



HEALING THE WOUNDED MIND

*Deliverance from Trauma,
Triggers, and Fear*

ELDER KEITH JOEL WALKER



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Written by
Elder Keith Joel Walker

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Preface

You have paid a price to seek healing. This book speaks to those who sit in our pews—redeemed in Jesus’ blood, baptized in His name, filled with the Holy Spirit—and yet still carry wounds of childhood abuse, abandonment, sexual violation, domestic violence, addiction, divorce, shame, panic, racing thoughts, and deep fears. Jesus our God and Savior suffered cruelty in the flesh, bore wounds, and offers healing for the spirit, soul, and body. This work blends Scripture, Jewish and Christian commentary, pastoral deliverance ministry, and responsible psychological insight to provide a practical, Spirit-filled path to inner healing and triumph.

Part I — Words, Meanings, and Biblical Equivalents

A note on language: “Trauma” and “trigger” are modern clinical words not found as exact single terms in biblical Hebrew or Koine Greek. The Bible, however, uses words and images that describe wounds of the heart, terror, distress, astonishment, and recurring provocation. Below are the closest Hebrew and Greek terms and their English meanings.

Hebrew words (closest biblical equivalents)

1. Yirah (יִרָא) — fear, reverence, dread. Often used for general fear but also godly awe.
2. Pachad (פַּחַד) — terror, panic, great fear.
3. Chaburah / Chabur (חֲבוּרָה / חִבּוּר) — wound, bruise, the mark of a blow; figurative for emotional injury.
4. Makkah (מַכָּה) — stroke, blow, calamity; used for physical blows and calamities.
5. Leb / Lev (לֵב) — heart; biblical seat of emotions and inner life (where trauma hurts).
6. Ruach (רוּחַ) — spirit/wind; can describe inner agitation or the Spirit's calming.
7. Skandalon equivalent: The Hebrew idea of a stumbling block (michshol, מִיֶּשְׁחָל).

Greek words (closest biblical equivalents)

1. Phobos (φόβος) — fear, terror.
2. Deilia (δειλία) — timidity, faint-heartedness.
3. Merimna (μέριμνα) / Merimnao (μεριμνάω) — anxious care, worry, anxiety.
4. Thlipsis (θλίψις) — affliction, pressure, distress (used for trials/tribulation).
5. Helkos (ἔλκος) — wound, sore (literal and figurative).
6. Skandalon (σκάνδαλον) — stumbling block, provocation (what triggers someone to stumble).
7. Paroxusmos / Paroxyno (παροξυσμός / παροξύνω) — provocation, incitement (to anger or

agitation).

Short summary: For “trauma,” think of *chaburah* / *helkos* (wounding) or *thlipsis* (distress). For “trigger,” think of *skandalon* (stumbling-block) or *paroxusmos* (provocation). For “fear,” use *yirah*/ *pachad* and *phobos*/*merimna* for anxiety.

Part II — How Psychologists/Researchers Define Trauma, Abuse, and Triggers

(Short list of influential clinicians and basic positions)

- Bessel van der Kolk — Trauma (The Body Keeps the Score): trauma is an imprint on mind and body; symptoms include hypervigilance, flashbacks, dysregulation; body-based treatments matter.
- Judith Herman — Trauma and Recovery: trauma results from power violation; recovery requires safety, remembrance/mourning, reconnection.
- Francine Shapiro — EMDR: certain eye-movement-based therapy can help process traumatic memories.
- Peter Levine — Somatic Experiencing: trauma is held in the nervous system; resolving it requires body-focused completion of defensive responses.
- Daniel J. Siegel — Interpersonal Neurobiology: integration heals; attachment and relational safety shape the brain.
- John Bowlby & Mary Ainsworth — Attachment theory: early attachment ruptures create patterns of

fear and avoidance.

- Aaron T. Beck & David D. Burns — Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: trauma-related thinking (distortions) fuels anxiety and depression; cognitive restructuring helps.
- Viktor Frankl — Meaning-making models: finding meaning in suffering aids recovery.

