

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE



Core Story

Unlock the Treasure of
Knowing Your Story

DR. TERRY S. SMITH

Core Story: Unlock the Treasure of Knowing Your Story

Dr. Terry S. Smith

Core Story: Unlock the Treasure of Knowing Your Story

Dr. Terry S. Smith

Copyright © 2022 Coaching: Life Matters. All rights reserved.

Published by Meazzo Design Co.

ISBN 978-1-4583-0487-2

ENDORSEMENTS

“ Dr. Terry Smith's Core Story technique provides a kind and caring way to give people a revealing and valuable look at themselves. The Core Story also creates a unique opportunity for a person to discover and acknowledge their Core Beliefs and the powerful role these beliefs have in shaping a person's life.

Joseph McLoughlin, Ph.D., Associate Professor of the Practice of Psychology and Human Development at Vanderbilt University

“ As someone who went through the process of recounting my Core Story with Dr. Terry Smith almost two decades ago, I know personally that it can be a powerful experience. In this booklet, he goes step by step through his approach to drawing out the Core Story which highlights special relationships and controlling beliefs. It instructs the reader on how to replicate the process he has developed to transform lives over decades as a counselor.

Trina R. Shanks, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Michigan, School of Social Work

“ The Core Story provides insight into broken attachments and the meaning we place on those family attachments we experienced as children. Through the tool, we learn what we had to do to get our needs met! I think this should be an excellent accompaniment to addiction treatment.

Leslie S. C. Cole, M.D., Author of Quit Pain Pills Without the Withdrawal: How to Break Free from Your Dependence and Finally Woke Up Feeling Normal

“ The Core Story process gives a person the sacred space to tell the truth about themselves. When I experienced the process it was both profound and humbling. For those seeking greater understanding about human relationships, the Core Story coaching tool is a tremendous gift that offers endless possibilities to experience understanding, healing, and draw us to a deeper readiness to give and receive love.

Karen Casey, M.Ed., Educator, Metro Nashville Public Schools

“ Every man, woman and child have a Core Story. Unlocking that story, understanding the unconscious drivers, and discovering the true self has freed thousands from addictive and obsessive behaviors. On the job and in countless marriages, those behaviors sabotage success. The Core Story manual speeds the process of discovery and is an important tool for recovery.

Russell Bloodworth, Jr., Executive Vice-President of Boyle Investment, Inc.

“ The Core Story is an enhanced approach to using the genogram. This insightful and spiritually grounded process allows individuals to see themselves through a hopeful and true lens. Working with the Core Story is a great beginning and provides a solid foundation for continued emotional and spiritual healing and growth.

Lezlie R. Owsley, MMFT, LMFT, Intentional Life Counseling, LLC

“ My use of the Core Story concepts has proven to be a valuable tool for assisting people to assess the impact of their relationships and structure their thinking about their sources of motivation and drivers for performance, whether in a marriage or an organizational setting.

Ronald G. Joyner, LFACHE, Retired Hospital CEO, Co-Author of Being Better at Being Married: Building a Deeper Relationship Through Mutual Understanding

“ If you have experienced the genogram as a resource for understanding one's family system, what Dr. Terry Smith has developed with the Core Story tool is more life giving and transformative than the genogram by itself! I've been personally transformed by the Core Story and have also witnessed the sacred space created with others each time a colleague, client, or friend experiences their Core Story. The Core Story helps people better understand the heart of human relationships.

John O. York, Ph.D., Director, Doctor of Ministry Program; Associate Dean, Hazelip School of Theology, Lipscomb University

“ Several years ago I had the pleasure of Terry Smith facilitating my Core Story amongst two friends. I was blown away by the things that I learned about myself. The Core Story tool shined a light on my Core Beliefs, Core Wound, and Core Lie. I have since been able to confront my inadequacies and draw closer to the One who loves me and also help others process their life journey by facilitating their Core Story. The tool is powerful and illuminating as it allows individuals to look in the rearview mirror of their life and understand "great and unsearchable things they did not know."

