

Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook

Self-Assessments, Exercises & Educational Handouts



Ester A. Leutenberg
John J. Liptak, EdD

Illustrated by
Amy L. Brodsky, LISW-S

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Dedication

Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook is lovingly dedicated to Kathy Atarah Khalsa, who in 1987 lighted the way.

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V.I.P. ~ Very Important for the Professional

Our goal

Our goal for *Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook's* assessments, activities, journaling pages, quotations and educational handouts is to open participants to the possibilities of spirituality and its benefits. We believe people on a spiritual path lead more healing, enriching, enlightening, peace-filled lives. We interviewed over one hundred people of many different faiths and economic backgrounds. We spoke to people of varied ages, genders, sexual orientations, cultures, nationalities and religions. We were privileged to discuss the topic presented with believers and non-believers and clergy of most every faith before we even began the process of writing this book.

Defining and Addressing Individual Spirituality

Each person we interviewed had different opinions and beliefs about spirituality. Some had none. Our challenging task was opening a topic so complex and immense, and not appearing over simplistic, condescending, incomplete or confusing. Since spirituality can be a sensitive subject, we avoided over-using the word spirituality and we focused on the topics we felt were the components of spirituality, to gather the greatest variety of honest responses and ideas, as well as to encourage a wide range of thought processes.

We asked these questions: Are you . . .

- 1.) *spiritual, but not religious?*
- 2.) *religious, but not spiritual?*
- 3.) *religious and spiritual?*
- 4.) *neither religious nor spiritual?*

In what way is your spirituality connected with your religion?

How would you define spirituality?

What/where do you feel your spirituality or a genuine warm feeling?

Which situations feel non-spiritual or irritating?

Shayna Korb, aspacewithin.com, used thematic analysis to create the following categories that represent definitions of spirituality from the one-hundred plus participants who completed our survey:

Healing/Growth — a force toward greater individual or world health

Understanding/Meaning/Answers — the drive towards greater knowing

Connection — a related or connected feeling

Feeling — a particular sense-state, (e.g. a state of flow perceived in quiet moments or moments of meditation)

Force God/Higher Power — some kind of relationship to a higher power

Inner/Within — an internal construction, a knowing inside

Energy/Metaphysics — awareness of an underlying energy or reality undefined by contemporary science

Negative Case — people who do not see themselves as spiritual, define spirituality in a negative way or have no understanding or definition of spirituality at all.

(Continued on the next page)

V.I.P. ~ Very Important for the Professional (page 2)

Defining and Addressing Individual Spirituality (Continued)

Another one of our goals was to find the PERFECT definition of spirituality. Spirituality is a difficult concept to define because it can mean many different things to different people. Defining spirituality is individual and personal. We hope that our readers' felt-sense of spirituality can connect to one or more of the multiple frameworks presented in this text. We believe the chapters in this book reflect components of spirituality that can be useful to everyone, regardless of how they define spirituality.

For the purposes of this book, we define religion as a set of beliefs and practices based on a specific religious doctrine. We attempt to differentiate spirituality from religion. In *Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook* we are focusing primarily with spirituality, not religion (although religion can be a part of spirituality). We have purposefully avoided much discussion of religion, allowing the facilitator to use personal judgment to the extent that religion plays a part in this process for each individual.

We have included a handout, *Definitions Of Spirituality*, in the participant's section in this chapter. It consists of several of the definitions from our surveys that seem to represent most of the responses in some way. You may choose to read the definitions aloud to the participants, with the hope that one of the quotations might set off a spark, a thought or an idea for those who are unsure of how to define spirituality. The quotations may help those who do feel some level of spirituality verbalize their ideas. Either way, participants may find something with which to identify. After the definitions page are the handouts *When/Where Do You Feel Your Spirituality or a Genuine Warm Feeling?* and *Which of These Feel Non-Spiritual or Irritating?* These can be used as pre- and post-discussion tools or warm-ups before you begin facilitating the book, afterwards, or both.

