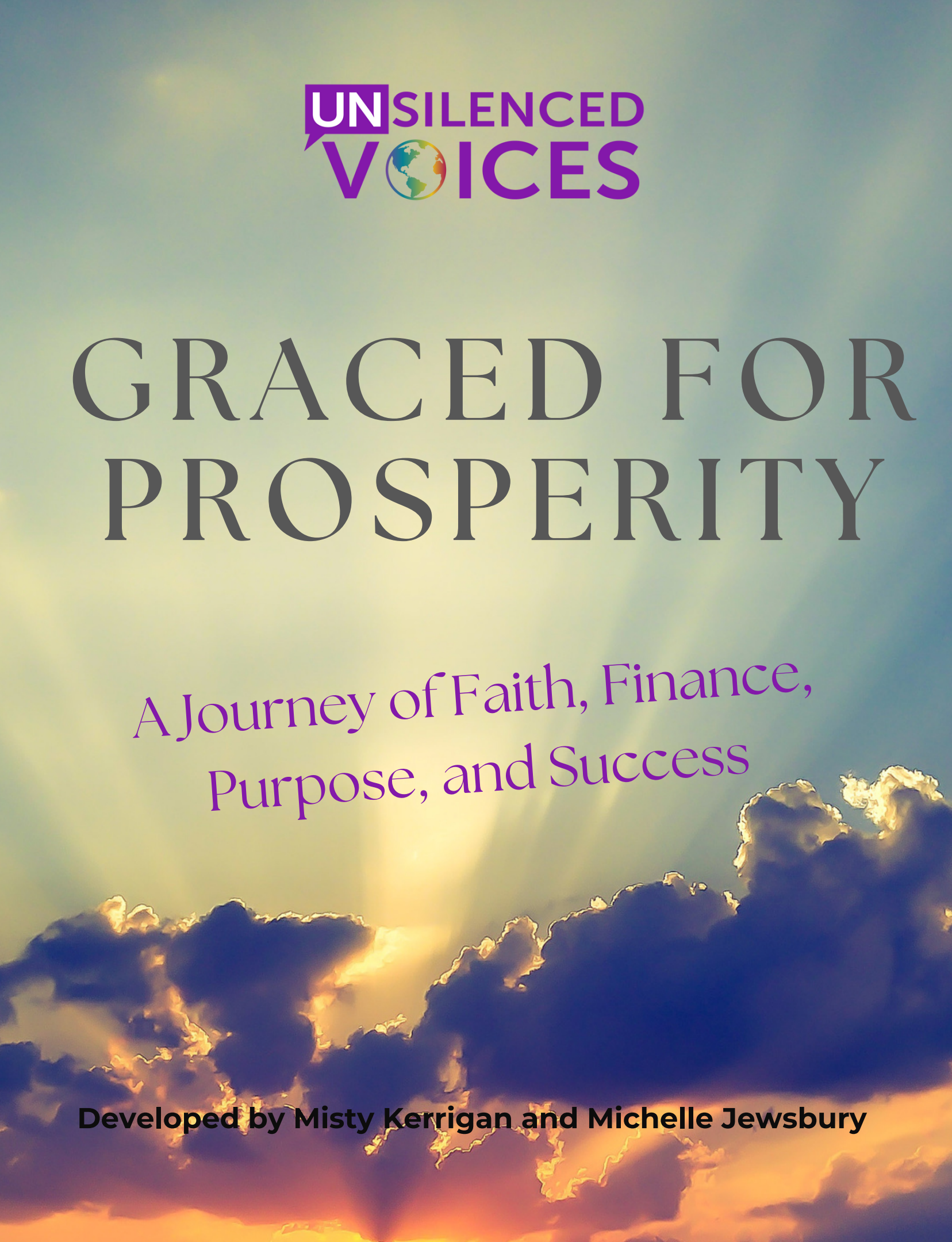
UNSILENCED VOICES
GRACED FOR PROSPERITY
A Journey of Faith, Finance, Purpose, and Success
Developed by Misty Kerrigan and Michelle Jewsbury

GRACED FOR PROSPERITY

WORKBOOK

By Misty Kerrigan, MS
&
Michelle Jewsbury

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The Graced for Prosperity Workbook and any resources recommended are intended to help you gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence you need to begin to live a life free of violence. This workbook is not meant to render any psychological, financial, legal, or professional services. If expert support is needed, please seek out a licensed therapist.

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About UNSILENCED VOICES

Unsilenced Voices empowers survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking through advocacy, education, and support services. They work to break the cycle of abuse and give survivors a platform to share their stories, reclaim their power and live a life free of violence. Although Unsilenced Voices is non-secular, they remain steadfast in their adherence to Christian values and principles.

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UNSILENCED VOICES

SKILLS FOR LIFE

Our program is designed to help survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking gain the skills and knowledge they need to become self-sufficient, and successful in their personal and professional lives.

Our holistic approach incorporates spiritual and emotional healing with practical skills and knowledge, to help individuals create a stable and fulfilling life.

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"Despite the natural belittling of one's self, the doubts, the insecurities, we have to wake up to the realization that we all write our own autobiography, we are the authors of our life story. Realizing that, write a good story with your life and make sure to write yourself as the protagonist. Be the hero of your journey."

-Yossi Ghinsberg

INTRODUCTION

The journey begins

thank you

for taking part in our program. We want to commend you for your bravery and resilience in the face of abuse and violence. It takes great courage to confront the trauma of abuse and to work toward healing and recovery. I hope that our program has provided you with the tools, support, and empowerment to take the next steps in your journey. Remember that you are not defined by your past experiences and that you have the power to create a bright and fulfilling future. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your healing journey, and I wish you all the best as you move forward.

With Love,
Michelle Jewsbury
Founder/CEO
UNSILENCED VOICES

New Beginnings

Why don't they "just" leave? It's the question many people ask when they learn that someone is suffering battery and abuse. However, if you have ever been in an abusive relationship, you know, it's not that simple. First, ending a significant relationship is never easy. It becomes even more difficult when you've been isolated from your family and friends, psychologically beaten down, financially controlled, and physically threatened. Furthermore, once someone is out, a whole new set of obstacles begins, the majority being, one's own thought processes, inner dialogue, and beliefs.

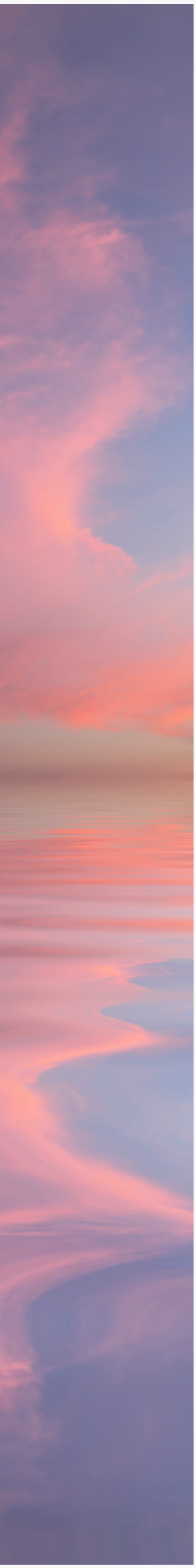
We would love to tell you the journey is easy, but we can't. However, We can tell you that the journey is yours and you alone hold the power. You hold the power to create the life you want. It may not be easy, but we promise you, it will be worth every inch you make toward defining, creating, and living who you truly and divinely are.

How this workbook is organized

This workbook is divided into 8 Modules with lessons, activities, insights, and self-reflection questions. Each module is designed to help individuals gain specific skills and knowledge in particular areas such as emotional healing, career, financial literacy, mindset, and goal setting.

Each module contains self-assessments to help track progress as well as the vital things to apply in your daily life to increase self-awareness, motivation, and self-value.

Every module also has an inspirational story from individuals who share their stories on how they escaped and rebuilt their lives.



Reflection Questions

What are some things you hope to accomplish through this program?

What are some concerns or worries you have about this program?

What would support you in completing this program?

Well-Being Survey

Complete and score the survey below

Instructions: First, circle the number that best indicates your response to each question. Next, add up your scores and write the total below. Lastly, after you complete the program you are going to take another survey and be able to compare your scores.

1.How much do you feel that others have your best interests at heart?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

2. To what extent do you feel your life is valuable and worth while?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

3. How frequently do you feel optimistic about positive outcomes in your life?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

4. How often do you feel happy?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

5. How often do you stop your critical self-talk and replace it with nurturing and kind words?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

6. How healthy do you feel your eating habits are?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

7. To what extent do you feel your overall health and well-being are priortized?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

8. Generally, how healthy do you feel your sleep habits are?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

9. How healthy do you feel your physical health habits are, in general?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

10. Generally speaking, how healthy do you consider your mental health habits to be?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

11. How well do you feel you manage stress in a healthy manner, generally speaking?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

12. How connected do you feel to others in your life?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

13. How much do you prioritize what is best for you?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

14. How well do you feel you manage the different aspects of a significant change?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

15. To what extent do you feel you treat yourself with kindness and understanding?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

16. How frequently do you believe you comprehend and regulate your own emotions?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

17. How often do you speak up for yourself?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

18. How much do you feel self-assured and valued, in general?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

19. To what extent do you feel comfortable saying no to requests that don't align with you?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

20. In general, to what extent do you feel you like who you are?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

21. How much do you feel that you are progressing successfully towards your goals?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

22. How frequently do you believe you manage your time efficiently?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

23. How frequently do you feel that you exhibit self-respect?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

24. How often do you protect your time and energy?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

25. How frequently do you regulate your behaviors, thoughts, and emotions in a constructive manner?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

Total _____

MODULE 1

Rising to Greater Heights

A Faith Journey of Self, Change, and Divine Peace.

Skills Assessment

Making a major change can require a variety of skills, depending on the nature of the change and the context in which it is taking place. Here are five skills that can be helpful in making a major change. Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale:

5 = High level of competence - extensive experience in the skill area
4 = Moderately high level of competence - good experience in the skill area
3 = Average level of competence – some experience in the skill area
2 = Low level of competence – little experience in the skill area
1 = No level of competence – no experience in the skill area

Awareness: conscious knowledge and ability to focus on yourself and how your actions, thoughts, or emotions do or don't align with your internal standards. 1 2 3 4 5

Resilience: being able to persevere through challenges and setbacks, while maintaining motivation to achieve your desired outcome. 1 2 3 4 5

Adaptability: being able to adapt to changing circumstances and make adjustments to the plan as needed can help in staying flexible and moving forward toward your goals. 1 2 3 4 5

Emotional intelligence: understanding and managing your own emotions, as well as those of others, while maintaining healthy relationships and dealing with conflicts that may arise. 1 2 3 4 5

Planning and organization: creating a well-thought-out plan with specific timelines and milestones while managing the various aspects of a major change. 1 2 3 4 5

A Faith Journey of Self, Change, and Divine Peace

Preparing for change can be a scary and challenging task, but there are some practical steps you can take to make the process smoother. One of the first steps is to acknowledge the change, recognizing that change is coming. Understanding that it will affect your life positively, may decrease stress and worry. It is vital to be open to the idea of change as well as embrace it as an opportunity for growth and development.

GETTING READY FOR CHANGE

Change is a natural part of life, and while it can be challenging, it can also be an opportunity for growth and transformation.

UNDERSTANDING THE JOURNEY

Change can be stressful and increase worry as well as anxiety. It can also be unpredictable with several ups and downs.

PREPARING FOR THE PROCESS

Preparing for change and approaching it with a positive attitude, helps you navigate it with confidence and resilience.

Getting Ready for change

One of the challenges with change comes from the human tendency to see problems rather than opportunities. Add that to the very common fear of failure, and you can see why many people give up even before they start. One of the first things they skip is preparing for change.

Many people realize during the preparation phase that failure is not something to be afraid of but rather something to welcome, as it is the time when we learn, develop, and improve ourselves.

Another vital thing to understand before you embark on the journey of change is the stages that one can expect to go through when modifying behavior. Psychologists call this "The Cycle of Change" and define this cycle through 6 phases (which are illustrated on the next page).

The Cycle of Change helps us recognize that change doesn't happen instantaneously. Whether it's a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly or an individual striving to build a better life for themselves, change is a process.

> **"Incredible change happens in your life when you decide to take control of what you do have power over instead of craving control over what you don't."**
>
> **— Steve Maraboli**

Cycle of Change

STEP ONE: PRECONTEMPLATION

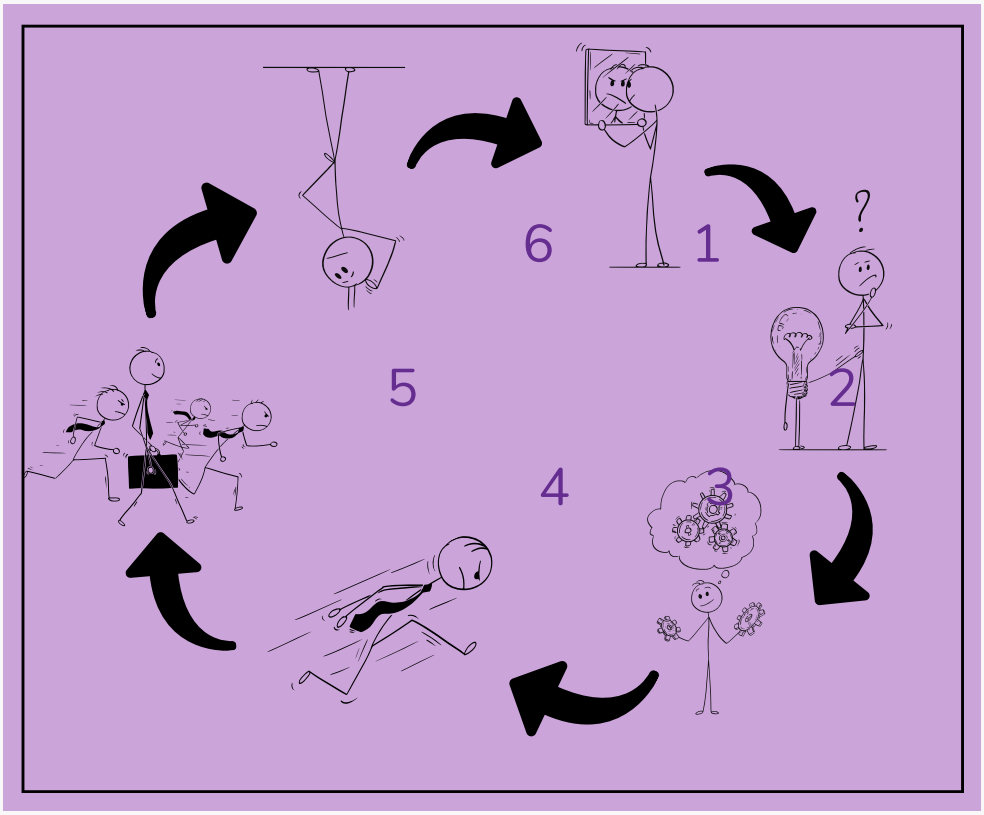
People in this stage are not considering a change and may not understand that the behavior is impeding them.

STEP TWO: CONTEMPLATION

People in this stage are aware of the benefits of making a change but are conflicted by what the change might take.

STEP THREE: PREPARATION

During this stage, some people start to make small changes while others gather information about how to make the change.



STEP FOUR: ACTION

This stage is where people begin taking direct action to accomplish their goals, but may stop after a few weeks if they did not prepare for setbacks.

STEP FIVE: MAINTENANCE

This phase is where people continue to successfully avoid former behaviors and create new habits.

STEP SIX: RELAPSE

It's common to fall back into past behaviors, but the best course of action is to study your triggers, reaffirm your goals, revise your action plan, and start anew, even though it might be challenging.

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Reflection Questions

01 **Readiness to change:** To achieve a lasting change successfully, what are the resources and knowledge that you believe would be necessary?

02 **Barriers to change:** Is there anything preventing you from changing?

03 **Likelihood of relapse:** What might trigger a return to a former behavior?

Understanding the Journey

Change is a journey, and it rarely follows a pre-determined path. The most crucial aspect of embarking on a change journey is arguably the process of self-discovery.

Self-discovery is the act of discovering your strengths and weaknesses, values, beliefs, and motivations. It involves delving into your innermost thoughts and emotions to gain a more profound comprehension of yourself.

Self-discovery is an ongoing journey that can be triggered by a variety of life experiences, such as significant life changes, personal hardships, or new relationships. It can involve self-reflection, introspection, and contemplation and can result in personal development, heightened self-awareness, and a clearer sense of purpose and direction in life.

The process of self-discovery can be both exhilarating and challenging, as it often entails confronting and working through difficult emotions, past traumas, and limiting beliefs. Nonetheless, the benefits of self-discovery can be substantial, including an improved sense of self-esteem, increased resilience, and the capacity to lead a more authentic and gratifying life.

> **Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.**
>
> **— Barack Obama**

Reflection Questions

01 What are some challenges or obstacles that I have faced in the past, and how have they helped me grow?

02 What are my strengths and how can I use them to achieve my goals?

03 What kind of people do I want to surround myself with, and how do my relationships impact my life?

Preparing for the process

By taking certain steps, you can prepare yourself for change and increase your chances of successfully navigating through it.

The first step to preparing for change is to acknowledge and accept that it is happening. This can involve coming to terms with any feelings of uncertainty, fear, or resistance that you may have.

Next, you will need a clear understanding of what the change involves and how it will impact your life. Change can be stressful, so it's important to build resilience by taking care of yourself. This can involve practicing self-care, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and seeking support when you need it.

The Knoster Change Model (which is laid out on the next page) lists 5 variables you need when making a change. By studying these variables you can set obtainable goals, identify potential obstacles, and brainstorm strategies to overcome anything in your way.

> **Good luck is when opportunity meets preparation, while bad luck is when lack of preparation meets reality.**
>
> **— Eliyahu Goldratt**

Knoster Change Model

VISION

A clear and inspiring big picture of your life and what you want it to look like in the areas of spirituality, family and friends, health and wellness, love and relationships, and finally career and finances. Having a vision of your life decreases confusion and frustration.

SKILLS

Life skills are the abilities that enable you to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. They are a mixture of psychological and behavioral skills that help with decisions, problem-solving, communication, and the capacity to build and maintain healthy relationships.

MOTIVATION

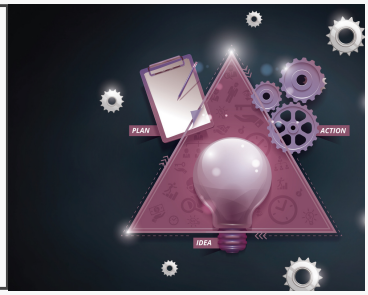
You must see the value of the change before it can happen. Understanding how you benefit and the importance of making the change can decrease your resistance while increasing your success rate.

RESOURCES

Every change requires resources such as a support system of people, time, tools, and access to the things you need in order for you to be successful. Failing to not have the things you need when you need them can lead to frustration and worse a disconnect from the things you really want.

ACTION PLAN

Is the creation of a solid, practical, and manageable plan based on your vision, skills, motivations, and resources you have that can be put into place. It is important to note this plan can be flexible as things and circumstances do change.