William Roberts, Story Archeologists, Retired Business Executive

“ Core Story is a powerful instrument for discovery and healing of deep trauma. It is particularly valuable for those suffering PTSD from military or first responder experiences.

Larry Malone, Retired Captain, USN Aviator, Vietnam War Veteran



DEDICATIONS

I'd like to dedicate this book to five special men, each of whom have impacted my life through the gift of deep friendship, a knowledge of their own story, and the greatest story of all.

I mention these men in the order of meeting them. You will find each of these men's lives imprinted deeply in my life's work.

**Landon Saunders, James Woodroof, Russell Bloodworth, Jr.,
Dr. Merle R. Jordan and Ron Joyner**

Landon, Jim and Rusty have been friends and mentors for over 50 years.

Merle, my friend and Professor at Boston University studying personality, religion and culture.

Ron is my friend who has worked closely with me over the last 28 years. He is the engine behind establishing our non-profit educational organization - Coaching: Life Matters (CLM)

All of these men have written books that provide deep knowledge of how to live in this world with authentic joy.



Published in 2022 by Mezzo Design Co.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks and recognition goes to the Heart Table Team-
hearttable.org

Larry Malone

Bill Roberts

Rocky Tannehill

Marcus Meazzo

Creative Direction/Publisher

Each of these friends have practiced the Core Story and have
been my teachers.

Steve Meeks has taught me so much as we have processed
the use of the Core Story as a resource in coaching people how
to move forward in life - husband of **Donna Jo**, father of five,
grandfather, excellent therapist and dear friend.

Rebekah Jenkins Gibbs, thank you for bringing your friendship
and editing skills to this book and on the website
www.coachinglifematters.org

COACHING: LIFE MATTERS

To donate to Coaching: Life Matters, please make checks payable
to Coaching Life Matters and send to:

Coaching: Life Matters
7100 Executive Center Drive, Suite 105
Brentwood, TN 37027

You may also donate by going to www.coachinglifematters.org.
Click "Donate" and follow the instructions.



Core Story

A video of a Core Story interview can be viewed by going to
www.coachinglifematters.org/videos
and select *Core Story Training Video*.

Copyright © 2022, Coaching: Life Matters. All Rights Reserved.

Coaching: Life Matters is a 501c3 organization located in Brentwood, TN.

THE CORE STORY PROCESS

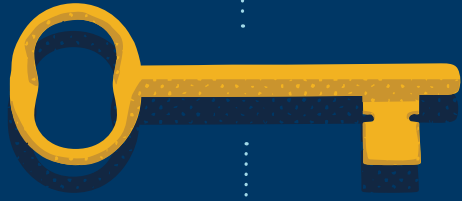
BY TERRY S. SMITH, D.MIN.


“What a person believes will override what they know. Controlling beliefs often lie beyond conscious awareness and must be sought out.”




Table of Contents

The Approach to the Core Story Process	10
Steps to the Core Story Process	16
Step 1 The Tools	18
Step 2 Questions Regarding Family of Origin	30
Step 3 Questions About Relationships in the Family	36
Step 4 Questions About Experience Outside the Home	42
Step 5 Questions to Identify Significant, Caring People	46
Step 6 Questions to Identify Controlling Beliefs	50
Step 7 Questions to Identify Core Wounds, Lies & Truths	54
Step 8 Making the Decision	60
Step 9 Final Thoughts & Reflections	64
Remarks on Healing Through Hearing and Understanding	66
Biography	74
Bibliography	76





THE
APPROACH...
TO THE
CORE STORY
PROCESS



When referring to the Core Story Process,

we are referring to the mapping of an individual's personal story over the first eighteen years of life (with a particular emphasis on early childhood beliefs about security, esteem, and power). During the process, the person you are helping will recount a relational history covering three generations. Also to be recounted will be the experiences and perceptions of a wide range of relationships, including how they feel they were perceived by their parents.

It is possible for an individual to complete the process alone, but involving others as process facilitators will stimulate discussion and feedback that can result in a deeper understanding of what comes out of the Core Story Process experience. You need to become familiar before you start with the various

questions, forms, and formats that will be encountered during the Core Story Process. Organizing your thoughts in advance of the interview will increase the likelihood of the one being interviewed getting the most out of the experience as you guide them towards considering things they may have never considered before, or at least not in a long time.