The Nature of Spirituality

Wellness includes six important dimensions: occupational, social, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual. The spiritual dimension, according to the National Wellness Institute*, recognizes the search for meaning and purpose in human existence. This search includes the development of a deep appreciation for the depth and expanse of life and natural forces that exist in the universe.

It will help to keep several tenets in mind as your clients explore spiritual themes in their lives:

- This spiritual search will be characterized by a peaceful harmony between their internal personal feelings and the external realities that exist in their lives.
- While conducting this search, they may experience feelings of doubt, despair, fear and disappointment as well as feelings of joy, happiness, contentment and discovery. These important experiences and components to their search will be displayed in the value system they adapt to bring meaning to their existence.
- They will know they are becoming spiritual or more spiritual when their actions become more consistent with their beliefs and values, resulting in a "world view."

*Hettler, B. (2004). *Six dimensional model of wellness*. Stevens Point, WI: National Wellness Institute. www.nationalwellness.org.

(Continued on the next page)

V.I.P. ~ Very Important for the Professional (page 3)

The Nature of Spirituality (Continued)

In the book, *Spirituality for Dummies**, Sharon Janis suggests some of the ways that spirituality can manifest itself:

- Experiencing a higher universal love
- Surfing the waves of life with a light-hearted view that nurtures a positive sense of humor
- Achieving the ability to see the spiritual in one's ordinary life
- Developing a mature approach to life that includes peacefulness and spirituality
- Experiencing the divine through faith, optimism and an unfettered heart
- Trusting one's own inner guidance

Preparing to Use the Workbook

Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook contains five separate sections to help participants learn more about themselves and their spiritual natures. They will learn about the importance of spirituality, their ability to integrate spirituality into their everyday lives, and tools and techniques to enhance their spiritual awareness.

Sections of this book are:

- 1) **Forgiveness and Acceptance Scale** helps individuals explore their ability to forgive themselves and forgive other people.
- 2) **Connecting with Others Scale** helps individuals explore the strength of their characteristics related to connecting with other people.
- 3) **Spiritual Living Scale** helps individuals identify how effective they are at integrating spiritual themes into their daily lives.
- 4) **Personal Centering Scale** helps individuals explore their use of the various spiritual disciplines for finding peace and centering themselves, even when facing life's challenges.
- 5) **Spiritual Awareness Scale** helps individuals explore how aware they are of their spiritual nature.
- 6) **The Last Chapter** helps individuals process what they have learned from *Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook*.

The five sections of this book are intended to serve as avenues for individual self-reflection, as well as for group experiences revolving around identified topics of importance. Each assessment includes directions for easy administration, scoring and interpretation, and provides exploratory activities, reflective journaling activities, related quotations and educational handouts. All materials have been designed to help participants discover their spirituality in a variety of ways.

*Janis, S. (2008) *Spirituality for Dummies*. Wiley, John & Sons, Inc.

The Assessments, Journaling Activities, Quotations and Educational Handouts

The art of self-reflection goes back many centuries and is rooted in many of the world's greatest spiritual and philosophical traditions. Socrates, the ancient Greek philosopher, was known to walk the streets engaging the people he met in philosophical reflection and dialogue. He felt that this type of activity was so important in life that he went so far as to proclaim, "The unexamined life is not worth living!" The unexamined life is one in which the same routine is continually repeated without ever thinking about its meaning to one's life and how this life really could be lived. However, a structured reflection and examination of beliefs, assumptions, characteristics, and patterns can provide a better understanding, which can lead to a more satisfying life. A greater level of self-understanding about important life skills is often necessary to make positive, self-directed changes in the over-used or repetitious patterns. The assessments and exercises in this book can help promote this self-understanding. Through involvement in the in-depth activities, the participant claims ownership in the development of positive patterns.

Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for enhancing self-discovery, learning, transcending traditional problems, breaking ineffective life habits, and helping to heal from psychological traumas of the past. From a physical point of view, writing reduces stress and lowers muscle tension, blood pressure and heart rate levels. Psychologically, writing reduces sadness, depression and general anxiety, and leads it to a greater level of life satisfaction and optimism. Behaviorally, writing leads to enhanced social skills, emotional intelligence and creativity. It also leads to improved writing skills which, in turn, leads to more self-confidence in the workplace. By combining reflective assessment and journaling, participants will be exposed to a powerful method of combining verbalizing and writing to reflect on and solve problems. Participants will become more aware of their spiritual strengths. They will explore ways to develop strategies to acquire an additional dimension in their lives with which to face life's challenges and enhance their daily lives.

Preparation for using the assessments and activities in this book is important. In order for you to be effective in administering the assessments in this book, it is suggested that you, the facilitator, complete them yourself. This will familiarize you with the format of the assessments, the scoring directions, the interpretation guides and the journaling activities. Although the assessments are designed to be self-administered, scored and interpreted. This familiarity will help prepare facilitators to answer participants' questions about the assessments.

The Assessments, Journaling Activities, Quotations and Educational Handouts in *Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook* are reproducible and ready to be photocopied for participants' use.

The Assessments, Journaling Activities, Quotations and Educational Handouts *(page 2)*

Assessments contained in this book focus on self-reported data and can be used as materials for individual self-inventory, partner study, spirituality study groups, classes and therapeutic supplements by psychologists, counselors, therapists, clergy, religious and spiritual leaders and teachers, activity directors and career consultants.

Accuracy and usefulness of the information provided is dependent on the truthful information that each participant provides through self-examination. By being honest, participants help themselves discover their life patterns and uncover information that might be keeping them from expanding the dimension of their spiritual path on the wellness continuum.

An assessment instrument can provide participants with valuable information about themselves; however, it cannot measure or identify everything about them. The purposes of the assessments is not to pigeon-hole certain characteristics, but rather to allow participants to explore all of their characteristics. *Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook* contains self-assessments, not tests. Tests measure knowledge or whether something is right or wrong. For the assessments in this book, there are no right or wrong answers. These assessments ask for personal opinions or attitudes about a topic of importance in the participant's spiritual nature.

When administering assessments in this workbook, remember that the items are generically written so that they will be applicable to a wide variety of people but will not account for every possible variable for every person.

Advise the participants taking the assessments that they should not spend too much time trying to analyze the content of the questions; their initial response will most likely be true. Regardless of individual scores, encourage participants to talk about their findings and their feelings pertaining to what they have discovered about themselves. Talking about the components of spirituality can enhance the lives of participants. These exercises can be used by group facilitators working with any population who may want to explore their spirituality, or with those whom you feel would be open and able to benefit from exploring a spiritual path.

The Assessments, Journaling Activities, Quotations and Educational Handouts *(page 3)*

Layout of the Book

- **Assessment Instrument** — Self-assessment inventories with scoring directions and interpretation materials. Group facilitators can choose one or more of the activities relevant to their participants.
- **Activity Handouts** — Practical questions and activities to prompt self-reflection and promote self-understanding. These questions and activities foster introspection and promote pro-social behaviors.
- **Reflective Questions for Journaling** — Self-exploration activities and journaling exercises specific to each assessment to enhance self-discovery, learning and healing.
- **Educational Handout** — Handouts designed to supplement instruction can be used individually or in groups. They can be distributed, converted into masters for overheads or transparencies, or written on a board and discussed.
- **Quotations** — Quotations are included throughout the chapters to motivate and inspire, as well as promote self-reflection and provide insight into the thoughts of various spiritual leaders.

Who Should Use This Program?

This book has been designed as a practical tool for helping professional therapists, counselors, career counselors and coaches, psychologists, teachers, spiritual and religious leaders, and group leaders help their clients. Depending on the role of the professional using *Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook* and the specific group's needs, these sections can be used individually, combined, or implemented as part of an integrated curriculum for a more comprehensive approach.