Christian clinicians with trauma-care emphasis:

- Dan Allender — Christian therapist and author focusing on soul care, abuse, and trauma recovery.
- Curt Thompson — Christian physician/leader who connects neuroscience and pastoral care (on relational healing and shame).
- Ed Welch & the Christian Counseling and Education Foundation (CCEF) contributors — biblical counseling approaches to fear, anxiety and sin patterns.
- Henry Cloud & John Townsend — practical Christian counseling and boundaries, addressing relational trauma.
- Paul T. P. Wong — meaning-centered approaches (Christian therapists often integrate these ideas).

How clinicians identify trauma and triggers in life

- Re-experiencing (intrusive memories, flashbacks, nightmares)
- Avoidance of reminders (places, people, topics)
- Hyperarousal (startle response, irritability,

insomnia)

- Negative changes in mood/thoughts (shame, persistent fear, hopelessness)
- Dissociation or numbness, memory gaps
- Physiological responses to cues (heart racing, sweating)
- Triggers are cues (people, smells, places, words) that elicit intense emotional/physiological response tied to past wound.

Part III — Identifying Trauma, Abuse, and Triggers in Your Life (Practical Checklist)

Signs you may have unresolved trauma or active triggers:

- Nightmares, intrusive images, or flashbacks
- Intense fear or panic disproportionate to present danger
- Avoidance of situations or people that remind you of past events
- Unexplained anger, rage, or shame
- Repeated relational patterns (isolation, clinginess, distrust)
- Substance dependence or self-harm behaviors
- Sudden intense reactions to ordinary comments (startling, rage, withdrawal)
- Recurrent somatic symptoms (chest tightness, stomach pain) without a medical cause

- Difficulty trusting God or believing God's love despite doctrinal knowledge

If you are in danger or have thoughts of harming yourself or others, seek emergency help immediately.

Part IV — 100 Scripture References for Deliverance, Healing, and Overcoming Fear

(Use these verses regularly in prayer, meditation, and proclamation. Listed as book:chapter:verse)

1. Psalm 23:1–6
2. Psalm 34:17–20
3. Psalm 27:1
4. Psalm 46:1–3, 10
5. Psalm 91:1–16
6. Psalm 103:1–5
7. Psalm 147:3
8. Psalm 6:6–9
9. Psalm 42:11
10. Psalm 43:5
11. Isaiah 41:10
12. Isaiah 61:1–3
13. Isaiah 43:1–2
14. Isaiah 26:3
15. Isaiah 54:17
16. Jeremiah 30:17
17. Jeremiah 29:11
18. Lamentations 3:22–24

19. Hosea 6:1
20. Joel 2:25–27
21. Matthew 11:28–30
22. Matthew 6:25–34
23. Matthew 8:26–27
24. Matthew 14:27
25. Mark 5:34 (Jesus to the healed woman)
26. Luke 4:18–19
27. Luke 8:48
28. John 10:10
29. John 14:27
30. John 16:33
31. Romans 8:1–2
32. Romans 8:28–39
33. Romans 12:2
34. Romans 15:13
35. 2 Corinthians 1:3–4
36. 2 Corinthians 4:8–9
37. 2 Corinthians 10:3–5
38. Galatians 5:1
39. Ephesians 1:7
40. Ephesians 2:4–6
41. Ephesians 3:16–19
42. Ephesians 6:10–18
43. Philippians 4:6–7
44. Philippians 4:13
45. Colossians 1:13–14
46. Colossians 2:13–15
47. 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

48. 2 Timothy 1:7
49. Hebrews 4:15–16
50. Hebrews 12:1–2
51. James 4:7–8
52. 1 Peter 5:7
53. 1 Peter 2:24
54. 1 Peter 3:12
55. 1 John 1:9
56. 1 John 4:4
57. Revelation 12:11
58. Revelation 21:4
59. Exodus 14:14
60. Deuteronomy 31:6
61. Joshua 1:9
62. Judges 6:23–24 (Gideon’s fear and God’s reassurance)
63. 1 Samuel 30:6 (David strengthened in the Lord)
64. Psalm 18:2
65. Psalm 34:4
66. Psalm 55:22
67. Psalm 56:3–4
68. Psalm 118:14–17
69. Isaiah 40:29–31
70. Isaiah 35:4
71. Jeremiah 17:14
72. Nahum 1:7
73. Habakkuk 3:19
74. Zephaniah 3:17
75. Matthew 6:33

