



REWEAVING HEARTS FOR VICTORY

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**Mental Health, Spiritual Awakening,
Trauma Healing and Wellness
WORKBOOK # 1**

Adapted from the Book

My Child and the Tapestry of Life

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**Whatever battle or struggle you are facing,
whatever dream you are pursuing,
with faith, hope and love,
you can have the VICTORY!**

Megan Reda

My Child - you can be Free!

First of all, I just want to say thank you for reading my book, *My Child and the Tapestry of Life*. I assume because you have downloaded this workbook you have identified with my life and my story and you are pursuing your healing.

I am deeply sorry you have suffered from known or unknown devastating and unfortunate traumas, whether through self-infliction or by someone else, but let me encourage you right here *if you don't give up*, with God's help, you WILL find your VICTORY in the way that's right for you!

I know when I was searching and pressing in for my healing over many years, I looked everywhere. I read books that came across my path, prayed earnestly, went to naturopaths, changed my diet, attended workshops, and I NEVER STOPPED BELIEVING that one day I would be made whole and healed! My healing victory took 55 years to complete, but I never gave up!

In this workbook, I have set out my personal tools and methods I discovered. Also, God-given promises and visions that eventually brought into my life my ultimate healing from the years and layers of suppressed traumas that had held me in bondage and illnesses all my life.

I have tried to keep this workbook easy to read with no in-depth theology or teaching, but rather it is natural, personable and straightforward.

I trust that as you surrender to the process of discovering your healing, you will be open and find out what methods and tools work for you, and if I can offer you some of mine, as a guide, in a few lessons which took me a lifetime to learn – that is my gift to you. I am cheering you on and praying for you.

My prayer for you

Father God, I pray as my dear friend takes a brave step of faith; you will take hold of their right hand and lead them on their own personal journey of healing. I pray you will weave, unravel, and reweave the threads in their tapestry according to Your great plan and destiny for their life. Amen.

Lessons

Love, Share and Care

Identifying Trauma -

Trapped

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Activate faith

Understand the victory is yours

Meditate and vision prayer

Authenticity

Mental health starts in the womb

I never knew - Who am I? Who are you?

You are what you eat

You are His masterpiece

If God wrote you a love letter

Love, Share and Care

As you would have read in my book, God gave me the banner to live under – LOVE, SHARE and CARE. I would like to start here.

Love –

‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life’ (John 3:16).

God’s love is the highest, purest form of love - in heaven and on earth. You will never find an unconditional, unfailing, reckless love like God gives you.

If you have never heard this before - I am here to tell you! God loves YOU, and eternal life is YOURS! If you have never asked Jesus Christ into your heart and life, to be your Lord and Saviour, and you would like to, I invite you to repeat this prayer. It’s the same prayer I prayed when I was 14 at the Youth Camp.

“Father God, thank you for sending Jesus your son to die for me. I believe Jesus, you are the Son of God, and You died and rose again to take away my sins. Forgive me for all my sins. Thank you for washing away my sins, and I repent for them now. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and let your peace lead me into the truth of God’s love for me. Amen.”

Congratulations! You are now a Christian, born again by the Spirit of God. Talk to Your Heavenly Father as often as you want or need to, as you are now His child. Christianity is ALL about a personal relationship with God and Jesus through the Holy Spirit – it is not following a religion. So, talk to God as you would speak to a person, except He is so much more than that – He is your Heavenly Father, Your Daddy, Your Papa and YOU are His precious child.

My prayer for you

Father God, I pray you hold my dear friend in the palm of your mighty hand and lead them into a beautiful and personal relationship with You and Jesus, your son, through the power of your Holy Spirit. Let them come to a full understanding of what it means to be your child. Amen.

Share -

‘Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ’ (Galatians 6:2).

You are not alone in your healing journey. Share! Don’t bottle things up. Don’t press pain down. Don’t live in denial. Talk to God. Talk to people you can trust. Get a Bible and read His promises for you. God’s word is tangible, alive and powerful in the Spirit. Take God’s right hand and BELIEVE He will lead you, step by step to exactly where He wants you to be.

I find it amazing the Bible uses the word burden specifically! Sometimes, we don’t want to *burden others* with *our burdens*. BUT – that is precisely what God wants us to do.