Why Use Self-Assessments?

Self-assessments are important in teaching various life skills. Participants will . . .

- Become aware of the primary motivators that guide their behavior.
- Explore and learn to identify challenging situations.
- Explore the effects of messages received in childhood.
- Gain insight that will guide greater understanding of one's spirituality.
- Focus thinking on behavioral goals for expanding one's spirituality.
- Uncover spiritual resources that can help one to cope with problems and difficulties.
- Explore personal characteristics without judgment.
- Develop full awareness of personal strengths and spiritual understanding.

Because the assessments are presented in a straightforward and easy-to-use format, individuals can self-administer, score and understand each assessment independently.

Introduction for the Participant

The intent of *Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook* is to either start you on your spirituality path or assist you in enriching your present spiritual path. Your spiritual path is an ever-moving and changing aspect of life.

Spirituality is hard to define. We have discovered that it is often what each person believes it to be — and that one's perception of spirituality can change over and over again. In interviews with over one hundred people, we found each person's definition was different from the others — and yet, each person's definition is correct as a personal understanding. Many people connect their religion with spirituality and some think religion and spirituality are different. We hope when you are finished with this book, you are able to create your own definition of spirituality or to expand on the definition you already have.

Spirituality is a critical component of the overall concept of wellness. Spiritual wellness has been described as a process of getting in touch with your inner self by exploring the spiritual themes in your life and thereby discovering your personal spiritual ideas and understandings. As you begin to further develop these dimensions of your life, you will have many questions, and we hope you will find many answers. You may also learn to embrace mystery, and value things that you do not completely understand. Spiritual wellness is about becoming more peaceful and compassionate, and connecting deeply with yourself and others, as well as developing spiritual wisdom and spiritual virtues.

Discovering Your Spiritual Path Workbook is designed to help you learn more about yourself, to guide your considerations of the notions of spirituality in your life, and explore ways you can use to enhance the spiritual dimension of your life. We truly hope that you will be able to find some of the answers you seek and discover hidden knowledge you may not even know you possess. We hope that you use this workbook to find meaning, purpose, optimism, peace and contentment in your life.

Enjoy the spiritual journey!

Let's Begin

The next three pages include activities to help you get started in exploring your spiritual path. It might be fun for you to complete these three exercises now and then again after you have completed the book. It will be interesting to see if and how your responses change. Review the *Definitions of Spirituality* page and then complete the two worksheets that follow.

For the Participants ~ Definitions of Spirituality

Random selections from our collection of over 100 surveys and interviews

Spirituality is an avenue of healing, inspiration and practical growth in living one's life. It can include drawing on and from the depths of one's religious faith and revelations since youth. But spirituality need not be religious at all. One can be very spiritual by nature and never talk about God, religion or scripture. Sacredness, love and joy are the common side effects of refined awareness, which is spirituality. ~ P. Mandelkorn

Spirituality is the primal human longing for meaning and a way to organize both our inner and outer world of feeling, stories, memories and experiences. ~ D. Shields

Spirituality is a connected feeling: Connected deeply to myself and connected to something larger than myself. ~ K. Khalsa

Spirituality for me is a feeling of awe, wonderment and connectedness to the universe – to those I love, dead and alive. ~ E. Leutenberg

Spirituality, for me, is the sense of what is beyond me, what is "greater" than me, what is as yet unknown, a mystery or unexplainable. It is the search for making meaning out of the things that are known – the realities of my life – all in the context of the bigger picture. It is both understanding that very little is in my control and taking responsibility for what I can control and affect. It is living as authentically as I can in accordance with my values. So, it is both an interior life, and the outward expression of that life. ~ J. Stoneberg