76. Luke 12:22–32
77. Luke 22:31–32 (Peter restored)
78. John 8:36
79. Acts 10:38 (Jesus' healing ministry)
80. Acts 9:17–18 (Paul's restoration)
81. Romans 5:3–5
82. Romans 8:6
83. 1 Corinthians 6:19–20
84. 1 Corinthians 10:13
85. Galatians 2:20
86. Ephesians 4:31–32
87. Philippians 3:13–14
88. Colossians 3:15–17
89. 1 Thessalonians 1:10
90. 2 Thessalonians 3:3
91. 1 Timothy 1:15–16
92. Titus 3:5–7
93. Hebrews 13:5–6
94. James 1:2–4
95. 1 Peter 4:12–13
96. 2 Peter 1:3–4
97. Jude 1:24–25
98. Psalm 119:50
99. Psalm 139:13–18
100. Micah 7:7–8

How to use these verses: memorize, meditate, pray them back to God, journal how each verse speaks to particular wounds or triggers, and declare them in

faith.

Part V — 100 Scriptural & Practical Principles for Deliverance and Inner Healing

(Brief, numbered principles to practice regularly —
spiritual and practical)

1. Acknowledge: Name your pain before God and others.
2. Beg for God's presence: Invite the Holy Spirit to come near.
3. Confess sin and lies you believed; repent where needed.
4. Claim Christ's finished work on the cross for your inner healing.
5. Pray specifically against the root lies that trauma shaped.
6. Declare legal rights back to Jesus (renounce ungodly vows, curses).
7. Forgive perpetrators—even if it's a long process.
8. Invite God to show you memories—to bring them into His light.
9. Journal memories and the emotions attached for processing.
10. Use Scripture to replace trauma-based thoughts (Romans 12:2).
11. Practice breath prayer to calm the nervous system.

12. Learn to identify triggers (sensory cues, dates, smells).
13. When triggered, name the trigger and ground yourself in the present.
14. Develop a safety plan for severe symptoms.
15. Create a “safe person” list—people you can call.
16. Receive compassionate pastoral counseling.
17. Seek professional trauma-informed therapy (EMDR, CBT, SE).
18. Engage in somatic work—body-awareness and release.
19. Practice mindfulness and centering prayer.
20. Worship with others; music engages heart and body.
21. Fast when led—fasting sometimes deepens spiritual breakthrough.
22. Take appropriate medication if prescribed—God uses medicine.
23. Rest—sleep and Sabbath are essential for healing brains.
24. Rebuild secure attachments in safe relationships.
25. Dive into identity-in-Christ affirmations daily.
26. Make amends where appropriate—repair relationships.
27. Practice gratitude to reframe cognitive patterns.
28. Use deliverance prayer where demonic oppression is evident.
29. Renounce generational patterns in prayer.
30. Admit and grieve losses—nurture mourning

(Herman).

31. Celebrate progress—small wins matter.
32. Participate in group therapy or support groups.
33. Develop healthy boundaries—learn to say no.
34. Learn assertiveness and emotional regulation skills.
35. Replace shame with truth—expose shame to light and to trusted others.
36. Allow the Spirit to comfort, not “fix” you with platitudes.
37. Ask God for the memory’s meaning—not to erase it but to reframe it.
38. Seek reconciliation with God’s image of you—Father, Bridegroom, Shepherd.
39. Rehearse God’s promises in specific areas where fear dominates.
40. Use art, music, movement as expressive therapy in prayer.
41. Practice hospitality—serving others helps reframe self-worth.
42. Establish rhythms: prayer, Scripture, fellowship, service.
43. Use narrative therapy—tell your story under God’s authorship.
44. Use cognitive restructuring to correct trauma-shaped beliefs.
45. Pray for dreams and ask God to change nightmares.
46. Invite prophetic ministry when spiritually

appropriate.