Share with family, friends, a support group or anyone – just don’t keep things bottled up inside. Don’t suffer in silence - ALONE!

Take a deep breath, pray and reach out – take another step of faith and SHARE! People want to help you, and there is help out there! You are worthy of it!

Who can you think of right now, you can share with; someone you can trust and who will listen to your burdens and trauma? I invite you to write their names or organisations down and at the right time, reach out to them.

My prayer for you

Father God, I pray you would give my dear friend the courage they need to share their burdens. I pray you would bring the right people into their lives to help them in their healing journey. Amen.

Care -

‘casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you’ (1 Peter 5:7).

Casting all of your worries onto Jesus is a great place to start. Be honest with Him; pull open those closed doors of your life, expose all the pain that is inside of you; be honest; cry; get angry if you have to. Tell God all the little things, even if you think they are silly or unimportant. God knows what you are going to say even before you say it anyway. Nothing you say or do is going to shock Him. But you need to let Him know what and how you are feeling.

There was a time in my life; all I could cry out was my two-word prayer. “HELP ME!” – and God helped me. It really is that simple.

I invite you to write a list of cares down and a space to write the date when God has answered them. Hold these requests before God as often as you feel. Writing them down keeps your faith and hope alive.

CARE:	DATE:
CARE:	DATE:
CARE:	DATE:
CARE:	DATE:
CARE:	DATE:
CARE:	DATE:

Now God has them – trust HIM - *and wait for something to happen!*

My prayer for you

Father God, I know my dear friend has been brave to cast all their cares upon you. Thank you, you have heard the cries of their heart and are now working everything, even what appears TERRIBLE in their life - for their good. In your way and your time. Amen.

Identifying Trauma

In this section, I want to identify different areas that relate to trauma by using the acrostic definition and apply self-awareness strategies for healing. These steps helped me towards my healing VICTORY!

- T – Trapped
- R – Renew your mind
- A – Activate faith
- U – Understand the victory is yours
- M – Meditate and vision prayer
- A – Authenticity

TRAPPED

There are *many ways* we can be trapped. There are *many things or people* that can trap us. For me looking back and learning the hard way, in hindsight I would have to say identifying my trappings was *extremely hard because I was IN them*.

People can tell you, warn you, plead with you, but until YOU see it – you will stay trapped. I had become so trapped *my* only hope for deliverance and freedom was at the mercy of God to move heaven and earth to intervene and set me free.

Those gut feelings you have; the triggers that come out of no-where; the cryptic dreams; the negative thoughts, behaviours and patterns which keep reoccurring, are the very things in which *you have to take notice!* They are your signposts pointing the way to exposing the truth and the issues that you need to deal with. Brushing them off or ignoring them **will keep you forever in bondage.**

Especially, when you are with a narcissist brainwashing you into thinking your truths are lies. (We will cover more about narcissists later in another chapter).

It is impossible to mention every hindrance, addiction, self-hate behaviour or trauma ailment here that keep you trapped. I invite you to do the following exercise to identify what your trappings might be. I encourage you to get a pen and find a quiet place to sit, pray - and be still before God.

Be open to hearing, seeing and feeling areas where you are trapped. You might not know the root of the areas in your life. That's okay because God does, and He will either show you or heal you directly, or indirectly. Identifying triggers is a step to shine light onto them and get the truth moving.

Here are some of mine from my book as examples:

Where am I trapped?

Trigger – anxiety, nausea, panic

When – I think about the wardrobe door being open

My solution – close the door

Root – I have no idea (*unknown at the time*)

Prayer – God, please reveal why I react this way and heal me

Trigger – feeling sad

When – all the time

My solution – drinking alcohol

Root – Feeling rejected and unwanted in this world (*little girl emotions*)

Prayer – God, please heal my rejection

Trigger – hating my body and self-image

When – all the time but especially when I am in a relationship

My solution – denial and withdrawal/walls of protection

Root – Andrew not wanting me at 40 if I am fat (*I know this is the reason*)

Prayer – God, please heal my self-image.

Praying doesn't have to be complicated. Remember, no matter what age we are, we need to be like little children when we talk to God—and keeping things simple works. Writing our triggers down on paper and doing it in such a basic way doesn't take away the enormity of pain or severity of the trauma. It creates a starting point, gives us hope, holds us accountable and invites God in to begin our complex, deep and personal healing process.