My sense of my own spirituality includes a sense of the interdependent web of life, of which I am a small part. This includes a source of universal energy that holds wisdom and power beyond what I or any one person can imagine. It is always there and available to me, if I open my heart and mind, and silence my thoughts to listen. ~ A. Goodwin

For me, spirituality is the indefinable connection that I might know, or feel, or intuit with that Oneness that is everything. Certain quantum physics theories help us understand mentally that we are all energy and all energy is connected. Certainly when you feel that connectedness, you will live and act with respect, reverence and gratitude. Hence, spirituality is involved with behaviors, attitudes and values. ~ G. Woityra

Spirituality is the feeling of the presence and essence of God during every day of my life. ~ A. Druckman

Spirituality is my connection with the "beyond" that we are all a part of. It is a sense of who I am in relationship to others, living, dead and still unborn. It is a sense of purpose in this life. It is a conviction that there are no coincidences and we each have a soul's purpose; things happen for a reason – to elevate us and give us the opportunity to reach our highest purpose and potential. ~ F. Zamore

Spirituality is the depth dimension of your experience. It is an awakening, an awareness, a heightened experience of being more fully alive. ~ G. Bammel

Circle any of the above to which you can relate.

If you have a personal definition of spirituality, please write it here:

For the Participants

When/where do you feel your spirituality or a genuine warm feeling?

Check those that apply to you below	Write your own examples in these 2 columns	
<p>In nature:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Animals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unique moments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Weather</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bodies of water</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A tree or flower in blossom</p>	<p>In nature:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>With my religion:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> House of worship</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prayer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Traditions and rituals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sacred texts</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Holidays</p>	<p>With my religion:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>Within my body's experiences:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sports</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Exercises</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yoga/Martial arts</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation techniques</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Solitude</p>	<p>Within my body's experiences:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>In self-expression:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Creating</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Music</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Writing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Singing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Art</p>	<p>In self-expression:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>In relationships:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of affection</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Communicating heart to heart</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Taking action to make a difference</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Being in sync with my partner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Enjoying intimate moments</p>	<p>In relationships:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>With myself:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> AHA! Moments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Illness</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Slowing down, deep breaths</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Thankfulness</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Belief in my own value</p>	<p>With myself:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
<p>Other:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Other:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

For the Participants

Situations which feel non-spiritual or irritating?

Check off below	Write your own examples in these 2 columns	
<input type="checkbox"/> Arguments	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Athletic events	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bad speaker	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bureaucracy	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Bigotry	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Busy places	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Chaos	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Dishonesty	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Disloyalty	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Frustration	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Gossip	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Hate	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Human's inhumanity to human	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Ignorance	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Jealousy	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Local news	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Media	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Noise	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Not enough time	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Paperwork	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pettiness	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical sickness	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Political games	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Prejudicial thinking	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Racism	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Rock music	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Selfishness	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Shopping	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Soap operas	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Times of stress	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Violence	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiting in lines	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> War	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Worry	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Yelling	_____	_____

How can you avoid these situations, or be less irritated by them?

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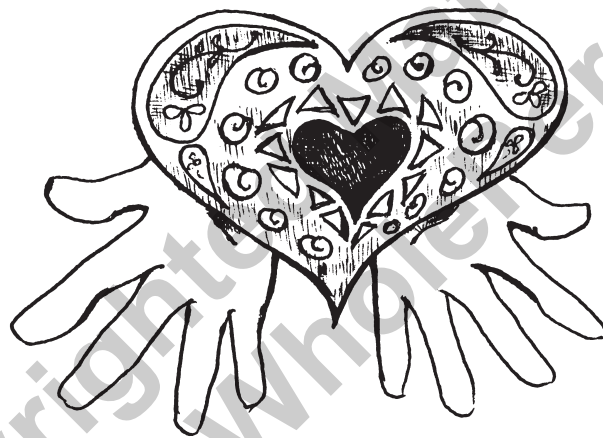
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SECTION I:

Forgiveness & Acceptance Scale



NAME _____ DATE _____

You have the opportunity to forgive both yourself and other people. Forgiveness is a conscious decision to let go of resentments, thoughts of anger, and revenge related to an offense committed against you, or for offenses you committed to yourself or others. Forgiveness is not the same as forgetting what has happened. It just means that by embracing forgiveness, you will reduce the negative feelings you have about what happened and move to a happier and freer life in the present. The Forgiveness & Acceptance Scale can help you explore your thoughts, feelings and actions related to forgiveness — both forgiving yourself and forgiving others.