47. Undertake symbolic acts of letting go (burning lists, symbolic burying).

48. Learn to identify and dismantle avoidance behaviors.

49. Receive inner child healing prayer if led.

50. Name and bless the younger you who was hurt.

51. Ask for God's justice; do not deny the ache for justice.

52. Pursue self-compassion and theological humility.

53. Reclaim sexuality and identity in safe, therapeutic contexts.

54. Build spiritual disciplines slowly—consistency over intensity.

55. Keep a “victory” file—evidence of God's faithfulness.

56. Learn to tolerate distress—exposure and coping gradually.

57. Rehearse forgiveness steps as a process, not a demand.

58. Partner with an experienced deliverance minister for spiritual strongholds.

59. Remove images/music/media that retraumatize.

60. Establish a daily rule of life to orient the heart.

61. Reconnect with nature and God's creation for soothing.

62. Practice grounding exercises (feet on the ground, naming five senses).

63. Celebrate sacramental moments (communion,

baptism) in faith.

64. Seek vocational help if trauma affects work functioning.

65. Train churches in trauma-informed ministry.

66. Name unholy alliances (bitterness, pride) and repent.

67. Relearn how to trust in safe, incremental steps.

68. Receive prophetic affirmation of identity if authentic.

69. Use imagery prayer—imagine Jesus' presence in the memory scene.

70. Rehearse safety cues—Scripture, songs, scents associated with calm.

71. Involve family in healing when safe and helpful.

72. Replace perfectionism with God's grace for progress.

73. Resist spiritual bypassing—do the inner work God calls for.

74. Teach children trauma-awareness and healthy boundaries.

75. Pray for dreams and prophetic reinterpretations of memories.

76. Cultivate mixed emotions—allow joy without guilt.

77. Break isolation by joining supportive spiritual communities.

78. Use physical exercise to regulate physiology.

79. Learn to label emotions accurately.

80. Practice forgiveness toward self for survival strategies.

81. Receive physical healing prayer and practical medical care.
82. Ask for deliverance from fear-root spirits where Scripture indicates demonic oppression.
83. Reframe trauma as part of a salvific story when God gives meaning.
84. Keep spiritual direction and accountability relationships.
85. Rehearse identity statements: I am beloved, forgiven, free.
86. Honor spiritual milestones—testimonies of progress.
87. Pray for the persecutor's repentance (if appropriate).
88. Rejoin the mission—helping others often heals.
89. Keep boundaries with retraumatizing institutions and people.
90. Practice daily confession to keep small sins from lodging as wounds.
91. Learn the language of emotional attunement to replace criticism.
92. Use ritual (anointing, laying on of hands) to reinforce healing.
93. Prepare for triggers (pre-plan responses for anniversaries).
94. Maintain a long-term plan—healing can be gradual and lifelong.
95. Teach your body new safety patterns with repeated calm experiences.

96. Ask for the Spirit to renew brain pathways—believe in neuroplastic hope.
97. Celebrate being an overcomer in Christ, not a victim.
98. Keep hope—commit to the story of resurrection in your life.
99. Keep learning—books, training, and mentors strengthen the journey.
100. Surrender continually—your healing is in Christ, not merely techniques.

Part VI — How Jesus and Biblical Figures Experienced Trauma and How They Were Healed

A. Jesus: the wounded healer

- Jesus experienced betrayal, false accusation, severe physical and emotional abuse, abandonment by friends, and the agony of the cross (Psalm 22 imagery). He is the great exemplar of God who identifies with human suffering and brings healing through sacrificial love and resurrection (Hebrews 4:15–16).

B. David

- Trauma: pursued by Saul, betrayed by close ones, family betrayal, grief, despair (Psalms reflect raw emotion).

- How he overcame: David repeatedly poured out his heart in honest prayer, sorrow, repentance (Psalm 51), trust in God (Psalm 27/23), and used lament (Psalm 42/43) as a spiritual practice of processing pain.
- Rashi on David (summary): Rashi often reads David's laments as sincere cries for rescue and indicators of God's providential care. He notes how David's weeping was not sinful but an expression of reliance on God's mercy (see Rashi on Psalms for many passages). Rashi emphasizes God's compassion in lifting David from distress—teaching us to bring lament before God.