When we live in a cloud, and quite often a black cloud, by identifying our triggers and writing them down, a faint light is lit and begins to flicker in the darkness. I invite you to write down your triggers.

Trigger -
When -
My solution -
Root -
Prayer -

Trigger -
When -
My solution -
Root -
Prayer -

Trigger -
When -
My solution -
Root -
Prayer -

Trigger -
When -
My solution -
Root -
Prayer -

My prayer for you

Father God, as my dear friend has written down their triggers, shine your light on these and lead them into freedom, deliverance and healing. Untangle and remove all the black threads and reweave new fresh, colourful threads of life into those places. Amen.

RENEW YOUR MIND

Renewing your mind is SO important. It is VITAL! Over the years, abuse and trauma set in place a negative programme into the mind. We need to re-wire our programme into a positive script.

As you believe and speak **the positive**, the power of these vibrations chemically boots the negative ones off, and positive cells take the place of the negative cells.

Think of your brain cells like an empty chair. A negative (dark) thought sits on this chair and releases toxins into your body. If you looked at your negative mind, full of negative thoughts, it would be black and toxic. Eventually, all the bad chemicals they release, make you sick and depressed.

But when you think happy, positive (light) thoughts, these are more powerful than the dark ones and forcefully bump them off the chair. The dark ones are released and swirl away and out of your system. They are gone.

The positive (light) thought then sits on the chair. It releases all the happy chemicals and over time, create positive re-wiring in your brain to be healthy, happy and well.

YOU have the POWER with YOUR thoughts – to create your happiness.

BELIEVE you are worthy, beautiful and deserve healing, justice and freedom.

When the ENOUGH IS ENOUGH is so dark, dig deep inside and replace all the negative thoughts with positive ones.

Use affirmations, Bible scriptures, quotes, or anything positive to redirect your brainwaves in your cells to change. Whatever method you feel comfortable to use – DO IT!

As often as you can, speak, meditate, draw, colour and know by ridding your mind of the negative cycles, this will aid in breaking the strongholds of darkness that have kept you trapped in mental trauma and sickness in your body.

In this exercise, I invite you to draw anything positive. A picture, an affirmation, a scripture or a quote, and then colour it in. Just as you would eat food to nourish your body, as you colour, let your mind absorb the truth. Let the truth nourish you, re-wire the cells in your brain and change your situation and heal your life.

Do this – again, and again, and again.

My prayer for you

Father God, please change in my dear friend all the toxic, harmful, brainwave thoughts that are in their mind and cells and replace them with new, fresh, positive, healed thoughts about who they are and their life. Amen.

ACTIVATE YOUR FAITH

‘Now faith is the *substance* of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’ (Hebrews 11:1).

Let’s have a little look at what faith is first, so we know what to activate. The Bible says it’s the substance of what you are hoping for.

The Websters Dictionary 1828 meaning of the word **substance** is:

That which really is or exists; equally applicable to matter or spirit.

The Websters Dictionary 1828 meaning of the word **hope** is:

To cherish a desire with anticipation: to want something to happen or be true.

Now let us repeat the scripture, expounding and adapting the meaning.

Now faith is *that which really is or exists; equally applicable to matter or spirit, of your desire which is cherished with anticipation and wanting something to happen or be true*, the evidence of things not seen.

Another word for anticipation is expectancy! Now that excites me! We can EXPECT God to grant us what we are hoping for.

The Bible says we take our substance (something which exists, even though we can’t see it yet), cherish our desire, and expect it to materialise from the invisible realm where it exists into our natural realm for where our need is.

What is the substance you are hoping for? Healing? Deliverance? Provision?

What desire is it you cherish that hasn’t happened yet? It is hard to believe for anything good to happen for you when you are trapped, depressed or sick, especially when it seems impossible for it to happen.

Since I understand things more in a visionary sense, I will explain it like this:

You have an empty glass cup. Hope is in the unseen realm, but hope has an invisible spiritual substance of its own. Whatever you attach to the hope, (your dreams and desires), with the power of belief, these vibrational thoughts and energy must go somewhere.

So, you put the hopeful thoughts in the empty glass cup. You can't see them, but they are there. You continue to hope, and you keep filling that glass cup up. You keep believing and expecting, and that glass cup fills up and overflows, (even though you can't see it).

