulation of the brain as you share with a therapist about your life/story/memories. The healing and tools offered through this form of therapy can be highly beneficial.

GUIDED PRAYER

Sozo prayer ministry is a unique experience of healing prayer that functions in a structured, guided prayer geared toward personal insight and healing directly from God to the participant.

Encountering God is a training for guided prayer held in Holden, Missouri, at Our Father's Farm. Through this training, you'll gain practical tools and personal prayer exercises similar to the imaginative prayer exercises here.

PRACTICAL STEPS

Prayerfully, look at the list of next steps above and choose one that you feel would be truly beneficial to pursue in the next twelve months. List that below in response to the following questions. Or if there is a different step toward healing, transformation, and growth that God is bringing to mind that isn't on the list, feel free to choose that. Then, fill out the questions below.



What will you engage for the next step in your healing, transformation, and growth?



When will you begin it by (sometime in the next twelve months)?



When will you complete it by (sometime in the next twelve months)?



What will your reward to yourself be once you've completed it?

Selah

“Shiloh” by Audrey Assad

Warrior Rest

The devil is real, and nothing ticks him off more than people waking up from the numb stupor he has crafted to keep us harmless.

- Jennie Allen, Anything¹

SELF-AWARE

Before we begin, please take a few moments to be still and silent and listen to what is happening inside you. Journal a word or two below that encapsulate your feelings right now. Feel free to journal as much or as little about those feelings as you would like.



What are you feeling?

It seems that almost every time I take a step toward healing and growth, spiritual opposition shows up in my life. What I have learned is that my life is not neutral. Engaging my life in such a way that I grow in reflecting more of the image of God often means that there will be spiritual warfare against that pursuit.

When you wake up to who God has made you to be and make choices to live in line with that reality, you become dangerous. It would not be fair of me to share this workbook with you without also sharing with you the spiritual reality of what you are combating as you become who God made you to be. Make no mistake that as you become who God made you to be, you are taking actual, spiritual ground. There is a real, spiritual battle happening all the time, and you pursuing healing in the midst of the battle is not neutral. Be aware that steps of obedience in this healing journey will most likely be met by counterattack.

That said, there are a few key things to note. First, there is a real spiritual battle happening all the time. Second, everything is more spiritual than we often realize. Third, your spiritual battle is not actually against people. Fourth, your battle is against spiritual realities that want to destroy you.² Fifth, the end of the story is already written and Jesus wins.

So, as you continue on in your journey of living from who God made you to be, living free, please process and be equipped with the following truths.

Read John 10:10 and Galatians 5:1. Journal below what Jesus's goal is in these verses.

Read John 10:10 and 1 Peter 5:8. Journal below what the enemy's goal is in these verses.

Read Ephesians 6:10-18. Journal below both who our battle is against and also what the tools are that we are to cultivate and engage in our battle.

When we grasp that our actual battle is against spiritual forces of evil and not really against people, so much shifts. In some ways, it can be scarier. But only if we allow ourselves to think that the spiritual forces of evil are bigger than God, which is not true.

Yes, the darkness is terrifying and massive; however, Jesus is bigger. This is the truth that you must hold onto as you begin to live as a spiritual warrior. Which you are, if you have stepped into this journey of transformation. Being fully surrendered to Jesus, you are a spiritual warrior. Jesus is bigger. And, in fact, all spiritual forces must ultimately submit to Him because He is the end all authority. He is above all.³

The other thing that happens, once we become aware of the truth of the battle we face, is that we are then invited to equip ourselves with tools for battle. Things we must pick up to fight well. Journal below across from each of these tools how you can practically pick up these weapons in a real way in your real life. Take some time to read Ephesians 6:11-18. As you read, write notes below about what these elements look like in real life.

Belt of Truth:

**Breastplate of
Righteousness (that comes
from the covering of Jesus
Himself over you):**

**Feet with Readiness that
comes from the Gospel
of Peace:**

**Shield of Faith (extinguishes
all the flaming arrows of the
evil one):**

Helmet of Salvation:

**Sword of the Spirit
(Word of God):**

Pray on all occasions:

In the world you will have trouble, but I leave you my peace
That where I am, there you may also be.

- Rich Mullins, "That Where I Am, There You"⁴

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Matthew 11:28-30

Even as we pursue transformation, there is peace and rest because Jesus' sacrifice is complete. We do not have to earn right standing with God; rather, we simply surrender to Jesus and are covered by Him. Jesus offers rest for our souls as we come to Him. And, at the same time, we can also gain so much more of the fullness of life in Christ available to us in our lifetime if we fight for it. Freedom and wholeness and transformation and growth and healing and change...available to us. There will be spiritual opposition to the pursuit of those things, which is why there will be some grappling involved. This is where we discover the combination of both rest and fighting, of embodying both peace and a warrior-like spirit. As we close our time together in this workbook, I want to encourage you with the rest and eternal peace that is yours as a follower of Jesus. And, in the same breath, I want to invite you to fight for all that is available to you in this life when you live in connection with Him, because it is the freest, most whole life possible. This is the warrior-rest kind of life.

Selah

"Alive" by Kings Kaleidoscope

We'd love to hear from you...

We'd love to hear from you! We love hearing your stories of how God met you through this process, how you grew or changed, or what impacted you most. We also love hearing your questions and/or ways we can improve our process. To contact us at Original Design Restored, click the contact button on our website (www.originaldesignrestored.org) or email me directly: katie@originaldesignrestored.org

Dedication and Acknowledgements

To Val

Who made it safe to face my imperfections and pain

To Elijah, Solomon, and Silas

Who were my first reasons to pursue my own healing and wholeness

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Notes

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ORIGINAL
DESIGN
RESTORED