C. Elijah (Eliyahu)

- Trauma: spiritual victory on Mount Carmel followed by death threats from Jezebel; Elijah fled into the wilderness, despaired, prayed for death (1 Kings 19).
- How he was healed: God provided angelic food, rest, a gentle whisper (*kol demamah dakah*) in which God addressed him, and gave renewed calling and companionship (another prophet, Elisha).
- Rashi on Elijah (summary): Rashi explains Elijah's fear and flight as human exhaustion; God's gentle approach in the still small voice teaches that healing often comes through nourishment, rest, and quiet intimacy with God—not dramatic displays. Rashi's metaphor: the cave/wilderness is a place of

inner struggle where God brings restoration, not condemnation.

Prophets' patterns and insights (Old Testament)

- Many prophets endured persecution, loneliness, and deep distress (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jonah). Their recovery patterns include honest lament, confession, renewed prophetic calling, and renewed trust in God's promises.

New Testament Examples of Deliverance

- The Gadarene demoniac (Mark 5; Luke 8): delivered from torment and restored to community.
- Peter (John 21): after denial, Jesus restores him with patient questioning and commissioning.
- Paul suffered beatings and shipwrecks; he learned strength in weakness and Christ's sufficiency (2 Corinthians 11–12).
- Lesson: Deliverance can be physical, relational, and vocational—restoring purpose and belonging.

Part VII — Rashi and Jewish Interpretations (Select Insights)

A short selection (summaries, not exhaustive):

- Rashi often reads Biblical complaints (Psalms, Prophets) literally as expressions of the author's

heart. He interprets David's tears as cries for God's mercy and emphasizes God's compassionate response.

- On 1 Kings 19 (Elijah): Rashi notes that Elijah needed bodily nourishment and found God not in wind or earthquake but in the still small voice—teaching the importance of quiet, providential care for the wounded soul.
- On Job: Rashi frames Job's suffering as a test and an arena for understanding God's sovereignty; Rashi highlights the limits of human understanding and the call to trust.

These Jewish commentaries underline practical pastoral truths: give space for lament, avoid quick judgments, value rest and nourishment, and trust God's intimate care in the hush.

Part VIII — How to Triumph Over Trauma, Triggers, and Fear — A Step-by-Step Spiritual Plan

1. Immediate Safety: If in danger, get to safety. If thinking of self-harm, seek emergency help.
2. Stabilization: Reduce symptoms—grounding, breathing, safe community, medical care if needed.
3. Spiritual Reorientation: Claim Jesus' work—confess sins, receive forgiveness, and declare Christ's healing.
4. Identify Triggers: Use a journal to note situations,

dates, sensory cues; map bodily reactions.

5. Process Memories: In trusted therapy or pastoral counseling, process traumatic memories safely (EMDR, CBT, SE).

6. Renew the Mind: Replace trauma-based cognition with Scripture and truth; memorize identity verses.

7. Forgiveness Work: Practice forgiveness but not at the cost of ignoring justice or ongoing harm.

8. Rebuild Relationships: Allow safe attachments to slowly restore trust.

9. Re-engage Mission: Find small ways to serve; purpose heals.

10. Maintain Practices: Prayer, community, therapy, Sabbath, worship, and healthy boundaries form ongoing maintenance.

Part IX — Christian Deliverance Ministry — Guidelines & Ethics

- Deliverance ministry should be conducted prayerfully, biblically, and ethically.
- Ensure consent, pastoral oversight, and follow-up care.
- Use Scripture and the name of Jesus in faith, but avoid coercive practices.
- Combine spiritual ministry with professional therapy when trauma is severe—deliverance + trauma-informed therapy often provides the best outcomes.

- Document and refer when medical or psychological conditions require clinical intervention.

Part X — Christian Psychologists, Therapists, and Reading Recommendations

Non-Christian trauma leaders (recommended)

- Bessel van der Kolk — *The Body Keeps the Score*
- Judith Herman — *Trauma and Recovery*
- Francine Shapiro — EMDR resources
- Peter Levine — *Waking the Tiger*
- Daniel Siegel — *The Developing Mind*

Christian counselors and authors

- Dan Allender — *The Wounded Heart; The Healing Path*
- Curt Thompson — *The Soul of Shame; The Soul of Christianity* (neuroscience and pastoral care)
- Ed Welch (CCEF) — *When People Are Big and God Is Small; counseling resources*
- Henry Cloud & John Townsend — *Boundaries*
- Larry Crabb — *Connecting*
- Bob Hopkins — *Christian trauma ministry resources*

Part XI — Sample Prayer Templates and Practical Exercises

(1) Simple breath-prayer for panic: “Jesus, have mercy” on inhalation; “Jesus, be near” on exhalation—repeat until calm.

