

# Hurt of the Heart Inventory

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*“An inside look is important, but ... it is tricky. The same Bible that instructs us to guard our heart (Proverbs 4:23) also tells us our heart is impossible to understand as well as deceitfully wicked (Jeremiah 17:9). The command to keep watch over our unknowable heart seems rather like ordering a guard to never let an invisible prisoner out of his sight. Clearly, if our insides are as difficult to know as the Bible indicates, then any hope of an accurate inward look depends entirely on God’s willingness to help. Students of the human personality can uncover mounds of data and organize their findings into intriguing and perhaps insightful theories, but without God’s help, no effort to explore the heart will ever pinpoint the core problems that need changing. The good news, of course, is that the opposite is also true. With God’s help, we can understand what needs to be understood.”*

**Larry Crabb**

The purpose of this worksheet is to help you process with God how you have been wounded by others who have been affected by the Fall. This worksheet does not contain an exhaustive list of possible reasons for the hurt of the heart; allow God to lead you by His Spirit towards what He wants you to know. To make use of this worksheet:

- Choose to get alone with God apart from distractions such as your cell phone and computer.
- Ask God to show you which past experience is affecting you currently. Your hurt may be related to one of the categories, but will probably be connected with a specific person’s actions or attitude or an incident in your life. Ask for clarity from God. It is not what the hurt is itself, but what this hurt means to you. In what ways has it affected you?
- Ask how you may be seeking to comfort yourself apart from His real comfort.
- Ask God to show you that He suffered with you through your pain and has never abandoned you or given up on you. If you need to, ask someone you trust to discuss the list with you.
- Be willing to be quiet in God’s presence until you know you are finished with this process.

# Categories of Wounding

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Abandonment (physical or emotional)	No physical affection
Abuse (sexual, physical, mental or emotional)	Neglect (deprived of the basic needs for food/shelter/clothing/security)
Incest	Overindulgence
Harsh, non-redemptive criticism (ridicule)	Overprotection
Trauma (physical, mental or emotional)	No investment of time
Loss through death or divorce	Broken promises or being lied to
Loss through bad decisions	Manipulation (being jerked around emotionally)
Rejection of you as a person	Being in warfare
Invalidation of your personal thoughts and beliefs	Cultural wounding
Growing up in a substance abuser's household	Being bullied
Growing up with a mentally ill person	Religious abuse
Growing up in a domestic violent home	Exposure to occult practices
Growing up with a family member in prison	Damage in the womb
Unjust punishment	Taught harmful values (hate/fear/"life should be fair"/"the world owes me a living"/certain kinds of people are inferior)
Demands of perfection	Womb wounds (stress from parents' experiences)
Made to feel that you do not matter	Hurts inflicted by your addictions (self-inflicted wounds)
Owning the pain of another person close to you	
Victim of a crime	

# Self Talk

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1. During this time of being with God, which hurt of the heart did He draw you to from your past needing to be healed?
2. Ask God to show you how this hurt translates into your life—in what ways are you affected by it? To discover this, you will need to take note of your self-talk.

Even though you might not know it, you're already practicing self-talk. Self-talk is basically the conversation that you have inside your mind, your inner voice which says things that you don't necessarily say out loud. Often self-talk happens without even realizing it and can be a subtle running commentary going on in the background of your mind. But what you say in your mind can determine a lot of how you feel about who you are and how you choose to interact with others.

So how do you talk to yourself about yourself? About yourself in relationship with the people who wounded you? About yourself in relationship with God? In the following groups of statements, mark the ones that you recognize that you say to yourself or project what others think of you. Responding truthfully is a gift to yourself, so do not skip over statements that may feel painful. When you are finished, go to the category definition list to identify which style of self-talk you regularly use.

Deep down, does this *hurt of the heart* translate for you that:

## Category 1

1. No one loves me./God doesn't love me.
2. No one cares about me./God does not care about me.
3. It would be good if I were dead.
4. Everyone would be so much happier if I were not around.
5. No one really is my friend.
6. Everyone always leaves me. God is far away from me.
7. People are never there for me when I need them./God wasn't around when I needed him.
8. I am a bad person.

## **Category 2**

1. I am a nobody in other people's eyes./I am not worth anything to God
2. People/family members do not see me./I am invisible to God.
3. Nobody wants me around.
4. I have to work so much harder than anyone else to even be noticed.
5. I never get any breaks.
6. No one ever notices me.
7. So many people are better than me.
8. I'm a loser.