Keep in mind that the completion of the Core Story Process will not always result in the discovery of some hidden flaw. Some people will complete this process in order to see if there are things about them that, if known, might improve their relationships and personal performance. Sometimes the Core Story Process will only result in a confirmation that there is little about their actions and personality that are detrimental to getting the most out of life.

The Core Story Process is conceptually and educationally sound. It employs the widely used think-pair-share learning strategy. It supports multi-sensory learning techniques where what is heard and what is recorded on the Core Story Process diagram become companion learning tools.

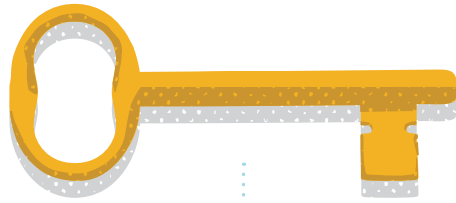
The Core Story Process is also consistent with Visual Learning Strategies (VLS). This is where images are used to help a person reflect on their own thinking. This approach facilitates learning through reasoning with evidence, making connections, wondering and asking questions, uncovering complexity and going below the surface of things, identifying patterns and making generalizations, and evaluating evidence, arguments, and actions.

By employing the Visual Learning Strategies inherent to the Core Story Process, critical

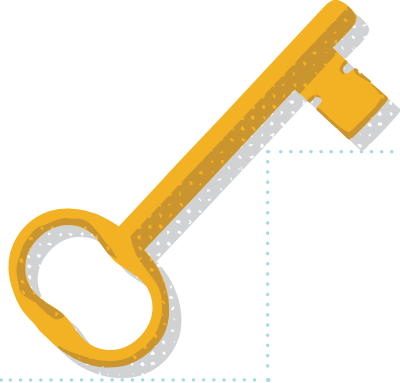
thinking is enhanced through a discussion about the visual representation captured on the Core Story diagram. This learning method has proven to be a good way for tapping into a person's background knowledge and aiding in memory recall.

Many people have experienced some degree of hurt and trauma as a child. Misinformation has been internalized as truth. Unfortunately, children vividly record what happens to them, but are ill-equipped to properly interpret what has happened. A child's unconscious solutions to grappling with misfortune and misinformation often prove counterproductive once reaching adulthood. For these reasons, listen carefully, show respect for what is being told, and give the person plenty of time to process what they are saying. Direct their attention frequently to the relational patterns

and belief formations that are represented on the Core Story Process diagram that you are constructing as the interview proceeds.



STEPS TO THE CORE STORY PROCESS

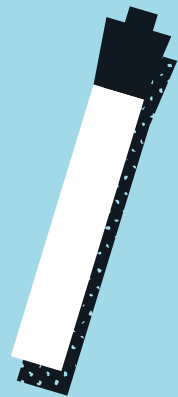
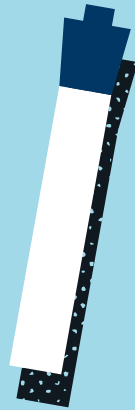




STEP 1

THE TOOLS

Prepare to visually capture the results of the Core Story Process. A whiteboard, chalkboard, flipchart, or just a piece of paper can be used to diagrammatically depict the answers to the series of questions beginning with Section B. Use the templates and charts below only as suggestions as to how you might map out the Core Story Process. Feel free to customize any of the templates or charts to fit the person's particular story. Some core stories will be more


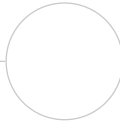

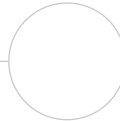












complex than others and some stories will have more family members and conflicts than others. Some Core Story Process maps can end up very congested with information. But the purpose of the Core Story Template is to capture the story, not to complete a neat chart.

You will find it useful to have writing instruments of different colors to use in recording different categories of response. For example, you might use the color black to record names, green to depict any troubling relationships, red for the stars in the story, and blue for the list of core wounds, core lies, and core truths.

