

SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY JOURNAL

AN ANGER PROBLEM



INTRODUCTION

Now that you have completed your study of *Spiritual Discovery – 7 Principles for Spiritual Growth*, you may find it helpful to write a Spiritual Discovery Journal. In this exercise, you will be taking another look at overcoming anger by considering events that have shaped your life. Because we are complex beings and our hearts are deep waters, there is often more to discover. Writing this journal is an opportunity to find more healing and freedom.

Writing this journal will require thoughtful reflection, and it may stir painful emotions. If you are tempted to stop writing, use the 7 Principles for Spiritual Growth to help you uncover what you believe and go to God for insight, wisdom and truth. Call a trusted friend, if needed.

PART 1 - PAST EVENTS:

In your journal, include the following:

- Painful or unpleasant past events that have shaped your life;
 - What emotion(s) you felt during this event (primary and secondary); (See page 55.)
 - What emotion(s) you feel as you consider it now;
 - What you came to believe about yourself, others or God as a result of that event;
 - “I’m not loved.”
 - “I’m a mistake.”
 - “I’m not enough.”
 - “I don’t matter.”
 - “I’m defective.”
 - “I’m all alone.”
 - “I don’t fit in.”
 - “Everyone is against me.”
 - “God is angry with me.”
 - “God is distant and unavailable.”
 - “_____.”
- Does this belief(s) still feel true today? If so...
 - What emotion(s) do you feel when this belief is triggered?
 - How do you move when this belief is triggered? (See page 74.)
 - Does this belief arouse feelings of anger?
- After you uncover what feels true, ask God for insight, wisdom and truth.
 - “God, is it true that I’m not loved?”
 - “God, is it true that I’m defective?”
 - “God, is it true that you are distant and unavailable?”
 - “God, is it true that _____?”
- Take time to pray, meditate and listen to God. (See page 109.)
- Include any insight, wisdom or truth that you receive.

PART 2 - CURRENT EVENTS:

In your journal, also include the following:

- Several recent examples of your anger, including the following:
 - What triggered your anger;

- What you desired (control, compliance, relief, respect, or _____)?
- Who was impacted and how it affected them;
- How you felt afterwards.
- In each example, was your anger a secondary emotion? (See Primary and Secondary Emotions, page 48-49.)
- If so, what was your primary emotion (shame, fear, stress, rejection, helplessness, impatience, feeling unappreciated, feeling like a failure, or _____)?
 - How do you feel about expressing this primary emotion?
 - Is this primary emotion rooted in childhood pain? (See page 151.)
 - Is there an emotional “rule” from childhood that keeps you from expressing this primary emotion? For example, “Emotions are bad.” (See pages 47b-48.)
- Was your anger righteous or unrighteous? (See page 189b.)
- Did you justify your anger?
 - Did you blame something or someone in order to take away your responsibility? If so, who or what? (See page 76.)
 - Did you claim helplessness? (See page 77.)
 - Did you minimize it or deny it was a problem? (See page 78.)
 - Did you compare yourself to others before, during or after your anger? If so, how did the comparison impact you? (See page 79.)
- As you consider your anger, what do you believe about yourself, others or God?
 - “I can’t change.”
 - “I have no control.”
 - “I’m defective.”
 - “I have a right to be angry.”
 - “No one cares about me.”
 - “God is against me.”
 - “_____”
- After you uncover what you believe, go to God for insight, wisdom and truth.
 - “God, is it true that I can’t change?”
 - “God, is it true that I have a right to be angry?”
 - “God, is it true that _____?”
- Take time to meditate and listen to God. (See page 109.)
- Include any insight, wisdom or truth that you receive.

PART 3 – REFLECTION

- What have you discovered about your anger?
- What would it look like to “move toward God” when you are tempted with anger?