But your expecting belief has activated, (in the unseen realm), a power which has attached itself to that unseen hope. One day, you have filled the glass cup, and then it manifests and produces the very thing in the seen realm, what you were hoping for.

The hope for your desires creates the substance for the desire to happen. I just love the unseen realm, because it is so real. If you ask God to open up your spiritual vision to be able to see it, He will.

I think that is why I love the song so much, 'Amazing Grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost, but now I'm found, was blind, but now I see.'

Let me just add here there is *faith* and there is *foolishness*. I have seen faith misused, and I have misused faith myself and been foolish. First, we need to believe what we are praying for is God's will and His word, and the second thing is that God always grants our prayer and desire in His way and His time.

Even when God answers our prayer, and sometimes not in the ways, we imagine, ultimately, we have to trust it is for our highest good. Let's not forget as little children; we don't always understand. Even trusting God is faith in itself.

When PTSD had me trapped with the fear of men, I didn't know how God was going to bring healing and freedom into my life, but I NEVER gave up hope after living with it for many years, that God would heal me. I expected it. I left the how and where in God's hands, and I held my outcome (substance) before Him from my intense cry (desire).

I believed (expected) because I knew God loved me, and He wanted the best for my life. In doing these few simple acts, my faith was activated before God and

UNDERSTANDING FORGIVENESS IS A KEY

I noticed a pattern occurring during the many deep healings I encountered.

FORGIVENESS!

I had to ask God to forgive me.

I had to forgive myself.

I had to forgive others.

Forgiveness doesn't excuse their behaviour and what they have done.

Forgiveness prevents their behaviour from completely destroying your heart.

I wrote this poem after the years of abuse with Alan, my children's father. It took me a long time to let go of the layers of suppressed pain. I hope as you read this poem, it encourages you also to find forgiveness for those who caused your trauma.

Forgiveness - I did choose.

I had every reason
to hold my life long grudge,
and no matter what had happened,
why should *I* have to budge?

You see - there was 'this' time
and don't forget about 'that'.
I couldn't let it go
so, I swept it under my mat.

It hurt so much to think about
such pain I had to bear.
You tormented me day and night,
and life was so unfair.

My little mound of bitterness
grew bigger when until;
my little mound of yesterday
had grown into a hill.

It could go on no longer
I had to finally see,
to forgive I'll loose the grip of pain
and in time - be a memory.

But my thought's they raged inside my head,
black bitterness filled my soul.
The poison kept on pouring in
I am trapped in this dark hole.

And now my hill inside me
was mountain size instead.
It brought me pain and sickness,
anguish never left my head.

I had to climb my mountain.
It was so high and wide.
It seemed to take a long, long time
Now, determined in my stride.

When I reached the top and looked down
at 'this' time and at 'that'.
It was so far away
I could hardly see the mat!

Resentment - you are not my friend,
I have to let you go,
Your poison I refuse to drink -
Today I will say NO!

I released all of my hatred,
I let it fall away.
"Don't come back, let me be free,"
For now, and every day.

Sometimes thoughts still remind me,
though their sting now doesn't last.
The gesture of forgiving you
is *my gift for your past*.

Looking back, I'm finally free
It's my gain, and you lose
Your power and pain over me – no more
Forgiveness - I did choose.

As you take time to sit quietly before the Lord, I ask you would be honest with yourself regarding anyone in your life you need to forgive. Forgiveness is a key that opens the door of trauma to come out of you. It is hard to do – believe me, I understand – But necessary for deep healing.

I have heard people declare, '*I will NEVER forgive such and such for what they did*'. When I hear these statements, my heart is saddened. If they only knew they are allowing the person who hurt them to continue poisoning their life, purely through their unforgiveness. The toxic, harmful substance and essence permeates throughout their body, eventually making them sick.

Please, if this is you – LET IT GO! I promise you the other side of this is freedom and healing, and you deserve ALL the healing and liberty life has to give you, from this point forward. I invite you to write down the people who you need to forgive. Don't forget yourself!

My prayer for you

Father God, I ask as my dear friend brings you their deep pain that you would help them forgive whoever they need to forgive. If they ask for your forgiveness Father, I ask that you would bathe them in Your Spirit and heal ALL their wounds. I pray you would help them to forgive themselves. Layer by layer as you know what their needs are, I ask you do this so profoundly for their life. Amen.