The **Core Story Framework** (*Fig 1.0*) on the next page is a template to use in organizing the story board. This template is to be used to capture the answers to the questions in Part B.

Example Core Story Framework

PATERNAL			MATERNAL		
Grandfather	Grandmother		Grandfather	Grandmother	
_____	_____		_____	_____	
_____	_____		_____	_____	
_____	_____		_____	_____	
					
Grandfather					
					
Father					
					
Father	Brother		Mother		
					
			Sister		
FATHER			MOTHER		
_____		YOU	_____		
_____			_____		
_____			_____		
SCHOOL			RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY		
6-12	12-15	16-18	Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jewish (Orthodox, Reformed, Conservative), Christian		
_____	_____	_____	12-15	16-18	
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	

The **Core Story Symbols** (*Fig 2.0*) is related to the first in that it is a chart illustrating various symbols that can be used to denote the responses to the questions beginning in Part C.

The **Core Beliefs Chart** (*Fig 3.0*) on page 21, is to be used to capture the responses to the questions appearing in Parts F and G. The **Core Beliefs Prompter** (*Fig 4.0*) below is to serve as a prompter to help with the answers to the questions in Parts F and G. There is no right answer to these questions, and the list of possible answers is not intended to be all inclusive. The most appropriate answer to a question may not even appear on the list in the illustration. The best answer is the answer given by the one being interviewed.

The fifth and sixth illustrations below are to show what a completed Core Story Process map might look like. This example is very neat for the purposes of illustration, but don't expect

Example Core Story Symbols



DIVORCE



SEPARATION



CONFLICT



DISTANCE



AFFAIR



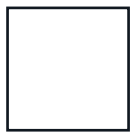
ABUSE



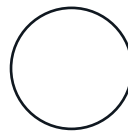
ADOPTION



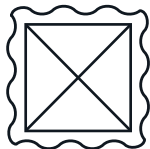
CLOSENESS



MALE



FEMALE



TRAGEDY



DEATH



CUT OFF



**AWARENESS
OF THOSE WHO
LOVED & WERE
DELIGHTED IN
YOU**

the one you construct as you conduct the Core Story Process exercise to be so neat. No matter how busy or complicated a Core Story Process map becomes, it will be a meaningful representation to the one being interviewed of the generational layers of relationships that have helped to create the system of beliefs that are being identified.



Template Core Beliefs Chart

PROCESS OUTCOME <i>Responses from sections F and G</i>	OBJECTIVE <i>What are objective it to do with the responses</i>
CORE BELIEFS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Security and Survival<hr/>• Affection and Esteem<hr/>• Power and Control<hr/>	TO DISCOVER
CORE WOUND <hr/>	TO EXPOSE
CORE LIE <hr/>	TO RENOUNCE
CORE TRUTH <hr/>	TO REPLACE

Core Beliefs Prompters

SECURITY/SURVIVAL

- Be Good
- Obey
- Be Perfect
- Work Hard
- Be Invisible
- Be Silent
- Other

CORE WOUND

- Abandoned
- Rejected
- Outcast
- Invisible/Not Seen
- Other

AFFECTION/ESTEEM

- Perform to Please
- Achieve to Please
- Be the Best
- Be Attractive
- Be Helpful
- Other

CORE LIE

- I am Worthless
- I am Not Good Enough
- I am Less Than
- I am a Failure
- Other

