

# Spirit Moved



**A Christian Guide for Moving Though Shame and Trauma**

*By: Casie Bray*

# *Setting the Intention*

Welcome to Spirit Moved—

a healing companion for your mind, body, and soul.

This workbook was born from a place of deep pain, profound transformation, and divine purpose. Whether you've experienced trauma, shame, loss, or seasons where your spirit felt disconnected, this is a space where you are invited to show up as you are—without pressure to perform or perfect.

You will find Scripture, reflections, mindful movement, and simple but powerful practices meant to guide you toward healing and hope. My journey has shown me that healing doesn't follow a linear path—it spirals, it pauses, it sometimes takes two steps back before leaping forward.

But through it all, God remains. Present. Patient. Loving.

As you move through these pages, give yourself permission to take breaks. To cry. To smile. To revisit. To rest. There is no right way to heal—but there is your way, and it's sacred

*“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.” –*

*Jeremiah 29:13*

This is not about fixing yourself—it's about remembering who you already are in Christ.

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# *Release*

## Burn This Page (Release Ritual)

Take a moment to list anything you're ready to release—guilt, shame, old narratives, past trauma, or lies you've believed about yourself. You are safe to write freely.

“Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.” – 1 Peter 5:7

When you feel ready, and only if it feels safe to do so, tear out this page and burn it as an act of surrender and renewal.  
Let it rise like incense. Let it go with love.

# *Daily Movement and Prayer/Praise*

Daily Movement & Prayer/Praise Tracker

Use this page as a daily check-in to keep yourself grounded in spirit, movement, and mindfulness. Customize it to fit your rhythm.

Date	Movement (Yoga, Walk, Dance)	Scripture or Prayer Focus	How I Feel (Before)	How I Feel (After)
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*“For in Him we live and move  
and have our being.” – Acts  
17:28*

# *Called to Fellowship and Community*

## Fellowship and Community: Healing Together

While the journey of healing is deeply personal, it is not one we were meant to walk alone. Scripture reminds us of the strength found in unity: “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them.” – Matthew 18:20

We are all recovering in some way—from trauma, shame, illness, or identity loss—and there is power in sharing our stories, supporting one another, and walking each other home.

This workbook is just the beginning of a greater vision—one that includes fellowship, prayer, movement, discussion, and sacred space where healing continues in community. While I unapologetically lead with my Christian faith, this is a space that welcomes all—wherever you are in your spiritual journey. Whether you're rooted in faith, curious, or still searching, you are welcome here.

Let us be women and men of valor, lifting one another in love, humility, and truth. This is not about changing your beliefs but offering a safe place for healing, growth, and connection.

If your heart feels called to join in this kind of support space—know the invitation is open.

You belong here.

# *In Closing:*

## Workbook Closing: A Blessing for the Journey Ahead

You've done brave work here.

Maybe you uncovered truths, met old wounds with gentleness, or simply made space for stillness in a noisy world. No matter how many pages you completed, the fact that you showed up is a testimony to your resilience. This workbook isn't the end—it's the beginning of a new chapter. You are not who you were at the start. You are a little lighter, a little stronger, and a lot more aware of the Spirit moving within you.

Keep listening. Keep healing. Keep walking in truth.

"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion." –

Philippians 1:6

You are not alone. You are loved. And you are being refined—by fire, by faith, and by grace.

Let's move forward—spirit moved, soul awakened, heart open.

## Final Breath Practice

As we do in class, take one final, deep breath in... and let it go.

Bring your thumbs to your lips: May our words be kind and careful.

Bring your thumbs to your third eye: May our thoughts be wise and mindful.

Bring your hands to your heart center: May we live from a place of love and truth.

You are spirit moved. You are whole. You are home.





# 01

# Module 1

## WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

### A Christian approach

John 16:33 In this world you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

We often hear that we live in a fallen world, one filled with trials and sorrows, which is part of the human experience crafted by God. Regardless of where we are on our spiritual journeys, we can all agree that we have encountered suffering and challenges in various forms and intensities. It is crucial to remember that the trials we endure are not random or meaningless; instead, they can act as catalysts for growth, transformation, and deeper connections with God and others.

Processing pain and suffering is vital as it influences our personal growth from those experiences. While it is not easy, choosing to reflect, heal, and seek purpose amid trials can cultivate remarkable resilience, empathy, and wisdom. This provides an opportunity to discover hope and grace, reminding us that even during the toughest times, we can emerge stronger and more anchored in our faith and values.