MEDITATE AND VISION PRAYER

Some people do this naturally like a sixth sense, and some people have to be taught and practise. Whichever one of these you are – meditation and vision prayer is helpful in your relationship with the Lord and also understanding and getting in touch with your pain and areas where you are stuck. Seeing in picture form with your spirit can bring clarity, encouragement and be another key to shine light into dark areas inside your spirit, soul and body.

There are many ways to meditate. There are many styles of vision prayer. Ask God to lead you and show you which method works for you.

I like sitting quietly and asking the Holy Spirit to speak to me or show me something. Meditating is Biblical. You will find it in many places in the Bible. And seeking visions from God is also Biblical.

I also journal a lot. Keeping a pen and paper beside you when you pray is handy to write down impressions of words, sentences or pictures that the Holy Spirit gives you.

Vision prayer is incredible because you can go back to any time in your life and ask the Holy Spirit to cognitively change and cognitively heal the structures in your brain, memory and soul.

As you read in my book when I had my ‘wardrobe door healing’ I had no idea such a thing was even possible. But it happened, and it worked. Relationship with Jesus is a personal thing. Your relationship with God, and you being His child is between you and Him. There is NOTHING that He cannot do for you! I encourage you to be brave, trust, hold God’s hand, take a step of faith, and let Him lead you into your healing.

I invite you to do the following exercise if you feel comfortable doing this.

Sit quietly like a child before your Father God. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you in a picture, areas in your life where you need healing. Perhaps God will show you a person’s face, a moment from your past.

Sometimes God will show you something very odd or random, and you will have to make sense of it. For example, He might show you being all alone on an island, sitting in front of a beach-fire you have just lit. This could be God’s way of touching your heart that although you are alone, He (*the fire*) is with you.

Again, when God speaks to you, it is a, *I know, that I know, that I know*, kind of feeling. You just KNOW!

Write or draw your vision/picture here of what God is saying to you or anything about your healing, your victory, a promise or hope - and then, colour it in absorbing the essence of the affirmation into your whole being:

My prayer for you

Father God, I thank you for my friend and that they are open to meditate and vision prayer. Lead them and guide them in what works for them. Gentle, personal and real. I trust you will bring them to complete healing, no matter how long it takes. Speak to their heart and show them with the eyes of their spirit your goodness, your unfailing never-ending, all-consuming love for them. Amen

AUTHENTICITY

Being authentic was probably the most important and hardest hurdle for me to jump over in my life. Victims of abuse, lose their sense of worth, confidence and suppress the real them. If you are a victim of abuse, I don't even need to say anymore you know what I mean.

Victims wear masks, whether this is through choice or through being forced to, and many times it is necessary for their survival. Either way, your mask gets so comfortable, and after you have worn it for such a long time, even you don't know who you are underneath it anymore.

Say to yourself; I am making a choice; taking a stand; being brave to say ENOUGH is ENOUGH! I don't know who I am - but right now, that doesn't matter. I am making the decision not to wear this false mask anymore to please those around me.

God has a plan of escape for you! You just need to ask Him and trust Him. I will never accept that you are stuck or trapped, and can NEVER get out! That is a lie from the dark forces! I had no help – NO-ONE – to help me escape, and God sent angels in to get me out! Even if God has to send angels in to help you escape too – He will! You just have to believe and want it badly enough!

I invite you to do this exercise. Using the eyes of your spirit, see yourself wearing your mask. Get in touch with how you feel wearing it. See who you are with your mask on. What do you look like?

Ask yourself these questions?

Do I *really* like wearing it?

How long am I going to wear it for?

Do I want to take it off?

If I took it off, how would that make me feel?

Can I see how others would react if I took it off?

Does that bother me?

Now, take the mask off. See yourself:

- healed
- strong
- flourishing in your destiny
- changing your entire life for the better

- improving the lives of your children and those around you
- would your life be better, would you be happy, would you be free?

At 54 years of age, I decided I wasn't going to wear my mask of denial ANYMORE! I wasn't going to shove down how I was feeling and pretend everything was okay when it wasn't. And taking that stand, caused a shift in the dimension of space and time for my life path and plan.

