

YOUR HEART HEALING JOURNEY

A journal to renew
hope, healing, and joy.

Adapted by permission of the original
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A Note, Dear Friend ~

You have taken a brave and intentional step towards healing. We'll be spending 7 weeks together set aside specifically to begin to move towards healing from the pain you've experienced. This is not easy and it is not simple. BUT it is possible. With the help of God's Word, a safe community, carefully chosen content, and your participation, it is my prayer that you'll find a new sense of hope that healing is possible.

John 10:10 declares that, "The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." (~ Jesus)

God's heart is for you!

"It is for freedom that Christ has set you free." and I pray that through this time together you will find this freedom that is available through Christ's comfort, love, and peace. He is faithful. I expect no less here during this time together.

How to Use This Journal

We'll refer to this journal throughout our time together as it provides a road map and a testimony for what the Lord will do in you over our time together. It's for you to use as you'd like. The journal will be provided at the beginning of each class.

Psalm 16:11

You have made known to me the path of life.

In your presence, there is fullness of joy!

Participant Journal

Week One:

What are heart wounds?

Week Two:

What can help our hearts heal?

Week Three:

What happens when someone is grieving?

Week Four:

If God loves us, why do we suffer?

Week Five:

Domestic Abuse

Week Six:

Bring your pain to the cross

Week Seven:

How can we forgive?

Week One:

What are heart wounds?

In this lesson we will:

- *Explain how trauma is a "heart wound" and identify how it makes people behave*
- *Show that God accepts our honest emotions*
- *Learn to manage strong feelings through a breathing exercise*

Questions to begin to think about:

1. *What experiences in my life do I consider to be traumatic?*
2. *How have I managed my thoughts, feelings, and actions around these events in the past?*
3. *How have God's Word and my church experiences impacted how I've personally navigated these painful events/relationships?*

Listen to the story ~

While you listen to the story, note what happened to the characters and how they responded both in thought and in feeling. We'll discuss this as a group, but you may find it helpful to record your thoughts below as you listen. Take note of the losses, both real and perceived, experienced by those in the story.

Think of people you know. What have been some of their losses?

Grief & Trauma



Grief - experienced when we suffer a loss

Trauma - when our hearts are wounded by a real or perceived, intense and unexpected experience; single or repeated/ongoing. It is characterized by intense fear, helplessness, horror, and loss of control. Trauma is also when our hearts are wounded by not receiving something that we should have had (i.e. emotional neglect or distance from a primary caregiver).

***Trauma always involves grief,
but grief does not always involve trauma.***

Trauma Affects How We See

- ~ *Order in the world*
- ~ *Justice in the world*
- ~ *Our own value*

Have you lost your sense of order, justice, or your own value?

Make a list of your own losses. Where do they correlate with these categories?

Comparing & Contrasting Wounds

PHYSICAL

HEART

How do people with wounded hearts behave?

Reliving

Avoiding

Being on alert

Other

Scriptures

Scripture has a lot to say about how we think, act, and feel!
Let's dive into His Word and take a look at what it has to say or demonstrate regarding emotions.

I Samuel 1:10, 13-16

¹⁰ She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly.

¹³ Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman. ¹⁴ And Eli said to her, "How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you." ¹⁵ But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD. ¹⁶ Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation."

Psalms 55:3-6

³ because of the noise of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked.

For they drop trouble upon me, and in anger they bear a grudge against me.

⁴ My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death have fallen upon me.

⁵ Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror overwhelms me.

⁶ And I say, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest;

John 11:33-35

³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved^[a] in his spirit and greatly troubled. ³⁴ And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus wept.

Jonah 4:1-3

¹ But it displeased Jonah exceedingly,^[a] and he was angry. ² And he prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. ³ Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."

Matthew 26:75

⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

What can we learn from these passages? How does knowing this help you?

A Calming Technique ~ The Butterfly Hug

The Butterfly Hug is a therapeutic intervention to help relax and calm yourself in a moment of stress. It is recommended that you practice this technique the first time when you are not in an anxious state or feeling distressed.