Forgiveness is an act of the will, a choice and a decision.

This chapter is unique in that it contains two separate assessments, one that helps you identify how effective you are in forgiving yourself and one that helps you identify how effective you are in forgiving others.

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Forgiveness & Acceptance

Self-Forgiveness Scale Directions

Think about a past instance or situation for which you are having trouble forgiving yourself. Describe that instance or situation:

For the Self-Forgiveness Scale that follows, answer the questions on the instance or situation you provided above.

This scale contains 40 statements related to the process of forgiving and accepting yourself. Read each of the statements and decide whether or not the statement describes you. If the statement is true, circle the number next to that item under the TRUE column.

If the statement is false, circle the number next to that item under the FALSE column.

In the following example, the circled number under FALSE indicates the statement is not true of the person completing the inventory.

	TRUE	FALSE
(A) I accept myself as I am with all my problems and limitations.	2	1

This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time thinking about your answers. Your initial response will likely be the most true for you.

Be sure to respond to every statement.

(Turn to the next page and begin)

Self-Forgiveness Scale

Focus on the past instance or situation that you stated in the box on the previous page and indicate whether or not the statement is true or false for you in this instance or situation.

	TRUE	FALSE
(A) I accept myself as I am with all my problems and limitations	2	1
(A) I cannot let go of blaming myself for my mistakes	1	2
(A) I can finally let go of my guilt	2	1
(A) I often engage in negative self name-calling	1	2
(A) I can, and do, trust in my own goodness, no matter what	2	1
(A) I have terrible remorse	1	2
(A) I seem to have lost the love for myself	1	2
(A) I am so sad, I can't let it go	1	2
(A) Total _____		
(B) I feel angry a lot when I think about this incident	1	2
(B) I know that I did the best that I could at that time	2	1
(B) I feel that the other person doesn't deserve my forgiveness	1	2
(B) I keep replaying the incident in my mind	1	2
(B) I rarely act out in self-destructive ways	2	1
(B) I blame myself for my part in this incident	1	2
(B) I want to make myself pay for what happened	1	2
(B) I hate myself for what happened	1	2
(B) Total _____		
(C) I now understand what happened	2	1
(C) I understand why I did what I did	2	1
(C) It is hard for me to find anything good about myself	1	2
(C) I am beginning to move from the feelings of victim and/or guilt to empowerment	2	1
(C) I cannot separate the past from the present	1	2
(C) I am aware that this incident might not have been my fault	2	1
(C) I have become aware of how my pain from the past affected my reaction to this incident	2	1
(C) I understand and accept that life is not always fair	2	1
(C) Total _____		

(Continued on the next page)

**(Self-Forgiveness Scale** *continued*)

	TRUE	FALSE
(D) I have accepted and forgiven myself for what happened	2	1
(D) I am able to see the situation differently	2	1
(D) I cannot find meaning in what happened	1	2
(D) I have released all my resentment	2	1
(D) I have not found peace since the incident	1	2
(D) I got what I deserved	2	1
(D) I refuse to let the past interfere with my life	2	1
(D) I have accepted what happened	2	1
	(D) Total _____	
(E) I try not to think about what happened	1	2
(E) I just deny that anything happened	1	2
(E) I am able to put this incident out of my mind	2	1
(E) I have not been able to forget this incident	1	2
(E) I live as if this incident never existed	1	2
(E) I am too ashamed to think about this incident	1	2
(E) I try not to feel guilty when I think about this incident	2	1
(E) I try not to think about this incident because it is so painful	1	2
	(E) Total _____	

(Go to the Scoring Directions on the next page)

Self-Forgiveness Scale Scoring Directions

Self-forgiveness is a decision that you can make to let go of resentments about something you did, or feel you did, in the past.

