

Join the Revolution!
Training Exercises – Weeks #1 - #2

The following exercises are taken from "Learning to Tell Myself the Truth" by William Backus

REVOLUTION: PRAYER OF COMMITMENT – Exercise #1

Read the following prayer out loud, filling in the blank spaces with your name and your unwanted moods, emotions, or habits. Then create a document that you can print and carry around with you. Reread out loud (even in a whisper) at least once per day, preferably several times a day, for the next week. As we walk through this REVOLUTION over the next several weeks call on Him to be your Guide.

A Prayer of Commitment

Lord God, Heavenly Father,
Your Son, Jesus Christ, has made three specific promises to His followers: 1) that you will give your Holy Spirit to those who ask; 2) that you the Spirit will guide us into ALL the truth; and 3) that by knowing the Truth, we will be made free. I _____, believe it is your perfect will for me to be free from _____ (your unwanted moods, emotions, or habits). Believing in your Holy Son and trusting in His promises, I ask you fill my life with the presence of your Holy Spirit and give me guidance and courage as I face these painful, confusing and consuming emotions. I am trusting that you are with me, and the results I leave in your hands, knowing you will be faithful in granting me the freedom your Son has promised. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen!

REVOLUTION: SELF-TALK ASSESSMENT – EXERCISE #2

Here is a list of self-talk statements based on common misbeliefs. Read them over and check those you can relate to, those that express how you think or feel.

These statements may not necessarily reflect how you think and/or feel currently; if you recognize your own thoughts, past or present, in these statements, go ahead and check the statement.

Depression

1. Things will never get better. I have nothing to look forward to.
2. My life isn't worth living. I just don't have anything to live for.
3. No matter what I do, my past controls my life.
4. The way I was raised will always determine how I feel and what I do.
5. I feel worthless. No matter how hard I try, I feel like a failure.
6. When anyone else screws up, things seem to work out; anytime I screw up, it's a major disaster.
7. I am a failure at everything that really matters.
8. God despises people who have not lived up to His law.
9. I'm tired of hurting, tired of trying. I don't even want to get out of bed in the morning.
10. I can't change or control the way I feel.

Anxiety

1. I can't stand it if anyone is upset with me.
2. I worry about everything that could possibly go wrong.
3. If something bad happens, I should be able to handle it better than I do.
4. When someone disapproves of me, I feel like something is wrong with me.
5. I can hardly stand it if someone doesn't like me.
6. When things are going OK for me, I always feel like something terrible is going to happen to me.
7. I'd rather avoid taking any risks. I shouldn't take chances.
8. God will love me as long as I do the things I should.

9. Jesus was gentle and meek, always thinking of the welfare of others; therefore, I should let others do what they wish and not be assertive about what I want or need.
10. If I don't perform perfectly, I'm a failure.

Anger

1. I think I should get what I want most of the time.
2. My family should respect and appreciate me more than they do.
3. My spouse and children (or co-workers, relatives, etc.) should do what I want because I only have their best interests at heart.
4. When things don't go the way I planned, I get very frustrated.
5. Getting angry is a sin.
6. If my husband/wife would just listen to me, things would be better.
7. I shouldn't have to go through these unpleasant experiences.
8. I need to keep my anger to myself until I'm over it; a good Christian doesn't express anger, especially to family or church members.
9. I never learned how to control my temper when I was a kid and it's too late now.
10. I get mad because other people upset me.

Perfectionism

1. If I wasn't so successful, I don't think people would be interested in being with me.
2. I don't think relationships should be this hard. I can hardly stand it if someone doesn't like me.
3. There's a right way and a wrong way to do things, and I am impatient with others when they don't do things right. I am usually right.
4. I can change whatever is wrong with me if I just try harder.
5. When I feel bad it's usually because of the way other people have acted.
6. If I don't live up to my own expectations, I'm a failure.
7. I don't expect any more of others than I expect of myself.
8. If my family would treat me differently, I would be happier.
9. I frequently put off doing something, because I know how it *should* be done and doing it "right" feels overwhelming.
10. Things should be easier than this.

What This Survey Tells You

There are no norms for this inventory. You may find your self-talk tends to cluster into one or more areas of concentration, such as anxiety or depression. This survey is simply a helpful tool to clarify what areas of emotional health you will want to focus on. If you recognize your own self-talk in many of these statements, you are probably struggling with the painful effects of the underlying misbeliefs. Identifying the misbeliefs that prompt our self-talk is the first step to freeing ourselves from their control.

The assessment has ten in each of the category. Count the number of statements that you checked under each heading and rate yourself according to the following scales.

VERY HIGH: 8-10. If you checked between 8-10 in anyone category, you are undoubtedly experiencing significant emotional turmoil or relational difficulty. This assessment can be the beginning of a new life for you. These statements, representing some of the self-talk that governs your attitudes and actions, are based on misbeliefs. Recognizing your misbeliefs and learning to tell yourself the truth will have a profound effect on your life. By working this program, you're headed in the right direction.

HIGH: 5-7. If you scored in this level, you will be surprised at the progress you will make by changing your misbeliefs. Although many of your reactions, emotions, and attitudes are now grounded in misbelief, you will soon experience considerable freedom by learning to overcome these unhealthy emotional undercurrents.

MODERATE: 3-4. A moderate score in one category, with a high or very high score in another category, indicates where you need to devote your efforts first. Let one area of growth wait while you work on the area creating greater emotional distress. Then come back to the lower-scoring category. Learning to tell yourself the truth in any area of concern will have a ripple effect. Once you begin this process, you will find the power of truth affecting all areas of your life.