Start off by putting your feet comfortably on the floor.

Notice your breath and heart beating. (At this point, you don't need to take a deep breath; just check in to see how fast your heart is beating.)

Notice any emotions or self-judgments coming up, and continue focusing on your breath.

Set a timer for 2 minutes.

Start by crossing your hands over your chest (like a bird shadow puppet) where the wings are resting just below your collarbone.

Begin slowly tapping, alternating left and right, left and right until you come into a rhythm. Continue tapping for 30 seconds to a few minutes.

Video

Butterfly Hug video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQxKedYGyU8>

Expressing our pain

One way to express the pain in our hearts, is by doing activities such as drawing, poetry, dance and music.

Start by getting quiet inside and asking God to show you the pain in your heart.

It may be pain from something about your life today or something from the past.

When you're ready, you can begin expressing your pain through the art form you've chosen. Your artistic expression may be symbolic rather than realistic. This exercise is not about showing artistic talent to others, but about expressing what is in your heart.

Bring your heart expression with you to our next session. You will have the opportunity to share as much or as little as you'd like.

What is one thing you want to remember?

You've gathered a lot of information, and possibly experienced a lot of intense emotions, during today's session. This is just a small part of your journey—but an important part! Take a moment to write down one thing you want to remember from our time together.

THE FIRE

It was three in the morning when the phone rang in Laurel and Pete's bedroom. Laurel looked sleepily at Pete as he answered it but became more alert as he started to get out of bed as he listened to the caller. "Bad fire," he said, "and it's coming this way!" Pete was a firefighter and Laurel was used to him being called out in the night, but somehow this seemed more serious than usual. Within five minutes Pete was out of the house on his way to the fire. Laurel wondered if she should wake the children, but first she went downstairs to turn on the television and find out what was happening.

Just as Laurel found a channel reporting on the fire, she heard cars driving outside, with loudspeakers telling everyone to get out. It took a while to get the three kids awake and dressed and into the car. As they left, clouds of smoke were getting nearer, and they could even see the fire in the distance. Finally, they arrived at a friend's house outside the danger zone. Laurel was so relieved to be safe, but then she began to worry about Pete.

There was no news for some hours but then Laurel got a message from a nearby hospital saying she should come at once because her husband was seriously hurt. As she rushed off, Laurel wondered if she would ever see Pete alive again. At the hospital, she heard that two other men in his unit had been killed and that Pete had burns on most of his body, his leg was crushed, and he had internal injuries. For three dreadful days, she thought he was going to die, but once they amputated his leg, he began to recover. It was a long time, though, before he could leave the hospital.

When he recovered, Pete was given a job in the office of the fire department. Laurel felt that things should be returning to normal, but now each week has seemed worse than the last. They both are having trouble sleeping and often have nightmares. But the worst part of it for Laurel has been Pete's personality change. Before the fire, he was generally a happy and balanced guy, but now he gets angry over little things. The children are beginning to be scared of their father because he yells at them when they make any noise. Laurel knows Pete is hurting inside because of the loss of his leg, but he will not talk about it because he thinks men should be strong. His friends just behave as though nothing has happened, but for Pete, his whole life has changed.

Laurel is becoming more and more depressed. She has lost interest in eating. It is especially hard for her at church because she is angry at God for not protecting her husband. Was God not able to protect him? Did God not care? What happened? Their pastor preaches that people who have strong faith in God are always H-A-P-P-Y and full of joy. Laurel knows this is not how she feels.

Finally, Laurel talks to her small group leader, Pat. As she talks, she begins to cry and cannot stop sobbing. It feels like pressure inside her has been released. Pat listens to Laurel tell what had happened. She asks Laurel to explain how she felt during the whole experience, and finally they talk about what the hardest part of the experience was for Laurel.

Laurel goes away feeling relieved. They have agreed to get together again for coffee the next week.