### What is Shame?

Shame is an emotion rooted in feelings of guilt, embarrassment, humiliation, and a sense of being unworthy or inadequate. These feelings can foster negative self-beliefs and lead to harmful behaviors.

### What is Trauma?

Trauma refers to how our bodies process and react to external events. It disrupts our normal functioning and can occasionally lead us to dissociate from our physical selves.

Shame + Trauma = Significant Suffering

## Refined by Fire

Take a moment to reflect on your past and identify what you consider to be significant turning points in your life. These moments are often linked with feelings such as temptation, loss, illness, persecution, self-pity, shame, regret, and guilt. Let's not dwell on this for too long, but take a moment to list these impactful experiences so you can come back to them when you are ready to explore them further. \*

## Shame – A Youthful Perspective

I'm going to share an analogy I learned from a fellow like-minded Christian during a clarion call. Often, we view ourselves and others as a muddy puppy, feeling unworthy of entering the house—dirty, guilty, and burdened with shame. We might even recognize that we should have acted differently. However, God sees a young, playful puppy that just got into some mud, ready to be cleaned up and welcomed inside. God loves us, sins and all, even before we are cleaned, similar to a beautiful lotus, waiting to blossom out of the muddy water.



It can take time to uncover and work through those feelings of shame, but ultimately, it lead one to fully embrace and understand that Jesus Christ is the answer!

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

## How Jesus Breaks Our Shame

Jesus' sacrifice on the cross bridges the gap between humanity and God, breaking the chains of shame and guilt caused by sin. By His death, burial, and resurrection, He makes a way for spiritual rebirth—a resurrection of the soul here on earth for those who believe. This transformative process begins with repentance, where we turn away from sin and align our hearts with God's will.

Through faith in Him, we are empowered to walk in His teachings, experiencing not only forgiveness but also the grace to live a life of purpose, love, and service. It's a journey of continually being shaped into His image, where shame no longer defines us because we are covered by His righteousness. It's such a powerful gift of freedom and redemption!

# Trauma

SAMSA (substance abuse and mental health service administration) defines trauma as an event or series of events that cause lasting harm to a person's mental, physical and/or social wellbeing.

Trauma and Trauma-informed care have become central to conversations about health, wellness, and social care in recent years. It's a sign of a broader shift in understanding that acknowledges how deeply trauma can impact mental, emotional, and physical health. Instead of just addressing symptoms, this approach aims to understand the root causes of people's struggles, recognizing that many challenges stem from unresolved trauma.

A likely reason for this is the aftermath of COVID-19 combined with political polarization and societal confusion, which has really magnified these issues. COVID itself was a collective trauma—disrupting lives, creating uncertainty, and leaving so many of us dealing with loss, isolation, and fear.

## Trauma Informed Care

- Central Conversations about health, wellness and social care
- Impacts mental, social and physical health
- Focus on root causes
- Resonates with all
- Holistic approach
- Creates environment that prioritizes safety, empowerment and understanding
- Helps prevent re-traumatization
- Fosters resilience
- Reduces shame and stigma
- Empowers recovery
- Builds trust
- Shifts the focus from asking, "What's wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?"

# Types of Trauma

- **Acute Trauma** - a single event that is overwhelming and causes distress and fear. (accident, sexual assault, sudden death of loved one, natural disaster)
- **Chronic Trauma**- repeated exposure to traumatic events over a course of time. (chronic illness, war, domestic violence)
- **Complex Trauma**- multiple and overlapping experiences that occur in a close relationship over along period of time. (neglect, abuse, emotional abuse especially childhood)

*“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” – Psalm 34:18*

## Ways Trauma may be experienced

### Common Experiences

- **Initial**- exhaustion, confusion, sadness, anxiety, agitation, numbness, dissociation, confusion, physical arousal, blunted affect
- **Normal Response**- still socially acceptable, psychologically effective, self-limited
- **Severe Response**- continuous distress (no calm, or rest period). severe dissociation, intrusive recollection despite a return to safety
- **Delayed Response**- persistent fatigue, sleep disorder, nightmare, fear of recurrence, anxiety, depression, avoidance of emotions sensations and activities associated with the trauma

**\*most trauma survivors are highly resilient and develop appropriate coping strategies**

### Physical

somatic complaints; sleep disturbances; gastrointestinal, cardiovascular, neurological, musculoskeletal, respiratory, and dermatological disorders; urological problems; and substance use disorders.

