

SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY JOURNAL
ENTANGLED RELATIONSHIPS



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 any entanglement that you want to overcome by considering the 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.

There are two sections in this journal outline. Choose the section that addresses your situation.

- Section A - Carrying Someone Else's Load
- Section B - Not Carrying Your Own Load

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.

SECTION A. CARRYING SOMEONE ELSE'S LOAD

PART 1 - PAST EVENTS:

In your journal, include the following:

- Any painful or unpleasant events that have shaped your life;
 - The emotion(s) you felt during this event (primary and secondary); (See page 55.)
 - What you came to believe about yourself, others and God as a result of that event;
 - "I'm a mistake."
 - "I'm not important."
 - "I don't fit in."
 - "I'm all alone."
 - "What happened was my fault."
 - "I'm responsible (for their happiness, anger, reaction);
 - "No one cares about me."
 - "God is distant and unavailable."
 - "I'm not good enough for God."
 - "_____."
- Did this belief(s) lead you to carry other people's loads in your childhood? If so, give examples.
- 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 move you to carry someone else's load today?
- After you uncover what feels true, ask God for insight, wisdom and truth.
 - "God, is it true that what happened was my fault?"
 - "God, is it true that you are distant and unavailable?"
 - "_____?"
- 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:

- Who you are entangled with now;
- Several recent examples of you carrying someone else's load, including the following:
 - The emotion(s) that moved you to do so (fear, shame, loneliness, anxiety, guilt, helplessness, or _____); (See page 55.)
 - What you desired:
 - To find relief;
 - To save your reputation;
 - To belong;
 - To be in control;
 - To fulfill your duty;
 - To be needed or loved;
 - To avoid dealing with their reaction (anger, sadness or _____)
 - To keep them from suffering;
 - (See pages 168-169 to review desires and motives.)
 - All the things that you reaped (sense of self-worth, satisfaction, conflict, family strife, financial challenges, exhaustion, anxiety, or _____). Give details.
 - How you justified picking up someone else's load;
 - Did you blame something or someone for your actions? 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? If so, how did it impact you? (See page 79.)
 - What feels true about these recent events of carrying someone else's load?
 - "My life will be ruined if I don't help them."
 - "I don't have a choice."
 - "It's my duty."
 - "They will appreciate me if I help them."
 - (See page 153.)
- After you uncover what feels true, ask God for insight, wisdom and truth.
 - "God, is it true that I don't have a choice?"
 - "God, is it true that _____?"
- Take time to pray, meditate and listen to God.
- Include any insight, wisdom or truth that you receive.

PART 3 – REFLECTION

- What have you discovered about your entangled relationships?
- What would it look like to "move toward God" when you are tempted to carry someone else's load?



SECTION B. NOT CARRYING YOUR OWN LOAD

PART 1 - PAST EVENTS:

In your journal, include the following:

- Any painful or unpleasant events that have shaped your life;
 - The emotion(s) you felt during this event (primary and secondary); (See page 55.)
 - What you came to believe about yourself, others or God as a result of that event;
 - “I’m not enough.”
 - “I’m powerless.”
 - “I can’t take care of myself.”
 - “I can’t make decisions on my own.”
 - “I will fail if I try.”
 - “I don’t fit in.”
 - “I’m entitled.”
 - “They owe me.”
 - “God does not care what I do.”
 - “God is against me.”
 - “_____.”
- 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 move you to not carry your own load?
- After you uncover what feels true, ask God for insight, wisdom and truth.
 - “God, is it true that I’m powerless?”
 - “God, is it true that you don’t care what I do?”
 - “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:

- Who you are entangled with now;
- Several recent examples of you not carrying your own load, including the following:
 - The emotion(s) that moved you to not carry your load (fear, shame, loneliness, anxiety, guilt, entitlement, _____);
 - What you desired:
 - To find relief;
 - To avoid painful emotions;
 - To avoid failure;
 - To be rescued;
 - To find pleasure;
 - To feel loved;
 - _____.
 - All the things that you reaped (sense of self-worth, relief from your problems, conflict, family strife, more painful emotions, or _____). Give details.

- How you justified not carrying your own load;
 - Did you blame something or someone else for your actions? 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? If so, how? (See page 78.)
 - Did you compare yourself to others for your actions? If so, how did the comparison impact you?
- What feels true about not carrying your own load?
 - “I can’t do it.”
 - “I deserve to have their help.”
 - “I can’t do anything right.”
 - “They can do it better than I can.”
 - “They will make my life difficult if they don’t get their way.”
 - (See page 153b-154.)
- After you uncover what feels true, go to God for insight, wisdom and truth.
 - “God, is it true that I can’t do it?”
 - “God, is it true that I’m a failure?”
 - “God, is it true that _____?”
- Take time to meditate and listen to God.
- Include any insight, wisdom or truth that you receive.

PART 3 – REFLECTION

- What have you discovered about your entangled relationships?
- What would it look like to “move toward God” when you are tempted to not carry your own load?