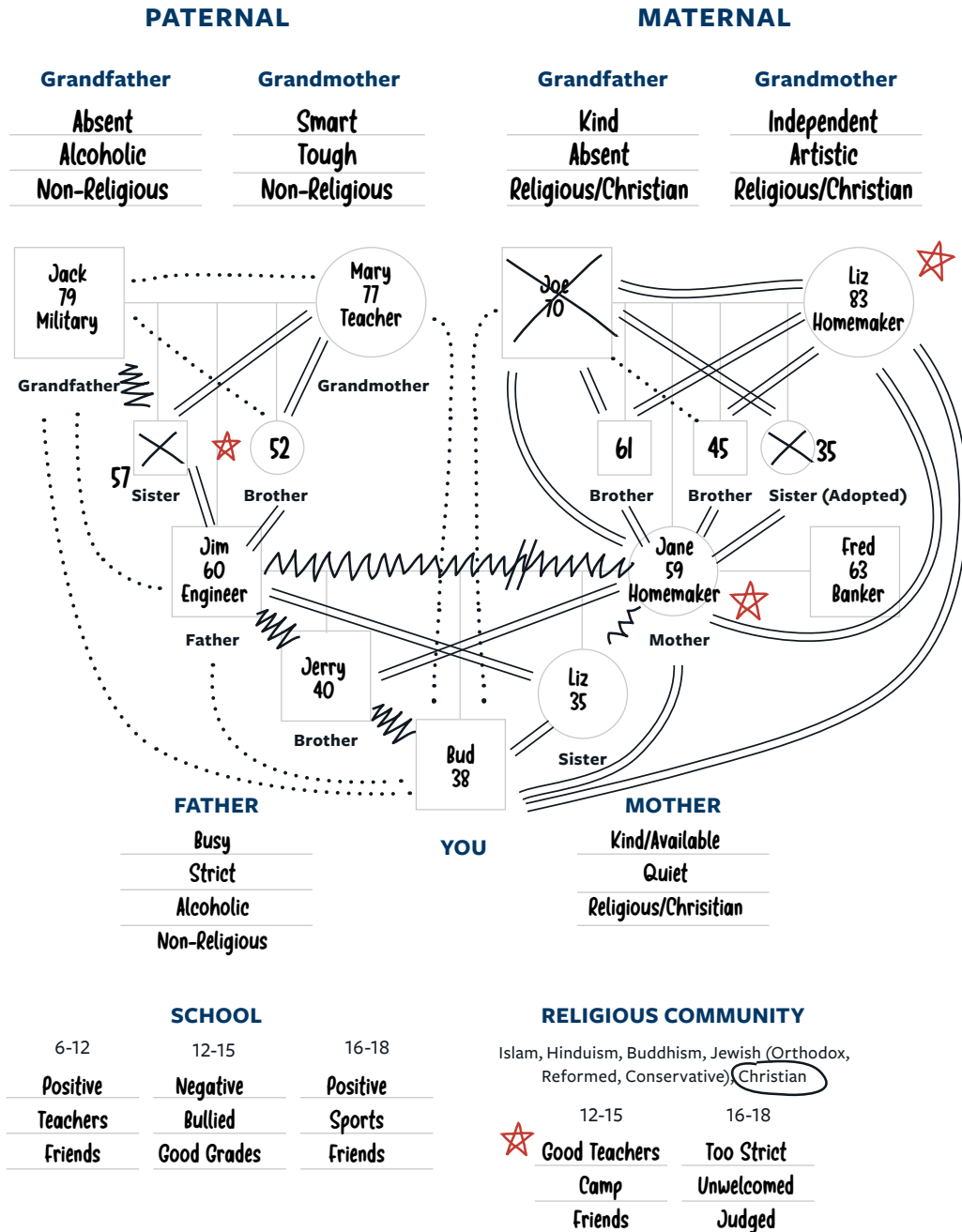
POWER/CONTROL

- Be Funny/Humorous
- Be Nice/Complicit
- Be Cute
- Be Strong/Show no Weakness
- Be Smart
- Other

CORE TRUTH

- I am of Immeasurable Value
- I am Loved
- I am Forgiven
- I am Not Alone
- I am a Gift
- Other

Example Core Story Mapping



Example Core Beliefs Chart

PROCESS OUTCOME <i>Responses from sections F and G</i>	OBJECTIVE <i>What are objective it to do with the responses</i>
CORE BELIEFS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Security and Survival Obey _____• Affection and Esteem Be Helpful _____• Power and Control Be Strong / Show No Weakness _____	TO DISCOVER
CORE WOUND Rejected _____	TO EXPOSE
CORE LIE Not Good Enough _____	TO RENOUNCE
CORE TRUTH I am Forgiven _____	TO REPLACE