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Reflection Questions

01 **What is your vision for your future?**

02 **What skills will you need to achieve this vision?**

03 **What will motivate you to stay on course?**

04 **What resources will you need to achieve this vision?**

05 **What are some things you can start doing to be successful?**

Persevere

Shining Light into the Shadows

By Erin Baer

Life is hard, messy, and beautiful, however, it's the messy parts that we tend to remember most. That's not to say we don't cherish beauty, but it is the storms that make the beauty shine bright. I believe we have moments that don't break us nor define us but rather show us that we are unbreakable. The cracks are there to give us an opportunity to fill them with light. That light becomes our resiliency. I have been raped, beaten, nearly killed, bullied, abandoned, abused, and broken. I shouldn't have survived, but I did; I am still standing. I haven't allowed any of that to define me, but rather I have used it to propel me.

The abuse and rape brought about shame, guilt, and embarrassment. Being abused makes you feel dirty, unwanted, and used. How are you ever going to move on? How could someone ever love you? When you realize you have been abused, your light dims. You're not sure if you will ever feel like yourself again. How can you? Something you never thought would happen, happened to you. With a dim light, we stand in the shadows and silence ourselves hoping the pain will lessen and that no one will notice that anything ever happened.

This works for a while until one day it all comes rushing back. Yet, it is at this moment we give ourselves permission to let go. This is when we find our voice and realize that burying it for as long only hindered our healing. Seeing other women find their voice, and share their stories, gave me permission to find my voice and finally speak up. I decided I had to tell my story and write my book.

Finding my voice allowed me to let go of the weight that I had been carrying. We can only carry this for so long before it crushes us. If you carry this weight too, you know it is exhausting and heavy. However, carrying the weight is like fighting your own shadow. So stop fighting, let the shadows be shadows. They are part of us, but they do not define us. Shadows need light and they only exist because we let our light shine.

Don't let what happened to you, make you feel less than, shameful or embarrassed. It happened to you, not because of you. Only you know your truth, your story and only you can share it. You have a power within you, we all do and that's the ability to speak. I encourage you to use your voice, speak your truth, and share your story – not for anyone else, but for yourself. After all, you deserve to heal and let your light shine bright.

Christian Perspective on Change

Although change does equal uncertainty, Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us that we don't have to worry about the unknown. God's plan is good, and even if it takes us down some unexpected roads, we can trust that it ultimately leads us to where we need to be.

This is easily one of the most powerful verses reminding us that no matter our current situation, even if it is troubled and filled with hardship and or suffering, God has a plan for us. All of our trials and tribulations ultimately have purpose and make us stronger.

> "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future."
>
> - Jeremiah 29:11

Plan of Action

MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAY ABOUT CHANGE:	
STOP DOING	
DO LESS OF	
KEEP DOING	
DO MORE OF	
START DOING	

MODULE 2

STEPPING INTO HOPE

Overcoming Shame and Embracing Self-Value

Skills Assessment

Shame is a powerful emotion that can be difficult to overcome, but there are skills you can develop to manage and eventually overcome it. Here are five skills that can be helpful in reducing the impact of shame. Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale:

5 = High level of competence - extensive experience in the skill area
4 = Moderately high level of competence - good experience in the skill area
3 = Average level of competence – some experience in the skill area
2 = Low level of competence – little experience in the skill area
1 = No level of competence – no experience in the skill area

Self-Compassion: treat yourself with kindness and understanding, instead of harsh criticism and self-judgment. This can involve being mindful of negative self-talk and replacing it with positive, self-affirming thoughts. 1 2 3 4 5

Mindfulness: being present in the moment and observing your thoughts and feelings without judgment. Being aware of your emotions without being overwhelmed by them. 1 2 3 4 5

Communication: expressing your emotions and sharing your experiences with others. By connecting with supportive and understanding people, you can reduce feelings of isolation and build a support network. 1 2 3 4 5

Reframing: looking at a situation from a different perspective and finding positive or constructive elements. By reframing your experiences you can increase feelings of self-worth. 1 2 3 4 5

Practicing Gratitude: by focusing on the good things in your life, you can shift your attention away from negative thoughts and feelings and reduce the power that shame has over you. 1 2 3 4 5

Overcoming Shame and Embracing Self-Value

Shame is a powerful emotion as it is connected to our sense of self-worth and belonging. When we experience shame, we feel a sense of failure, inadequacy, or embarrassment about ourselves. However, shame can be a powerful motivator for change if we use it in a healthy way. It can prompt us to reflect on our behaviors or beliefs and make positive changes. However, if shame becomes overwhelming or chronic, it can lead to negative consequences such as low self-esteem, depression, and social isolation.

THE EFFECTS OF SHAME

Shame is so powerful that it can impact the whole trajectory of a person's life. Thus it is vital to understand the specific impact it can have on our lives.

NURTURING SELF-WORTH

How you feel about yourself becomes the core of who you are. Your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are directly tied to your worthiness and value.

THE POWER OF HOPE

Hope is based upon your capacity to understand the way things are right now, and to imagine a future for the way things could be.

The Effects of Shame

Shame can have both short-term and long-term effects on our emotional, psychological, and physical well-being.

It's important to note that shame can be a healthy emotion when it prompts us to take responsibility for our actions and make positive changes. However, when shame becomes chronic or overwhelming, it can have negative effects on our well-being.

- **Emotional effects:** Shame can lead to feelings of worthlessness, self-doubt, and insecurity. It can make you feel small, powerless, and isolated from others. You may also experience intense feelings of guilt, anxiety, or depression.
- **Psychological effects:** Shame can affect your thinking patterns and beliefs about yourself and others. It can lead to negative self-talk, self-blame, and a distorted sense of reality. We may also struggle with perfectionism, people-pleasing, and avoidance of situations that trigger shame.
- **Behavioral effects:** Shame can impact your behaviors and choices in various ways. For example, some may engage in self-destructive behaviors such as substance abuse, eating disorders, or self-harm to cope with shame. On the other hand, individuals may also feel undeserving of positive experiences and relationships, causing them to steer clear of situations that may trigger feelings of shame.
- **Physical effects:** Shame can also affect your physical health, leading to symptoms such as stress, insomnia, and chronic pain. It can also weaken your immune system, and increase the risk of heart disease, and other health problems.

> **An exciting and inspiring future awaits you beyond the noise in your mind, beyond the guilt, doubt, fear, shame, insecurity and heaviness of the past you carry around.**
>
> **— Debbie Ford**

Reflection Questions

01 **List some of the emotional effects you have experienced:**

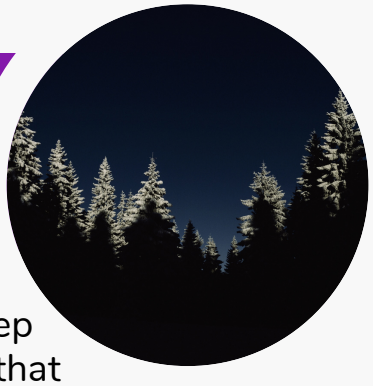
02 **List some of the psychological effects you have experienced:**

03 **List some of the behavioral effects you have experienced:**

04 **List some of the physical effects you have experienced:**

05 **Are there any effects that did not fit into these 4 categories?**

Shame Checklist



Many survivors of domestic violence and abuse experience deep shame. Sometimes to make sense of it they create narratives that support the shame they are feeling. Below are some common beliefs shared by survivors that they have had to overcome on their journey.

Check yes if you have ever felt the same way.

01	**Blaming themselves:** Many survivors of abuse may blame themselves for the abuse they endured. They may feel as though they did something wrong or did not do enough to prevent the abuse.	YES ☐	NO ☐
02	**Feeling dirty or damaged:** Survivors of abuse may feel as though the abuse has left them feeling dirty or damaged. They may feel as though they are tainted in some way and are not worthy of love or respect.	YES ☐	NO ☐
03	**Fear of judgment:** Survivors of abuse may worry about how others will judge them if they were to disclose their abuse. They may worry that others will see them as weak or damaged.	YES ☐	NO ☐
04	**Social conditioning:** In some cultures, there is a stigma attached to being a survivor of abuse. Survivors may feel ashamed because they have been taught that abuse is something to be kept secret and not talked about openly.	YES ☐	NO ☐
05	**Loss of control**: Survivors of abuse often feel as though they have lost control of their lives. They may feel as though they have no power or agency.	YES ☐	NO ☐
06	**Questioning their decision:** Survivors of abuse may have lived with their abuser for so long that everything else feels alien. They start to minimize the abuse and focus on the good times.	YES ☐	NO ☐

Combating Shame

Below are some strategies for each of the common distorted beliefs shared by some survivors. For all the ones you checked the yes box to, highlight some of the strategies, you would be willing to try.

01

Blaming themselves:

- Educate yourself about domestic abuse
- Understand manipulation and gaslighting
- Build your emotional boundaries
- Talk back to the self-critical voice

02

Feeling dirty or damaged:

- Work on your confidence and self-worth
- Recognize the effects of trauma
- Embrace positive affirmations.
- Heal the mind through exercise

03

Fear of judgment:

- Build a strong support system
- Revisit your strengths, skills and abilities
- Build your emotional boundaries
- Manage your stress levels

04

Social conditioning:

- Avoid people & places that treat you badly
- Define the kind of relationships you want
- Reassess your values
- Set Boundaries

05

Loss of control

- Understand the importance of healing
- Discover your limiting beliefs
- Create a vision for your future
- Seek professional help

06

Questioning their decision:

- Prioritize self-care and self-love
- Create a safety plan
- Identify your triggers
- Seek out new growth opportunities

Nurturing self-worth

Building self-worth is a process that takes time and effort, but it is a worthwhile pursuit as it can lead to increased confidence, resilience, and overall happiness.

It is important to highlight that building self-worth is a journey, not a destination. It takes time, patience, and consistent effort, but the results can be life-changing. In short, self-worth is essential for a happy, fulfilling life. It affects every aspect of our lives, from our relationships to our mental health and personal achievements.

- When you have a strong sense of self-worth, you are more confident in yourself and your abilities. You believe in yourself and your potential to succeed, which can lead to greater achievements in life.

- Having self-worth means that you have a strong sense of your own value and worth, which can help you bounce back from setbacks and challenges. You are less likely to be discouraged by failure and more likely to keep working towards your goals.

- Self-worth can also impact your relationships with others. When you believe in your own worth, you are more likely to attract and maintain healthy relationships with people who respect and value you.

> **"Self–worth is so vital to your happiness if you don't feel good about yourself, it's hard to feel good about anything else."**
>
> **— Sandy Hale**

Strength Finder

Identify your strengths: focusing on what you can do well and what makes you unique helps you to recognize your strengths. This can also help you feel more confident and capable, so be sure to review it often.

What are 3 strengths you can think of right away?

What are you proud of in your life?

What do you like about yourself?

What do you do better than others?

What do you enjoy or love doing?

What are your unusual or unexpected talents?

Who or what is your greatest inspiration?

The Power of HOPE

Hope is a positive feeling or emotion that arises from a belief that something good can happen in our future. It is a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain outcome, even when the present circumstances may be challenging or uncertain.

Hope is a powerful force that can motivate us to persevere through difficult times, take action toward our goals, and maintain a positive outlook on life. It is a crucial aspect of our resilience, and it provides us with a sense of meaning and purpose in the face of adversity.

Hope is more than wishful thinking, in fact, there are several benefits to hope which include:

- Increased Positive Emotions
- Stronger Sense of Purpose and Meaning
- Lower Levels of Depression
- Less Loneliness
- Better Physical Health
- Fewer Number of Chronic Illnesses
- Lower Risk of Cancer
- Fewer Sleep Problems

> "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."
>
> — Helen Keller

Increasing Hope

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

When faced with difficult circumstances, it can be easy to feel overwhelmed and powerless. Focusing on what you can control, such as your own thoughts, actions, and reactions, can help you maintain a sense of agency and hopefulness.

PRACTICE GRATITUDE

Cultivating a sense of gratitude can help shift your focus towards the positive aspects of your life, rather than the negative. This can help build a sense of hopefulness and resilience.

INCREASE POSITIVE INFLUENCES

Spending time with positive and supportive people, as well as seeking out uplifting and inspiring content, can help cultivate a more hopeful outlook.

LEARN FROM SETBACKS

Viewing setbacks as opportunities for growth and learning, rather than as failures, can help maintain a sense of hopefulness and resilience.

PRACTICE MINDFULNESS

Engaging in mindfulness practices, such as meditation or deep breathing, can help reduce stress and anxiety, and cultivate a more hopeful outlook.

5 WAYS TO PRACTICE GRATITUDE

- **Keep a gratitude journal:** Write down three things each day that you are grateful for. These can be big or small things, such as a supportive friend, a good cup of coffee, or a sunny day.

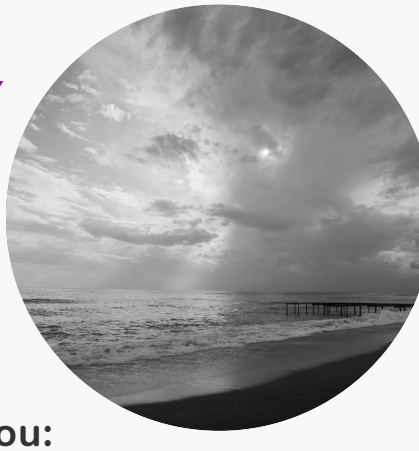
- **Express gratitude to others:** Take time to thank the people in your life who have had a positive impact on you. This can be done in person, through a phone call, or through a note, text, or email.

- **Focus on the present moment**: Pay attention to the small moments of joy and beauty that are present in your everyday life. This can include the taste of a delicious meal, the warmth of the sun on your skin, or the sound of birds chirping outside.

- **Use gratitude as a coping mechanism:** When faced with challenges or setbacks, try to find something to be grateful for. This can help shift your focus away from negative thoughts and towards a more hopeful and positive mindset.

- **Practice gratitude meditation:** Spend a few minutes each day reflecting on the things you are grateful for. You can do this by focusing on your breath and visualizing the things you are thankful for, or by repeating a gratitude mantra such as "I am grateful for all the blessings in my life."

Reflection Questions



01 **List some of the things that tend to overwhelm you:**

02 **When you start to feel overwhelmed what can help you?**

03 **What are some ways you can practice gratitude?**

04 **List some things you have learned from a recent setback:**

05 **List some things you can be hopeful for in your future:**

Prevail

H.O.P.E. Will Always Triumph

By Witlee Ethan

My life's story has taken a very different direction than I had expected, leading me on a journey toward a purpose that I could have never anticipated.

On January 6, 2020, I went on a date with the wrong man and it completely turned my world upside down. What started out as a typical night soon took a dark turn. I was held hostage for over 10 hours and repeatedly raped. After each time he violated me, I was forced into the shower to wash away any evidence of his crimes. During the entire ordeal, I was in survival mode. I was in a constant state of hypervigilance, operating at times between fight, flight, or freeze and even having to disassociate. When I was finally released, I immediately sought medical treatment.

Though I was free from captivity, I wasn't free from the crime scene. For survivors of sexual assault, their body is the crime scene, from which there is no escape, and every detail of the harrowing ordeal they endured replays all over again. That's why healing from trauma is a complex process, but not an impossible one. There is hope.

As much as I had to fight to survive when I was harmed, I had no idea that my greatest fight hadn't even begun yet. I'm a Victim Advocate and I knew that the police wouldn't do anything, this would just become some "He Said, She Said" situation. I also knew I wasn't in a good place mentally to come forward with this yet, I was struggling. Being repeatedly violated left me feeling powerless and full of shame. When I was laying in the hospital bed while being examined and evidence was being collected for the sexual assault kit, I began to wonder just exactly how I had ended up here.

Other intense questions like "What do you do when, as a Victim Advocate, you are the one that needs to be advocated for?" and "How will this look to others?" kept me from coming forward. I kept this a secret until there were multiple news reports that sexual assault was on the rise due to Covid. At that point, I knew I needed to come forward and make sure what happened to me wasn't going to happen to anyone else! Little did I know this fight for justice would be a huge step towards breaking barriers and creating change for victims of sexual violence. I could have never imagined what happened next, after turning in my rapist for his crimes our judicial system allowed him to re-victimize me in the courts by suing me in what has become commonly known as a "She Said, He Sued". Sadly this has been happening to survivors worldwide since the "MeToo" movement emerged in 2017.

Prevail

I've lost a lot from this, but I'm also who I am today because of what I've endured and ultimately overcome. In the 2 years since my rapist filed his lawsuit against me, I've experienced a lot of changes legally. I had to file for bankruptcy. I was forced to sign a settlement agreement under duress that protected him and silenced me, and after my attorney abandoned me. I had to represent myself in Federal District Court. There's a saying that attorneys have, "Whatever you do, don't go to Federal Court" because it's complicated and messy. Yet I was having to figure out how to file motions on my own.

The judicial process is a difficult one to navigate. Each state, each court, and each Judge within those courts have their own set of rules and I was expected to know them all. I had a choice; I could choose to either adapt to the change of circumstances that I couldn't control or give up and allow him to continue to have power over my life. So, I decided to face this head-on.

On Jan 3, 2023, I publicly broke my silence, with a call to action before government and law enforcement officials that was covered by the media. In the last few months, so much has changed for the better. In Feb 2023, I won my case representing myself in the Federal District Court, a historical Judicial victory that experts said was impossible.

Through my court win, the settlement agreement was made moot. The testing of my sexual assault kit has been expedited which was once part of the backlog and finally, a criminal investigation is underway. This includes the involvement of State Senators who are advocating for me. My rapist had two appeals left to file after my court win, but he chose to give up his rights to those appeals. In the last 3 years, my rapist has not once been brought in for questioning by the police, unfortunately, he is currently walking free.

Though my hope is that any progress with the criminal investigation is a step towards finally bringing my rapist to justice and holding him accountable, so he doesn't rape again. What I know now that I didn't know then was God was going to use my story to expose issues within the judicial process to create change. My court case win will set a precedent moving forward that will help protect the rights of victims and survivors everywhere.

Prevail

H.O.P.E. can mean different things to different people. Over the last 3 years, I've especially clung to H.O.P.E.

What if we viewed H.O.P.E. from a different perspective? What if it represented this?

H = HARDHSIPS can bring about HEALING.

O = OVERCOMING OBSTACLES leads to OPPORTUNITIES.

P = PERSERVERING under trial directs you towards your PURPOSE.

E = EXCRUTIATING EVENTS can create a positive EFFECT.

What if surviving leads you on the path to the very thing you are called to do? Today, I'm happy, healthy, and healing. I'm so full of life and I'm living out my purpose. I didn't give up, but I also relied on my faith and hope in Jesus to get me through. Romans 12:12 "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer." My encouragement to you is that no matter what you have gone through, take your story and share it with the world, encouraging others to "Live Each Day With Purpose… Making a difference one day, one life at a time."

Christian Perspective on Shame

Adam and Eve were not ashamed of their nakedness before eating from the Tree of Knowledge, as their minds were innocent and pure. After eating from the tree, they felt ashamed, guilty, and embarrassed, causing them to hide from God.

When God came into the garden he did not shame them, God's first question was to ask, "why are you hiding?”

Shame induces a distressing feeling that brings about a sense of guilt, inadequacy, or impropriety, leading us to hide from God. However, as believers in Jesus Christ, we can conquer the paralyzing grip of shame by putting our faith, trust, and belief in Him.