## **Category 3**

1. No matter what I do, I always fail.
2. I am never going to make it.
3. People walk all over me.
4. Why can't I think of the right thing to say to defend myself?
5. I am not able to do this./God expects me to help myself but I can't.
6. I've tried but I can't control my eating/exercise more/be more disciplined.
7. My life is going nowhere.
8. Why do I always agree to do stuff I hate?

## **Category 4**

1. I am trapped.
2. Nothing ever goes my way.
3. Other people have better lives.
4. I should quit.
5. I should run away from everything.
6. I should be better than I am./God expects me to be better than this.
7. I can never do anything right.
8. I blew it again.

## **Category 5**

1. I am never included by anyone.
2. People make me feel unwelcome.
3. People always complain about what I do/say.
4. I really do not have any real friends.

5. People would like me if I were perfect.
6. No one ever tells me anything.
7. I just do not belong.
8. I know I will be rejected if I try to join them.

### **Category 6**

1. I feel that I was robbed of my purity and innocence.
2. The person who did this to me doesn't even care.
3. I am a horrible person.
4. Sex is dirty.
5. I cannot trust people of the opposite sex.
6. Marriage is such a \_\_\_\_\_ (negative).
7. I just do not love anyone else/my spouse/my children.
8. Life stinks and I don't care.

### **Category 7**

1. I am always being made to pay for my past.
2. People never forget my past.
3. I might as well have a sign hanging around my neck.
4. God is always punishing me.
5. My family hates me. Will never forgive me.
6. It would be better to move someplace where no one knows me.
7. I am such a mess/horrible person.
8. Someone is always throwing my past in my face.

### **Category 8**

1. The world is full of things/events that make me afraid.
2. God/people are out to get me.
3. Everything is so stressful.
4. I will never be able to do it.
5. It's no use to try because I always mess up.
6. I know I am going to fail.
7. I cannot plan/take risks/enjoy anything because I might be going to die.
8. I won't go to/do this because \_\_\_\_\_ (negative) makes me afraid.

### **Category 9**

1. Things never go right for me.
2. There is no one who can fix me.
3. I am useless. God has given up on me.
4. I am an idiot. Or people think I am an idiot.
5. People don't like me because I am stupid/ugly/fat.
6. People are always telling me to grow up.
7. People talk about me behind my back.
8. I cannot cope with this (negative thing/event/situation).

### **Category 10**

1. If only I could go back and undo the harm.
2. What I did was unpardonable by God and He is punishing me.
3. I don't deserve to be happy/to be successful.
4. It's all my fault.
5. People are always looking at me.
6. I feel uncomfortable around people.
7. I deserve whatever people do to me.
8. I need to do this (whatever this is) to make it up to people.

### **Category 11**

1. I cannot live without them/him/her.
2. They won't let me go.
3. I am responsible for everyone else's happiness.
4. I cannot do what I want because others would be unhappy/mad at me/deprived.
5. Everyone is treating me like I am a child.
6. I will never get permission.
7. I am not allowed.

### **Category 12**

1. I deserve whatever I want.
2. If others get in my way, they are wrong.
3. It's not my fault.
4. I can do and say whatever I want, so just shut up.
5. This isn't fair.

6. That person owes me.
7. People are such jerks.
8. People are always getting in my way.

### **Category 13**

1. People don't think much of me.
2. I will never measure up.
3. Nobody is ever going to trust me with responsibility.
4. I'm such a failure.
5. I am so lazy.
6. I am a selfish person.
7. I am the family outcast.
8. God is disgusted with me.

### **Category 14**

1. Why do people look down on me?
2. Why is life so hard?
3. What do I have to do to get people to understand me?
4. Why can't people just leave me alone?
5. What am I going to do with my life?
6. How am I going to get out of this mess?
7. Why don't I just kill myself?
8. There is no God.

# The Fourteen Self Talk Categories and Their Meanings

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- 1: Unloved**, especially by those whose love you crave. You feel you have to pursue love wherever you can find it.
- 2: Insignificant**, lacking value in the eyes of others. You either let others define you or you feel the inner drivenness to succeed and prove them wrong.
- 3: Powerless** to help or defend yourself. You always feel put down and defeated.
- 4: Hopeless**, seeing yourself stuck in life. You see no point in having dreams or striving for a better life.
- 5: Never be accepted** by the people who you think matter. You always find yourself on the outside.
- 6: Violated/dirty** because of what happened to you. You sense your soul will never feel clean again.
- 7: Shame**, inwardly believe that you are a problem. You feel unworthy of love or any good thing.
- 8: Fearful**, so you feel paralyzed to act. You find that you cannot make life decisions.
- 9: Ruined/damaged/broken** by what happened to you. You feel you will never be made whole again.
- 10: Unremitting Guilt/at fault** for what happened. You find it hard or even impossible to forgive others or yourself.
- 11: Emotionally enmeshed** with the people who wounded you. You sense you cannot mature without their permission, which you never seem to get.
- 12: Entitled** to have whatever you think you want. You are easily offended when you do not get your way.
- 13: A Disappointment** to the people in your life. You have spent your life trying to please people.
- 14: Confused and despair** in life. You wonder all the time if your life has meaning.