Pushing through the pain, anxiety and fear of taking the mask off - IS WORTH IT!

Please see that YOU are worth it to do the same for your life too! Write down here the person you saw without the mask.

My prayer for you

Father God, give my dear friend the courage to take the mask off. Nothing is impossible with you. Send in angels if you have too, to get them free. I pray self-love over my friend so they can see their worth and their value as a human being. I pray as they take their mask off, you will heal them, keep them safe and bring them into the destiny of who they are and who you created them to be. The real, beautiful, gifted, authentic person they are. Amen.

Mental health starts in the womb

You know how passionate I am about this medical fact.

Every single human being's mental health starts in the womb.

I don't believe *every* human being *has* been inflicted with a trauma injury from the womb, but, if you suspect you have womb trauma, I can only suggest you pray and ask God to show you and heal you. However, if you are more comfortable seeking counsel and inner healing; I encourage you to do that.

You may know the specific details of your trauma. Your mother may have, smoked, taken drugs, drank alcohol or had her own trauma's and anxieties - and you have always been anxious too and never known why? I believe these things can affect an unborn child growing in the womb, but again, you need to personally seek God for Him to show you your specific areas.

A story I heard was about a mother who was pregnant through a thunderstorm. A crack of thunder opened up above her and gave her the fright of her life. When her baby boy was born, and the child grew, she noticed her son displayed acute anxiety and panic attacks at the slightest sound of thunder. She was convinced this trauma was inflicted to her baby in the womb.

Tracing back to the root causes within the womb can be like looking for a needle in a haystack, but the Holy Spirit will lead you and show you clearly if you need deep healing of this nature.

As you have read in my book, the Holy Spirit cognitively and spiritually healed me in the way that He knew was right for me.

As you seek God – there will be a right way for you. You can pray my method as a guide, as I know this works.

If you feel comfortable, I invite you to pray the following steps. If you know the specific details, that is great, and if not, God knows, and He will move in your spirit and heal you as you ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Get in a quiet, comfortable place and come before God. Thank Him for ALL His goodness in your life and His love for you in sending Jesus to die for you to take away ALL your trauma from the moment of your conception.

- See yourself as a baby growing in your mother's womb.
- Bring the point of trauma before God and cast it upon Jesus, who took ALL your disease, sickness, pain, confusion and trauma upon Himself.
- If you don't know the point of trauma cast the whole pregnancy duration before the Lord.
- Forgive your birth mother and anyone else that God shows you.
- See the Holy Spirit healing you in this particular trauma and injury, or the whole duration, while you are inside the womb.
- Ask the power of God to surround you inside the womb and create cognitive reconstruction healing and wholeness in your mind.
- Ask God to untangle trauma and reweave His perfect gold threads of healing into your spirit, soul and body, and lead you in His perfect plan and destiny that He has ordained for you since your moment of conception. In His way and in His time.
- Rest in the palm of God's hand. Abide under the Shadow of His great and powerful love for you, His beautiful child.
- Thank God for your healing.

My prayer for you

Father God, I lift my dear friend to you with all their confusion and pain in regards to possible womb trauma. Show them clearly what, when, how and why if it will help towards their healing. Heal them deeply, once and for all. Bring wholeness, newness and restoration back into their life from the moment of their conception. Take away ALL the effects of trauma from them – spirit, soul and body. Amen.

I never knew

I wrote, Who am I? Who are you? to be included in my book, but I felt it didn't flow in with my story, although learning this was a massive part of my healing.

I am an 'empath' and *was* co-dependant as you might have worked that out anyway from reading my book. One of the biggest things that lured me into the abuser's web was my lack of understanding of narcissists, empaths and co-dependents.

I thought a narcissist was a person who murdered people, and co-dependency were two people having a dying love for each other, like Romeo and Juliet. In my ignorance, I fell prey to this toxic dynamic that I now see everywhere and in many relationships. I didn't recognise it because I never knew and was not educated.

As you read the following excerpt, I pray you will receive clarity and understanding for your own life, what these dysfunctions, behaviours and disorders are, and if you are in an abusive, toxic relationship like this without realising – please love yourself enough and - GET OUT NOW!

Who am I? Who are you?