### Biological Cascade and Stress Response

(PTSD, other mental illnesses, and substance use disorders)

- **Changes limbic system functioning.**
- **Hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis activity changes with variable cortisol levels.**
- **Neurotransmitter-related dysregulation of arousal and endogenous opioid systems.**

### Cognitive Changes

Cognitive errors, excessive or inappropriate guilt, idealizations, delusions/hallucinations, intrusive thoughts and memories.

### “Feeling Different”

no one will understand, I am broken

- **Want to come to realization their situation is unique and should be heard and shared to help others (Testimony!)**

# Triggers and Flashbacks

**3 D's Dissociation, depersonalization, and derealization “feels like a dream or living in a bubble...”**

**Difficulty regulating emotions Initial-** exhaustion, confusion, sadness, anxiety, agitation, numbness, dissociation, confusion, physical arousal, blunted affect

## **Negative Self Regulation**

Self-medication in attempts to regain emotional control, self harm and self destructive behaviors (self-injurious behaviors, disordered eating) compulsive behaviors such as gambling or overworking, and repression or denial of emotions, reenactments

## **Positive Self Regulation/Resilience**

Support health and wellness through physical activity, creativity (writing, art, cooking...), creating organizations that support trauma and recovery

- **Increased bonding with family and community.**
- **Redefined or increased sense of purpose and meaning.**
- **Increased commitment to a personal mission.**
- **Revised priorities.**
- **Increased charitable giving and volunteerism.**

Now that we have gained insight into shame and trauma and their various impacts on our lives, let's explore what we can control and what lies beyond our reach. During my own traumatic breakdown, I recall my father reminding me that we cannot solve all the world's issues; instead, we should concentrate on what we can manage. Additionally, we shouldn't let our fears about potential scenarios that haven't occurred yet hold us back. Why spend energy worrying about things that aren't even real at this moment?

This perfectly illustrates the wisdom found in mindfulness and scripture: to remain present and anchored in reality rather than getting lost in the “what ifs.” This approach is beneficial for processing trauma and breaking free from shame.

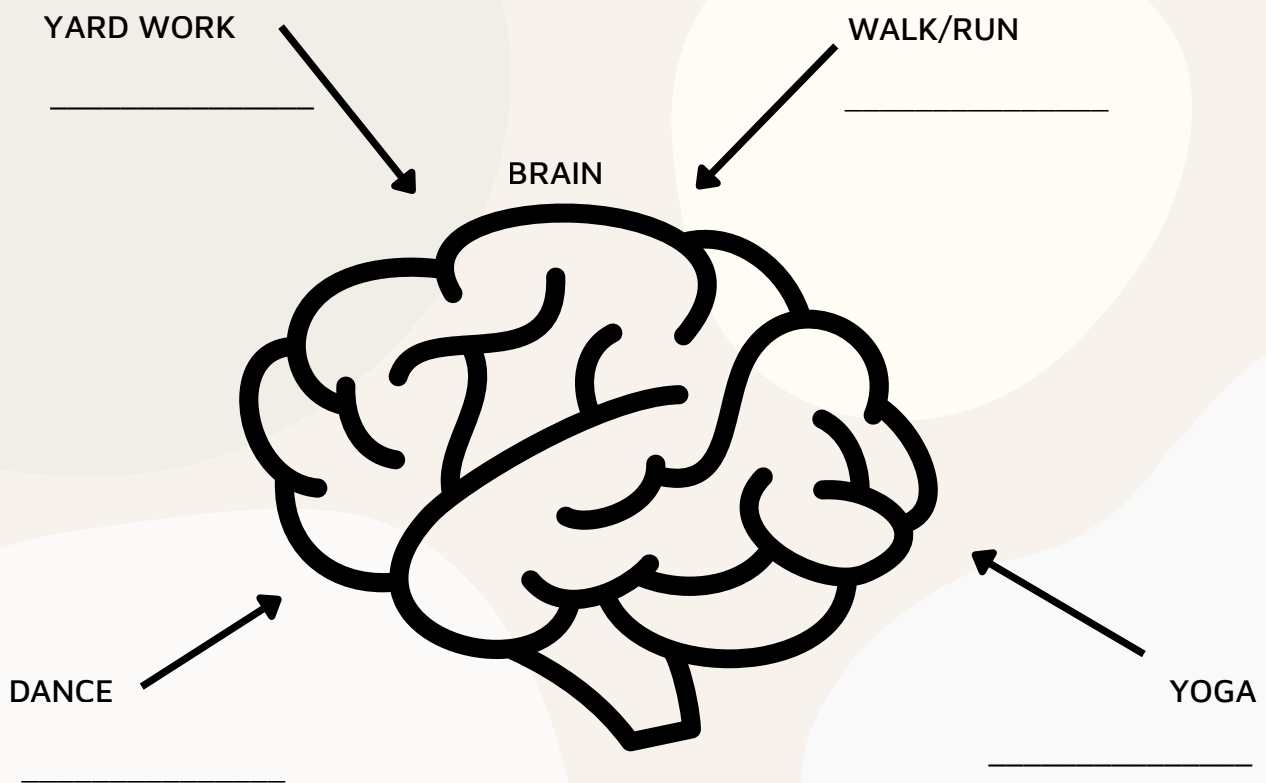
By focusing on what we can control—such as our actions, thoughts, and choices—we reclaim our agency, even in situations where we may have felt powerless.

