

Breaking the Cycle Work Sheet

Are you ready to ask God to break your cycle? Let me recommend that you write your answers—it's cathartic. If you want, you can ceremonially burn your paper when you're done. In any event, don't rush through it.

1. *Understand your baggage.* What are the repetitive and destructive sins that you struggle with? _____

2. *Get out of denial. Ask for help.* Share what you're going through with your group. You may need a Christian counselor to help you get to the bottom of it.

3. *Grieve what could have been.* This includes all the broken parts of your life, such as not having a father who was really involved in your life, a mother who didn't love you well, or alcoholism, abuse, or abandonment issues. What have you missed that is hurtful?

4. *Forgive those who have sinned against you.* This was Paul's urging when he wrote, "Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others" (Colossians 3:13). Write down others' names and what you forgive.

5. *Repent for all the ways you have sinned against others.* Unless it's impossible, apologize personally and seek forgiveness. When necessary and if possible, make restitution. Write down the names of people you have sinned against and the actions you plan to take. Trust in this great Bible promise: "If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness" (1 John 1:9).

6. *Ask the Holy Spirit to cleanse and transform you by His power.* The power of God is as close as your next thought. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. He lives to intercede for us. "The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words" (Romans 8:26).

7. *Be patient.* A few men experience immediate and total deliverance from their destructive sin cycles. For most of us, however, mending takes time. And like cutting a piece of string in half, the sinful nature never completely goes away, so we must continue to live by the Spirit day by day.