Self-forgiveness is not a one-step event, but a process to work through — a journey on which you must embark. It will not be easy, but you must know where you currently are. The Forgiveness & Acceptance Scale is designed to assess where you are in the self-forgiveness process. To get your (A) Forgiving Yourself score, total the numbers you circled for statements marked (A) on the scale. You will get a score from 8 to 16. Put that number on the line next to the (A) Total line on the scale you just completed. Do the same for the next four scales: (B), (C), (D) and (E). Then transfer those numbers below.

(A) Forgiving Yourself Total = _____

(B) Anger Total = _____

(C) Understanding/Insight Total = _____

(D) Acceptance/Compassion Total = _____

(E) Denial/Avoidance Total = _____

Profile Interpretation

TOTAL SCALES SCORES	RESULT	INDICATIONS
Scores from 14 to 16	High	You have been able to overcome the sadness associated with the incident or situation and you are well on the way to forgiving yourself and finding inner peace.
Scores from 11 to 13	Moderate	You have been able to overcome some of the sadness associated with the incident or situation but you can still work on forgiving yourself and finding inner peace.
Scores from 8 to 10	Low	You are having difficulty overcoming the sadness associated with the incident or situation and you need assistance to work on forgiving yourself and finding inner peace, and you will benefit by completing the activities that follow.



Self-Forgiveness Scale Descriptions

SCALE A – Forgiving Yourself

People scoring low on this scale indicate they are unable to forgive themselves. They forget that everyone makes mistakes at times and they need to forgive themselves. They need to learn to be courageous, loving to themselves and ready to forgive themselves as well as other people.

SCALE B – Anger

People scoring low on this scale indicate they continue to feel angry about what happened. They are angry at themselves. They keep rethinking the incident which makes them even angrier. They want to do something that would make them feel okay. They feel hurt and angry and may be prone to strike out at themselves both mentally and physically.

SCALE C – Understanding/Insight

People scoring low on this scale indicate they have trouble separating the past from the present and continue to harbor negative feelings about what happened. They still may think they were responsible for what happened and continue to let the pain of the past interfere with their present lives. They may even think that life isn't fair and they will never let go of what happened.

SCALE D – Acceptance/Compassion

People scoring low on this scale seem to be unable to feel compassion for themselves and unable to accept what happened. They cannot find meaning in what happened, and are unable to let go of the need to re-enact what happened. They feel no self-compassion and are unable to see the bigger picture of their value.

SCALE E – Denial/Avoidance

People scoring low on this scale indicate they are still in a state of denial about something that happened in the past. They are having trouble feeling the full impact of what happened and how the incident has influenced their lives. They may be feeling guilty and just want to try to forget that it happened at all. They attempt to overcome these feelings by denying that something happened or by running away from, or ignoring, their feelings.

Self-Forgiveness

Self-forgiveness (forgiving ourselves for what we did, or perceive our action or reaction), cleanses us and allows us to overcome our guilt and shame.

The following method may help you to forgive yourself.

A Question to Consider:

1) What makes it so difficult to forgive yourself?

Start the Forgiveness Process: Try to Forgive Yourself

2) What possible benefits or gains are you receiving from not forgiving yourself?

3) Start the forgiveness process by trying to forgive yourself.
For what do you want to forgive yourself?

Now, forgive yourself out loud for these things!

4) Think of a time that you forgave someone. How can you work on trying to do the same for yourself?

Remember that self-forgiveness is a powerful survival tool. Use it to empower yourself!