The “what ifs” often rob us of our peace, yet they exist solely in our minds. As Jesus stated in Matthew 6:34, “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” This is a reminder to trust that we need not bear the burden of the future—just the grace for today.

# *Mindful Movement, Spirit Moved*

In this section of our workbook I want ua to take a look at why movement and meditative techniques can be useful in overcoming trauma and shame. Why it works and tools we can use and practice in the privacy of our own home or in a small group.

## MOVEMENT AS MEDICINE-THE “SCIENCE”



I provided some activities I enjoy, take time to fill in what you enjoy that requires movement

# Happy Chemicals

Our bodies are beautifully designed with natural systems that foster health, balance, and happiness. When we engage in physical movement, we not only boost blood circulation, delivering oxygen and nutrients to our brain and cells, but we also generate those wonderful feel-good chemicals!

## ENDORPHINS

The “natural painkillers”, released during exercise, laughter, and moments of joy. They're part of our natural opioid system and help reduce pain and create feelings of pleasure.

## DOPAMINE

The "reward" chemical, released when we accomplish something, experience pleasure, or even anticipate something good.

Did you know that dopamine levels drop during adolescence, which can lead to an increase in risk-taking behavior? This is one reason why sports and exercise are so vital during this stage of life. They provide a healthy outlet for energy, promote positive habits, and can help regulate mood and reward pathways in the brain.

## SEROTONIN

Plays a big role in mood regulation and feelings of contentment. It's often associated with being out in nature, feeling connected, or acts of kindness. This chemical plays a key role in body functions such as sleep, digestion, nausea, wound healing, bone health, blood clotting and sexual desire.

## OXYTOCIN

The "love hormone," it's released through physical touch, bonding, and acts of affection. It's a powerful connector in relationships.



### **God created us with the ability to produce "happy chemicals"**

When you think about it, all these chemicals work together beautifully to encourage us to live in ways that align with our physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being—like moving our bodies, building community, serving others, and being mindful of the beauty in creation. It's like God designed us with the tools to thrive and experience His joy naturally!



# Spirit Moved

Spirit Led, Spirit Moved

When I first began using exercise to manage the symptoms of trauma, stress, anxiety, and depression, I experienced a profound realization. It all started with running. Running was the only activity that seemed to quiet my mind, pulling it away from endless worries about "what ifs" and things beyond my control. The rhythmic motion helped me focus on my breath, count my strides, and silence the mental chatter. Over time, this sense of focus and calm extended to my yoga practice, both on my own and in group settings.

Yoga, however, offered something even deeper—it didn't just clear my mind; it created space for meaningful conversations with God. It enabled me to rebuild my relationship with Him, allowing me to speak openly and then listen as I would with a close friend. The more I engaged in this practice, the more I found myself truly listening. I began to notice this happening even outside of yoga, like when I was out doing yard work. I'd have full conversations in my mind—conversations filled with deep meaning and introspection about my life, my experiences, my prayers, and my search for answers. In those moments, I found clarity.

Now, I often say that my best work happens when I spend time with God and do this as often as possible.

I share this because I believe that deep healing can occur when we make that connection with God—when we allow Him to be our counselor and open ourselves to the miracles He can bring into our lives. For me, yoga became a powerful tool in that process, but I know it may not be the answer for everyone. Still, I believe we all have the opportunity to explore what works best for us to foster that connection—whether it's through movement, stillness, nature, or something entirely different. The important part is creating the space to listen, reflect, and grow in our relationship with God.

Isaiah 9:6

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;  
And the government will rest on His shoulders;  
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Ephesians 1:11

In Him, we have also received an inheritance, having been  
predestined according to the purpose of the One who works all things  
according to the counsel of His own will.

