

Truth Journaling

Romans 12:2 tells us that we're transformed by the _____ of the _____.

Strong's definition of the Greek word for renew (anakainosis):

When we renew, we're:

1. Taking off _____ and putting on _____.
2. Taking off a _____ perspective and putting on a _____ perspective.
3. Taking off what we learned _____ and putting on what we learn in the _____.

How to Truth Journal with the List Method

1. Ask one of three questions:
 - a. **Breaking a habit:** What am I believing that's making me _____ to do my bad habit?
 - b. **Starting a habit or working on a goal:** What am I believing that's making me _____ working on my habit or goal?
 - c. **Letting go of a negative emotion:** What am I believing that's making me _____ this way?
2. List 3-5 _____ based on your answers to the above questions.
3. Look at each _____ and ask, "Is this completely _____?" If so, write True. If not, write a _____ truth.
4. Visit with _____ about any truths that were _____ moments.

Exercise 1: Record Your Beliefs

Pretend that you're on your phone too much and you want to start a new habit of not getting on your phone after 6:00 pm. It's now 8:30 and you're dying to get on your phone. You decide you will truth journal instead. You begin by asking, "What am I believing that's making me want to do my bad habit?" Go ahead and write down 3-5 beliefs that would make you want to get on your phone even though you said you weren't going to."

If you're having a hard time coming up with beliefs, use the following phrases as prompts:

I need ...
I'll just ...

I deserve ...
I'll start ...

I already ...
It's not ...

I want ...

Beliefs That Make Me Want to Get on My Phone

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Tips for Recording the Truth

1. Write down a _____ that counteracts the _____.
 - a. **Lie:** I'll start tomorrow.
 - b. **Truth that doesn't fit the lie:** I should probably start today. (Note: the truth should answer the question, Will I really start tomorrow?)
 - c. **Truth that fits the lie:** If I break this tonight, I'll have a far less chance of following my boundaries tomorrow. Usually, 'I'll start tomorrow' is an excuse to live with abandon today in ways that are not good for me. Lord, help me to start today. Give me the desire and the strength to follow my boundaries today.
2. Record the _____ truth.
 - a. **Half-truth:** It's not a big deal if I break my boundaries.
 - b. **Full truth:** It's not a big deal if I don't want to break my phone habit. But I do want to break this habit, so it *is* a big deal! Every time I break my boundaries, what I'm really saying is that I have no boundaries and I can pick up my phone whenever I want. That would be like me saying, hey, I'm going to be faithful to my husband except for the days I don't feel like being faithful. You either have boundaries or you don't. If I want to develop the habit of no phone at night, I need to follow my boundaries *all* the time.
3. Record _____ truth.
 - a. **Belief:** I need a little excitement in my life.
 - b. **Minimal truth:** I *don't* need excitement in my life!
 - c. **Enough truth:** I don't need excitement, but excitement is a pleasant gift. The questions I need to ask are 1) Does God approve of this way of this type of excitement, 2) are there consequences to this form of excitement, and 3) do I actually enjoy this type of excitement? The truth is that the phone is an easy distraction, and I don't even enjoy it that much. I think I'll read a book or do something that would be more rejuvenating.

4. Look for _____ and/or _____ truth.
- Belief:** I want to look at my phone so I should look at my phone.
 - Practical truth:** Just because I want to do something doesn't mean I should do it. If I did and said everything I felt like doing and saying, my life would be a disaster and I would probably have no friends! The truth is, I want to look at my phone, so I better find something else to do so I'm not tempted to look at my phone! Also, I should put it far away from me so I'm less likely to look at it!
 - Biblical truth:** God never said, "Barb, trust your feelings. Do what you want to do!" Instead, Jesus said things like deny yourself and lay down your life for others and put God first! God does not want me to be on my phone all night because He wants me to live an abundant life, walk in the Spirit, and love others well. Since I tend to be addictive with my phone, I need boundaries. And this evening boundary is a good boundary for me. Lord, please help me to have the discipline to follow my boundaries and even learn to love them!

Exercise 2: Record the Truth

- Belief: I deserve this after my hard day.
Truth:
- Belief: I'll take one quick peek.
Truth:
- Belief: I need to check to see if my kids/friends posted anything on Instagram.
Truth:
- Belief: I already broke my phone boundaries once so I might as well break them again.
Truth:
- Belief: I need to unwind after my hard day.
Truth:

If you finish early, consider truth journaling any beliefs you wrote down on page 1 that haven't been covered, or turn this page over and try truth journaling for another situation in your life.

For more help with truth journaling, read *Rally: A Personal Growth Bible Study, Freedom from Emotional Eating, or Renewing of the Mind Project*, by Barb Raveling, or check out resources under the Renew Your Mind tab at barbraveling.com.

Exercise 3: Option Charts

Truth journaling helps us take off lies and put on truth. Option charts help us see the consequences of our current actions. This helps us to believe at the gut level that God's way really is best and they give us the strength to do what God wants us to do.

Go ahead and turn to the next page to fill out the option chart. You don't need to read the rest of this page right now, but I wanted to include it so you'll remember how to make an option chart when you get home and want to give a try with one of your current habits, goals, or trials.