All my life I politely bent over backwards to the requests, expectations, demands or favours from others. I just couldn't say no even when I wanted to.

It left me depleted and many times, taken advantage of, but that didn't stop me sacrificing myself, even when it made me extremely unhappy, unfulfilled and depressed.

It didn't matter though. I patted myself on the back for being such a nice person and wore my false mask of happy pretence. I never *told* lies; I just *lived* one.

I would give you all the eggs in my basket. If I had two coats, you have them both. The unhealthy display of my giving was a direct response to the deep and life-long low-self-esteem pain I was trapped in. An automatic martyr, I would keep the peace so everyone would be happy around me.

I took pride in being the peacemaker. Another mask and another lie. I avoided confrontation. I would never ruffle any feathers or rock any boats. You were right, I was wrong, and I always said sorry way more than I should. The praises and gratitude though genuine from others fed my low-self-worth inside of me, so it was all worth it, wasn't it?

People used to comment, what a beautiful and sacrificial person I was. I didn't know about co-dependency. But that's what I was. Co-dependent. I had heard of the term, but I thought it meant two people who desperately can't live without each other because of their intense soul mate connection. Now I know that's not quite right.

Co-dependency is a behavioural condition. The dictionary meaning for it is relating to a relationship in which one person is physically or psychologically addicted, as to alcohol or gambling, and the other person is psychologically dependent on the first in an unhealthy way. It is also known as relationship addiction.

I was addicted to self-sacrificing myself with my needs and wants with everyone to the degree of self-abuse. I was meek, weak and timid. I didn't receive, I only gave. Receiving made me feel uncomfortable. In my subconscious, I wasn't worthy of being given anything, and if I did take gifts or help, I felt incredibly guilty for doing so.

I was also an empath. Another term I was unfamiliar with. I had way too much empathy for my own good, and it was my downfall. I was easy prey for stronger people to dominate me, and I could never say no or stand up for myself. It is quite common for empathetic people to attract narcissists and boy, oh boy, I did!

These two types of people easily fall into this co-dependent dynamic. A narcissist and an empath. Especially an empath who is broken and co-dependent. And narcissists mostly on a subconscious level seek out such people like this because they are pliable and easy to dominate for their demise.

I looked at some of the traits of an empath.
(www.drjudithorloff.com)

Empaths are highly sensitive.
Empaths absorb other people's emotions.
Many empaths are introverted.
Empaths are highly intuitive.
Empaths need alone time.
Empaths can become overwhelmed in intimate relationships.
Empaths are targets for energy vampires.
Empaths become replenished in nature.
Empaths have highly tuned senses.
Empaths have huge hearts and sometimes give too much.

These are the symptoms of a co-dependent personality.
(www.everydayhealth.com)

Having difficulty making decisions in a relationship.
Having difficulty identifying your feelings.
Having difficulty communicating in a relationship.
Valuing the approval of others more than valuing yourself.
Lacking trust in yourself and having poor self-esteem.
Having fears of abandonment or an obsessive need for approval.
Having an unhealthy dependence on relationships, even at your own cost.
Having an exaggerated sense of responsibility for the actions of others.

A typical co-dependent has little or no self-love for themselves. Especially if abuse or neglect was evident in their childhood to cause them to have negative feelings against themselves. What is the opposite of self-love? That's right, self-hate. And self-hate is destructive and has many ways of displaying itself in our lives, and co-dependency is one of them.

A co-dependent has no secure or firm identity, so they create their identity around helping others to build their low self-esteem. Giving to others, makes them feel good about themselves, and it also feeds the unhealthy root problems deep within them. A co-dependent usually feels ashamed of who they are and believe they are worthless. So, they build their value in themselves by doing and giving of themselves in every and any way they can. Most times this is to their own detriment. They can be taken advantage of easily, which feeds their cycle of abuse and lack of respect for themselves. This adds to their devaluation. The hole gets deeper and the trap tighter. They also believe they don't deserve

happiness but crave it deeply, so they will do anything to get it, even at their own expense. Most of this is done at a subconscious level.

While it is always wonderful to be a giver, I needed to make sure it is given for the right healthy reasons.

I had to research what a narcissist is because honestly, I had no idea what this was either. I thought they were people who murdered others. When I met Alan, I was ignorant, even though his behaviour was a textbook display of this disorder. When I grew up, we didn't have google and no-one talked about such things as we do now.

