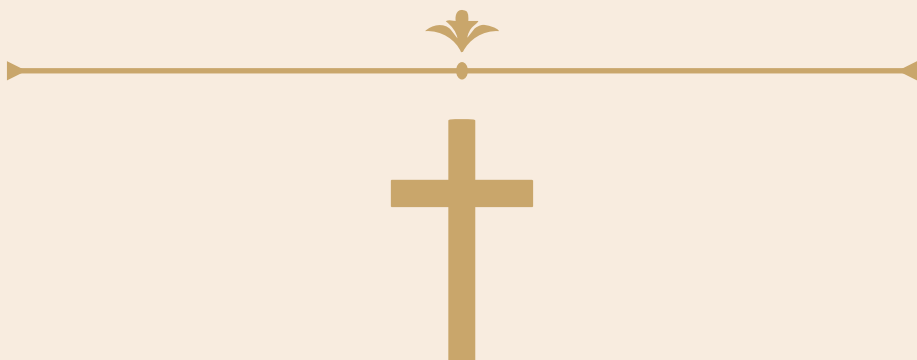




Recovery Journal for Christian Women and Men - Volume 1

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Month: 01 Day: 01 Week: 01

Understanding Despair

Defining Despair



Scripture

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (Ps. 34:18)



Reflection

It is extremely difficult to come face-to-face with despair. Yet, it is important to try. Can you write down your feelings of despair? If not, leave it for now and return to the exercise later.



Insight

True despair is the abandonment of hope. It is abandoning God, even though God has never—and would never—abandon you.





Gratitude

Write down three small things you are grateful for today, even if they feel insignificant. Begin to look to the **small things** for tiny sparks that lighten your gloom.



Prayer

Create a single prayer for yourself and others who are experiencing despair.



Realization

Take a moment to jot down your thoughts and feelings that arise as you reflect on this day, your first intentional step toward healing.

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Not for resale.

Month: 01 Day: 02 Week: 01

Understanding Despair

Identifying Triggers



Scripture

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.
(1 Pet. 5:7)



Reflection

What situations, thoughts, or events tend to trigger your feelings of despair?



Insight

The cruelest trick of despair is to convince you it is eternal. But God has said He will comfort you. So, who's lying?





Gratitude

Reflect on a person who has supported you in difficult times and express gratitude to God for sending them to you.



Prayer

Choose your worst trigger and, with sincerity, ask God to help you manage it.



Realization

Document your feelings as you explore your triggers. How have they affected you?

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Month: 01 Day: 03 Week: 01

Understanding Despair

The Impact of Despair



Scripture

So I turned about and gave my heart up to despair over all the toil of my labors under the sun. (Eccl. 2:20)



Reflection

Your feelings of despair may have impacted your daily life or relationships in subtle ways you may not have noticed. Upon reflection, do you notice how despair has changed you?



Insight

Despair finds strength in isolation; it grows ever more powerful when you keep kindness and truth at arm's length.





Gratitude

List one way someone showed you **unexpected** support during difficult times.



Prayer

Think of someone who is going through a difficult time and pray for them. This time, be the unexpected helper as you yourself once benefited from.



Realization

Realize how easy it is to overlook the suffering of others and for others to overlook your suffering. Yet, God sees everything.

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Month: 01 Day: 04 Week: 01

Understanding Despair

Expressing Emotions



Scripture

A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. (Prov. 17:22)



Reflection

Cheerfulness is the best medicine for despair. Ask yourself if you strive to be cheerful or if you have allowed yourself to slip into despair.



Insight

Despair thrives in the loneliness of silence, in keeping bitter wounds deep inside like a poisonous dart turned inward.





Gratitude

Try to remember a moment during today when cheerfulness came into your life. What made you smile or even laugh out loud? **Be grateful for the small things.**



Prayer

On this day, today, set a forever intention to be cheerful. Ask God for His kind assistance to help you succeed in being cheerful at all times. (Yes, be ambitious. Our Father is able.)



Realization

This is a huge realization: it is up to you to choose whether you will be cheerful, or bitter, morose, and full of despair. I pray you make the right choice and that you choose the path to healing.

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Month: 01 Day: 05 Week: 01

Understanding Despair

Seeking Support



Scripture

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor. (Eccl. 4:9)



Reflection

Who in your life can you turn to for support when you feel despair? Even if you have forgotten that you are not alone in this world (God the Father is always with you), remember that charitable people exist, and all you have to do is reach out to them. At the back of this journal, you will find a list of charities in a number of countries.



Insight

Despair imprisons the soul not through pain but through its pretense that from now on, pain is all there will ever be and help from others will be futile.





Gratitude

Write down a time when a stranger supported you in your life and express gratitude for them.



Prayer

Pray for individuals who go out of their way to help others. Ask God to bless them for their charitable work.



Realization

Reflect on how reaching out for help has made—or could have made—a difference in your life.

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Month: 01 Day: 06 Week: 01

Understanding Despair

Recognizing God's Presence



Scripture

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'
(Heb. 13:5)



Reflection

How can money worries lead to feelings of despair?



Insight

Despair is a sly, wicked mirror. It shows you only what is broken, hiding the Light of God in the small, better things behind its dark, unsympathetic reflection.





Gratitude

Look to a **small thing**, the subtle, quiet way in which God works. If for nothing else, be grateful for that one thing.



Prayer

Pray for the openness to grow ever more sensitive to and appreciative of the small things, for these are the tiny sign posts that will help lead you toward God's presence so you feel it ever more deeply in your life.



Realization

God has a plan, and it is far better for you to be in step with His plan than not.

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Month: 01 Day: 07 Week: 01

Understanding Despair

Moving Forward



Scripture

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 hope and a future. (Jer. 29:11)



Reflection

What small steps have you taken this week to begin moving from despair toward hope?



Insight

The strange paradox of despair is that it denies hardest what you are hardwired to value most: hope.





Gratitude

Write down one victory you experienced this week, no matter how small it may seem. All the little things eventually add up to a big thing!



Prayer

Pray for guidance and strength as you take these steps toward healing.



Realization

Realize that with intent and full purpose, you have put yourself on the path to healing and hope.

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