

Workbook Chapter Seventeen Heal Your Betrayals

Self-Assessment Tools:

Skill Practice Exercise: Locating Your Patterns of Betrayal Barry K. Weinhold, PhD

Make a list of the significant betrayals in your life. You can make the list chronological, starting with the earliest one you can remember, or you can arrange your list from the most significant down to the least significant. After you have listed all these events (you only need a few words to describe each event: "The time when _____ happened"), go back and examine each betrayal using the following questions.

- What were the predominant feelings you had then and have now toward the betrayer?
- Which sterile choices did you make in dealing with this betrayal?
- What illusions, misperceptions, or expectations contributed to the betrayal?
- What other choices could you have made in this betrayal situation?
- What new choices still exist for you in this betrayal situation?
- What lessons did you learn because of this betrayal?
- What, if any, important benefits came out of this betrayal experience?
- Have you had similar kinds of betrayals? What were the common elements in these betrayals? How do they form a pattern?
- Which betrayals do you feel you have successfully resolved? How did you do that? What steps did you take?
- Which betrayals have you not healed? What opportunities still exist to heal or resolve these?

Locating Times When You Were The Betrayer

After you have answered the above questions, make a second list of the times when you were the betrayer. Answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

- What were your most prevalent feelings involved in your betrayals when you were the betrayer?
- How did you deal with each betrayal?
- What were the short-term and long-term effects of the betrayal on you?
- What were the short-term and long-term effects of your betrayal on the other person(s) involved?
- What could you have done differently instead of betraying the other person?
- What, if any, benefits did you receive because of the betrayal?
- What, if any, unfinished business do you think still exists with your betrayals?
- What actions do you still need to take to clear any unfinished business left over from any of your betrayals?

Please check the workbook for more information about betrayals. There is also a case study in the Workbook on how a couple healed their betrayal experience.

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- What, if any, benefits did you receive because of the betrayal?
- What, if any, unfinished business do you think still exists with your betrayals?
- What actions do you still need to take to clear any unfinished business left over from any of your betrayals?

Self-Awareness Exercise: Processing Your Patterns of Betrayal

Begin this activity by looking at your list of betrayals for patterns and trends in your betrayals. Ask yourself: Are your betrayers mostly men or women? Were they older or younger than you were? Have certain kinds of betrayal occurred more than once? Which betrayals have you successfully healed? Which have you not healed? What do you plan to do with those that are not healed?

After you have completed the above parts of the activity, go back and do it again, this time from the standpoint of the betrayer. Make a list of the times where you were the betrayer and betrayed someone else. Be honest with yourself. Most people can more easily remember the times when they were betrayed rather than the times when they betrayed others.

WERE YOU EVER BETRAYED?

MALE VERSION

Barry K. Weinhold, PhD

Directions: In the space before each of the items listed below place a "Y" for a yes or a "N" for a no, to indicate whether or not you ever experienced any of these betrayals by a woman or another man.

1. I have been rejected by a woman.
2. I was told to act like a man.
3. I have been called derogatory names like sissy, wimp, panty waste, etc.
4. I have been verbally or emotionally abused by a female partner.
5. I was criticized or shamed by a woman for expressing my anger.
6. I have been hit or physically abused by a woman partner.
7. I had an intimate partner have a sexual relationship with another person without my knowledge.
8. Felt pressured, manipulated or coerced to have sex with another person when I didn't want to.
9. I was raped or forced sexually against you will with someone much older than me.
10. I was promised something important to me by someone I trusted who did not keep his/her promise.
11. I fought for my country in a war where I was trained to kill other humans.