LOW: 0-2. A low score is an indication that this is probably not a pressing area of concern for you. However, if you scored low in each category, the cumulative effect of these misbeliefs is a hindrance to happiness and emotional well-being. Learning to tell yourself the truth will enhance your self-esteem and your relationships with God and with others.

REVOLUTION: ELEMENTS OF AN EPISODE – Exercise #3

We can nearly always find four elements in an episode of anger, anxiety, frustration, sadness, or any other intense emotion. Think back about some of your previous emotional episodes and look for the following four elements in your notes. Changing our Core Beliefs begins with becoming sensitive to the behavioral process and recognizing the self-talk content. This exercise will give begin giving you that self-awareness.

- **Provocation (an incident):** The provocation is the event that triggers the bad feelings;
- **Cognitions (self-talk/internal monologue):** Cognitions is simply a technical term for self-talk about the meaning of the provocation and how bad it was; in other words, what you were cognitively thinking during the episode;
- **Physiological reactions (physical systems to emotions):** The bodily changes you experience, such as a faster pulse, changes in breathing, sweating, a sinking feeling in your stomach or butterflies, an increase or decrease in body temperature, trembling, tense muscles;
- **Response (How you handled the situation):** What you do about the situation – your decisions, choices, actions, reactions.

Look back over your description of how you felt and try to identify the provocation, your cognitions or self-talk, your body’s physiological reactions and your response. Write your observations in the space provided:

1. **The provocation:** What happened to trigger your episode of bad feelings? Example: Someone’s remark was offensive to you or you felt insulted.

2. **Your cognitions (self-talk):** How did you interpret the meaning of the provocation, i.e., what did you find yourself thinking about the incident? Example: When you had nothing exciting to do for the upcoming weekend, you found yourself thinking, “Nobody really wants to spend any time with me, so this weekend is going to be a bummer.”

3. **Your physiological response:** What did you physically experience? Example: When you woke up at 1:30 AM and your sixteen-year-old son wasn't home yet, your heart began pounding and you felt nervous, tense and anxious; or worrisome thoughts awakened you in the middle of the night and you couldn't get back to sleep due to restlessness and anxiety.

4. **Your response or wail of dealing with the situation:** What action, if any, did you take? What decisions did you make? How did you handle the provocation and/or feelings? Example: You made a point of avoiding the person you thought insulted you; you went to a movie by yourself; you called the parents of some of your son's friends to see if their kids were home yet.

For the next few weeks, practice analyzing difficult emotional situations by looking for the four elements we've identified: provocation, cognitions (self-talk), physiological reactions, and response. Keep a record for the next week, using the format provided. You may prefer taking several copies of this with you so you can easily journal anywhere you are using this format.

REVOLUTION: INTERPRETING EVENTS - EXERCISE #4

When an event in life happens and your emotions are distinctly surfacing, what are your associated thoughts? Take a notebook and make a table with these column headings:

- The Event (Provocation)
- Self-Talk Thoughts
- Physiological/Emotional Response
- Behavioral Response (Choices / Reactions)
- What is the TRUTH?

Event (Incident)	Self-Talk Thoughts	Physical/Emotional Response	Choices / Response	What is TRUTH?

Then for the next several days keep a personal log (3-4 times a day) of samplings of what you are feeling and thinking. This exercise is to begin creating awareness in you of the subterranean thoughts and emotions that have been driving so many things in your life. Until you are aware of negative processes it will be very hard to make significant changes to the process.

REVOLUTION: CHALLENGE THE MISBELIEFS – Exercise #5

Read through the following statements. Work through each statement and spend some time reflecting on why these statements are based in misbeliefs and write your observations in the space provided. (If the below statements aren't thoughts you have had spend some time writing down individual statements that you have had and work through them).

- 1. "Things will never get any better."
Why it isn't true:

- 2. "Nothing ever turns out right."
Why it isn't true:

- 3. "I can't change the way I feel."
Why it isn't true:

- 4. "My family should appreciate me more than they do."
Why it isn't true:

- 5. "If my spouse would just listen to me, things would be better."
Why it isn't true:

- 6. "I am the way I am and I can't change; I know because I've tried."
Why it isn't true:

7. "(Misbelief Statement of Your Choice) _____"
Why it isn't true:

8. "(Misbelief Statement of Your Choice) _____"
Why it isn't true:

REVOLUTION: PAIRING EMOTIONS WITH MISBELIEFS – Exercise #6

My self-talk is filled with statements like:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Spend some time reflecting and recognizing where these statements are based in some core misbeliefs. Using the number/line above correspond that statement to a misbelief below with the same number/line. Recognize how these untruths have influenced your self-talk:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

REVOLUTION: WHAT WOULD YOUR EMOTIONS BE? – Exercise #7

See how well you can predict the resulting emotion triggered by a corresponding misbelief. Imagine how you would feel if you were telling yourself these misbeliefs:

Example:

Misbelief: "My life isn't worth living."

Resulting Emotion: Sadness, depression and self-pity

Now you try it with these:

Misbelief: "If something bad happens, I won't be able to stand it."

Resulting Emotion: _____

Misbelief: "I have nothing to look forward to."

Resulting Emotion: _____

Misbelief: "Because I haven't seen my dreams of professional success be fulfilled I am a loser."

Resulting Emotion: _____

Misbelief: "My marriage is a complete failure and will never be a source of joy to me!"

Resulting Emotion: _____

Misbelief: "I can't let myself make any mistakes when I do any thing."

Resulting Emotion: _____