(2) Memory-surfacing prayer: “Lord, show me the memory that needs Your presence. I give You my hurt; I ask for Your healing meaning.”

(3) Forgiveness prayer: “Father, I choose to forgive [name] for [specific actions]. I release them to You. Heal my heart and protect me.”

(4) Renunciation prayer (short): “In Jesus’ name I renounce the lies [list lies—e.g., ‘I am unlovable’], break every vow I made out of fear, and declare freedom in Christ.”

(5) Grounding exercise: Name five things you can see, four you can touch, three you can hear, two you can smell, one you can taste—then pray Psalm 23 aloud.

Part XII — Safety for Churches:

How to Care for Traumatized People in Worship

- Train leaders in trauma awareness.
- Provide quiet spaces and debriefing after triggering services.
- Avoid spiritualizing suffering; validate pain.
- Have referral lists for Christian therapists and medical professionals.
- Create groups for survivors with appropriate confidentiality and boundaries.

Part XIII — Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is it unspiritual to take medication for anxiety?

A: No. Medicine can be a gift from God used alongside prayer and pastoral care. Wisdom and medical counsel should guide use.

Q: Can deliverance ministry harm people?

A: If done without consent, boundaries, or clinical oversight, it can retraumatize. Always seek trained ministry leaders and clinical professionals for severe trauma.

Q: How long does healing take?

A: Healing timelines vary. Some find quick relief; many need months to years. Hope and perseverance matter.

Part XIV — Concluding Encouragement

You are not your trauma. You are a child of God who has been purchased by Christ's blood. Jesus knows wounds intimately. He walked through humiliation and brutality to give you healing and life. Take practical steps: safety, professional care, spiritual work, community, and persistent faith. The journey may be long, but our God is faithful, and deliverance is real.

Forgiveness: The Path to Freedom

Introduction

Forgiveness is central to the Christian life. Jesus commands us to forgive (Matthew 6:14–15; Luke 17:3–4) and modeled radical, redemptive forgiveness on the cross (Luke 23:34). For those wounded by abuse, betrayal, and trauma, forgiveness is often the most difficult step—but also the most liberating. This chapter guides you through what forgiveness is, what it is not, why it matters for trauma recovery, and practical steps to move toward release, healing, and—where appropriate—reconciliation.

What Forgiveness Is—and What It Is Not

- Forgiveness is: a deliberate decision to release a person into God’s hands, to stop pursuing personal vengeance, and to refuse the tyranny of bitterness. It’s an act of obedience and trust that God will be the righteous judge.
- Forgiveness is not: forgetting what happened as if it didn’t matter; excusing or minimizing the offense; requiring immediate reconciliation or removing the need for justice and boundaries; saying that the hurt was acceptable.
- Forgiveness does not mean returning to a situation that will re-traumatize you. It can coexist with firm

boundaries, legal action, and protective measures.

Why forgiveness matters for trauma, triggers, and fear

- Trauma often embeds anger, shame, and bitter resentment in the heart. These emotions can keep neural pathways of vigilance and fear active, making triggers more intense and long-lasting.
- Choosing forgiveness interrupts the cycle of rumination and hatred. Spiritually, it aligns us with Christ's heart; psychologically, it reduces the cognitive and emotional load of holding anger.
- Forgiveness does not erase memory; it gradually loosens the emotional charge associated with memories and triggers, making them less determinative of present response.

Barriers to forgiveness (common, normal)

- Denial, numbness, overwhelming anger, fear of being complicit, desire for justice, shame, repeated offending, lack of apology, and ongoing danger.
- Spiritual shame or pressure to forgive too quickly can be damaging. Resist spiritual bypassing—healing requires honest processing.

Step-by-step process toward forgiveness

Step 1 — Make a clear choice to pursue forgiveness

- Pray: “Lord, I choose to begin the work of forgiving [name]. Give me the grace to begin.”
- Acknowledge that forgiveness may be a journey, not a single moment.

Step 2 — Name the hurt and its effects

- Write down the facts of what happened, how you felt then, and how it affects you now (trust, relationships, self-image, fear).
- This is not rumination; it is honest clarification.

