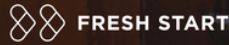




Part I  
*Offense, hurt  
and loss*



# Processing the Issues of Your Heart

*Participant Guide*

## Part 1: Offense/Hurt/ Loss

*"Who or What is in my Gap?"*

*"Who or What has offended or hurt you?"*

*"What have you lost?"*

What happened? Who hurt you? What have you lost? Let's start with your story.

**Your journey of freedom begins first with honesty.** In this part of the process, you will identify one significant area of offense, hurt, or loss that is hindering your life. Whether it was an event that happened recently, or something from when you were a child; no detail is too small. No pain is too great. Your goal is to choose one person or event to process.

### **You may be thinking- "Why do I really need to process all of this?"**

This is a totally normal response. You might even have some of these common questions rolling around in your heart: "I already forgave or let go." "I don't think about this or hardly even remember what happened." "I don't want to make a big deal of this." "It's nothing compared to what he/she has or is going through." "I don't want to rehash all of these things."

*In Psalm 66:18, God says, "If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened."* No one lives up to God's design. Not one of us is perfect or righteous in the eyes of God. This is not a statement of condemnation, but rather an invitation to freedom offered for your heart. Surrender to the reality that we all have 'stuff' God wants to heal at a deeper level.

One of the biggest lies we can succumb to is, "My story is not worth investigating or digging into, because it's not going to change anyway, and it's not that big of a deal." But, if we "agree with God," and what He thinks about what hurts us, and what He says He can and will do with sin and pain, then we can be free!

God NEVER dismisses what's important to us.

God NEVER ignores our aching hearts.

God NEVER gives approval to sin we commit, or sin committed against us.

God NEVER compares our pain to others. So, why should we?

To understand how God sees our stories, it's helpful to think of our offenses, hurts, and losses as, 'GAPS.'

## Part 1: Offense/Hurt/ Loss

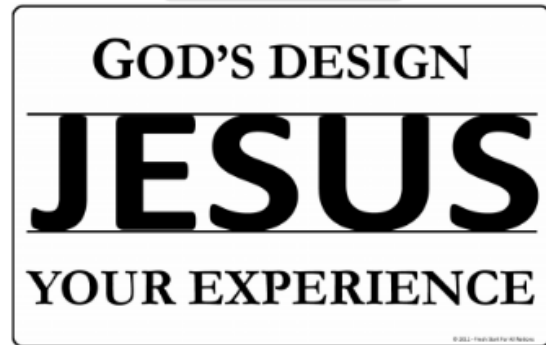
*"Who or What is in my Gap?"*

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### **Who or What is in the GAP in your story?**

The GAP is the difference between God's design for relationship and your life's experience.



The offenses, hurts and losses you experience in your life are what we call the GAP. Your experience will always fall short of God's design until you get to Heaven. Until you agree with God's design for relationship, you will not experience the freedom and peace that is available to you. So, we compare our stories only to God's design, which is found in His Word. In what ways does your story, relationships, and heart not line up with His design? This GAP is what you process. When you process, you must consider all the ways the other person/situation is not according to God's design.

Only Jesus can fill the GAP in your life. If you desire or experience anything instead of intimacy with the Lord, you will always be disappointed. Only Jesus fills the GAP. Only Jesus satisfies. When you allow Jesus to fill the GAP in your life, you can begin to experience the freedom and peace that God always had in mind for you.

### **So, Who or What is in the GAP in your story?**

To help you better identify where to begin, let's start by looking at the questions in the booklet.

# Part 1: Offense/Hurt/ Loss

"Who or What is in my Gap?"

"Who or What has offended or hurt you?"

"What have you lost?"

**Start by praying through the scripture, and asking the Lord to reveal to you anything He wants you to know. What does the scripture say to you?**

*"Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind..." – Psalm 26:2 (NIV)*

## **A. List specific offenses or hurts, and the person(s) involved:**

- People who have rejected you in some way
- People or situations where you have been violated or abused
- Conflicts involving family, friends, work, church, or others
- Divorce or separation
- Other examples through your life

## **B. List significant losses that you have experienced in your life:**

- Loss of job
- Loss of health
- Loss of a relationship due to conflict, separation, divorce or death
- Loss of a dream for your life or your future involving marriage, children or career

## **Two Key Notes:**

-Think of Parts a and b as an inventory of all offenses, hurts, and losses. You may find it helpful to write out your story or a timeline of your life. This allows you to identify themes showing up. Once you have written specific hurts, offenses, or losses, begin to ask God where He wants you to start processing.

-It is not biblical to process yourself. Only God can forgive you. When you follow the parts of the process, you will deal with the thoughts, behaviors, and wrong related actions or attitudes you had toward yourself or others. And God will deal with 'your role' in relation to the situation or relationship you choose to start with.

## Part 1: Offense/Hurt/ Loss

*"Who or What is in my Gap?"*  
*"Who in my life is least like Jesus?"*

### **C. From your previous responses, choose one person/loss to process:**

Once you have decided where to begin, you will deal with the one person, event or loss you have chosen going forward. So, answer the questions from here on, in relation to that one person you are processing. There may be many offenses, hurts, and losses that come from this one person or event. List them. But, in regard to your list, stay focused on the one person or loss you are processing.

You may find it helpful to start with the earliest wound or someone from your immediate family of origin (father, mother, sibling, grandparent, or someone who represented them). We often find what we are experiencing today is an effect or direct result of a past experience of offense, hurt, or loss-typically from the family of origin. Choose ONE person or loss to process at a time. Who or What is in your GAP?

### **Here are some examples:**

*The offending person is:* My Mom

*The offense, hurt, or loss is:* Loss of a relationship, loss of a dream, loss of protection, loss of childhood

### **Illustration: The Weed**



When you want to pull a weed, it may be tempting to just yank at the top-the part you can see with your eyes. But we know if we don't dig down a little, remove some dirt, get to the root, and eliminate the pesky thing growing, it will just be a matter of time before it comes back. Our hearts and stories are much like the weed. We all have areas that need attention and care to get healthy, so let's start with the root. For processing, we find that dealing with the root of the problem- your earliest wound- will almost always take care of the whole weed and root out problems you may be currently facing. God is in the healing business, not the bandaid business! He doesn't just want to cover up the roots so problems can come back. He wants us to grow!