> The Lord God called to Adam, “Why are you hiding?"
>
> - Genesis 3:9

Plan of Action

MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAY ABOUT SELF-WORTH:	
STOP DOING	
DO LESS OF	
KEEP DOING	
DO MORE OF	
START DOING	

MODULE 3

EMBRACING YOUR WORTH

A Journey to Self-Discovery and Empowerment

Skills Assessment

Self-worth refers to an individual's internal perception of their own value and deservingness of love and respect. Here are five skills that can be helpful in increasing your self-worth. Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale:

5 = High level of competence - extensive experience in the skill area
4 = Moderately high level of competence - good experience in the skill area
3 = Average level of competence – some experience in the skill area
2 = Low level of competence – little experience in the skill area
1 = No level of competence – no experience in the skill area

Assertive Communication: you practice speaking up for yourself in a clear, respectful manner. Your communication demonstrates confidence and self-respect. 1 2 3 4 5

Set boundaries: you are okay saying "no" to requests that don't align with your values or goals. This can help you protect your time, and energy, and demonstrate your self-respect. 1 2 3 4 5

Growth Mindset: embracing challenges and seeing them as opportunities to learn and grow. You are great at focusing on progress, not perfection. 1 2 3 4 5

Physical Health: maintaining a regular exercise routine, eating well, and getting enough sleep. Taking care of your body helps you feel better about yourself. 1 2 3 4 5

Positive self-talk: challenging negative self-talk and replacing it with positive, encouraging messages. As well as using affirmations, self-reflection, and journaling to reinforce positive beliefs about yourself. 1 2 3 4 5

A Journey to Self-Discovery and Empowerment

Self-discovery is the process of exploring and understanding yourself, including your personality, values, beliefs, strengths, weaknesses, and life experiences. It involves looking inward and gaining insights into your own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as well as how these aspects of you interact with the world around you. Self- Discovery can help you gain a deeper understanding of yourself, increase self-awareness, and make meaningful changes in your lives.

ESTABLISHING CORE VALUES

These are the guiding principles that help you define your identity and help to shape your choices. They inform your decision making, goal setting, and overall disposition.

PILLARS OF SELF-DISCOVERY

Life can involve significant changes and challenges, and self-discovery can help you navigate these transitions and find a sense of identity and purpose.

PERSONAL-EMPOWERMENT

Having the self-esteem and conficence to take control of your own life, through making positive decisions based on what you want.

Establishing Core Values

Establishing your core values involves identifying and defining the guiding principles that shape your beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Core values are the fundamental principles that define what is most important to you, what you stand for, and what you prioritize in your life.

Establishing core values can be a valuable process for gaining clarity and direction in your life. It can help you make meaningful decisions, set goals, and live a more fulfilling life.

- **Define your values:** Start by reflecting on your beliefs and what is important in life. Ask yourself questions such as "What values do I hold dear?" or "What motivates and inspires me?"

- **Prioritize your values:** Once you have identified your beliefs, prioritize them in order of importance. Ask yourself questions such as "Which values are most important to me?" or "Which values do I want to prioritize in my life?"

- **Live your values:** Once you have identified and defined your core values, it is important to live by them. Make decisions and take actions that align with your values. This can help you build a sense of integrity and purpose in your life.

> **"A highly developed values system is like a compass. It serves as a guide to point you in the right direction when you are lost."**
>
> **– Idowu Koyenika**

5 WAYS TO STRENGTHEN CORE VALUES

- **Identify your current core values:** Start by reflecting on what is most important to you in life. Write down a list of values that you believe are important, such as honesty, integrity, compassion, and fairness.

- **Evaluate your current behaviors:** Take an honest look at your actions and behaviors. Do they align with your core values? If not, identify the areas where you need to make changes.

- **Create a plan of action:** Once you have identified the areas where you need to improve, create a plan of action. Set specific goals that will help you live in alignment with your values.

- **Surround yourself with like-minded people:** Surrounding yourself with people who share your core values can help you stay focused and motivated.

- **Practice self-reflection:** Regularly take time to reflect on your actions and behaviors. Ask yourself whether you are living in alignment with your core values, and make adjustments as necessary.

CORE VALUES

Values form the foundation of life, they dictate our choices and determine the direction that life takes us. Our values will influence our thoughts, actions, and responses, they affect our relationships, careers, aspirations, and goals.

Despite their importance, sadly few people think about and consciously choose them. Instead, they default to their childhood influences and social values. Explore this list of values on the next page and take some time to consider which ones resonate with you.

- **Step 1:** On the next page highlight or circle your top 20 values.
- **Step 2:** Out of your top 20 values, take 10 and write them below.
  -
  -
  -
  -
  -
  -
  -
  -
  -
  -
- **Step 3:** Out of your 10 above, rank your top 5 in order below.

01.

02.

03.

04.

05.

VALUES LIST

- Family
- Freedom
- Security
- Loyalty
- Intelligence
- Connection
- Creativity
- Humanity
- Success
- Respect
- Invention
- Diversity
- Generosity
- Integrity
- Finesse
- Love
- Openness
- Religion
- Order
- Advancement
- Respect
- Joy/Play
- Forgiveness
- Legacy
- Excitement
- Change
- Goodness
- Involvement
- Faith
- Wisdom
- Beauty
- Caring
- Personal Development
- Vitality
- Honesty
- Adventure
- Kindness
- Teamwork
- Career
- Communication
- Learning
- Excellence
- Innovation
- Quality
- Commonality
- Contributing
- Spiritualism
- Strength
- Entertain
- Wealth
- Service
- Power
- Affection
- Cooperation
- Honor
- Friendships
- Encouragement
- Success
- Clarity
- Fun-Loving
- Charisma
- Humor
- Leadership
- Renewal
- Home
- Be True
- Contentment
- Friendship
- Courage
- Balance
- Compassion
- Fitness
- Professionalism
- Relationship
- Knowledge
- Patience
- Change
- Prosperity
- Wellness
- Finances
- Gratitude
- Grace
- Endurance
- Facilitation
- Effectiveness
- Fun
- Fame
- Justice
- Appreciation
- Willingness
- Intuition
- Accountability
- Patience
- Forgiveness
- Self-Respect
- Abundance
- Reciprocity
- Enjoyment
- Entrepreneurial
- Happiness
- Harmony
- Peace

Reflection Questions

01 How do your values help you feel fulfilled in life?

02 Are your current behaviors aligned with your core values?

03 What actions can you take to align your actions with your values?

04 Compile a list of individuals in your life who share your values:

05 What things in your life take you away from your core values?

Pillars of Self-Discovery

The ability to understand your own character and become aware of your potential, motives, and aspirations takes time and intention. When you define yourself, you're able to harness your passions, discern your life's purpose (the reason you get out of bed in the morning), and learn what inspires you. Ultimately, defining who you are and what you want to do, unlocks the best version of yourself.

If you do not define yourself, others will, and you will be living out their version of you. Without defining your own self, and understanding your purpose, passions, potential, and inspiration, you can never achieve something better than what you have now.

Self-discovery is an intentional and ongoing process of self-exploration, personal growth, and self-awareness. It often involves the following:

- **Awareness:** the ability to recognize what's happening internally and externally.
- **Comfort Zone:** the space where you can easily minimize stress, risk, and failure.
- **Intentional living:** putting purpose behind your choices and actions.

> **"Finding happiness is like finding yourself. You don't find happiness, you make happiness. You choose happiness. Self-actualization is a process of discovering who you are, whom you want to be and paving the way to happiness by doing what brings you the most meaning and contentment to your life"**
>
> **~ David Leonhardt**

5 WAYS TO INCREASE SELF-AWARENESS

- **Practice mindfulness:** Mindfulness is the practice of being present and aware of your thoughts and emotions in the moment. This can help you identify patterns in your thinking and behavior.

- **Keep a journal:** Writing down your thoughts and emotions can help you identify patterns in your thinking and behavior. This can also help you develop a greater understanding of your strengths and weaknesses.

- **Seek feedback:** Ask trusted friends or colleagues for feedback on your behavior and how you come across to others. This can help you gain insight into your blind spots.

- **Take personality tests:** There are various personality tests available online that can help you gain insight into your strengths, weaknesses, and tendencies.

- **Practice self-reflection:** Set aside time each day to reflect on your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. This can help you identify patterns and develop greater self-awareness.

Daily Journal Prompts

Journaling can be an effective tool to increase self-awareness, it does not matter if you do it in the morning or at night. Both times of day can be beneficial for different reasons. Below are some prompts you can ask yourself in your journal to increase self-awareness:

Journaling in the morning can set your tone for the entire day. Below are a few morning routine writing prompts:

- Biggest wins from yesterday...
- 3 things I am grateful for...
- Today I choose to...
- What would make today great?
- What I'll do today that will bring me joy
- One action that will help me progress towards my big goals.

Journaling at the end of the day can help you practice reflection, clear your mind, and help you get a restorative night of sleep. Below are a few end of day routine writing prompts:

- 3 beautiful moments that stand out to me from today
- 3 things I am grateful for...
- A lesson I learned today...
- My biggest challenge today was...
- What brought me joy today is...
- 1 thing I did today that brought me closer to my big goals...

Comfort Zone

Your comfort zone refers to your psychological state which feels familiar, safe, and secure. It's a state where you operate within your set of routines and habits, which require minimal risk or challenge. However, your comfort zone is characterized by a lack of growth or progress, as it is where you tend to avoid new experiences or challenges that may require stepping outside of your comfort zone. This limits personal and professional development and prevents you from achieving your full potential.

Good news! Stepping outside of your comfort zone may be uncomfortable and even challenging, as it often involves taking risks and facing new or unknown situations. But it can also lead to personal growth, increased confidence, and new opportunities. It's important to strike a balance between staying within a comfort zone and taking calculated risks that can help a person achieve their goals and reach their full potential.

In the grey part below list some activities and behaviors that you would consider to be in your comfort zone. In the yellow part below list some activities and behaviors that are outside of your comfort zone.

WAYS TO LIVE *Intentionally*

When you live intentionally, your choices & actions become selective. When these are selective, you ensure they always support your self-discovery and development journey of becoming the best version of yourself. Below is a list of 20 things you can do to increase living intentionally, circle three you would like to try out over the next week. Small daily actions can lead to a ripple effect of changes.

- Develop a Positive Outlook on Life
- Live In and For the Moment
- Let Go of Failure
- Empower Others
- Do Things that Bring you Joy Daily
- Trust Yourself
- Help a Cause
- Get Organized With Your Time and Money
- Embrace Challenges
- Add a Meditation Practice
- Get Clarity on your Dreams
- Identify what you Care About
- Let Go of Negative Relationships
- Smile More
- Listen to Your Gut
- Spend Time in Nature
- Practice Daily Mindfulness
- Journal
- Create a Vision Board
- Express Gratitude Every Day
- Start a Morning Routine

Personal-Empowerment

Personal empowerment is all about gaining the knowledge, skills, and confidence to take control of your life and make positive changes as well as confident decisions. It involves developing a strong sense of self-awareness and self-efficacy, as well as learning to assert oneself and communicate effectively with others. However, true empowerment comes when you convert intention into action.

Personal empowerment is an important part of personal growth and development and helps individuals to overcome obstacles and achieve their full potential in life. It involves a range of different strategies, including:

- **Setting Goals**
- **Developing New Skills**
- **Building Self-Esteem**
- **Seeking out Positive Relationships**
- **Taking Responsibility for your Decisions**
- **Having Accountability for your Actions**

> **"The best day of your life is the one on which you decide your life is your own. No apologies or excuses. No one to lean on, rely on, or blame. The gift is yours – it is an amazing journey – and you alone are responsible for the quality of it. This is the day your life really begins."**
>
> **-Bob Moawad**

CONFIDENCE BUILDER

Self-confidence is the belief in your own abilities, qualities, and judgment. It is a sense of trust and assurance in yourself and your ability to handle situations and challenges in life. Self-confidence allows you to approach tasks and situations with a positive and optimistic attitude, and to take risks and pursue your goals with courage and determination.

A lack of self-confidence can lead to self-doubt, fear and anxiety, which can hinder personal and professional growth. Although there are several variables that play a role in it, a vital one that increases and or decreases self-confidence is your self-talk.

Challenging negative self-talk is an important skill to help improve self-esteem and increase confidence. Here are some steps you can take to challenge negative self-talk:

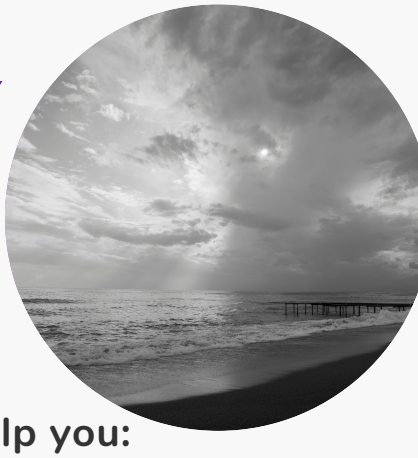
STEP 1: **Identify the negative thought:** Pay attention to your thoughts and notice when you are engaging in negative self-talk. Common negative thoughts might include “I’m not good enough,” “I’ll never be able to do this,” or “I’m such a failure.”

STEP 2: **Question the thought**: Once you’ve identified the negative thought, question it. Ask yourself if the thought is really true or if there is evidence to support it. For example, if you are thinking “I’m not good enough,” ask yourself why you believe that and what evidence you have to support that thought.

STEP 3: **Reframe the thought:** Once you’ve questioned the negative thought, reframe it into a positive or more realistic statement. For example, instead of “I’m not good enough,” reframe it to “I’m doing my best” or “I may not be perfect, but I’m making progress.”

STEP 4: **Practice positive self-talk:** Incorporate positive self-talk into your daily routine. This can be as simple as repeating positive affirmations to yourself, such as “I am capable,” “I am worthy,” or “I am enough.”

Reflection Questions



01 List some ways increasing self-awareness will help you:

02 What concerns do you have regarding leaving your comfort zone?

03 What excites you about leaving your comfort zone?

04 What are some of the negative things you say to yourself?

05 Which positive words can you substitute for the negative ones?

Priority

The Hurt Little Girl Became A Battered Woman

By Tonia M. Reaves

My story of domestic abuse started well before I was old enough to know what abuse was. I was just learning how to tie my own shoes, read a picture book, and write my own name; I was four years old.

My mom and dad were both working so they asked our neighbor's daughter to babysit. It was a very hot and humid night and we were all uncomfortable and hungry. The babysitter decided to steal money from my dad's coin collection to order pizza for herself. She fed everyone else but me and I couldn't understand why. When I let her know that I was hungry and that she should share it with me since she took the money from my dad, she began to physically abuse me. She kicked me in my stomach knocking the wind out of me and then laughed uncontrollably. As I lay there gasping for air she taunted me, giving me my first memory of fear. My nightmares began there.

I went to bed hungry. She woke me to ask me if I was still mad at her. I didn't want to answer so I pretended to be asleep. She kept on until I answered no. I was afraid that if I said yes, she would just brutalize me again. Then without warning, she began to undress me and violated my little body. I was so angry, but I was too little and too afraid to defend myself. That was the moment my self-esteem was destroyed and the night I learned to lie and keep secrets.

As life went on, I got into unhealthy relationships where I felt neglected and unappreciated. I became an unwed teen-aged mother. During this time I was approached by a childhood acquaintance, at first, he just wanted to be friends and hang out. We eventually started dating and I let my guard down. I trusted him. It turned out to be the worst decision I have ever made in my life. It began with his web of lies and sowing seeds of discord. This man had come into my life to tear me down just to build me back up on false pretenses, as he plotted to destroy our lives.

Priority

In the calm before the storm moment, we got married and had two additional children. Now with this blended and growing family situation. Soon after we found out I was pregnant, my husband started to abuse me and my children physically over the next nine years. I felt like we were stuck in a hostage situation and that I had developed Stockholm Syndrome. I loved the man who wanted to abuse me. I tried to do things that would please him and make him want to be loving to me and my children. I tried to figure out ways to get him to love my kids. Nothing I did worked because he never intended for us to be a real family.

I knew I couldn't be married to him and it definitely wasn't love. I recall the day I was ready to go. I called out to God for help. Instead of begging for my marriage to be fixed as usual, I asked for help protecting my babies from this evil person that camouflaged himself as a sweet gentle man but quickly transformed into a violent and foul person. One day, I finally decided that I had had enough. At that moment, I quickly planned our escape with directions from God. He told me what to do with every step. We were finally set free from bondage and our new story of victory began for me and my children.

Christian Perspective on Self-Worth

This scripture is a reminder that God is intimately involved in the creation of every human being, from the moment of conception. The phrase "knit me together" is a deliberate and careful crafting of each individual, and highlights the unique nature of each of us.

This is a reminder of the inherent value and dignity of every individual; (including yourself) and is a vital reminder to respect and care for ourselves and for one another. Psalm 139 is a celebration of the beauty and complexity of human life and a reminder of our connection to a loving and creative God.

> "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."
>
> – Psalm 139:13–14

Plan of Action

MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAY ABOUT SELF-DISCOVERY	
STOP DOING	
DO LESS OF	
KEEP DOING	
DO MORE OF	
START DOING	

MODULE 4

FINDING PURPOSE AFTER PAIN

The Essential Skills for Overcoming Trauma & Abuse

UNSILENCED VOICES

Skills Assessment

Overcoming trauma can be a difficult and complex process, and it may require support. Here are five skills that can be helpful in coping with trauma. Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale:

5 = High level of competence - extensive experience in the skill area
4 = Moderately high level of competence - good experience in the skill area
3 = Average level of competence – some experience in the skill area
2 = Low level of competence – little experience in the skill area
1 = No level of competence – no experience in the skill area

Relaxation Techniques: you practice methods, processes, procedures, or activities that help you to relax; to attain a state of increased calmness. 1 2 3 4 5

Support System: you have trusted friends, family members, or support groups for emotional support. It's vital to have a support system to help you cope with trauma. 1 2 3 4 5

Self-Care: you engage in activities that establish behaviors to ensure your holistic well-being. Taking care of yourself can help reduce stress and promote emotional well-being. 1 2 3 4 5

Challenge Negative Thoughts: since trauma can lead to negative thoughts and beliefs about yourself and the world, you practice challenging these negative thoughts and replacing them with more positive, realistic thoughts. 1 2 3 4 5

Positive Self-Talk: challenging negative self-talk and replacing it with positive, encouraging messages. As well as using affirmations, self-reflection, and journaling to reinforce positive beliefs about yourself. 1 2 3 4 5

The Essential Skills for Overcoming Trauma & Abuse

Recovering from trauma and abuse is an intricate and demanding undertaking that necessitates patience, self-kindness, and assistance. It is crucial to recognize that each individual's path to healing from trauma and abuse is distinctive, and it may take time to cultivate these abilities and advance. Establish a secure and nurturing atmosphere to work through the trauma and recuperate from it. Being a trauma survivor can be a tough journey, however, it can also be empowering. It acts as a stimulus to help us learn to mend and articulate ourselves, which enables us to channel our crisis into a positive transformation.

THE AFTERMATH OF TRAUMA

Comprehending the responses to trauma and traumatic stress can aid in comprehending some of the things you are currently encountering.

THE PROCESS OF HEALING

The healing journey is a process that belongs to you, and you have the liberty to progress at your own pace - one step at a time, as slowly or swiftly as you require or desire.

THE POWER OF PURPOSE

Your purpose can serve as a compass for your decisions, impact your actions, mold your aspirations, and provide you with a sense of direction and significance throughout your journey.

