

Is Unresolved Trauma Part of My Story?

The following exercises are a starting point to begin asking yourself if you may have unresolved Big T or Little t Trauma in your life. If you already know that trauma is part of your story, these questions may normalize some of your experiences and help you to see there is nothing wrong with you. These are normal responses to unresolved trauma.

This exercise cannot determine categorically that you have unresolved trauma in your life. But if the following questions are difficult for you to work through, we encourage you to call our counselling team for help in navigating what this means for you.

❖ Call us at **1.800.661.9800** ❖
MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 8 A.M. TO 4 P.M. PT
to book a free one-time phone consultation
with one of our counsellors

1. Have you struggled with any of the following? These are not always associated with unresolved trauma; however, if you're experiencing any of these – especially if other treatments have not worked for you – there may be unresolved trauma causing these mental and emotional health symptoms.

☐ Depression

☐ Loss of sense of future or hopelessness

☐ Loss of interest

☐ Shame and worthlessness

☐ Insomnia

☐ Few or no memories

☐ Hyper vigilance or lack of trust

☐ Nightmares and flashbacks

☐ Chronic pain or headaches

☐ Anxiety or panic attacks

☐ Self-destructive behaviours

☐ Substance abuse, eating disorders, addictions

☐ Irritability

☐ Feeling unreal or out of body

☐ Decreased concentration

☐ Loss of sense of “who I am”

☐ Numbing

☐ Anger issues

☐ Emotionally overwhelmed

☐ People-pleasing

☐ Highly sensitive to emotions and reactions of others

2. Do you believe any of the following statements? Are these negative thought processes a regular part of your self-talk?

<input type="checkbox"/> I'm not good enough	<input type="checkbox"/> I'm worthless	<input type="checkbox"/> I can't trust my judgment
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm stupid	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't deserve love	<input type="checkbox"/> I can't protect myself
<input type="checkbox"/> I deserve to be miserable	<input type="checkbox"/> I am shameful	<input type="checkbox"/> I can't let it out
<input type="checkbox"/> I don't deserve to be happy	<input type="checkbox"/> I am damaged	<input type="checkbox"/> I can't stand up for myself
<input type="checkbox"/> I can't trust anyone	<input type="checkbox"/> I am ugly	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not in control
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm a failure	<input type="checkbox"/> My body is hateful	<input type="checkbox"/> I can't succeed
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm weak	<input type="checkbox"/> I am disgusting	<input type="checkbox"/> I am powerless or helpless
<input type="checkbox"/> I have to be perfect	<input type="checkbox"/> I deserve to die	<input type="checkbox"/> I am inadequate
<input type="checkbox"/> I can't be forgiven for this	<input type="checkbox"/> I can't be trusted	<input type="checkbox"/> I cannot get what I want
<input type="checkbox"/> I am different and don't belong		

3. If you have experienced any of the above symptoms and/or negative thought processes, the following steps will help you slow down and explore if there have been times you have felt this way before.

Aware: *What is going on in your body?*

- Is your heart racing? Are your muscles tightening? Is your heart rate slowing down like you're numb inside? Do you have butterflies in your stomach? Are you noticing anything else?

Accept: *This is information. The sensations and emotions are not the danger.*

- Your nervous system is trying to communicate with you and this is the language it's using. We need this information to be able to heal.
- "I accept these sensations and emotions and the responsibility to care for them."

Ask for God's help. **Allow** God's perspective.

- God's ways are far above ours and he has a perspective we are not able to grasp without his help. By inviting him into the process, you can move to the next step.

Attend: *Now you're ready to figure out what is going on. Work through the following questions to begin exploring the source of the above symptoms and thought processes.*

What am I feeling?

Have I felt this before?

When is the earliest I have felt this?

What patterns of hurts are starting to emerge?

What are things that happened to me that were abusive or painful that I have dismissed or tried to simply move on from?

Do I currently feel the upsetting emotions or body sensations as though it were happening all over again?

What are any negative or limiting beliefs I am telling myself?

Is it difficult to receive God's positive words to me?

Do I consider myself the exception to God's grace or forgiveness in some areas?

NEED HELP?

Call our care team to book a free, one-time phone consultation with one of our registered Christian counsellors. Call **1.800.661.9800** weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pacific time, or visit **FocusOnTheFamily.ca/Counselling** to learn more.
