

# 5 Steps to Take When Your Past Abuse Still Haunts You

Do feelings of shame, anger, or fear from your past abuse overwhelm you? Perhaps you struggle to trust others. If these emotions sound familiar, consider these 5 steps.

## **Step #1 - Be willing to acknowledge the shame of your past.**

The shame of my past left me striving to fix the brokenness and prove I was more than what happened to me. Consider asking yourself:

*Can I identify shame's lies? Can I replace each lie with God's truth?*

## **Step #2 - Be honest about your confusion.**

My attempts to reconcile why those who could have protected me were unaware of what happened deepened my confusion. Ask yourself:

*Has my past left me unable to move forward? What is one step I can take toward the peace God offers?*

## **Step #3 - Be willing to admit you're angry.**

Perhaps anger has become a close friend, and you wrestle with questions about God's goodness.

*Does anger consume my thoughts and drive my behavior? Am I using anger as a tool to protect myself?*

## **Step #4 - Be willing to face your fears.**

Even when the object of your fear is gone, the resulting emotions can become a chain of bondage. If fear is still controlling your life, think about the following:

*Have I become more isolated or anxious? What if I choose to hold onto God's promise to protect?*

## **#5 - Be open to rebuilding trust.**

I surrounded myself with people who were dependable and honest—then I let them in.

*Do I find it difficult to trust others? What is one step I can take to be more trusting?*



# Healing After Abuse?

## WORDS TO REPEAT WHEN YOUR PAST ABUSE STILL HAUNTS YOU

“I can be changed by what happens to me, but I refuse to be reduced by it.” —*Maya Angelou*

“Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.” —*Deuteronomy 31:6*

“Today, I’ve found a new refuge—resting at the top of a hill, overlooking a city, crowned by a cross. And when I am faced with the ugliness of this world or the sin in my life, I can look up and be certain that from now to eternity, I am safely resting in the arms of my Father. Fear no longer controls me. I am free.” —*A. McCormick*

“Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.” —*Colossians 3:12-13*

“We all have a story. The difference is: Do you use the story to empower yourself? Or do you use your story to keep yourself a victim? The question itself empowers you to change your life.” —*Sunny Dawn Johnson*

“God rewrote the text of my life when I opened the book of my heart to his eyes.” —*Psalms 18:24*