The Aftermath of Trauma

Trauma is a term used to describe an intensely distressing or unsettling occurrence that surpasses an individual's capacity to handle the emotional and psychological effects of the event. Trauma can be triggered by a solitary event, such as a natural calamity, an accident, or an attack, or it can result from ongoing situations such as abuse, neglect, or violence.

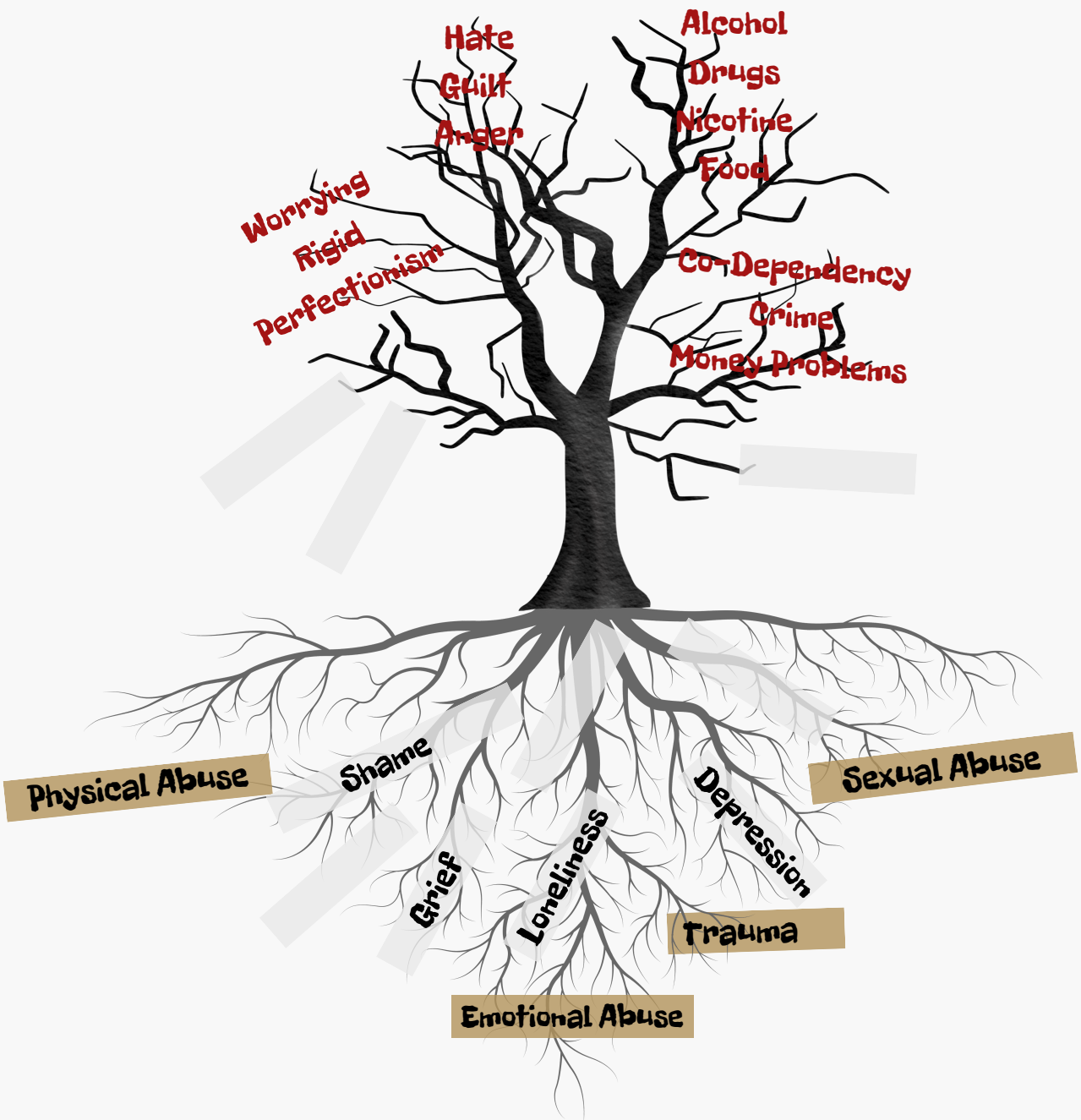
Trauma can have a profound impact on an individual's mental health and well-being, leading to symptoms such as anxiety, depression, flashbacks, nightmares, and hypervigilance. It can also affect a person's physical health, leading to chronic pain, fatigue, and other physical symptoms.

Trauma is a highly individualized experience, and what may be traumatic for one person may not be traumatic for another. Additionally, not everyone who experiences a traumatic event will develop symptoms of trauma. The way trauma affects a person depends on a variety of factors, including their personal history, coping skills, and support network.

> **As every therapist will tell you, healing involves discomfort. But so is refusing to heal. And over time, refusing to heal is always more painful.**
>
> **– Resmaa Menakem**

Trauma Tree

In the recovery community, they utilize a tree metaphor to compare the branches of a tree to behaviors, saying that both (branches and behaviors) have roots. Abuse of any kind provides fertile ground for the roots to develop into behaviors we do not want. Unfortunately, the very things trauma causes become roots that grow into parts of our behaviors. Below you can see an example of how this very metaphor works. Feel free to fill in the empty boxes with your own emotions and behaviors.



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Healing Tree Activity

The healing tree works the same way, the soil and the roots produce the branches. Start with the fruit you would like your tree to produce. Fill in the different feelings, emotions, actions, habits, and results you would like.

Then fill out the roots. In order to have the fruits you choose, what do your roots need to be grounded in? Fill out the thoughts, beliefs, and support you need for healthy roots.

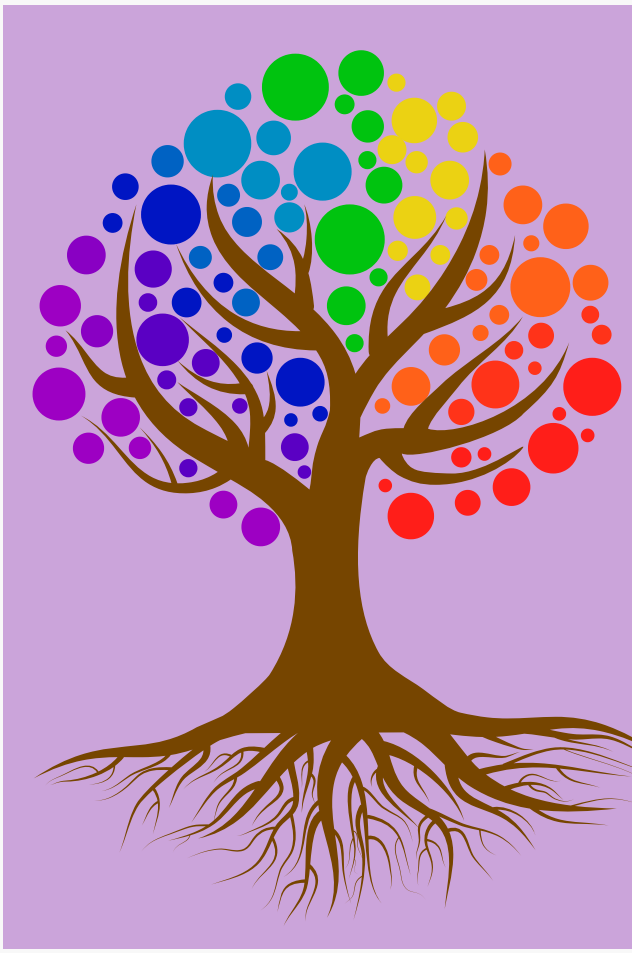
Feelings:

Emotions:

Actions:

Habits:

Results:



Thoughts:

Beliefs:

Support:

The Process of Healing

As harsh as it may sound, the reality is that you will never be the same person as you were before the trauma. As scary as that sounds, it can also feel incredibly freeing as you go through the healing process and experience post-traumatic growth.

The healing progress isn't linear. You may feel like you are making great progress and feeling strong, then you have a terrible day where all of your emotional pain hits you at once. This is to be expected and you can even be prepared for these days.

- **Practice self-compassion:** Always remember, you're not broken. You cannot heal if you're beating yourself up all the time. Self-compassion can even increase your wellbeing.

- **Don't try to "fix" it all at once:** As tempting as it seems, trying to speed up the healing process is not wise. You are likely experiencing a range of deep emotions and feelings and each of them needs to be processed through and healed from.

- **Don't go it alone:** Your instinct might be to go through the process alone, truth is we are connective beings and we heal better together. Reach out to someone who feels safe and respects that this is your process.

> **Trauma creates change you don't choose. Healing is about creating the change you do choose.**
>
> **– Michelle Rosenthal**

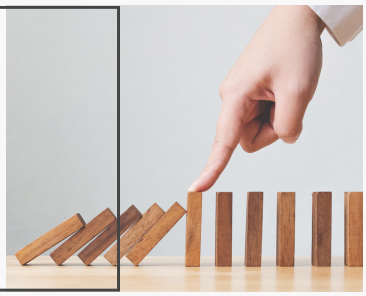
Stages of Healing

RECOGNITION

The first stage of healing is recognizing that there is an issue that needs to be addressed. This can involve acknowledging the symptoms or emotional pain.

INTERVENTION

Once the issue has been recognized, the next stage is to take action to address it. This can involve seeking support, counseling, talking to someone, or making lifestyle changes. Here is where establishing a sense of safety and stability in one's life is vital.

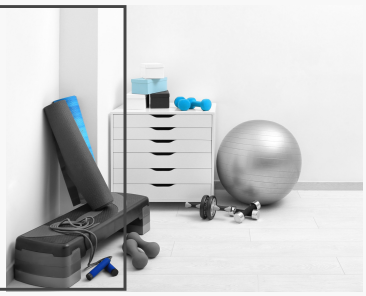


REST AND RECOVERY

Depending on the type of healing that is needed, rest and recovery may be required to allow your body and mind time to heal. This can involve taking time off, engaging in self-discovery activities, or even just getting enough sleep.

REHABILITATION

Seek out a range of interventions that are specifically tailored to provide relief and mitigate some of the adverse consequences of trauma, such as anxiety, behavioral changes, health problems, and even cognitive functioning.



INTEGRATION

The final stage of healing involves integrating the healing process into daily life. This can involve incorporating new habits or practices into daily routines, such as meditation or exercise, to maintain health and prevent future issues.

Reflection Questions

01 **What did you learn from understanding your roots better?**

02 **What were some new ways you would like to consistently feel?**

03 **What beliefs do you need to feel this new way consistently?**

04 **What has been the scariest part of healing?**

05 **What has been the best part of healing?**

The Power of Purpose

The purpose of one's life gives them meaning and direction. Ultimately, the question of life's purpose is one that each individual must answer for themselves. What brings you a sense of meaning, joy, and fulfillment? What impact do you want to make in the world? These are questions to explore as you seek your own path and purpose in life.

- **Happiness and Fulfillment:** Some believe that the ultimate goal of life is to experience joy, satisfaction, and a sense of purpose. This can be achieved in different ways, such as through relationships, career, hobbies, or spirituality.

- **Contribute to the World:** For some, the meaning of life comes from making a positive impact on others and the world around them. This can be through volunteer work, activism, philanthropy, or any other form of service.

- **Grow and Evolve:** From a spiritual or personal development perspective, life's purpose may be seen as a journey of self-discovery and growth. This can involve overcoming challenges, learning new skills, and becoming a better version of oneself..

> **You have a masterpiece inside you. One unlike any that has ever been created, or ever will be. If you go to your grave without painting your masterpiece, it will not get painted. No one else can paint it. Only you."**
>
> **– Gordon Mackenzie**

5 WAYS TO REFLECT ON *Finding your Purpose*

- **Reflect on your values and passions.** What do you care about most? What activities or topics do you feel most drawn to? By exploring your interests and values, you can begin to identify potential avenues for finding purpose.

- **Identify your strengths and skills.** What are you good at? What unique talents or abilities do you have? By focusing on your strengths and skills, you can start to see how you might use them to make a meaningful impact.

- **Consider your past experiences.** What have been some of the most significant moments in your life so far? What have you learned from those experiences? Looking back on your life can help you identify patterns or themes that may point you towards your purpose.

- **Explore different opportunities.** Once you have a sense of what you care about, what you're good at, and what you've learned from your past experiences, it's time to start exploring potential paths. This might involve volunteering, taking a new class, starting a side project, or networking with people in fields that interest you.

- **Stay open and curious.** Finding your purpose is a journey, not a destination. As you explore different opportunities and experiences, stay open to new possibilities and be curious about where they might lead you.

Reflection Questions

01 **List some things you care about:**

02 **List some unique talents or abilities you have:**

03 **List some of the most significant moments in your life so far:**

04 **What are some new experiences you want to try?**

05 **List a few things that may constitute your distinct journey toward fulfilling your purpose:**

Peace

The Night
By Candice R. Reyes

For 19 years, I held on to guilt and shame because of someone else's actions.

In New Orleans, the week of my honeymoon, a policeman offered to take me to a clean bathroom and promised I wouldn't need to buy anything to use it. He didn't tell me he had plans for a different payment type.

When emerging from the ladies' room, I was sexually assaulted. I never spoke about that night with my husband for 19 years. Last year was the first time I felt my silence needed to be broken. My husband needed to know the truth about the night I walked to the bathroom in New Orleans.

Fearful of his response, I mustered up the courage to expose the secret that haunted me. His response caught me off-guard. My husband embraced me as I lay in bed weeping, and he whispered, "You have nothing to be sorry for. I'm sorry I wasn't there. We will get through this together. I love you."

At that moment, hope replaced my shame. Hope flooded my emotions once the silence was broken. My healing process could now begin.

If fear of pain influences our choice to remain silent, that pain festers, erecting walls and preventing others from helping. My choice to admit my pain freed me from its lingering sting.

Bondage was broken when I chose to reclaim my voice to ask for help, share my truth, and expose the lie. Strength is seen in those who do was is right when afraid.

Christian Perspective on Trauma

This verse is a message of comfort and reassurance from God to his people. The passage begins with an admonition to not be afraid or dismayed, with the promise that God is with us. This is seen as a message of encouragement to have faith and trust in God, even in difficult times.

God will provide strength and help those who rely on him, This is a promise of protection and support, as well as a call to trust in God's power and goodness. This scripture is a message of hope and comfort when we are facing challenges or struggles, encouraging us to trust in God's presence and provision.

> 'Do not fear, for I am with you:
> Do not be afraid, for I am your God, I will strengthen you; I will also help you, I will also uphold you with my righteous right hand.
>
> -Isiah 41:10

Plan of Action

MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAY ABOUT HEALING IS:

STOP DOING	
DO LESS OF	
KEEP DOING	
DO MORE OF	
START DOING	

MODULE 5

EDUCATION TO CAREER

Your Guide to Vocation and Career Development

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Skills Assessment

Soft skills are personal attributes and traits that enable individuals to effectively interact with others and perform their job responsibilities. Here are five soft skills that can be helpful in any career. Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale:

5 = High level of competence - extensive experience in the skill area
4 = Moderately high level of competence - good experience in the skill area
3 = Average level of competence – some experience in the skill area
2 = Low level of competence – little experience in the skill area
1 = No level of competence – no experience in the skill area

Self-management: the ability to manage your behaviors, thoughts, and emotions in a conscious and productive way. 1 2 3 4 5

Communication: the ability to effectively express ideas and information clearly, both verbally and written. 1 2 3 4 5

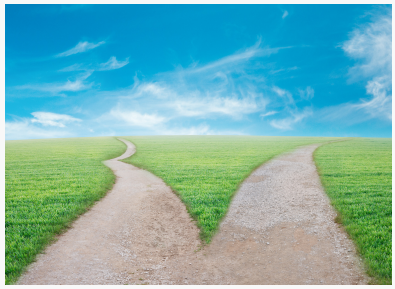
Time Management: the ability to manage your time effectively, including the ability to prioritize tasks, meet deadlines, and balance multiple responsibilities. 1 2 3 4 5

Collaboration: the ability to work effectively with others in a team environment, including the ability to give and receive feedback, and to resolve conflicts. 1 2 3 4 5

Conflict Resolution: the ability to manage and resolve conflicts effectively, including the ability to negotiate, mediate, and find mutually acceptable solutions. 1 2 3 4 5

Your Guide to Vocation and Career Development

The continuous process of steering your professional life towards achieving personal and career objectives is referred to as career development. This process involves strategic planning and taking action to enhance your skills, knowledge, and experience. It also entails exploring new prospects for career advancement or even making a shift in career direction. Career development is critical as it can aid in achieving both personal and professional growth and maximizing your potential. Moreover, career development can lead to finding purpose and contentment in your work and contributing to your overall well-being.



UNDERSTANDING LIFE'S PATHWAYS

This module provides you with a deeper insight into the world of education, work, and the different opportunities to fulfill your purpose and find meaning in what you do.

SUCCESSFUL CAREER PLANNING

This entails identifying your skills and interests and then exploring suitable career options that bring you joy, meaning, and income to sustain your lifestyle.

WORKFORCE FUNDAMENTALS

No matter what career path you decide to take, there are core power skills that stay the same and are applicable to all professions. Mastering these skills are vital.

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Understanding Life's Pathways

Have you ever been asked the question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

The irony is that the ideal profession for you might be something that you haven't even heard of yet. Often, we are only aware of career options that are familiar to us, such as those that our family members, friends, or popular media have exposed us to, such as doctors, dentists, and teachers.

The plethora of options available for career paths can often feel overwhelming, considering the numerous choices like education, certifications, blue-collar labor, white-collar labor, government jobs, jobs with benefits, the military, and many more. However, there is a career suitable for everyone, as evidenced by the emergence of influencers who showcase their dancing skills on popular social media platforms.

That's why having a general idea of what you would love to pursue, and understanding the required education or training for various careers, can aid in your future planning and enable you to achieve your desired career path.

> **Desire! That's the one secret of every man's career. Not education. Not being born with hidden talents. Desire."**
>
> **—Johnny Carson**

Career Path Basics

Some commonly held beliefs can hinder individuals from choosing the right career path for themselves.
The first one is the notion that pursuing a traditional four-year college degree is the only way to secure a high-paying job. However, some careers offer ample opportunities for financial growth without requiring a college degree.

The second common belief is that college is not a viable option for some individuals due to financial or academic constraints. However, there are various options available to individuals who desire to enter their dream career, including financial aid, scholarships, or even community college programs.

Four-year College or University: an undergraduate program leads to a bachelor's degree in a specific area of study. You complete a bachelor's degree to prepare for a profession after college and/or enter a graduate program. To qualify for admission you need a high school diploma or GED and take the ACT or SAT college placement test. However, there are some private schools that do not ask for the ACT or SAT.

Community College: offers associate degree programs. This degree either prepares you for a career after graduation or to transfer to a bachelor's program. Tuition is usually less expensive and you can take individual courses to gain specific knowledge or skills without having to go full-time.

Apprenticeships: a work-based learning model where apprentices have supervised on-the-job training, along with job-related education, all while earning a wage that increases during the progression of the program.

Trade and Certificate Programs: offers training for a specific job. Students attend a trade school program to learn the skills needed for their chosen career path, such as welding, business administration, medical billing or computer repair. Trade schools are focused on quickly preparing students to enter the workforce in a skilled trade.

