

Recognize, Reflect, and Release - Processing intense emotions

Sample journaling exercises from my notebooks...

Keep your heart open without all the protective layers...

we don't love well through the layers of protection... Mary Freeman

It is helpful to “calibrate” your emotional stress before you begin the 4 techniques...what I mean is “on a scale of 1 to 10, how intense do I feel (name the emotion) right now, with 10 being the most intense, and 1 not intense. Write your assessment in the upper right hand corner of your first page of journaling...then “recalibrate” after you finish technique 4...has there been any change? Are your feelings less intense?’

MY JOURNALING:

Technique #1 – **Catharsis** – 2 or maximum of 3 minutes duration

(From 1996) My head is so crammed full of need to know, should know, what my clients know (or wish they knew) of what my children need to know of and then God calls me to know Him...Jeremiah 9:23...

K – keria (Lord)

N – needs? Necitates necessitates

O – our

W – worship

Know Him first and only.

I was tired but now I have renewed energy,

Mental energy

Knowledge puffs up, love builds up...

All they all need is love

Beatles – all we need is love (da, da, da)

Now, I need to plan the Super Bowl party...

Technique #2 – **Stream of Consciousness or Free-writing** – 3 to a maximum of 5 minutes.

(1996) Now I have Beatles music and the new Coca Cola ads going in my head because of Troy's da-da-da in the commercial and I'm full of love feelings instead of knowledge panic and I still want to plan what to get from the grocery store for the party or I will panic on Sunday and I think I'll stop by Sack and Save so I can see what they have for paper products and get some cash so David can have lunch money tomorrow and both the boys can be paid allowance money and and and I only have one check left so I need to remember to put blanks in my purse and then I need to remember to grade michael's papers when I get home if I can find a red pen and so he can take his tests tomorrow afternoon and and and and I hope I get this all done by 10:00 tonight so I can go to bed and sleep I took a stress evaluation today and I think I am...

Technique #3 – **Dictation or Description** – 3 to a maximum of 5 minutes

(2002 – this journaling stream was about my anger and healthy vs. unhealthy ways of expressing it) I think the stress has increased over the past 7 years, but so has the joys and so has my strengths to LIVE in spite of the stress. Am I running with the horses yet God? (Jeremiah 5:12) Interesting that it has been 7 years – the number of God, perfection, completion. Interesting, too, that we have been walking this path so long that there are “flashbacks” of very similar events from his teenage years. Not to mention “flashbacks” to the out-of-control chaos of childhood years. I do not like that! How can we help him? Let his healing begin soon, Lord! My body was tense. I’m not stuck like I was as a child or young adult.

Technique #4 – **Reflection** – again, 3 to a maximum of 5 minutes.

(2002 – finishing the anger assessment journaling.) Am I repeating patterns of my childhood? I don’t think so...I’m not reacting. I’m responding. There are boundaries being tested, yet holding strong. I have a lot more tools to utilize – I want to use them with skill. Even compared to the mid-1990s – I have more depth, confidence, faith, hope for his future – maybe I need to grieve a little more in the area of loss. I really had hoped he would have outgrown this by now – hmmm. And yet, I don’t feel bogged down by the emotional outburst of the weekend – and I’m not holding it against him – just factually evaluating next moves, what is necessary, what is prudent, what we can do today that we won’t regret in 10 years! Or 20!