# More “Science”

## More than Fight or Flight

The most commonly known reactions to threats (or trauma) are Fight and Flight. However, there are other responses that are less frequently discussed, such as Freeze, Fawn, Fine, and Faint.

Fight or Flight is exactly what it sounds like. When we encounter a threat, our brain activates the sympathetic part of the autonomic nervous system. This doesn't always lead to a physical confrontation but can also involve how our mind and body react to a verbal assault.

Think about a time when someone made a comment that angered you, or a situation where you felt physically endangered. What did you notice about how your body responded and how you felt?



“TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING; IN ALL YOUR WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM, AND HE WILL MAKE YOUR PATHS STRAIGHT.” – PROVERBS 3:5-6

The autonomic nervous system (ANS) regulates essential functions such as blood pressure, heart rate, urination, sweating, and digestion, among others. When the sympathetic nervous system is activated, its primary role is to ensure our safety. Interestingly, this same system is also triggered during intense physical activity! The key neurotransmitters involved in this process are norepinephrine, epinephrine, and acetylcholine.

While the sympathetic nervous system works to activate and energize us, the parasympathetic system does the opposite, promoting relaxation and counteracting the signals from the SNS to maintain balance. How incredible is that?

Practices like breathwork, massage, meditation, mind-body balancing, and proper nutrition can all support this balance. In fact, we can combine high-intensity training or cardio with slower, mindful movements and meditation to train our bodies, enhance self-regulation, and build resilience.

# More “Science”

## The less spoken

- Freeze: When the brain becomes so overwhelmed, it triggers a state of paralysis, leaving you unable to respond.
- Fawn: A response where you attempt to appease or please the source of the stress in an effort to make it stop.
- Fine: The denial or suppression of trauma, often dismissing it as if nothing is wrong.
- Faint (Vasovagal Response): A physical response to overwhelming stress or trauma, where the body shuts down, resulting in fainting or extreme dizziness as a protective mechanism.

Despite how we respond to trauma the idea of using tools like movement to work through trauma is centered on fostering feelings of safety, trust, pleasure, and strength. In some cases, the initial goal may simply be to reconnect with the ability to “feel” again. Movement can help build resilience to stressful situations while also providing healthy ways to cope and heal. As Christians, we can take this a step further by using movement as an opportunity to connect with the Spirit, deepening our healing and faith journey.

## Tools

Before diving into the various “tools” God has given us to promote wellness and balance in our bodies, I want to take a brief moment to address something.

I have decided to step away from the ongoing debate among Christians about whether or not a believer can practice yoga. For too long, I allowed certain comments to affect me, but I will keep this simple:

God created everything, and we are called to worship Him with all our heart, body, mind, and soul. My practice is simply another way to worship fully, and it works for me. I find it interesting that so many others have had similar experiences. The truth is, God will meet us wherever we are—it all comes down to our intention.

While I have studied other religions, spiritual and cultural practices, that does not mean I adopt them. Yoga is a practice, and many of its principles align with Jesus’ teachings and Scripture. I am not worshiping other gods—just as I wasn’t when I was a gymnast or practiced ballet. Rather, I have embraced this practice as a way to become more Christlike.

Prayerful meditation, connecting with God, and mindful, meditative practices help rewire our neural pathways, transforming the way we think and regulate our emotions. While others may use yoga differently, this is why I emphasize that intention is what makes the difference.

Much of this debate stems from misunderstanding and fear. When something has origins outside of Western Christianity, some people assume it must be entirely rejected, rather than recognizing that it can be repurposed for God's glory. Historically, many things Christians use today—like music, art, and even certain holidays—have roots in non-Christian traditions, yet they have been redeemed and used for worship.

# Toolbox

- Meditation and Prayer
  - Christian Meditation/prayer- Lectio divina, examine conscience, ignatian contemplation, full-body worship/movement
  - Mindfulness meditation- awareness practice to focus on the present, trains our brains into being less reactive and more reflective in our response to stress and anxiety ...
  - Gratitude

**Lectio Divina** ("lex-ee-oh div-ee-nah)- divine reading, spiritual reading, a method of praying with the Bible

Silence (silencio)

Pray (oratio)

Read (lectio)

Meditate (meditatio)

Embody (incarnatio)

Breath Prayer

Nourishment

Temptation:

Lust- JOB 31:1

Anxiety- Philippians 4 6-7

Worry Provisions Matthew 6:33-34

Fear- 2 Timothy 1:7

Tap into passion- music/art/animals (beauty)/smells, taste choice on what we like dont like, being present

Still-->Kind-->community