Internships: a professional learning experience that offers meaningful, practical work related to a student's field of study or career interest. An internship gives you the opportunity for career exploration and development, and to learn new skills. Internships can be both paid or unpaid opportunities.

The Military: provides a salary, benefits, job training, and travel. The military requires you to commit to a certain number of years of service. Each branch has its own focus and career options. To apply, you must take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test. Each branch requires you to pass a physical examination and meet certain weight requirements. Fitness requirements vary depending on the branch.

Volunteering: contributing your time, effort, and talent to meet a need or gain valuable experience is a great way to learn new skills and knowledge however, as this does not bring in income it may pose its own challenges.

Entrepreneur: technology has increased opportunities for individuals to take their idea and create a product or service that people will buy. Websites such as Etsy, eBay Youtube, and others provide needed tools, resources, and even guidance to start your own business.

Workforce: there are several careers where experience is king and just getting a job in the field provides more opportunities for growth, skill development, and advancement. In fact, many entry-level jobs can lead to leadership opportunities which are a fast track to increased pay and career advancement.

5 Sectors of Industry

There are nearly 118 million jobs in the U.S. with over 12,000 careers listed in our 5 sectors of industry. The sectors of industry refer to the different categories or segments of our economy that produce goods or services.

- **Primary sector:** This sector includes industries that involve the extraction and production of raw materials, such as agriculture, mining, forestry, and fishing.

- **Secondary sector:** This sector involves industries that transform raw materials into finished products. Examples include manufacturing, construction, and energy production.

- **Tertiary sector:** This sector involves industries that provide services to consumers and businesses. Examples include banking, education, healthcare, hospitality, transportation, and retail.

- **Quaternary sector**: This sector involves an intellectual aspect of the economy. It includes education, training, the development of technology, and research and development

- **Quinary sector:** This includes businesses and not-for-profit organizations that focus on providing essential services such as public services, education, military, and healthcare.

Factors to Consider

Choosing a career is an important decision that requires careful consideration of several factors. Here are some factors to consider when choosing a career:

Salary & Earning Potential

Core Values & Purpose

Career Growth & Potential

Benefits & Perks

Availabilty & Demand

Flexibility & Autonomy

Conditions & Culture

Skills & Passions

Education & Training

Basic Informational Interview

With so many career options available, it can be challenging to choose the right path. However, you don't have to make a decision without gaining a deeper understanding of a profession from someone who has experience in it. An informational interview with a professional working in a field that interests you can provide valuable insights and help you determine if it's the right fit for you. Here are some questions to ask during the interview to gain a basic understanding of the profession.

- What's the best thing about your job?
- What's the most challenging thing about your job?
- What do you do at work on a daily basis?
- What are the entry-level positions in this field?
- What drew you to this field?
- What skills have you found vital to your job?
- Where do you see the industry going in the future?
- What is the earning potential in this field?
- What are the hours like?
- How has the field changed since you started?
- What is the company culture like in this field?
- Are there any degrees or certifications I need?
- How much experience do I need?

Advanced Informational Interview

Once you have narrowed down a field it is still a great idea to get advice from experts in the field. Below are a few questions to ask to get you started on this exciting new career path.

- What advice do you have for someone new to the industry?
- What should I be doing to improve my career prospects?
- What are the different ways I can enter this field?
- What are the pros and cons of each option?
- What are the advancement opportunities in this field?
- What is the work/life balance in this field?
- Where are the jobs in this field located?
- Are there any conferences or events I should attend?
- Who are some people I should connect with on LinkedIn?
- What publications do experts in the field read?
- Are there any trade associations I should join?
- What interviewing advice do you have for job seekers?
- How can I make my resume stand out to employers?
- How can I hone my interviewing skills for a job in this field?
- How can I gain experience in this field?

Reflection Questions

01 What career paths stood out to you and why?

02 What career paths were an absolute no and why?

03 What industry sectors are you interested in and why?

04 What 3 factors are most important to you and why?

05 List 3 careers you would like to interview people in:

Successful Career Planning

Occasionally, individuals may mix up the concepts of jobs and careers. A job is a role that you hold at a specific moment in time. A career, on the other hand, pertains to a profession that one prepares for and approaches as a lifelong pursuit. Certain jobs are situated within your career trajectory, whereas others simply provide financial support as you pursue your career goals. To illustrate, consider an author who works as a barista to make a living until their book is published.

The process of career development typically involves several stages, including self-assessment, exploration, decision-making, and implementation.

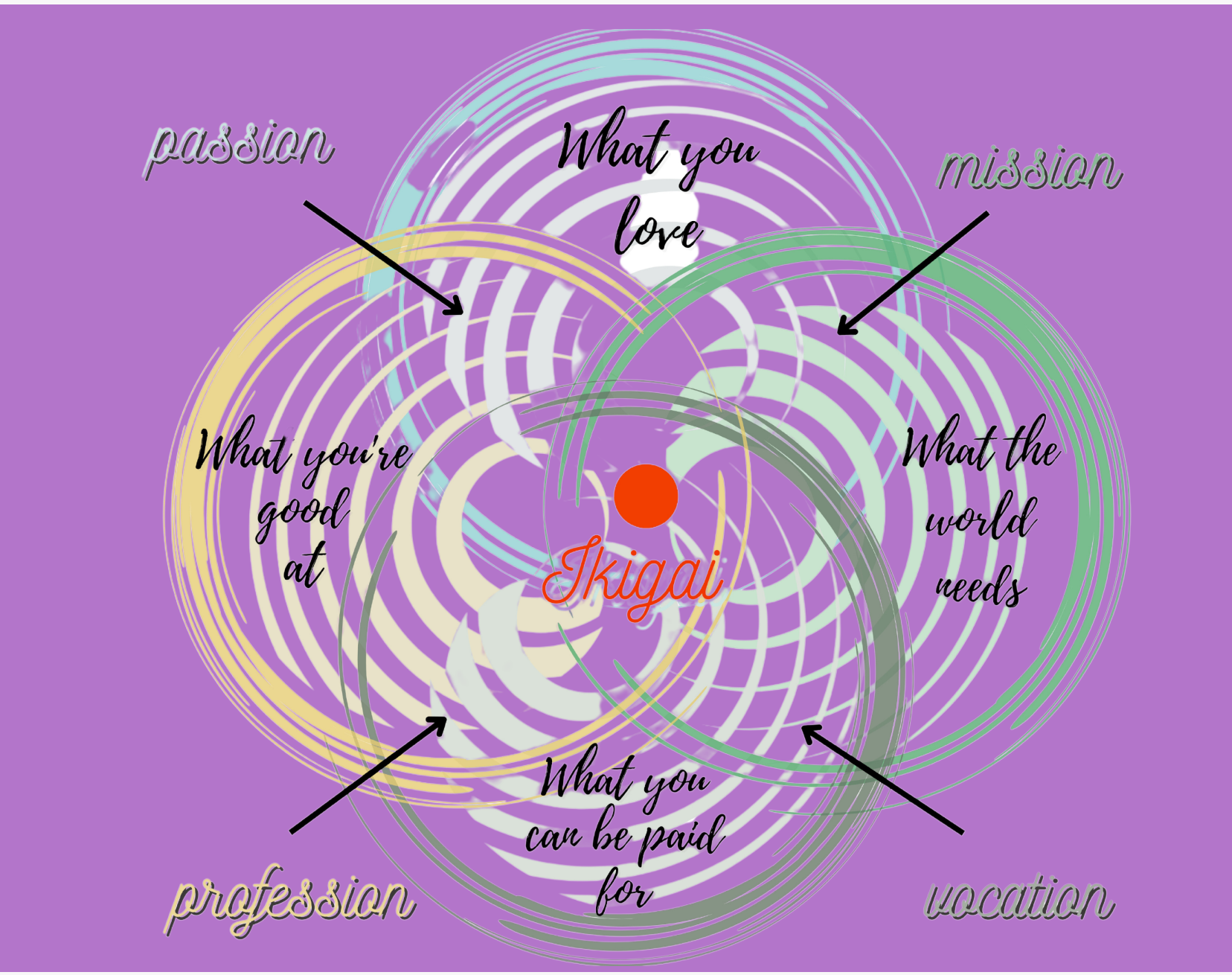
- **Self-Assessment**: identifying one's strengths, weaknesses, values, and interests.
- **Exploration:** involves researching various career options and opportunities.
- **Decision-Making:** choosing a career path that aligns with one's goals and values.
- **Implementation:** involves taking action, such as obtaining additional education or training, seeking job opportunities, and networking with professionals in one's field.

> **"Would you do your job and not be paid for it? I would do this job and take on a second job just to make ends meet if nobody paid me. That's how you know you are doing the right thing."**
>
> **—Oprah**

The Four Elements of Ikigai

We spend one-third of our life working, so it's no surprise that you should want to find a career that will be a good fit for you. Choosing a career first means learning as much as you can about yourself, your goals, and the larger context of work.

In Japanese culture, there is a word referring to something that gives a person a sense of purpose, a reason for living. This word for the passion that gives value and joy to life is Ikigai. Below is a diagram representing the four areas of Ikigai.



Reflection Questions

01 **What do you love?**

02 **What are you good at?**

03 **What does the world need?**

04 **What are some things you can be paid for?**

05 **What careers align with your answers above?**

Workforce Fundamentals

Interpersonal skills are the cornerstone of success in any job or career, as well as in all areas of life. They encompass a range of personal qualities, traits, and attributes that allow individuals to interact with others in a positive and productive manner. While they are often difficult to quantify, these skills are critical to complement technical knowledge and expertise, enabling individuals to form strong relationships, work effectively with others, and ultimately achieve their goals..

- **Effective communication:** verbal and non-verbal communication is essential in any workplace as it helps to build relationships, prevent misunderstandings, and foster collaboration.
- **Adaptability:** enables you to cope with changes and unexpected situations in the workplace. In today's rapidly changing work environment being flexible, creative, and having the ability to solve problems is vital.
- **Emotional intelligence:** soft skills such as empathy, self-awareness, and self-regulation enable individuals to understand and manage their own emotions and those of others. Emotional intelligence is critical for building strong relationships, resolving conflicts, and creating a positive workplace culture.

> **Success is neither magical nor mysterious. Success is the natural consequence of consistently applying the basic fundamentals.**
>
> **-Jim Rohn**

5 WAYS TO DEVELOP *Interpersonal Skills*

- **Practice active listening:** One of the key elements of effective communication is active listening. This means paying attention to what the other person is saying without interrupting or formulating a response in your head.

- **Develop empathy:** Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. You can develop empathy by putting yourself in another person's shoes and trying to see things from their perspective.

- **Improve your communication skills:** Effective communication involves both verbal and nonverbal communication. Try to be clear and concise when expressing your thoughts and feelings, and pay attention to your body language and tone of voice.

- **Learn to manage your emotions:** Emotions can sometimes get in the way of effective communication and relationships. Learn to manage your emotions by identifying your triggers and finding healthy ways to express and manage your feelings.

- **Build rapport:** Building rapport involves establishing a connection with another person based on mutual trust and understanding. You can build rapport by finding common interests or experiences, showing genuine interest in the other person, and being authentic and transparent.

Active Listening Tips

Active listening is a crucial component of effective communication and developing strong interpersonal relationships. Here are some tips to practice active listening:

- **Pay attention:** Focus your attention on the speaker and avoid any distractions. Make eye contact and give the speaker your full attention.
- **Avoid interrupting:** Allow the speaker to finish their thoughts without interrupting them. Interrupting can be perceived as disrespectful and may cause the speaker to lose their train of thought.
- **Show interest:** Demonstrate that you are interested in what the speaker is saying by nodding your head, making appropriate facial expressions, and using verbal cues such as "uh-huh," "yes," or "I see."
- **Paraphrase:** After the speaker finishes talking, paraphrase what they said to confirm your understanding. This shows the speaker that you were actively listening and can help to clarify any misunderstandings.
- **Ask questions:** Asking open-ended questions can help you gain a deeper understanding of the speaker's thoughts and feelings. This can also help to keep the conversation flowing and show that you are engaged.
- **Avoid distractions:** Avoid multitasking or thinking about what you're going to say next while the speaker is talking. This can detract from your ability to actively listen and may cause the speaker to feel ignored or disrespected.
- **Validate feelings:** Acknowledge and validate the speaker's feelings, even if you don't necessarily agree with their perspective. This can help to build trust and rapport in your relationship.
- **Respond appropriately:** Respond to the speaker's message in a thoughtful and respectful way. This can help to build stronger relationships and foster better communication.

Reflection Questions

01 What are some of your stronger interpersonal skills and why?

02 What are 2 interpersonal skills you can grow?

03 List some ways you can increase the skills you chose above:

04 Who would you consider a good listener in your life and why?

05 List 2 of the active listening tips you can work on and how:

Persistence

Gift from a Stranger

By Susan Sheehan

I remember my grandmother telling me at 10 years old: “Never sit on a man’s lap, it is just not what a young lady does.” I was blonde and cute: I looked like Shirley Temple as a little girl, Hayley Mills as a teenager and Marilyn Monroe as a young woman. All three looks attracted the eye of others. I learned to take compliments with a smile and when boys started following me, I thought they were just eyes adoring me from afar. I was always told to flirt with all the boys and marry a rich one. However, I was a young romantic and believed very confidently “I would only marry for love!”

The ideals of youth, how wonderful it would be to hold onto them forever, but the truth is that life’s experiences destroyed my innocence. I share my story out of hope that it can give you hope in knowing that yesterday no longer exists and the only truth that matters is, you are worthy of love, and it is your birthright to live your best life.

I wanted to be a virgin when I married, I know it seems silly to say today but forty years ago it was what I wanted. However, at fifteen years old, I noticed a strange guy following me, it seemed wherever I went there he was always staring at me. Then one day at the park he pulled me into the bushes and tried to rape me but I was quicker and stronger, and I managed to get away. Six months later I would not be so lucky, as my innocence was shattered when someone my family knew, tied me to a bed and raped me.

I cried myself to sleep for weeks wondering what I had done to deserve such punishment. I kept it to myself never telling another soul because of the shame and embarrassment. Sadly, it became very obvious to me that I was no longer being adored from afar but that I was a sex object to some, who only desired to take what they wanted by any means.

I had a date’s dog attack me because I said no to his advances, and a work colleague once locked me in a cupboard until I agreed to give him a blow job. There was the time a boss organized a ‘surprise’ for me with his friend that wouldn’t take no for an answer. I was even once followed home by a guy in the bank who pushed his way into my apartment, and onto me. I could not even trust the men I was dating, as a former boyfriend I said no to, broke into my apartment, and viciously raped me. I even had a landlord use his key one night to take more from me than just rent money.

Persistence

These are only a few of my stories and although the innocence of my youth was stolen, I promised myself I would not be defined by what I had experienced. I want you to know that I have also experienced love, maybe not the 'soul mate' one love forever love, but I have loved and have been loved. Although to be completely transparent, it took me some time to enjoy sex and true intimacy because I was afraid of and felt unworthy of it. However, my experiences did inspire my career.

I have been a coach for over 30 years, I have studied and been coached by the best in the world. I have consciously and unconsciously let go of the layers of pain, shame, contempt, anger, disappointment, embarrassment, unworthiness, criticism, and fear. I have worked tirelessly to build my confidence and self-esteem because the one thing I am sure about is that we are worth more than the pain we have suffered.

I remember seeing an old friend I hadn't seen for a while, her life experiences had turned her bitter and angry. She had not aged well and had zero joy in her presence. I promised myself that day, I would never let this happen to me. I am very proud to tell you today that I kept that promise, and so can you. Even though mental, emotional, and physical abuse is a powerful force that can destroy your spirit and tear your heart into 1000 little pieces forever if you let it, it is still a choice to let it.

I was reminded of this one day as I was sitting in an artsy café in a little desert town by myself wondering what I was going to do. When a stranger, a woman walked up to me took my hands in hers, looked me straight in the eye, and said, "You are going to be OK, use this time for you, you are special, believe it." She kissed me on the forehead and walked out. Even though I never saw her again, she gave me a gift that changed my life forever. Since that day on I have been practicing 'forgiveness', one of the most powerful healing tools. Always remember, forgiveness is a gift you give yourself and healing can only happen when you open your mind to believing it to be true. Start today thinking about what you truly desire, create a beautiful new picture of what you want your future to look like and for goodness' sake start today believing that you deserve it. Let me be that stranger kissing you on the forehead telling you, you are special, this is your time.

Christian Perspective on Divine Gifts

> From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.
>
> -Ephesians 4:16

This scripture emphasizes the body of Christ is a unified and interconnected organism that is held together by Him. Every part of the body has a unique role to play in building up the body and promoting its growth.

The individualized functions performed by each body part are integral to the overall growth and fortification of the body as a whole.

This emphasizes the significance of each person utilizing their distinct spiritual abilities and skills to assist others, thereby promoting the well-being, growth, and love within the entire community.

Plan of Action

MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAYS ABOUT MY CAREER ARE:

STOP DOING	
DO LESS OF	
KEEP DOING	
DO MORE OF	
START DOING	

MODULE 6

GETTING FINANCIALLY FIT

A Guide to Wealth and Prosperity

UNSILENCED VOICES

Skills Assessment

Effective money management skills can help you achieve financial security and avoid unnecessary financial stress. Here are five essential money management skills. Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale:

5 = High level of competence - extensive experience in the skill area
4 = Moderately high level of competence - good experience in the skill area
3 = Average level of competence – some experience in the skill area
2 = Low level of competence – little experience in the skill area
1 = No level of competence – no experience in the skill area

Budgeting: the ability to create and follow a spending plan based on your income and expenses. This plan keeps your spending in check and helps you stay on track for your future. 1 2 3 4 5

Saving: the ability to put money aside each month for emergencies, retirement, and your long-term goals. 1 2 3 4 5

Debt Management: managing your debt wisely by making payments on time, avoiding unnecessary debt, and understanding how borrowing money can impact your finances. 1 2 3 4 5

Money Mindfulness: The skill of spending money with conscious and deliberate intention, consistently maintaining awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors related to finances. 1 2 3 4 5

Financial Literacy: the ability and knowledge that allows you to make informed and effective decisions with all of your financial resources. Understanding the risks and benefits of different investments. 1 2 3 4 5

A Guide to Wealth and prosperity

Personal finance is the management of one's money and financial resources. It's essential to take control of your personal finances to achieve financial stability, security, and independence. Finances can be a struggle for some due to a lack of financial education, overspending, income insecurity, unexpected expenses, debt, trauma, and economic factors. It's essential to develop good financial habits, seek out resources and advice, and be patient and persistent in managing personal finances.

PERSONAL FINANCE 101

These are just a few basic principles of personal finance. As you continue to manage your finances, there are some tools to help you master the basics and build a strong financial foundation.

MASTERING YOUR CREDIT SCORE

Excellent credit management leads to higher credit scores, which in turn improves your financial future. Low scores are a reflection of your beliefs and behaviors.

MILLIONAIRE MINDSET

There are certain beliefs, habits, and actions financially abundant people have in common. Learning and applying them will help you in achieving financial success.

Personal Finance 101

There are many factors that can contribute to proficient personal financial management. By understanding the factors that increase your financial well-being and seeking out resources and support, you can take steps to improve your financial situation and avoid common personal finance mistakes.