Across the top:

Record three things you want at the top. I usually include one specific thing I want, then add a Peace-and-Joy and a Close-to-God column since those are two things I always want.

Down the left side:

1. 1st row: Write the unrealistic-can't-have option that you really want, then cross it out and write "NOT AN OPTION" with lots of exclamation marks to drill it into your head that you can't control everything and everyone you want to control!
2. Middle rows: Write your real-life options on the left. These are not brainstorming options; these are the things you're currently doing. The ways you typically handle this situation.
3. Last row: I call this the God option. Talk to Him for a bit and record how you think He would like you to handle this situation, based on what you read in the Bible.

Fill in the boxes:

1. Put up and down arrows based on how those actions will affect getting what you want at the top. If you think that option will help you get what you want (at the top of the column), put an up arrow. If you think it won't help you get what you want, list a down arrow.
2. List an explanation for your up and down arrows.
3. Put little light bulbs by anything that is an aha moment.

Review:

1. Review the chart as an overall picture to see what option looks best.
2. Visit with God about any aha moments He gave you while making the chart.

For more help with option charts, read *Freedom from Emotional Eating* by Barb Raveling or go to Barbraveling.com and look under the Renew Your Mind tab for free resources.

Think of a situation in your life that worries you. It could be worries about a loved one, finances, the state of the world, your health, meeting a work deadline, or any other worry. Often in these situations we imagine the worst happening and that's why we worry. Fill in the option chart below with that particular worry in mind.

	Things to Turn Out the Way I Want	Peace and Joy	Close Walk with God
To know for sure that things will turn out okay.			
Talk about my fears with a loved one often and keep asking for assurance that things will turn out okay.			
Keep obsessing and fretting about things, imagining the worst happening.			
Try to avoid thinking about it and drown my sorrows in ice cream, alcohol, Netflix, shopping, or novels.			
Try everything I can to fix this even if it's not fixable because I don't have control over this situation.			
Keep an eternal perspective, remember that God is in control, shift my trust to Him, dwell on the good, and use this trial to grow and mature in my character. (Note from Barb: This would include doing things to prevent your worry from taking place <i>if</i> that's possible and God wants you to do that!)			

	Things to Turn Out the Way I Want	Peace and Joy	Close Walk with God
To know for sure that things will turn out okay.	NOT	AN	OPTION!!!
Talk about my fears with a loved one often and keep asking for assurance that things will turn out okay.	↓ - This doesn't change anything. Just because they assure me everything will be okay, that doesn't mean it will. Plus they may get tired of reassuring me.	↑↓ - I'm putting my trust in the wrong person so it doesn't lead to peace and joy. Peace and joy come from walking in the Spirit, not from getting assurances from people who aren't powerful enough to guarantee that nothing bad will happen!	↓ - This doesn't help me feel close to God because I'm clinging to this other person, not God. Hard and scary things can draw me closer to God if I go to Him for comfort, perspective, strength, and refuge.
Keep obsessing and fretting about things, imagining the worst happening.	↓ - Worry does nothing to change anything, yet it makes my immediate life bad as I'm experiencing the things I fear at the imaginary level. I would be far better off letting go of the worry and trusting God.	↓ - Obsession and imagining the worst does not lead to peace and joy! It leads to worry, anxiety, and depression!	↓ - This draws me away from God because I'm not dwelling on the good, nor am I trusting in Him. I'll feel closer to Him if I renew so I can get His perspective, pray about it, and let it go, willing to accept the worst if God allows it.
Try to avoid thinking about it and drown my sorrows in ice cream, alcohol, Netflix, shopping, or novels.	↓ - This does nothing to keep my fears from coming true. And it could add new worries such as health and financial issues!	↑↓ - This may give me peace and joy in the short run, but since I'm not learning how to go to God and let go of those fears, the worries will come back.	↓ - God doesn't want me to go to these other things for support as they can become idols. They separate me from God if I'm turning to them as God-substitutes.
Try everything I can to fix this even though it's not fixable because I don't have control over this situation.	↓ - In some situations, it's helpful to act, but not all. I have to recognize what I can control and what I can't control – and also recognize that ultimately God is the one in control, not me.	↓ - If I keep trying to control situations and people that I think I can control (but really can't), I'll keep getting disappointed. Which does not lead to peace and joy.	↓ - If I'm trying to control things God either doesn't want me to control or hasn't given me the power to control, I'm putting myself in the god position – and this doesn't make me feel close to Him. It may even make me feel mad at Him when I'm unable to fix things.
Keep an eternal perspective, remember that God is in control, shift my trust to Him, dwell on the good, and use this trial to grow and mature in my character.	↓↑ - I still may not be able to do anything about the situation, but with this option, I won't care so much that I can't control it because I'll be living the "to live is Christ to die is gain" sort of life.	↑ - This is my best chance for peace and joy since it's not dependent on things turning out the way I want them to turn out. God can help me learn to be content in all situations!	↑ - This will also bring me closer to God since I'll be going to Him for help with my worries, doing things that will draw me closer to Him.