Self-Worth and Identity

A reflection worksheet for separating circumstances, performance, and personal worth

Purpose: Difficult seasons, setbacks, losses, and unmet expectations can affect how we see ourselves. This worksheet is designed to help distinguish what is happening in life from the conclusions we may draw about our worth.

1. What Is Happening vs. What Does It Mean About Me?

The situation: What are the facts of what is happening right now?

The impact: What is genuinely difficult, disappointing, painful, or uncertain about it?

The meaning: When I think about this situation, what do I start telling myself about who I am?

Because _____, my mind tells me that I am _____.

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2. Circumstance, Performance, or Identity?

For each statement, decide whether it describes a circumstance or performance, or makes a global judgment about the person's worth.

Thought	Circumstance / Performance	Identity Judgment
Something important in my life is not going the way I hoped.	[ ]	[ ]
I made a mistake.	[ ]	[ ]
I am a failure.	[ ]	[ ]
I am struggling in an important area of life.	[ ]	[ ]
Other people seem further ahead than I am.	[ ]	[ ]
Because I am struggling, I am less valuable than other people.	[ ]	[ ]

Write one of your own:

[ ] Circumstance / Performance [ ] Identity Judgment

3. Step Back From the Thought

Choose one painful judgment about yourself:

"I am _____."

Now add some distance from the thought:

"I am having the thought that I am _____."

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And one step further:

"My mind is telling me the story that because _____, I am _____."

What happens emotionally or behaviorally when I completely believe this story?

Does holding tightly to this story help me move toward the person I want to be?

4. Am I Rating My Whole Self?

A circumstance, outcome, mistake, or area of weakness can be evaluated without turning that evaluation into a verdict about the whole person.

Something in my life or performance that I am dissatisfied with:

The conclusion I tend to draw about myself because of it:

If someone I respect were in the same situation, would I conclude that this person had less worth? [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] I'm not sure

What would I say about that person instead?

If this situation improved dramatically, would I become a more valuable human being, or would I be the same valuable person in better circumstances?

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5. What Remains True About Me?

Circumstances and roles can change. Consider qualities, capacities, relationships, values, and experiences that remain part of who you are.

Qualities or strengths I still possess (examples: compassionate, persistent, creative, dependable, courageous, thoughtful, willing to learn)

Things I have survived, learned, or handled that demonstrate capability

Ways I contribute to other people's lives that are not based on achievement or status

6. A Christian Foundation for Worth

Christian faith offers a foundation for human worth that is not dependent on achievement, status, relationship roles, or circumstances.

Genesis 1:26-27: Human beings are created in the image of God.

Ephesians 2:8-10: Grace is received rather than earned, while our lives are still called toward meaningful good work.

Romans 8:38-39: Changing circumstances do not separate us from the love of God.

If my worth begins with being created, known, and loved by God, what power do my present circumstances actually have to determine my value?

Healthy responsibility My choices and actions matter. I want to grow, use my abilities well, repair what I can, and move toward a meaningful life.	Performance-based worth I need to succeed, achieve, be admired, or have my life look a certain way in order to prove that I am valuable.

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Which of these has been shaping the way I treat myself?

What would it look like to pursue growth from faithfulness, responsibility, and hope rather than from the need to prove my worth?

7. A More Complete Story

Something that is genuinely hard right now:

Something I want to change, improve, grieve, or accept:

The negative identity story my mind tells me:

A more accurate description of my situation:

What remains true and valuable about me even while this is difficult:

What I believe God says is more fundamental about my identity and worth:

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8. The Next Faithful Step

Accepting your worth does not mean pretending everything is fine or giving up on change. It means that growth does not have to function as a test of whether you deserve dignity.

If I did not have to prove that I was valuable, how would I want to show up in this season?

What is one realistic, values-consistent step I can take next?

My statement for this season

My circumstances are _____.

That is difficult because _____.

It does not mean that I am _____.

What remains true about me is _____.

My worth is grounded in _____.

The next faithful step I can take is _____.