The most common financial mistakes and problems people have are:

- Poor money management
- Lack of financial education
- Unhealthy attitudes toward money

To avoid the common problems in your finances, it is important to be proactive:

- Create a monthly budget
- Save for emergencies
- Invest for the future
- Maintain responsible spending habits

> **Too many people spend money they earned..to buy things they don't want..to impress people that they don't like.**
>
> **–Will Rogers**

7 Common Financial Traps

Below are seven of the most common factors that contribute to poor personal finances. By understanding these factors and seeking out education, resources, and support, you can take steps to improve your financial situation and avoid common personal finance mistakes.

- **Not having a budget:** Failing to create and stick to a budget can lead to overspending, debt, and financial stress.
- **Living beyond their means:** Spending more money than they earn can lead to debt, financial insecurity, and limited opportunities for financial growth and stability.
- **Impulse spending:** Making impulsive purchases without considering the long-term impact on their finances can lead to financial instability and poor money management.
- **Failing to save for emergencies:** Not having an emergency fund to cover unexpected expenses can lead to financial stress and reliance on high-interest credit cards or loans.
- **Misusing credit cards:** Using credit cards to finance everyday expenses and carrying high balances can lead to debt, high-interest payments, and poor credit scores.
- **Not investing for the future:** Failing to invest in retirement accounts or other long-term investments can limit opportunities for financial growth and leave individuals financially unprepared for the future.
- **Ignoring bills and debts:** Failing to pay bills on time or ignoring debts can lead to late fees, penalties, and damage to one's credit score.

Money Spending Habits

Money spending habits are the patterns or behavior that people follow when it comes to spending money. Some common money-spending habits include:

- **Impulse buying:** Impulse buying is when you make a purchase without planning or considering it beforehand. This habit can lead to overspending and financial stress.

- **Budgeting:** Budgeting is the practice of setting financial goals and allocating money towards them. People who budget tend to be more mindful of their spending and are more likely to stick to their financial goals.

- **Saving:** Saving is the practice of putting money aside for future expenses or emergencies. People who save regularly tend to have more financial stability and are better prepared for unexpected expenses.

- **Prioritizing needs vs. wants:** Prioritizing needs vs. wants is the practice of identifying the difference between what you need and what you want. People who prioritize needs over wants tend to make more responsible financial decisions.

- **Using credit responsibly:** Using credit responsibly involves using credit only when necessary and paying off balances in full and on time. People who use credit responsibly tend to have better credit scores and financial stability.

- **Avoiding debt:** Avoiding debt involves not taking on unnecessary debt and paying off debt as quickly as possible. People who avoid debt tend to have less financial stress and are more financially stable.. People who avoid debt tend to have less financial stress and are more financially stable.

Sample Monthly Budget

The purpose of a monthly budget is to help you manage your money effectively by tracking your income and expenses. A budget is a plan that helps you allocate your money in a way that aligns with your financial goals and priorities. By creating a budget, you can see exactly where your money is going and make adjustments to ensure that you're not overspending or underspending in any area.

Expenses

Home/Utilities

- Rent/Morgage _____
- Electricity _____
- Water and Sewage _____
- Garbage Collection _____
- Gas _____
- Food/Groceries _____

Services

- Cell Phone _____
- Internet _____
- TV/Streaming _____

Additional

- Car Payment/Gas _____
- Car Insurance _____
- Childcare _____
- Healthcare _____
- Memberships _____
- Household Items _____
- Personal Care _____
- Pet care _____
- Misc. _____

Total: _____

Income

- Income Stream _____
- Income Stream _____
- Income Stream _____

Total: _____

Debt

- Loan _____
- Credit Card _____
- Credit Card _____
- Misc. _____

Total: _____

Investments

- Fund 1 _____
- Fund 2 _____
- Fund 3 _____
- Savings _____

Total: _____

Total

Total Income _____

Total Expenses _____

Total Debt _____

Total Investments _____

Ending Balance _____

Money Jar System

Experts in the field have developed highly effective money management strategies aimed at helping people achieve financial freedom. T. Harv Eker, an author, businessman, and motivational speaker, suggests that his clients divide their monthly income in the following manner:

FINANCIAL

- Investments
- Stocks/Bonds
- Passive Income

SAVINGS

- Rainy Day
- Big Purchases
- Vacations

LIFE

- Rent
- Bills
- Food

GIVE

- Donations
- Causes
- Church

PLAY

- Fun
- Leisure
- Spoiling

EDUCATION

- Courses
- Coaching
- Books

Eker, T. (2005). Secrets of the millionaire mind

Reflection Questions

01 Are you stuck in any of the common financial traps and why?

02 What are some things you can do to not be trapped?

03 What spending habits did you identify with?

04 What are the positives of creating and keeping a monthly budget?

05 What concerns do you have about maintaining a monthly budget?

Mastering your Credit Score

Your relationship with credit is important because it allows you to borrow money and make purchases, and it also plays a role in many other aspects of your financial life, including getting approved for loans, renting an apartment, and even finding a job.

A credit score is a number that represents your creditworthiness, which is a measure of your ability to repay debts on time. Your credit score is used by lenders, landlords, and other financial institutions to determine your creditworthiness and whether to approve you for loans, rental applications, or other forms of credit.

Understanding credit scores can help you make informed decisions about your credit use and can help you maintain a good credit score over time. By paying bills on time, keeping credit utilization low, and monitoring your credit score, you can work towards a strong credit history and financial health.

> **Rich people believe**
> **“I create my life.”**
> **Poor people believe**
> **“Life happens to me.”**
>
> **– T. Harv Eker**

Financial Score Keeping

Understanding credit scores can help you make informed decisions about your credit use and can help you maintain a good credit score over time. By paying bills on time, keeping credit utilization low, and monitoring your credit score, you can work towards a strong credit history and financial health. Here are some key points to understand regarding credit scores:

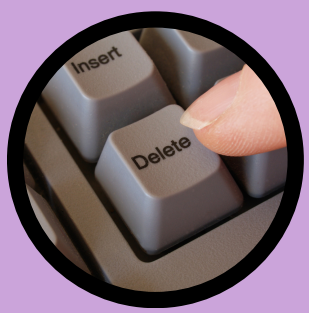
- **Range of credit scores:** Credit scores range from 300 to 850, with higher scores indicating better creditworthiness.
- **Factors that affect credit scores:** Your credit score is based on several factors, including payment history, credit utilization, length of credit history, types of credit used, and new credit inquiries.
- **Payment history:** Payment history is the most important factor in your credit score. Late payments, missed payments, and accounts in collections can all negatively impact your score.
- **Credit utilization:** Credit utilization is the amount of credit you're using compared to your credit limit. High credit utilization can negatively affect your credit score, even if you're making payments on time.
- **Length of credit history:** The length of your credit history also affects your score. Having a longer credit history with a record of responsible credit use can help boost your score.
- **Types of credit used:** Having a mix of different types of credit, such as credit cards, car loans, and mortgages, can also help boost your score.
- **New credit inquiries:** Applying for multiple new credit accounts in a short period of time can negatively impact your score.
- **Credit score monitoring:** Monitor your credit score for free through many credit card issuers, financial institutions, and credit monitoring services. This can help you keep track of your creditworthiness and identify potential issues.

9 Tips to Raise Credit Scores

Pay balances on time

Dispute credit report errors

Don't apply for more credit



Remove late payments

Decrease your use of credit

Remove old debt

Pay off high-interest

Diversify your credit mix

Leaving old accounts open

The 7 Baby Steps out of Debt

There are numerous effective money management methods from experts in the field designed specifically to get you to financial freedom. Below is how personal finance personality, radio show host, author, and businessman Dave Ramsey teaches his clients on how to get out of debt.

BABY STEP 1

Save $1,000 for your starter emergency fund.

BABY STEP 2

Pay off all debt (except house) using the debt snowball.

BABY STEP 3

Save 3–6 months of expenses in a emergency fund.

BABY STEP 4

Invest 15% of your household income in retirement.

BABY STEP 5

Save for your children's college fund.

BABY STEP 6

Pay off your home early.

BABY STEP 7

Build wealth and give.

Ramsey, Dave. "Baby steps millionaires

The Debt Snowball Method

The debt snowball method is effective because it provides a sense of accomplishment and motivation as you see your smaller debts get paid off quickly. This can help you stay motivated and committed to paying off your debt. However, keep in mind that the debt snowball method may not be the most cost-effective way to pay off your debt, as you may end up paying more in interest over time if you're not prioritizing higher-interest debts first.

- **List all of your debts:** Make a list of all your debts, including the balance owed, interest rate, and minimum monthly payment.
- **Order your debts:** Order your debts from smallest balance to largest balance, regardless of interest rate. This is different from the debt avalanche method, which prioritizes paying off debts with the highest interest rate first.
- **Pay minimum payments:** Make the minimum payments on all of your debts, except for the smallest one.
- **Pay extra on the smallest debt:** Take any extra money you have and put it toward the smallest debt on your list. This could be money from cutting back on expenses, selling items you no longer need, or working extra hours to earn more money.
- **Repeat:** Once you've paid off the smallest debt, take the money you were putting toward that debt and put it toward the next smallest debt on your list. Keep repeating this process until all of your debts are paid off.

Reflection Questions

01 **Why is your credit score important and what is your score?**

02 **What credit score-boosting techniques will you try?**

03 **What are some spending habits you may need to improve?**

04 **What are your thoughts on the 7 baby steps?**

05 **Why is getting out of debt difficult for some people?**

Millionaire Mindset

The "Millionaire Mindset" refers to the set of attitudes and habits that are commonly associated with achieving financial success.

It involves developing a mindset that prioritizes financial growth, embraces risk-taking, and is focused on creating and seizing opportunities. The Millionaire Mindset is characterized by goal-setting, learning from failures, taking responsibility for one's financial situation, and practicing discipline and self-control.

It is about developing the belief that wealth and success are achievable through hard work, dedication, and a willingness to take calculated risks. Ultimately, the Millionaire Mindset is about adopting a positive and proactive approach to managing one's finances and working towards financial freedom and security.

By adopting these principles, you can develop the mindset and habits that lead to financial success.

> **You must gain control over your money or the lack of it will forever control you.**
>
> **– Dave Ramsey**

Millionaire Mindset Habits

The "Millionaire Mindset" refers to the attitudes and behaviors that are commonly associated with achieving financial success. Here are some key principles of the Millionaire Mindset:

- **Focus on goals:** Millionaires tend to have a clear vision of what they want to achieve and take focused action to achieve their goals. They prioritize their time and energy to achieve their goals, and they stay committed to their objectives even when faced with obstacles.
- **Take calculated risks:** They are not afraid to take calculated risks to achieve their goals. They recognize that this is a natural part of the path to success and are willing to take on calculated risks that have the potential to pay off.
- **Learn from failures:** Millionaires understand that failures are an essential part of the learning process. They embrace failure as an opportunity to learn and grow, and they use their failures as motivation to improve their performance.
- **Seek out opportunities:** They are always on the lookout for new opportunities to create value and generate wealth. They are curious and open-minded, and they actively seek out opportunities to invest in their future.
- **Embrace a growth mindset:** Millionaires believe that their abilities can be developed through hard work, dedication, and persistence. They adopt a growth mindset that allows them to see challenges as opportunities for growth and development.
- **Take responsibility for their finances:** They take full responsibility for their financial situation. They understand that their financial success is their responsibility and are willing to take action to improve their financial situation.
- **Practice discipline and self-control:** Millionaires understand that financial success requires discipline and self-control. They develop good habits around saving, investing, and spending and are mindful of their financial decisions.

6 Laws of Money

- **Law of attraction:** This law states that our thoughts and emotions attract corresponding experiences and outcomes in our lives. By focusing on positive thoughts and emotions related to money, such as gratitude and abundance, we can attract more wealth and financial success.

- **Law of delayed gratification:** This law states that delaying gratification and making short-term sacrifices can lead to long-term rewards. By saving and investing money instead of spending it on immediate pleasures, we can build wealth and achieve financial goals over time.

- **Law of compounding:** This law states that small investments made consistently over time can grow exponentially. By investing money in assets that generate compound interest or returns, such as stocks or mutual funds, we can grow our wealth over time.

- **Law of leverage:** This law states that borrowing money to invest in income-producing assets can amplify returns and accelerate wealth building. However, it's important to use leverage responsibly and manage risk carefully.

- **Law of diversification:** This law states that spreading investments across different asset classes and industries can reduce risk and increase returns over time. By diversifying our investments, we can avoid putting all our eggs in one basket and increase the likelihood of achieving our financial goals.

- **Law of abundance:** This law states that there is enough wealth and resources in the world for everyone to prosper. By embracing an abundance mindset and focusing on creating value for others, we can attract more wealth and financial success into our lives.

Reflection Questions

01 What Millionaire Mindset Habits do you currently have?

02 What Millionaire Mindset Habits do you need to work on?

03 How do you think and feel about money?

04 How can following the laws of money increase your finances?

05 What law of money can you start with today, and how?

Prosper

Secrets, Truth, and Tenacity

Helena Georgiou

Secrets seem as natural as breathing, though they can be a heavy burden we bear. Most secrets are told deliberately or accidentally and some we take to our deathbeds. Secrets slowly gnaw away at our being; silencing them is exhausting, however, divulging them can lighten the load. Today, I disclose the most gripping secret tragedy of my life as well as the touching story of someone very close to me. I hope to inspire you to live a life without secrets.

Around five years ago, I awoke with a severely frozen neck. As a Holistic therapist, I'd studied and seen firsthand how physical ailments present when underlying trauma and unresolved emotional issues are stored in the body. Immediately I sought out psychological help to overcome the root cause. I discovered that my current physical state was due to my dysfunctional family and my unstable childhood. After two years of therapy, various holistic healing modalities, and at the age of 45 a deep dark secret was revealed.

I had been sexually abused by my father. My mother was busy taking care of my sickly younger brother, so I was often left in his care. The abuse started when I was three years old and continued until I reached puberty. When I became old enough to stand up for myself, he beat me with his belt whenever I spoke up. His beatings were another form of abuse that met his narcissistic need for control.

Realizing the degree of trauma I had endured helped me understand why I avoided or distanced myself from men. Although, discovering this tragic truth raised some very strong emotions, from severe depression to suicidal thoughts. However, today I've overcome this thanks to holistic interventions and self-development.

Eventually, I decided to courageously face my mother and share my abuse story. Without realizing it, I offered her a space to disclose her tragic secret; one which she had kept for over 60 years.

Prosper

At the age of 15, while waiting alone at a bus stop, four guys in a car abducted my mother, they gang-raped her for hours and did not release her until the next day. When she arrived home, she was met with the belt for staying out the previous night. She silenced herself that day, never telling a soul until the night she shared it with me.

Sharing our truth and revealing our secrets shattered the barrier between us, creating an opportunity for a heart-level connection between my mother and myself. Our relationship only deepened from there. We now listen to and support each other in a way we never have before. She is 80 years old and even though she lives abroad we have never been closer, we chat daily. Together we were able to heal and turn our wounds into wisdom.

Yes, the truth can be destructive, yet so powerful. When I let go of my secret, I let go of a burden. When I shared my secret, I shared part of myself and helped my mom do the same. When I connected with another being whom I could trust, it was an even stronger benefit! We are all responsible for our lives and the choices we make; we can either live in anger and bitterness which often leads to serious addictive consequences, or we can be brave and face our traumas and turn them into triumphs. "Only when the desire to heal is greater than our fear, can our truth set us free."

Secrets offer two choices, disclose them or be silent. Either outcome guarantees disruption in our life. We can live from their wounds or from the deeper wisdom of the experience. Bravery and courage help us extract the higher teaching, that there always is. Speaking my truth was my path to emancipation, along with forgiveness. I now enjoy my euphoric, authentic self, living my true calling; which is helping sexual abuse and trauma survivors find healing. I help them transform their lives so they can discover their absolute potential using their pain to fuel their passions.

Our truth deserves to be revealed;
Our presence warrants to be acknowledged;
Our voice needs to be expressed and heard.

Christian Perspective on Finances

This proverb is speaking about the importance of careful planning and hard work in achieving success and abundance while warning against impulsive and hasty decisions that can lead to poverty.

In essence, this verse emphasizes the importance of being diligent and deliberate in our actions, rather than rushing headlong into decisions without proper consideration. By taking the time to plan and work hard, we are more likely to achieve our goals and experience prosperity in our lives. On the other hand, making impulsive decisions without adequate forethought can lead to financial and personal ruin.

> "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."
>
> -Proverbs 21:5

Plan of Action

MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAY ABOUT MONEY AND FINANCES:

STOP DOING	
DO LESS OF	
KEEP DOING	
DO MORE OF	
START DOING	

MODULE 7

BUILDING STRONG CONNECTIONS

A Guide to Healthy Relationships and Thriving Communities

UNSILENCED VOICES

Skills Assesment

Healthy relationships are essential for personal and professional success. Here are five essential skills for building and maintaining healthy relationships. Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale:

5 = High level of competence - extensive experience in the skill area
4 = Moderately high level of competence - good experience in the skill area
3 = Average level of competence – some experience in the skill area
2 = Low level of competence – little experience in the skill area
1 = No level of competence – no experience in the skill area

Respect: the ability to be treated and treat others with dignity, honor their boundaries, and value their opinions. 1 2 3 4 5

Empathy: the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, being emotionally present and responsive to others' needs. 1 2 3 4 5

Positive Communication: expressing appreciation, providing positive feedback, and sharing your opinions and feelings without being overbearing or violating others. 1 2 3 4 5

Self-Trust: consistently staying true to yourself, looking after your own needs and safety. Being reliable, honest, and transparent in your actions and words. 1 2 3 4 5

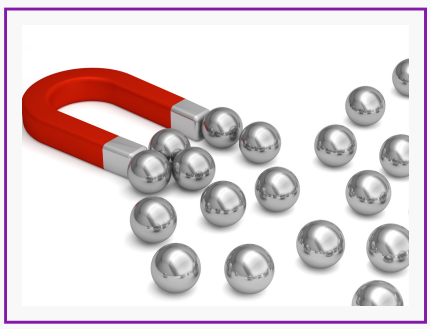
Healthy Boundaries: the ability to establish and maintain the limits and rules you have identified as the reasonable, safe, and permissible way for others to behave towards you. 1 2 3 4 5

A Guide to Healthy Relationships & A Thriving Community

Healthy relationships are an essential part of a fulfilling and meaningful life. They can provide us with a sense of purpose, belonging, and happiness, and can help us grow and thrive as individuals. Remember that healthy relationships take effort and commitment from both parties. It's important to prioritize communication, trust, and respect in all of your interactions with the other person, and are based on a foundation of shared values and a willingness to work through challenges and conflicts together.

PILLARS OF HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Although healthy relationships consist of numerous variables, they all include core pillars such as trust, respect, and communication.



ATTRACTING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Attracting healthy relationships take time and effort. It requires an active effort in the areas of self-value, open communication, and respect

STRENGTHEN YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

A support system consists of people who provide emotional support, encouragement, and assistance during challenging times.

Pillars of Healthy Relationships

Abusive relationships affect every aspect of life. Whether the abuse is financial, physical, sexual, emotional/mental, or all of the above, the effects are wide-ranging and can significantly affect you as you move forward. One of the scariest things that survivors of abusive relationships face is building new relationships.

Forming relationships after experiencing abuse can be challenging, but it is worth it as they are essential for several reasons.