A narcissistic personality disorder is a mental condition in which people have an inflated sense of their own importance, a deep need for excessive attention and admiration, troubled relationships, and lack of empathy for others. (www.mayoclinic.org)

Eight Signs of a Narcissist. (www.powerofpositivity.com)

They exaggerate their achievements and talents.

They are master manipulators.

They don't recognise or accept your feelings.

They are arrogant.

They require constant adoration and admiration.

They take advantage of others.

They are envious of others.

They believe they are superior.

These people have substituted the lack of love and support from a parent by over-emphasising their own worth. Narcissistic Personality Disorder seems to affect more males than females. It's essential to recognise the boundaries between an unhealthy ego and that of a narcissistic personality disorder. Sometimes the lines seem to overlap. The above signs are some of the many that differentiate a narcissist from a person who has self-assurance and confidence.

Lying is usually thrown into the mix as this is a tool to which the narcissist uses to fulfil their plans and selfish desires.

As a co-dependent, it is only when we are accountable and take responsibility for our own behaviour and short-comings and stop being the victim in our lives and circumstances that true healing can come.

I became free by taking ownership of my part to play in a toxic relationship. I had to say as a declaration, "I allowed Alan to dominate me." When I did this, I was released from 'victim mentality' or PLOM syndrome, (poor little old me!). I acknowledged my weakness, learnt from it, took back my power, grew in wisdom, and took a step forward into freedom.

I invite you to write down your personality traits from the previous lists. Does this help you to know - who you are?

Do you need to take ownership over your behaviour and change in anyway?

My prayer for you

Father God, I pray if my dear friend is caught in this toxic dynamic that you would reveal to them what to do for their relationship. Holy Spirit give them strength, grace and boldness to be free from this unhealthy lifestyle. Highlight and heal unhealthy sub-conscious behaviours and turn their weaknesses into strengths. Amen.

You are what you eat!

When I had explained to me very simply; the repercussions of acid versus alkaline in the body, and how these two things affect our inner health, in a good and bad way, understanding the importance of diet was easy.

You see, disease and sickness start with any type of inflammation. Inflammation is created through an acidic environment in your body. An overly acidic environment is toxic to the body. A body that is full of toxins is more likely to fall prey to inflammation resulting in disease and sickness.

I have done a health math for you to see clearly.

Acidic body = inflammation = toxicity = disease and sickness.

Foods that create an acidic environment in your body are:

PROCESSED FOODS
HIGHLY REFINED FOODS
HIGH ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION
ALL SUBSTANCE ABUSE
SUGARY DRINKS
HIGH CAFFEINE CONSUMPTION

YOUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DEPENDS ON AVOIDING THESE THINGS.

(It is imperative to understand this concept; we are what we eat, and our health depends on us feeding our body with real food.)

When you are hungry, your body wants **nutrition, not** calories.

YOUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING DEPENDS ON A DIET RICH IN:

GREEN LEAFY PLANTS
EVERY COLOUR OF THE RAINBOW FRUITS, VEGGIES & BERRIES
PLANT OMEGAS
WHOLEGRAINS
WATER

Don't forget –

You are God's Masterpiece, and He has an excellent plan for your life. In my book I include a beautiful poem called *THE WEAVER* by Grant Colfax Tullar – but as I sat before the Lord one day, I felt Him give me this poem – *just for you!*

You are His Masterpiece

I am a simple strand of thread
in my Father's hand.
And I must truly trust
whatever - He has planned.

His colours for me are gold;
His path for me is bright.
He keeps me in the palm of His hand,
I never leave His sight.

Sometimes He weaves so tightly
I feel like I will break.
And I am not exactly sure
how much pulling I can take?

I see the underside at work,
frayed knots and tangled ends.
Makes only sense my life's a mess
that never has an end.

Then I turn the fabric over
to see my stitching-story told.
My Father's love planned all along
I am His masterpiece, foretold.

Megan Reda

If God wrote you a love letter

If God wrote you a love letter, what would it say? I invite you to sit quietly and listen to God's small still voice inside your heart and write down what you hear? I will start you off.

My darling child,

I love you; I have always loved you, and I will always love you. For you are, and always will be, my child.

Your loving Father God.