Step 3 — Grieve/receive lament

- Give God your tears, anger, and questions. Lament is biblical (Psalms). Allow the younger you to be heard and blessed (naming and blessing exercises are helpful).

Step 4 — Confess and renounce related sins

- Confess the ways you responded (retaliation, bitterness, addictions) and renounce any vows made in brokenness (e.g., “I will never trust anyone”).
- Use a renunciation prayer to speak truth and reclaim your identity in Christ.

Step 5 — Choose to release the offender

- Pray a release prayer out loud. You might write a letter (not necessarily sent) declaring your choice to release them to God's justice.

Step 6 — Set boundaries and seek justice where needed

- Forgiveness and safety go together. If the person is dangerous or unrepentant, protect yourself and others.
- Pursue legal or restorative justice channels as appropriate. Forgiveness does not cancel accountability.

Step 7 — Seek pastoral and therapeutic integration

- Work with a pastor, deliverance ministry (if applicable and trained), and a trauma-informed therapist to integrate spiritual and psychological recovery.

Step 8 — Rehearse truth and practice new patterns

- Replace trauma-driven narratives with Scriptural identity statements: e.g., “I am beloved,” “I am not defined by what happened.” Repeat these in prayer,

journaling, and confession.

Step 9 — Consider reconciliation only when safe and genuine repentance occurs

- Reconciliation requires transformed behavior, repentance, accountability, and restoration of trust over time. Do not rush this.

Practical exercises and prayers for forgiveness

Exercise A — The Naming and Releasing Letter

- Write to the person who hurt you. Describe the facts succinctly. Say how it affected you. Declare that you release them to God's justice and that you choose to forgive. Finish with a prayer blessing the person (if possible).
- After writing, choose a symbolic release: burn, bury, or place in a sealed box as a sign you have entrusted it to the Lord.

Exercise B — The Blessing Practice

- Close your eyes and picture the younger you (a child or the you who suffered). Bless them aloud: "God bless you, I see you, you are not to blame, you are loved." Repeat for 5–10 minutes.

Exercise C — The Renunciation Prayer (sample)

- “In the name of Jesus, I renounce the lies I have believed about myself because of [name]’s actions. I break any vows I made in fear or hatred. I release [name] into God’s hands and choose forgiveness by faith. Lord, heal my heart; protect me and give me wisdom in all relationships. Amen.”

Exercise D — The Release Prayer (sample)

- “Father, I give you my anger and my desire for revenge. I choose to forgive [name]. I leave justice and judgment to You. Do Your healing work in me. If I need to protect myself, show me how. Thank You for freeing me from bitterness. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Exercise E — A 21-day Forgiveness Practice

- Day 1–7: Write, grieve, and pray daily; perform the naming and releasing letter.
- Day 8–14: Repeat short release prayers each morning and night; practice the blessing exercise daily.
- Day 15–21: Replace trauma narratives with Scripture confessions and rehearse safe boundary plans. Evaluate progress with a trusted mentor.

Fasting and prayer for release (practical guidance)

- If you feel led to fast (and this is appropriate for your health), use it as a focused season to pray for inner freedom and to ask God to break spiritual strongholds tied to bitterness.
- Start small if you are inexperienced (e.g., partial fast or one meal) and seek medical advice if you have health conditions.
- Use the fasting season to journal, pray, and listen to God about practical next steps (boundary setting, pastoral support).
- Remember textual variants of Mark 9:29—some manuscripts emphasize prayer alone; others combine prayer and fasting. Both point to dependence on God's Spirit.

When You cannot Forgive Yet

- Some wounds are deep and require long-term work.

Appendices

- A. 100 Scripture Verses (repeat list for easy printing)
- B. 100 Principles (repeat list)
- C. Suggested resources and ministries for EMDR, somatic therapy, and Christian counseling (local referrals vary—contact your church or pastoral care for trusted lists)

Final Pastoral Note

If you or someone you care for is in immediate danger or thinking about suicide, call local emergency services or a crisis line now. If you need help finding a Christian trauma therapist or referrals in your area, tell me your country or region and I'll help locate resources.

Written by Elder Keith Joel Walker