- **Emotional well-being:** Healthy relationships can provide us with emotional support and a sense of connection and belonging. When we feel loved and supported, we are more likely to feel happy, confident, and fulfilled.

- **Personal growth:** Being in a healthy relationship can help us grow and develop as individuals. We can learn from our partner's strengths and weaknesses, and use the relationship as an opportunity to develop greater self-awareness and emotional intelligence.

- **Increased resilience:** Healthy relationships can help us develop greater resilience in the face of challenges and setbacks. Having a strong support system can help us cope with stress and bounce back from difficult experiences.

> **A healthy relationship is a feast of affection/giving for both people; not one receiving crumbs and trying to convince themselves it's enough.**
>
> **-Shannon Thomas**

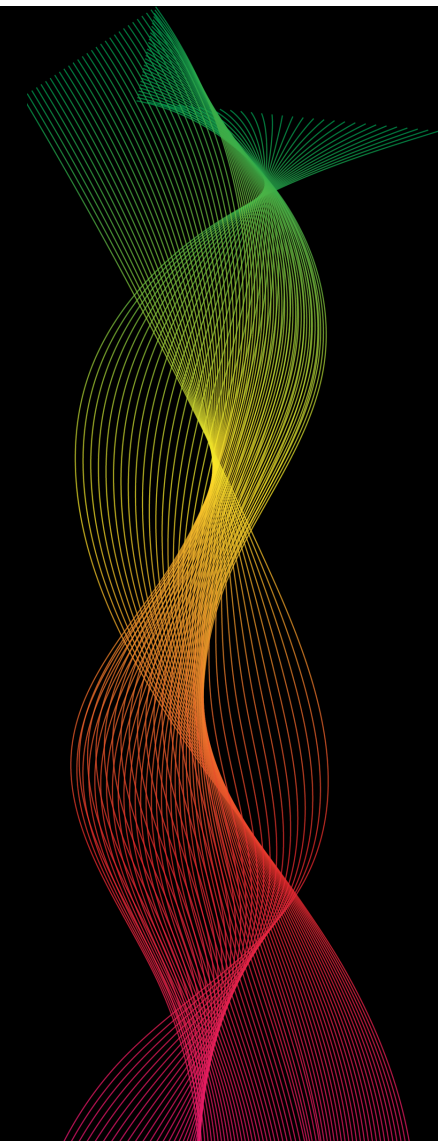
Aspects of Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships are characterized by mutual respect, trust, communication, and support. They are based on a foundation of shared values and a willingness to work through challenges and conflicts together. Here are some key characteristics of healthy relationships:

- **Respect:** Healthy relationships are built on a foundation of mutual respect. Each person in the relationship should value the other's feelings, opinions, and boundaries.
- **Trust:** Trust is essential in healthy relationships. This means being honest, reliable, and consistent in your words and actions.
- **Communication:** Effective communication is crucial for building healthy relationships. This means being open, honest, and respectful in your interactions with the other person.
- **Support:** Healthy relationships involve supporting each other's goals, dreams, and aspirations. This means being there for each other during both good times and bad.
- **Empathy:** Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. Healthy relationships involve being able to empathize with the other person's perspective and feelings.
- **Boundaries:** Healthy relationships involve setting and respecting boundaries. Each person in the relationship should have the right to set boundaries around their personal space, time, and relationships with others.
- **Equality:** Healthy relationships involve a balance of power and decision-making. Each person in the relationship should have equal say in important decisions and should be respected as an equal partner.

Relationships Spectrum

It's important to recognize that relationships can evolve and change over time and that people may have different needs and expectations when it comes to the relationship. Not all relationships are going to be perfect all the time and will have moments of disagreements frustration, and discomfort. However, the majority of the time a healthy relationship makes you feel respected, secure, loved, happy, and free to be yourself. Below is a list of behaviors, which can be characterized as unhealthy, healthy, or abusive.



HEALTHY

- Communicating
- Respectful
- Trusting
- Mutual Choices
- Equal
- Enjoy time apart
- Honest
- Empowering
- Supportive
- Empathic

UNHEALTHY

- Not Communicating
- Disrespectful
- Not Trusting
- Trying to take control
- Unequal
- Only spend time together
- Dishonest
- Empowering
- Pressured into activities
- Hostile

ABUSIVE

- Communication is threatful
- Communication is harmful
- Controlling
- Mistreating
- Accusing
- Isolating Partner
- Intimidating
- Gaslighting
- Bullying
- Violent

Reflection Questions

01 How do you know you are in a safe relationship?

02 What are some signs someone is mistreating you?

03 What are some red flags you can be aware of now?

04 What are some green flags you can be aware of now?

05 How do you deserve to be treated? How are you going to ensure that?

Attracting Healthy Relationships

Have you ever felt like you always attract a certain type of person?

Some might say it is the Law of Attraction at work. The Law of Attraction is a belief that suggests that positive or negative thoughts can bring positive or negative experiences into a person's life. In essence, it is the belief that like attracts like, in other words relationships in our lives act as mirrors; when we have a loving relationship with ourselves, the reflection will always be the strong, healthy, loving relationship we deserve.

Attracting healthy friendships takes time and effort. It requires being intentional and focusing on building connections that are based on respect, trust, and open communication. Here are some tips to help you attract and maintain healthy friendships:

- **Know who you are**
- **Know what you want**
- **Know your worth**
- **Teach people how to treat you**
- **Set boundaries**
- **Be intentional**

> **"The law of attraction states that whatever you focus on, think about, read about, and talk about intensely, you're going to attract more of into your life."**
>
> **—Jack Canfield**

5 Reasons for Attracting the Wrong People

Attracting the wrong people can happen for a variety of reasons. Here are some possible reasons why you may be attracting the wrong people.

- **Unresolved personal issues:** If you have unresolved personal issues, such as low self-esteem, a lack of boundaries, or a fear of intimacy, you may unconsciously attract people who reinforce these issues.

- **Familiarity:** Sometimes, we are attracted to people who feel familiar to us, even if that familiarity is based on negative past experiences. This can lead to repeating patterns of unhealthy relationships.

- **Lack of clarity:** If you don't have a clear understanding of what you want and need in a relationship, you may be more likely to attract the wrong people.

- **External validation:** If you rely on external validation to feel good about yourself, you may be more likely to attract people who are not good for you, just to feel validated.

- **Unhealthy patterns:** If you have developed unhealthy patterns of behavior in relationships, such as co-dependency or a tendency to enable unhealthy behavior, you may attract people who perpetuate those patterns.

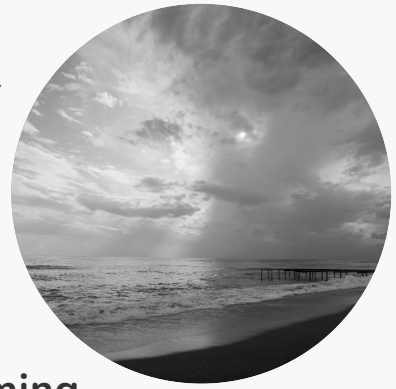
To break the cycle of attracting the wrong people, it's important to take a step back and reflect on your past relationships and your patterns of behavior. Work on building your self-esteem, setting clear boundaries, and developing a clear understanding of what you want and need in a relationship. Seek support from friends, family, or a therapist if necessary. With time and effort, you can attract healthier relationships.

Attracting healthy relationships

Attracting healthy relationships requires a combination of self-reflection, intentional action, and a willingness to communicate effectively. Here are some tips to help you attract and maintain healthy relationships:

- **Know your worth:** Before you can attract healthy relationships, you need to know your own worth. Spend time getting to know yourself, your values, and your boundaries. This will help you identify what you want and need in a relationship.
- **Communicate effectively:** Communication is key to any healthy relationship. Be open and honest about your feelings, needs, and boundaries. Also, be willing to listen and respond in a respectful and understanding way.
- **Practice self-care:** Taking care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally will help you attract healthier relationships. This means getting enough sleep, eating well, exercising regularly, and taking time for things that make you happy.
- **Be authentic:** Be true to yourself and your values. Don't try to be someone you're not in order to please others. Authenticity attracts healthy relationships.
- **Set boundaries:** Boundaries are essential in any healthy relationship. Be clear about your limits and expectations, and communicate them clearly. This will help you avoid unhealthy relationships and attract people who respect you.
- **Focus on quality over quantity:** It's better to have a few close, healthy relationships than many superficial or unhealthy ones. Invest time and energy in building strong, meaningful connections.
- **Let go of toxic relationships:** If you're in a toxic relationship, it's important to let go. This will free up space in your life for healthier relationships to come in.

Reflection Questions



01 What are some ways to be intentional when forming relationships?

02 What are your 5 non-negotiables on how you are treated?

03 What are you looking for in a new relation?

04 What are some boundaries you need to set?

05 Are there people in your life right now that need to treat you differently?

Strengthen Your Support System

Building a support system is essential for anyone's mental and emotional well-being. A support system consists of people who provide emotional support, encouragement, and assistance during challenging times.

Remember, building a support system takes time and effort. Don't be afraid to reach out for help and support when you need it. Building a strong support system can provide a sense of comfort, security, and well-being during challenging times.

Having a strong support system has many positive benefits, such as higher levels of well-being, better coping skills, and a longer healthier life. Studies have also shown that social support can reduce depression and anxiety. A strong support system can often help reduce stress.

Unfortunately, having poor social support has been linked to depression and loneliness and has been shown to alter brain function and increase the risk of the following: Alcohol/Drug use, Cardiovascular disease, and Depression.

> **Anything is possible when you have the right people there to support you.**
>
> **–Misty Copeland**

Build a Support System

Building a support system is essential for anyone's mental and emotional well-being.
Everyone needs a team of supporters. A great support system builds you up, keeps you strong, and pushes you to do your best even when it may be difficult. Here are some tips to help you build a strong support system:

- **Identify your needs:** Reflect on what type of support you need and who can provide it. This might include friends, family members, or professionals like therapists or counselors.
- **Reach out to trusted individuals:** Reach out to people you trust and feel comfortable talking to. Let them know what's going on in your life and what kind of support you need.
- **Be clear about your boundaries:** It's important to set clear boundaries with the people in your support system. Let them know what you're comfortable with and what you're not.
- **Seek professional help:** Sometimes, talking to a trained professional like a therapist or counselor can be beneficial. They can provide a non-judgmental and confidential space to work through difficult emotions or situations.
- **Join support groups:** Consider joining a support group for people going through similar experiences. This can provide a sense of community and understanding.
- **Be willing to give support:** A support system is a two-way street. Be willing to listen and offer support to others when they need it.
- **Practice self-care:** Taking care of yourself is essential to building a strong support system. This includes getting enough sleep, eating well, and engaging in activities that bring you joy and relaxation.

The Art of Setting Boundaries

Setting boundaries is an ongoing process that takes time and practice. It's okay to make mistakes and adjust your boundaries as needed. Be patient with yourself and with others, and prioritize your well-being and self-respect.

- **Identify your needs:** Start by identifying your needs and what's important to you. Reflect on what you're comfortable with and what you're not.
- **Be clear and direct:** When setting boundaries, it's important to be clear and direct with the other person. Use "I" statements to express your feelings and needs, and be specific about what you're asking for.
- **Be firm:** It's important to be firm in setting boundaries, even if the other person doesn't initially agree or understand. Don't apologize or back down if the other person pushes back.
- **Consider the other person's perspective:** While it's important to prioritize your needs, it's also important to consider the other person's perspective. Try to understand their point of view and find a compromise that works for both of you.
- **Practice self-care:** Setting boundaries can be difficult and uncomfortable, so it's important to practice self-care during this process. Take care of yourself physically, emotionally, and mentally.
- **Follow through:** Once you've set boundaries, it's important to follow through with them. Stick to what you've communicated and don't compromise on what's important to you.

Reflection Questions

01 **Who is part of your support network right now?**

02 **Where are there gaps in your support network?**

03 **What are some things you can do to add to your support network?**

04 **What are some ways you practice self-care?**

05 **What might be difficult when setting boundaries?**

Perceptive

Let us shatter the chains of silence
By Sheldon R. Crocker

In the depths of my darkest moments, I carried a secret that threatened to consume me. At four years old, I experienced an unspeakable act of sexual abuse at the hands of my babysitter, forever altering my life. With no siblings to share the pain, I witnessed my parents' volatile relationship, feeling invisible as their words of anger echoed through my childhood home. My father's cruel words, claiming I'd amount to nothing more than a "disabled welfare bum," haunted me for years.

Despite life's challenges, including my physical disability that required leg braces, I persevered. Against all odds, I learned to walk, navigating the world with unyielding determination. For years, I bore the scars of my past in silence, fearing the judgment and disbelief that male survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse often face.

The time has come for men like me to rise above the stigma and shame. We must stand together and shatter the barriers preventing us from speaking our truth, for in our voices, we find our strength, power, and ability to heal. Through God's grace and love, we can overcome past trauma and forge a new path toward healing and hope. In Christ's teachings, we find solace and guidance, a beacon of light illuminating our souls' darkest corners.

Together, we can create a world where men and women alike can share their stories without fear of retribution or disbelief. A world where the healing power of faith and financial literacy uplifts those broken by abuse.

So let us rise, my brothers and sisters. Let us embrace the wildness of our spirits and the fire within our hearts. Let us shatter the chains of silence that have held us captive for too long. In our unity and determination to make a difference, we will create a brighter future for ourselves and generations to come.

As we walk hand in hand toward that future, remember that we are not alone. In the face of adversity, we have each other and the unending love and grace of God to guide us on our journey. Together, we are a force to be reckoned with – a powerful testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the boundless potential within each of us.

Christian Perspective on Community

This verse is a reflection on the value of companionship and the importance of having others to rely on in times of need. Working with a partner or companion can lead to greater productivity and success, as two people working together can achieve more than one person working alone.

Additionally, the passage emphasizes the importance of helping others, as having someone to help you up when you fall is crucial for success and survival. The scripture is seen as a call to value our relationships with others and to recognize the benefits of working together in our personal and professional lives.

> Two are better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up.
>
> -Ecclesiastes 4: 9-10

Plan of Action

MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAY ABOUT SUPPORT NETWORKS:	
STOP DOING	
DO LESS OF	
KEEP DOING	
DO MORE OF	
START DOING	

MODULE 8

ACHIEVING GREATER HEIGHTS

Journey to Success After Survival

UNSILENCED VOICES

Skills Assesment

Motivation is a critical factor in the journey to success after survival. Here are five essential skills for building and sustaining motivation on your continued journey. Please indicate your perception of your level of ability in each area using the following scale:

5 = High level of competence - extensive experience in the skill area
4 = Moderately high level of competence - good experience in the skill area
3 = Average level of competence – some experience in the skill area
2 = Low level of competence – little experience in the skill area
1 = No level of competence – no experience in the skill area

Goal Setting: to attain your intended results, you must initiate measures to determine, strategize, execute, and fulfill them. 1 2 3 4 5

Self-Discipline: the ability to push yourself forward, stay motivated, and take action, regardless of how you're feeling, physically or emotionally. 1 2 3 4 5

Accountability: the willingness to accept responsibility for your actions and results through monitoring your progress, owning your mistakes, and recognizing your achievements. 1 2 3 4 5

Self-Development: the ability to consistently work on and grow your self-awareness, talents, potential, skills, and abilities. 1 2 3 4 5

Celebrate: the ability to recognize and celebrate your own achievements. Taking the time and honoring who you are, where you came from, and what you've done helps boost your confidence and motivation. 1 2 3 4 5

Journey to Success After Survival

Motivation is a critical factor in the journey to success after survival, particularly in overcoming trauma and abuse. Ultimately, the journey to success after survival requires a combination of perseverance, self-reflection, and a commitment to personal growth. By focusing on your goals, seeking support when needed, and taking care of yourself, you can find the strength and resilience to overcome challenges and achieve success.

THE ART OF LETTING GO

Letting go can be a difficult and challenging process, but it's an important skill to cultivate in order to move forward, live a fulfilling life, and become the best version of ourselves.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ROUTINE

Having a routine can be incredibly beneficial for our physical and mental health, as well as our productivity and overall sense of well-being. They are key steps in obtaining our goals

THE POWER OF BE, DO, HAVE

The "be, do, have" concept suggests that by focusing on our inner growth and taking action towards our goals, we can create a life that aligns with our values and desires.

The Art of Letting Go

Psychology, self-improvement and spiritual traditions speak often of letting go. This term means letting go of painful memories and painful thoughts, harmful desires and unhealthy habits. It also means stop dwelling on the past or worrying about the future.

Letting go is a process that takes time and effort. Be patient and kind to yourself as you practice the art of letting go.

With time and practice, you can cultivate the ability to let go and move forward toward a more fulfilling life. Letting go of who we were in order to become someone better can be a challenging but rewarding process.

Remember, personal growth is a lifelong journey, and it's okay to make mistakes and have setbacks along the way. Letting go of who you were in order to become someone better is a process that takes time and effort, but with commitment and determination, you can achieve your goals and become the best version of yourself.

> **“There is no passion to be found playing small—in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.”**
>
> **—Nelson Mandela**

The Act of Letting Go

Letting go can be a difficult and challenging process, but it's an important skill to cultivate in order to move forward and live a fulfilling life. Here are some steps to help you practice the art of letting go:

- **Acknowledge your emotions:** Allow yourself to feel the emotions that come up when you think about what you need to let go of. It's normal to feel sad, angry, or hurt.
- **Identify what you need to let go of:** Identify what it is that you need to let go of. This might be a relationship, a job, a past mistake, or something else.
- **Practice acceptance:** Accept that what you need to let go of is no longer serving you and that it's time to move on.
- **Forgive yourself and others:** Forgiveness can be a powerful tool in the process of letting go. This means forgiving yourself for any mistakes or regrets, as well as forgiving others for any hurt they may have caused.
- **Create a ritual:** Create a ritual or symbolic gesture that represents letting go. This might involve writing a letter or burning a piece of paper with what you need to let go of.
- **Focus on the present:** Focus on the present moment and the things in your life that bring you joy and fulfillment. Allow yourself to move forward and create new experiences.

The Art of Letting Go

Letting go of who we were in order to become someone better can be a challenging but rewarding process. Here are some steps to help you let go of your past self and embrace personal growth:

- **Acknowledge and accept your past self:** It's important to acknowledge and accept who you were in the past, including any mistakes or regrets. This can help you to move forward without carrying the weight of the past.
- **Reflect on your values and goals:** Reflect on what is important to you and what you want to achieve in your life. This can help you to identify areas where you want to grow and change.
- **Set realistic goals:** Set realistic goals that align with your values and that challenge you to grow and become a better version of yourself.
- **Practice self-compassion:** Be kind and compassionate to yourself as you work towards your goals. Remember that personal growth is a journey and that there will be setbacks along the way.
- **Let go of limiting beliefs:** Let go of any limiting beliefs or negative self-talk that may be holding you back from achieving your goals.
- **Surround yourself with support:** Surround yourself with people who support and encourage your personal growth. This might include friends, family, or a therapist or coach.