# Hurt of the Heart Inventory Explained

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Now that you have spent time with God over your Hurt of the Heart Inventory, here is some information that will help you process what you discovered.

1. God's goal for all who believe is to conform them to the likeness of Jesus (Romans 8:29). To accomplish this, He uses every event—good, bad and ugly—to lead us towards intimacy with Him and, through a deepening relationship, transform our lives (Romans 8:28). The wounds you are discovering define neither who you are nor who you will become. Your true identity is God's child. That will not change no matter what how many wounds you have experienced in this world.
2. Everyone you will ever meet, including the person in the mirror, has been wounded by living in a world affected by the Fall. This also includes the people who wounded you. Often these wounds are inflicted by those that love us, but whose love failed at a critical moment. This does not mean they meant to wound us or that they are even aware that they wounded us. Nor are all the wounds people receive in life from other people. The whole creation has been affected by the Fall. Some wounds are a product of fallen creation itself in the form of trauma, sickness, death and the unfairness of life that emerged after the Fall.
3. In the Bible, the heart is the place where emotions and rational thinking are weighed to make a 'will decision'—"What will I do in this life situation?" *Hurt of the heart* issues damage our emotions. As a result, where our emotions are damaged, they take on weight in determining will decisions. Damaged emotions create their own reality in our thinking, so that the will decisions we make often seem irrational to those who are observing us. But for us, they seem perfectly rational in light of the reality our damaged emotions have created.
4. It is these damaged emotions that become one of the main avenues through which Satan lies to you about what is true and how much you cannot trust God. For the person who is struggling with damaged emotions, the lies of the enemy feel much more real than the truth from God.
5. During this time of being with God, He probably drew you to a specific wound that has bearing on the transformation He is going to do in your life at this time. It is probably not

the only *hurt of the heart* you have, and may not even be the one you were expecting Him to point you to at this moment. But do not reject what God has shown you. Instead, listen to the Spirit and accept that this is the place where God is going to heal you today.

6. What is important is that not only are you wounded, but the *hurt of the heart* of which you are becoming aware has meaning in your life you may not realize. Most people you meet can share about similar wounds, but it may be important to know how this particular wound would translate for you. For example, not just that you were unjustly punished, but how the injustice of that event defined you. Much of this can be found in what you say to yourself in your inner conversations. Self-talk is a window to the emotions of the heart, letting you re-enforce the stories you hold to be true even though they are products of your damaged emotions. It is always a signal that something is wrong within. When fully developed, harmful self-talk helps establish your false identity instead of moving you towards being restored to the person you were created to be by God.

The purpose of the 14 categories of self-talk is to allow you to identify from the way you interact with yourself how you actually view the damage that has happened in your life. You may have more than one way of talking to yourself. By accepting that this self-talk is the result of the woundedness you carry, you may be ready to allow God to heal you deeply. If you do, you will find that your self-talk will change.

7. Broken relationships are always the outcome of *hurt of the heart*. This part of the interaction with God calls for ruthless honesty. However broken the relationship is, knowing what needs to be healed and allow God to do so is the first step to wholeness, forgiveness and reconciliation.
8. It is important to know that you have already done something about the pain apart from asking God to heal you. Instead, you have chosen to comfort yourself by deadly *sin in me*, which has led you to being trapped by behavior and attitudes that are slowly but determinedly moving you towards further loss and grief. You may have made these choices unconsciously and maybe made them when you were young or long before you began to follow Jesus. That does not lessen the ongoing impact of those choices on you.
9. The good news is that God is the Great Physician who heals. Once you come to the place where you know you cannot live with the pain anymore, you will find that God is

the Great Physician. It is the very act of going to God and allowing Him to deal with your *hurt of the heart* issues that starts your journey to freedom. You will also need God as your King to deliver you from *sin in me*. So while you have already chosen to comfort yourself with deadly *sin in me*, God is more than able and willing to heal and deliver you. The next step in your faith journey will be to draw close to God and learn from Him how He will do this.

10. God put us in a faith community so we would not be on this journey alone. You are encouraged to find people you can trust and allow them in on the process through which God is taking you—remembering they are in a process with God as well.