

Healing from Life's Hurts

Practicing the Three Decisions: Reveal – Reframe – Release

Work with one specific hurt or situation as you go through this worksheet.

Step 1 – REVEAL: Naming What Happened and How You Feel

A. Describe the event

1. What happened?

(Briefly describe it as if a camera were recording it: who, what, when, where.)^[1]

Write:

2. What specifically was hurtful about this event to you?

(Broken promise, rejection, unfair treatment, betrayal, abuse, criticism, etc.)^[1]

Write:

B. Name your emotions

3. Circle or list the emotions you feel (or felt) about this event:

- Angry
- Sad
- Afraid
- Ashamed
- Rejected
- Numb
- Confused
- Other: _____

4. Of all these emotions, which one feels **strongest** right now? Describe it.

Write:

C. How have you been coping so far?

5. Which pattern fits you most with this hurt?
 - Building a shell (shutting down, withdrawing, avoiding people)
 - Blowing up (exploding at others, depression, irritability)
 - Numbing out (overwork, scrolling, substances, constant busyness)
6. *Explain briefly:*
7. Who have you *safely* shared this hurt with (if anyone)?
 - No one
 - God in prayer
 - Journal
 - Trusted friend / counselor / pastor
8. *What happened when you shared (or what has kept you from sharing)?:*

D. A small next step in revealing

7. What is **one** healthy step you can take this week to reveal this hurt?
(Example: write about it for 10 minutes; talk with God honestly; schedule a talk with a safe person.)^{[2][3]}

My step this week:



Step 2 – REFRAME: Seeing the Story with God in the Frame

A. What is your current story?

8. When you think about this event, what story do you tell yourself?

(Example: “Nothing good ever happens to me,” “People can’t be trusted,” “God abandoned me.”)^{[4][5]}

Write:

9. How does this story make you feel and act?

(Notice patterns like hopelessness, fear, bitterness, withdrawal, etc.)

Write:

B. Challenge and reframe your thoughts

10. Ask yourself:

- Is this story 100% accurate, or is it influenced by hurt and fear?
- What evidence supports it, and what evidence challenges it?^{[6][4]}

Write a few honest reflections:

11. Where might God be at work in or through this experience, even if you don’t like what happened?

(Growth in character, greater empathy, dependence on God, ability to help others, clearer boundaries, etc.)^{[7][8]}

Write:

C. Write a new, more truthful story

12. Rewrite your story in 2–3 sentences, including both the reality of the hurt and a God-centered perspective.

(Example start: “What happened to me was wrong and painful. Yet with God’s help, this is becoming a place where...”)

My reframed story:

Step 3 – RELEASE: Practicing Forgiveness

Forgiveness does **not** mean trust is restored automatically, or that consequences disappear. It means you choose to release revenge and entrust justice and healing to God, for your own freedom.^{[9][10][11]}

A. Clarify the offense

13. Who hurt you? (You don't need to write their full name if this is not safe.)

Write:

14. What exactly did they do that affected you physically, emotionally, or spiritually? Be specific.^{[12][9]}

Write:

B. Explore the cost of holding on

15. How has holding onto resentment, anger, or the desire to “make them pay” affected you?

- Emotionally (anxiety, anger, sadness, numbness)
- Physically (tension, sleep, health)
- Spiritually (prayer, trust in God, worship)

Write:

C. Decide about forgiveness

16. On a scale of 0–10, how willing are you today to move toward forgiveness?

- 0 = not willing at all
- 10 = fully willing

My number is:

17. If your number is not a 10, what is one barrier that makes forgiveness hard right now?

(Fear of minimizing the hurt, fear of being hurt again, belief that forgiveness excuses the wrong, etc.)^{[13][9]}

Write:

18. What truth could gently speak to that barrier?

(Example: “Forgiveness is not the same as trust”; “Justice can still be pursued.”)^[9]

Write:

D. A first step of release (prayer or statement)

19. Write a short prayer or statement of release, even if your emotions are not fully there yet.

Example pattern:

- “Lord, you know what [name] did and how it wounded me.
- I choose to entrust them and this situation to you.
- I release my right to get even, and I ask you to continue healing my heart.”^{[10][11]}

My prayer/statement:

20. What boundaries or wise actions are still needed to stay safe and healthy (if any)?

(Examples: limit contact, seek counsel, involve authorities, get counseling.)^{[12][9]}

Write:



Step 4 – PLAN: Putting It All Together

21. From this worksheet, what is **one** concrete action you will take in the next 7 days in each area?

- Reveal:

This week I will...

- Reframe:

This week I will...

- Release:

This week I will...

22. Who is one safe person who can pray with you or check in with you about this process?

Name and plan to reach out:

You can adapt this to a one-page front-and-back handout by tightening the prompts, or expand it into a multi-session guide by slowing down and doing one decision per week.^[14]

[9]

*
**



1. <https://commonthreadchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Faciliator-Guide-SA-SD-Worksheet-March-2019.pdf>
2. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC2935262/>
3. https://sparq.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sbiybj19021/files/media/file/baikie_wilhelm_2005_-_emotional_and_physical_health_benefits_of_expressive_writing.pdf
4. <https://cogbtherapy.com/cbt-blog/2014/5/4/hhy104os08dekc537dlw7nvopzyi44>
5. <https://darindavidson.com/reframing-and-cognitive-reappraisal/>
6. [https://dcnlab.psychology.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/DCN Cognitive Reappraisal Workshop.pdf](https://dcnlab.psychology.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/DCN_Cognitive_Reappraisal_Workshop.pdf)
7. <https://www.mentalhealth.com/library/reframing-finding-solutions-through-a-new-lens>
8. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6188704/>
9. <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/forgiveness-therapy>
10. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10120569/>
11. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2017/01/ce-corner>
12. <https://chr-northfield.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Forgiveness-Worksheet.pdf>
13. <https://www.simplepractice.com/resource/self-forgiveness-worksheet/>
14. <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheets/emotions/none>
15. <https://positivepsychology.com/positive-psychotherapy-exercises-sessions-worksheets/>
16. <https://www.thesocialemotionalteacher.com/beyond-the-icebreakers-self-disclosure-in-the-classroom/Summer-Social-Emotional-Learning-Activity-Sheets-p555331558>
17. https://www.steps2wellbeing.co.uk/document/content/page_section/radically_open_dialectical_therapy_ro_dbt_323.pdf
18. <https://ayupdate.net/what-is-cognitive-reappraisal/>
19. <https://eliminatestigma.org/wp-content/uploads/Up-To-Me-Adult-Workbook.pdf>
20. <https://www.merckgroup.com/content/dam/web/corporate/non-images/company/curiosity/activate-curiosity-program-support-material/distress-tolerance/us/Curiosity-HowToGuide-Cognitive-Reappraisal-EN.pdf>

21. <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheets/emotions/adults?page=2>

22. <https://www.keepinglifereal.com/social-skills>