6 Tips for Setting Realistic Goals

Setting realistic goals is a process that takes time and effort. Be patient and kind to yourself as you work towards achieving your goals, and remember that it's okay to make adjustments along the way. Here are some tips to help you set realistic goals:

- **Identify your priorities:** Start by identifying your top priorities. What is most important to you right now? This will help you to focus your energy and attention on what really matters.
- **Make your goals specific:** Set specific goals that are clearly defined and measurable. This will help you to track your progress and stay motivated.
- **Break your goals down into smaller steps:** Break your goals down into smaller, manageable steps that you can realistically achieve. This will help you to avoid feeling overwhelmed and make progress towards your larger goal.
- **Be flexible:** It's important to be flexible with your goals and adapt them as needed. Life can be unpredictable, and it's important to be able to adjust your goals when necessary.
- **Set a timeline:** Set a realistic timeline for achieving your goals. This will help you to stay motivated and focused on making progress.
- **Celebrate your successes:** Celebrate your successes along the way, no matter how small they may be. This will help you to stay motivated and encouraged as you work towards your larger goal.

Reflection Questions

01 What are some things you are holding on to?

02 What is one thing you want to let go of?

03 What is a limiting belief you have?

04 What is one thing you want to do differnt?

05 What are some goals you have for your life?

The Significance of Routine

Routines create structure and promote mental, physical, and emotional health. The absence of a routine can often lead to stress and feelings of unmanageability.

A routine refers to a regular and repeated pattern of behavior, activity, or action that you follow. It is a set of habits or customs that are established over time and can be either conscious or unconscious.

Routines can help us to live more organized, productive, and fulfilling lives. They can provide a sense of structure and stability that can reduce stress and anxiety, while also helping us to achieve our goals and establish healthy habits. We need routines for several reasons, including:

- **Creating Structure**
- **Increasing Productivity**
- **Establishing Healthy Habits**
- **Reducing Decision Fatigue**
- **Improving Mental Health**

> **Your future is found in your daily routine. Successful people do daily what others do occasionally!**
>
> **-Paula White**

5 Reasons for Establishing Routines

- **Efficiency:** By establishing a routine, we can become more efficient and productive with our time. When we know what we need to do and when we need to do it, we can avoid wasting time on unnecessary decisions or actions.

- **Consistency:** Routines help to create consistency in our lives. When we have a regular schedule to follow, we are less likely to experience disruptions or unexpected events that can throw us off track.

- **Stability:** Routines provide a sense of stability and security. Knowing what to expect can reduce stress and anxiety and help us feel more in control of our lives.

- **Health:** Many routines, such as exercising, eating healthy, and getting enough sleep, can contribute to our overall physical and mental health.

- **Goal-setting:** Routines can help us achieve our goals by providing structure and discipline. When we establish a routine around specific tasks or habits, we can make progress toward our goals more consistently and efficiently.

Establishing Routines

Routines can provide structure and stability in our lives, help us make progress toward our goals, and improve our health and well-being. Below are some steps you can take to set up a routine:

- **Identify your goals:** Before you can establish a routine, it's important to identify what you want to achieve. Set specific, measurable goals that align with your priorities and values.
- **Determine your priorities:** Decide what's most important to you and prioritize your goals accordingly. This will help you allocate your time and energy in the most effective way possible.
- **Create a schedule:** Once you know your goals and priorities, create a schedule that outlines your routine. Start with the most important activities and work your way down to the less important ones.
- **Be realistic:** Make sure your routine is realistic and achievable. Don't overload yourself with too many activities or tasks, or you may become overwhelmed and discouraged.
- **Be flexible:** Recognize that life can be unpredictable, and be prepared to adjust your routine as needed. Allow for some flexibility in your schedule so you can adapt to changing circumstances.
- **Stay accountable:** Find ways to hold yourself accountable for sticking to your routine. This could include setting reminders, tracking your progress, or enlisting the support of a friend or family member.
- **Practice consistency:** The key to making a routine stick is to practice consistency. Stick to your schedule as much as possible, and over time, it will become a habit that feels natural and effortless.

Morning Routine Example

- Wake up at the same time every day
- Drink a glass of water to rehydrate after sleeping.
- Stretch to wake up the body and get blood flowing.
- Take a shower to freshen up and feel alert
- Eat a healthy breakfast to fuel the body and brain.
- Meditate and set a positive intention for the day.
- Plan the day: review the schedule and to-do list.
- Spend a few minutes enjoying some music,
- Get ready and leave for work.

Reflection Questions

01 What is one thing that excites you about establishing routines?

02 What is one thing that concerns you about establishing routines?

03 What routines do you have down already?

04 Where do you need a routine?

05 What do you want to accomplish by establishing a new routine?

The Power of Be. Do. Have.

"Be, do, have" is a concept that relates to personal growth and achieving our goals. It suggests that in order to have the things we want in life, we must first focus on who we want to be and what we want to do. Here's a breakdown of each element of "be, do, have":

- **Be:** This refers to who we want to be as a person. It involves identifying our core values, beliefs, and character traits that we want to embody. By focusing on who we want to be, we can align our actions and choices with our desired identity.
- **Do:** This refers to the actions we take to achieve our goals. It involves setting specific, measurable goals and taking steps to accomplish them. By taking action towards our goals, we can build momentum and make progress towards our desired outcomes.
- **Have:** This refers to the things we want to have in life, such as material possessions, relationships, and experiences. By focusing on who we want to be and what we want to do, we can create a path toward achieving the things we want to have.

> **"The best way to predict the future is to create it."**
>
> **—Abraham Lincoln**

Be, Do, Have Iceberg

The "be, do, have" concept suggests that by focusing on our inner growth and taking action toward our goals, we can create a life that aligns with our values and desires. By prioritizing who we want to be and what we want to do, we can create a sense of purpose and direction in our lives, and ultimately achieve the things we want to have.

- Results

- Behaviors
- Actions

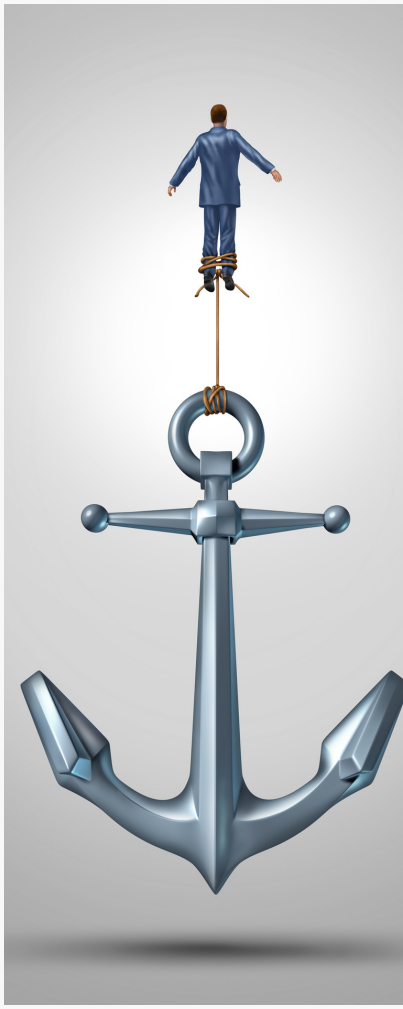
- Beliefs
- values
- Attitudes
- Mindset

Visible

Not Visible

The Power of Beliefs

The things we believe to be true; WE CREATE...



"A limiting belief is a state of mind or belief about yourself that restricts you in some way." Limiting beliefs are beliefs or assumptions that you hold about yourself, others, or the world that hold you back from reaching your full potential. These beliefs may be based on past experiences, cultural or societal norms, or other factors that have shaped your perception of what is possible for you.

These beliefs can be deeply ingrained and may go unnoticed until you start to examine your thoughts and behaviors more closely. However, once you identify your limiting beliefs, you can begin to challenge and overcome them by replacing them with more empowering beliefs that support your goals and aspirations.

Remember that you're the writer and editor of your own life story.

5 Steps to Overcome Limiting Beliefs

- **Examining the evidence:** Look for evidence that challenges your limiting beliefs and supports a more positive outlook.
- **Questioning assumptions:** Ask yourself whether your beliefs are based on fact or simply assumptions that you have made.
- **Re-framing beliefs:** Find ways to re-frame your beliefs in a more positive light, such as by focusing on your strengths and accomplishments.
- **Taking action:** Take small steps towards your goals, even if they are outside of your comfort zone, to build confidence and overcome self-doubt.
- **Create affirmations:** Repeat affirmations regularly and with intention. You can say them out loud, write them down, or repeat them silently to yourself throughout the day.

Reflection Questions

01 **Who do you want to be?**

02 **What do you need to start doing to be that person?**

03 **What beliefs have been holding you back?**

04 **What are some new beliefs you need to have?**

05 **What can you do to reinforce these new beliefs?**

Purpose

From Tragedy to Purpose
By Christina Gruber

We were all children at one point. I am sure in one way or another, we have all questioned our purpose. What is my value? What is my mission? What is God's purpose for me on this earth? Why was I brought here?

As a child, like many of us, we were influenced by the love or lack thereof of our parents. I grew up with a very religious mom whom I always trusted to guide me on the right path. For most of my life I was exposed to a life of religious context, but one faithful night I went from being a follower to a true believer. Angels are not simply mythical context spoken but rather, they do in fact actually exist not just for me, but for all.

How can something so beautiful become something so very tragic and terrifying? And if so, why? On October 1, 2017, on a night when the midnight sky was full of music, sounds, and celebration at the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival in Las Vegas, Nevada, how did that night become life-changing for those that did not survive and more life-changing for the families and those who attended who did leave with their lives?

In the ether of celebration of the final headliner, Jason Aldean, my heart was full of love for life and people, only to have it shattered by the small pops of what I believed then to be fireworks. Amongst the smoke, the chaos, the fear, the sounds, the blood, and screaming; I realized in slow motion we were no longer having the time of our lives. While my life changed, so did the lives of 22,000 other concertgoers who quickly transcended into the same nightmare; a living hell in which nobody knew whether any of us were getting out alive

Sometimes things are not what they seem. Sometimes fireworks are in fact not fireworks. Sometimes faith is challenged and replaced with fear and doubt. In the lights that shinned brightly yet dimly from the Mandalay Bay, I found truth and answers to all these questions. I questioned humanity. I questioned love. I questioned safety… something, that all of us from our younger years need. I had no defense; however, I did have a purpose. My children.

Purpose

My only defense was simply to run. I ran not for my safety but for the safety of my children with a determination to see them again. At that moment, while they were miles away, they were for me still no longer safe, and the world as small as it was, I was not either. They say, that at times of great trauma, your pain and injuries are masked by adrenaline, purpose, and faith.

As I realized I could no longer run, there was a pop in my leg that felt like a flick but impacted me like a flood. How can a dime-sized wound in my leg become a cavernous opening in my heart as I watched it pour blood? What had I done? What had anyone done to deserve this? Was this it? Was my final destination in life finally reached?

No. You see, everything we know about fate and angels is only what we have read. That is until you meet one face to face. Behind an old church, I was aided, supported, and protected by random strangers. We will call them by their earthy names of strangers when in all actuality, they go by the name of angels. These selfless individuals (many injured themselves) transported and carried this unworthy stranger to the hospital for medical care.

When the smoke subsided and the smells and screams no longer existed, the remnants of evil were represented in eighteen pieces of shrapnel in my legs. How can mere inches in a time like this matter? For me, it was the difference between life and death separated by a femoral artery. Over the days I realized I was blessed. Angels were real. God existed and, yes, in some ways I realized I had a purpose.

I now smile more, speak less, appreciate others more deeply, hold my children and family tighter, and yes know that gods plan for me on that night was not about tragedy but hope.

Fast forward to today, I am still healing emotionally. I don't know if I will ever be 100%. However, physically, I am back to where I was prior to that night, only stronger. I am back to running. I have completed three half Ironman triathlons as well as a full Ironman triathlon. I have a renewed love for life and a renewed faith in something more powerful than you or I. While I may never understand the evil that ignited this event, I will always understand the love and faith I gained from it.

Christian Perspective on Growth

The essence of this verse is that our character is reflected in how we handle minor issues, which can be indicative of our ability to manage larger ones. Demonstrating dependability and accountability in small tasks enhances our chances of being entrusted with bigger responsibilities. Conversely, being untrustworthy or irresponsible in minor matters diminishes our ability to handle greater ones.

This verse underscores the significance of upholding integrity and accountability in our everyday lives. It emphasizes that our approach to even the smallest tasks and responsibilities can have a substantial impact on our lives. Hence, we should endeavor to be faithful with everything we have been given. This is how we develop and expand, by ensuring we take care of minor things, which in turn takes care of the bigger things.

> "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much."
>
> -Luke 16:10

Plan of Action

MY BIGGEST TAKEAWAYS ABOUT MY FUTURE ARE:	
STOP DOING	
DO LESS OF	
KEEP DOING	
DO MORE OF	
START DOING	

NEXT STEPS

Where to go from here

Where to Start

Setting 90-day goals can be an effective way to stay focused and motivated, as well as stay on track and progress towards achieving longer-term goals. Here are some steps you can take to set and achieve 90-day goals:

- **Define your goal: Identify a specific and measurable goal that you want to achieve within the next 90 days. Your goal should be challenging yet realistic, and aligned with your overall vision and values.**
- **Break it down: Break your goal down into smaller, actionable steps that you can take on a daily or weekly basis. This will help make your goal more manageable and keep you on track.**
- **Create a plan: Develop a plan for how you will achieve your goal, including specific tasks, deadlines, and resources you will need. Write down your plan and refer to it regularly to stay on track.**
- **Stay accountable: Share your goal with someone else or find an accountability partner who can help keep you motivated and on track.**
- **Measure your progress: Regularly track your progress towards your goal, and adjust your plan as needed to stay on track.**
- **Celebrate your success: Once you've achieved your 90-day goal, take time to celebrate your success and reflect on what you've learned. Use this experience to help set and achieve new goals in the future.**

90 DAYS

What do I want to accomplish in the next 90 days (BIG PICTURE)?

Goal 1:
Why:

3 Action steps to achieve goal

- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____

Goal 2:
Why:

3 Action steps to achieve goal

- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____
- [ ] _____

90 DAYS

Fill in the actions and tasks needed during the week to accomplish your goals.

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday
Saturday
Sunday

Final Thoughts

Ultimately, your journey to success after survival requires a combination of perseverance, self-reflection, and a commitment to personal growth. By focusing on your goals, seeking support when needed, and taking care of yourself, you can find the strength and resilience to overcome challenges and achieve success. Here are some ways to build and sustain motivation on your journey:

- **Identify your values and goals:** Understanding what is most important to you, and what you want to achieve, can help you focus your energy and effort in a meaningful way.

- **Set achievable and realistic milestones:** Breaking down your journey into smaller, manageable steps can help you track your progress and stay motivated.

- **Surround yourself with supportive people:** Having a network of people who believe in you, offer encouragement, and are there to offer help and advice can be incredibly empowering.

- **Celebrate your successes:** No matter how small they may seem, recognizing and celebrating your achievements can help boost your confidence and motivation.

- **Seek out resources and support:** Whether it's counseling, therapy, or other forms of support, it's important to find resources that can help you navigate the challenges of your journey.

- **Reframe setbacks and failures as opportunities for growth:** Instead of viewing setbacks as a reason to give up, try to see them as opportunities to learn and grow.

- **Practice self-care and self-compassion:** Taking care of yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally is essential for maintaining your motivation and resilience.

- **Keep a growth mindset:** Embracing a positive, growth-oriented mindset can help you overcome obstacles and stay motivated, even in the face of adversity.

The Journey

“Sometimes we make the process more complicated than we need to. We will never make a journey of a thousand miles by fretting about how long it will take or how hard it will be. We make the journey by taking each day step by step and then repeating it again and again until we reach our destination.”

– Joseph B. Wirthlin

We would love to tell you the journey is easy, but we can't. However, we can tell you that the journey is yours and you alone hold the power. You hold the power to create the life you want, it may not be easy, but we promise you, it will be worth every inch you make toward defining, creating, and living who you truly and divinely are.

YOUR JOURNEY BEGINS

UNSILENCED VOICES

Well-Being Survey

Complete and score the survey below

Instructions: First, circle the number that best indicates your response to each question. Next, add up your scores and write the total below. Lastly, after you complete the program you are going to take another survey and be able to compare your scores.

1.How much do you feel that others have your best interests at heart?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

2. To what extent do you feel your life is valuable and worth while?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

3. How frequently do you feel optimistic about positive outcomes in your life?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

4. How often do you feel happy?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

5. How often do you stop your critical self-talk and replace it with nurturing and kind words?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

6. How healthy do you feel your eating habits are?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

7. To what extent do you feel your overall health and well-being are priortized?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

8. Generally, how healthy do you feel your sleep habits are?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

9. How healthy do you feel your physical health habits are, in general?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

10. Generally speaking, how healthy do you consider your mental health habits to be?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

11. How well do you feel you manage stress in a healthy manner, generally speaking?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

12. How connected do you feel to others in your life?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

13. How much do you prioritize what is best for you?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

14. How well do you feel you manage the different aspects of a significant change?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

15. To what extent do you feel you treat yourself with kindness and understanding?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

16. How frequently do you believe you comprehend and regulate your own emotions?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

17. How often do you speak up for yourself?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

18. How much do you feel self-assured and valued, in general?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

19. To what extent do you feel comfortable saying no to requests that don't align with you?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

20. In general, to what extent do you feel you like who you are?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

21. How much do you feel that you are progressing successfully towards your goals?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Extremely

22. How frequently do you believe you manage your time efficiently?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

23. How frequently do you feel that you exhibit self-respect?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

24. How often do you protect your time and energy?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

25. How frequently do you regulate your behaviors, thoughts, and emotions in a constructive manner?

Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Always

Level of Well-Being	Range for Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment
Very High	45-50
High	40-44
Average	35-39
Low	30-34
Very Low	0-29

Total _____

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Resources

RESOURCES FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
NATIONAL CRISIS ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSISTANCE:

The National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)
www.ndvh.org

National Dating Abuse Helpline
1-866-331-9474
www.loveisrespect.org

National Child Abuse Hotline/Childhelp
1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
www.childhelp.org

National Sexual Assault Hotline
1-800-656-4673 (HOPE)
www.rainn.org

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-8255 (TALK)
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

National Center for Victims of Crime
1-202-467-8700
www.victimsofcrime.org

National Human Trafficking Resource Center/Polaris Project
Call: 1-888-373-7888 | Text: HELP to BeFree (233733)
www.polarisproject.org

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
1-510-465-1984
www.nnirr.org

National Coalition for the Homeless
1-202-737-6444
www.nationalhomeless.org

Resources

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
1-800-537-2238
www.nrcdv.org and **www.vawnet.org**

Futures Without Violence: The National Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence
1-888-792-2873
www.futureswithoutviolence.org

National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma & Mental Health
1-312-726-7020 ext. 2011
www.nationalcenterdvtraumamh.org

National Runaway Safeline
1-800-RUNAWAY or 1-800-786-2929
www.1800runaway.org

National Deaf Domestic Violence Hotline (NDDVH)
Website: **https://www.thedeafhotline.org/**
Hotline: 855-812-1001 (Voice/VP)
Email: **hotline@adwas.org**

Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services (ADWAS)
Website: **https://www.adwas.org/**
Email: **adwas@adwas.org**
Office: 206-922-7088 (Voice/VP)

MEN

National Organization for Men Against Sexism (NOMAS)
1-720-466-3882
www.nomas.org

TEENS

Love is respect
Hotline: 1-866-331-9474
www.loveisrespect.org

Break the Cycle
202-824-0707
www.breakthecycle.org