- ___12. I was treated with disrespect when I returned from the war.
 - ___13. I was lied to by my government.
 - ___14. I was lied to by politicians in order to get my vote.
 - ___15. I was sexually abused by a non-parental adult when I was a child.
 - ___16. I was physically abused by a non-parental adult when I was a child.
 - ___17. I was emotionally abused by a non-parental adult when I was a child.
 - ___18. I was lied to by an intimate partner.
 - ___19. I was told by an intimate partner that they no longer loved you.
 - ___20. I was told by my parent that he/she would stop loving me if I didn't do what I was told to do.
 - ___21. I was lied to by my parents.
 - ___22. I was physically abused by one or both of my parents.
 - ___23. I was sexually abused by one or both of my parents.
 - ___24. I was emotionally abused by one or both of my parents.
 - ___25. I had important needs neglected by one or both of my parents.
 - ___26. I had a parent, teacher or other adult punish me for something I didn't do.
 - ___27. I had a parent or trusted friend steal money from me.
 - ___28. I had a trusted friend or parent reveal to others something I trusted them to keep secret.
 - ___29. I had an intimate partner share intimate details with other about me to others without my permission.
 - ___30. I had a parent or teacher shame me or belittle me in front of others.
 - ___31. I was deliberately attacked verbally or physically by someone I trusted.
 - ___32. I had my parents shame me because of my innocent sexual curiosity.
 - ___33. I had an intimate partner leave the relationship for no apparent reason.
 - ___34. I had an intimate partner steal money from me.
 - ___35. I had an intimate partner try to hide a drug or alcohol addiction from me.
 - ___36. I had an ex-spouse try to turn my children against me.
 - ___37. I had a con-artist cheat me out of money.
 - ___38. I had an intimate partner tell me she did not want me to be the father or her future children.
 - ___39. I had an intimate partner talk to my parents behind my back about important things I wanted to keep secret.
 - ___40. I was wrongly accused of committing a crime.
- ___ **Total "yesses"**

Interpretation of Results

- 1-10 yesses = Some risk of possible long-term effects of your past betrayals
- 11-20 yesses = Moderate risk of possible long-term effects of your past betrayals
- 21-+ = High risk of possible long-term effects of your past betrayals.

Note: Gender neutral persons can choose the version that best fits their gender experience.

**WERE YOU EVER BETRAYED?
FEMALE VERSION
Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D.**

Directions: In the space before each of the items listed below place a "Y" for a yes or a "N" for a no, to indicate whether or not you ever experienced any of these betrayals by a man or another woman.

1. Felt that my needs came second to those of a man.
2. Told that I am not pretty.
3. Told I am too aggressive.
4. Criticized or shamed by a man for expressing my anger.
5. Called derogatory names like bitch, slut, whore, etc.
6. Were afraid to walk the streets alone at night because I am a woman.
7. Were verbally or emotionally abused by a man.
8. Were hit or physically abused by a man.
9. Were sexually abused by a man.
9. Were verbally or emotionally abused by another woman.
10. We physically abused by another woman.
11. Were sexually abused by another woman.
12. Had an intimate partner lie to me.
13. Had an intimate partner cheat on me sexually.
14. Felt pressured to have sex with a man against my will.
15. Manipulated or drugged by a man in order to have sex with me.
16. Were raped by man by force.
17. Feared for my life in an intimate relationship.
18. Feared for my life because of imminent threat of physical violence, or the terrorism or war. in a war where I was trained to kill others.
20. Were sexually abused as a child by a trusted parent, older sibling or other adult.
21. Were physically abused by a trusted parent or other adult.
22. Were emotionally abused as a child by a trusted parent or other adult.
23. Had important needs neglected by my parents or other trusted adults.
24. Were lied to by my parents or other trusted adults.
25. Had a parent or other trusted adult steal money from me.
26. Had a parent or teacher punish me for something I didn't do.
27. Were cheated out of money by a trusted friend.
28. Were cheated out of a promotion at work because I was as woman.
29. Were promised things that were important to me by parents or trusted other adults that they failed to deliver.
30. Had a parent or teacher shame of belittle me in front of others.
31. Had my parents shame me because of my natural sexual curiosity.
32. Had a trusted friend lie to me.
33. Had my intimate partner leave the relationship for no known reason.
34. Had an intimate partner steal money from me.
35. Had a con-artist cheat me out of money.
36. Had an ex-spouse try to turn my children against me.
37. Had an intimate partner share details of your life that you expected them to keep secret.
38. Had an intimate partner tell me that they no longer love you.
39. I was wrongfully arrested.
40. Had an intimate partner tell me they did not want me to be the mother of my future children.

___Number of Yeses

Interpretation of Results:

1-10 yeses = Some risk of possible long-term effects from past betrayals

11-20 yeses = Moderate risk of possible long-term effects from past betrayals

21-+ yeses = High risk of possible long-term effects from past betrayals.

Note: Gender neutral persons can choose the version that best fits their gender experience.

Case Example:

John and Nancy, a very loving couple, had been married for almost ten years. When they came to therapy, they were experiencing a real crisis in their marriage. John had just admitted to Nancy that he was having a sexual relationship with another woman that he had met at work. Nancy had sensed for some time that something was wrong because he was spending more time at work in the evenings.

Their sexual relationship had tapered off, but she never allowed herself to think that John would betray her in this way. She imagined that John would always be faithful to her and that his moodiness was just due to pressure at work.

John said he had become dissatisfied with his sexual relationship with Nancy because they were always doing things the same way. He found it hard to talk to Nancy about his dissatisfaction because he thought she would be too embarrassed. In addition, he began to doubt his own sexuality, since he sometimes had trouble holding his erection.

Gradually he withdrew from Nancy and began to look for reassurance from a female co-worker whom he often met for lunch. Eventually, John began to take a romantic interest in his friend and they started a sexual relationship. Then he began to experience guilt and remorse, but also felt trapped. He now had to lie to Nancy to deal with his affair, and this increased his guilt, this increased his need to withdraw from Nancy.

Finally, this became unbearable for John and he confessed to Nancy what had been happening. Nancy was hurt deeply by his betrayal and at first wanted to get revenge for what John did to her. She moved out for a week, staying with a girlfriend, but she then decided to ask John to go for counseling with her to sort out the problems.

In the course of therapy, John was able to express his sexual needs directly to Nancy, and Nancy was able to ask John to spend more time with her instead of at work. The openness with which they were able to express and listen to each other's feelings increased greatly during their time in therapy, and they were able to deepen their relationship with each other. They came to understand how and why this crisis had happened and began to take steps to make it less likely that they would have to repeat that betrayal again.

In this case, the betrayal brought many unresolved issues to the surface and allowed them to be resolved. When one or both people in a relationship are holding on to a dream about the other person or the relationship, usually some betrayal is necessary to shatter the dream and help each of them expand their reality.

Note: What I learned over the years in dealing with couples where infidelity is present is that engaging in an infidelity is often a dysfunctional attempt to by the man or the woman to complete their unfinished individuation process at age 2-3. If the man did not get emotionally separate from his mother at about age 2-3, he may be compelled to act out this unfinished process in his adult relationships.

The completion of this vital process at age 2-3 requires the presence of another bonded caregiver, usually the father. The child goes through intense ambivalent feelings about wanting to stay attached to his/her mother or seek emotional independence from her. Likely, he/she did not have a father who was emotionally present and could support his/her ambivalent feelings as well.

Fathers are not very good at supporting the feelings of their children, particularly, if it means siding with his child against his spouse. The father has to do this without making either one the bad one. This means the child usually does not have enough support to individuate and falls back on depending on his/her mother for guidance. Fathers often react to being in this position between his child and his wife. The most common time when father leave their relationship is when the child is about 2 years old.

For example, late he projects on his spouse all the things that he thinks his mother might have done to thwart his attempts to become more independent. When these people come for therapy, it is imperative that I support their feelings, without making the other person bad or wrong. This is how I can assist adults in finishing this vital individuation process as adult. What I know is the people cannot achieve emotional separation by making the person they are separating from bad or wrong.

Additional Resources:

Novels:

"Sonny's Blues "by James Baldwin