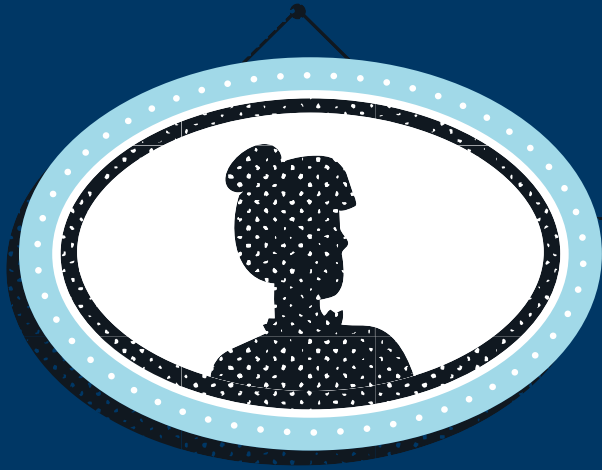
A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes, spanning most of the page width.



STEP 2

QUESTIONS ABOUT FAMILY OF ORIGIN

The family of origin questions are those given in a sequence that will support an orderly unfolding of a person's core story. Working through these questions and visually recording the responses makes this a visual, cognitive, and experiential endeavor.



The answers to these simple questions can create strong emotions. It is important as you help a person work through the Core Story Process to listen closely and be present in these moments. You should begin by stating this is a very personal and confidential meeting, and that you do not intend to share this story with anyone. Let it be known that you will give them a copy of their story when completed.

You will begin with questions about the father and the immediate nuclear family with whom the one being interviewed grew up during their first eighteen years. Use the Core Story Framework as well as the Symbols Chart just shown above to capture all the characters during the Core Story Process before asking the relational questions listed in Part C. Sometimes the person you are assisting will be traumatized just by naming people in their family of origin. When this happens, let them

know you will come back to these significant people in a moment.

It is all right if some of the questions are not answered as this lack of response can be revelatory in the storytelling process.

FAMILY OF ORIGIN

1. What is your father's name?
2. What did he do for a living when you were growing up?
3. How old is your father?
4. What is your mother's name?
5. Did your mother work outside of the home when you were growing up? If so, what did she do for a living?
6. How old is your mother?

-
7. How many brothers and sisters do you have? Where do you fit in? List the ages of the siblings from oldest to youngest. (This question is intended to put the storyteller on the Core Story diagram in the appropriate birth order as soon as possible.)
 8. Did your parents stay married? If the answer is “no,” who did they marry?
 9. If your parents divorced, how old were you when this occurred?
 10. How many brothers and sisters did your father have?
 11. What are the ages of your father’s siblings? Living or dead? Ages at death?
 12. How many brothers and sisters does your mother have?
 13. What are the ages of your mother’s siblings? Living or dead? Ages at death?
 14. What is the name of your father’s father?
 15. What is his age, if living? What was his age when he died?
 16. What did your father’s father do for a living?

-
17. What is the name of your father's mother?
 18. What is her age, if living? What was her age when she died?
 19. Did your father's mother work outside of the home? If so, what did she do for a living?
 20. What is the name of your mother's father?
 21. What is his age, if living? What was his age when he died?
 22. What did your mother's father do for a living?
 23. What is the name of your mother's mother?
 24. What is her age, if living? What was her age when she died?
 25. Did your mother's mother work outside of the home? If so, what did she do for a living?



STEP 3

QUESTIONS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FAMILY

In asking these questions you will enter into the person's experiential world or as it was understood to be. You will need the symbols for closeness, distance, conflict, and abuse listed under Section A in the Symbols Chart. Use of these symbols will help create a visual, cognitive and experiential awareness of the story as it develops.



When helping work through the Core Story Process, observe body language very closely. A person's mood or reactions to the questions may indicate the need to either move on or pursue additional questions. When asking these questions, allow the person time to answer. Do not be afraid of silence as it can produce some of the best responses.

RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FAMILY

1. How did you relate to your father growing up? Was he close or distant? Was he kind, mean, abusive, alcoholic, absent, religious, or non-religious? What spiritual tribe did your father subscribe to (e.g., Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Atheist, Buddhist, etc.)?
2. How did you relate to your mother growing up? Was she close or distant? Was she kind, mean, abusive, alcoholic, absent, religious, or non-religious? What spiritual tribe did your mother subscribe to (e.g., Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Atheist, Buddhist, etc.)?

-
3. If you have siblings, how did you experience them relating to your father (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?
 4. How did you experience each of your siblings relating to your mother (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?
 5. What was your relationship to each of your siblings growing up (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?
 6. What was the atmosphere of your home (e.g., safe, loving, chaotic, hostile, unpredictable, welcoming, warm, combative, etc.)?
 7. What are the descriptive adjectives your father would use to describe how he experienced his father when he was growing up? Was he close or distant? Was he kind, mean, abusive, alcoholic, absent, religious, or non-religious? What spiritual tribe did your father subscribe to (e.g., Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Atheist, Buddhist, etc.)?
 8. What are the descriptive adjectives your father would use to describe how he experienced his mother growing up? Was she close or distant? Was she kind, mean, abusive, alcoholic, absent, religious, or non-religious? What spiritual tribe did his mother subscribe to (e.g., Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Atheist, Buddhist, etc.)?

-
9. What are the descriptive adjectives your mother would use to describe how she experienced her father when she was growing up? Was he close or distant? Was he kind, mean, abusive, alcoholic, absent, religious, or non-religious? What spiritual tribe did her father subscribe to (e.g., Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Atheist, Buddhist, etc.)?
 10. What are the descriptive adjectives your mother would use to describe how she experienced her mother growing up? Was she close or distant? Was she kind, mean, abusive, alcoholic, absent, religious, or non-religious? What spiritual tribe did her mother subscribe to (e.g., Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Atheist, Buddhist, etc.)?
 11. How did your father relate to each of his siblings (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?
 12. How did your mother relate to each of her siblings (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?
 13. How did your father's father relate to each of your father's siblings (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?
 14. How did your father's mother relate to each of your father's siblings (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?

-
15. How did your mother's father relate to each of your mother's siblings (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?
 16. How did your mother's mother relate to each of your mother's siblings (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)?
 17. How did your father's parents relate to you (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)? How did they relate to your siblings?
 18. How did your mother's parents relate to you (e.g., close, distant, combative, loving, etc.)? How did they relate to your siblings?



STEP 4

QUESTIONS ABOUT EXPERIENCES OUTSIDE THE HOME

Many times significant experiences and influences occur for young and middle age children outside of their household. School, religious groups, sports participation, and adults other than their parents can make impressions that are formative and might last for a lifetime.



EXPERIENCES OUTSIDE THE HOME

1. What was elementary, middle, and high school like for you? Were they a positive or negative experience? What were the reasons it was positive or negative for each? List those reasons. NOTE: The responses may be different for each different grade level.
2. What about your involvement in religious assemblies such as church, synagogue, or mosque? Was this involvement a positive or negative experience? List the reasons you feel as you do.
3. Were there any activities outside of school that were special to you growing up, such as a sports team, scouting, 4-H Club, playing in a band, etc.?
4. Were there adults other than any of your relatives who were very special to you growing up?



A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

STEP 5

QUESTIONS TO IDENTIFY SIGNIFICANT, CARING PEOPLE

It is now time to explore and reflect upon the special people growing up. This is the point in the Core Story process where the one being interviewed is to identify others they experienced as especially caring. These are the people who were always glad to see them.



SIGNIFICANT, CARING PEOPLE

1. Who were the people during your childhood who were special to you, who you experienced as valuing you, encouraging you, or who seemed delighted when you came into the room? Give each of these people a big, red star on the Core Story Process diagram.
2. Have the person make a list of these significant caring people on a piece of paper. Have the person take time to give thanks for each one of these people. It could be a mother, father, second grade teacher, neighbor, or best friend. It might be this special affirmation came from a pet or a character in a book or movie. If the names are not already on the Core Story Process diagram, add them somewhere.



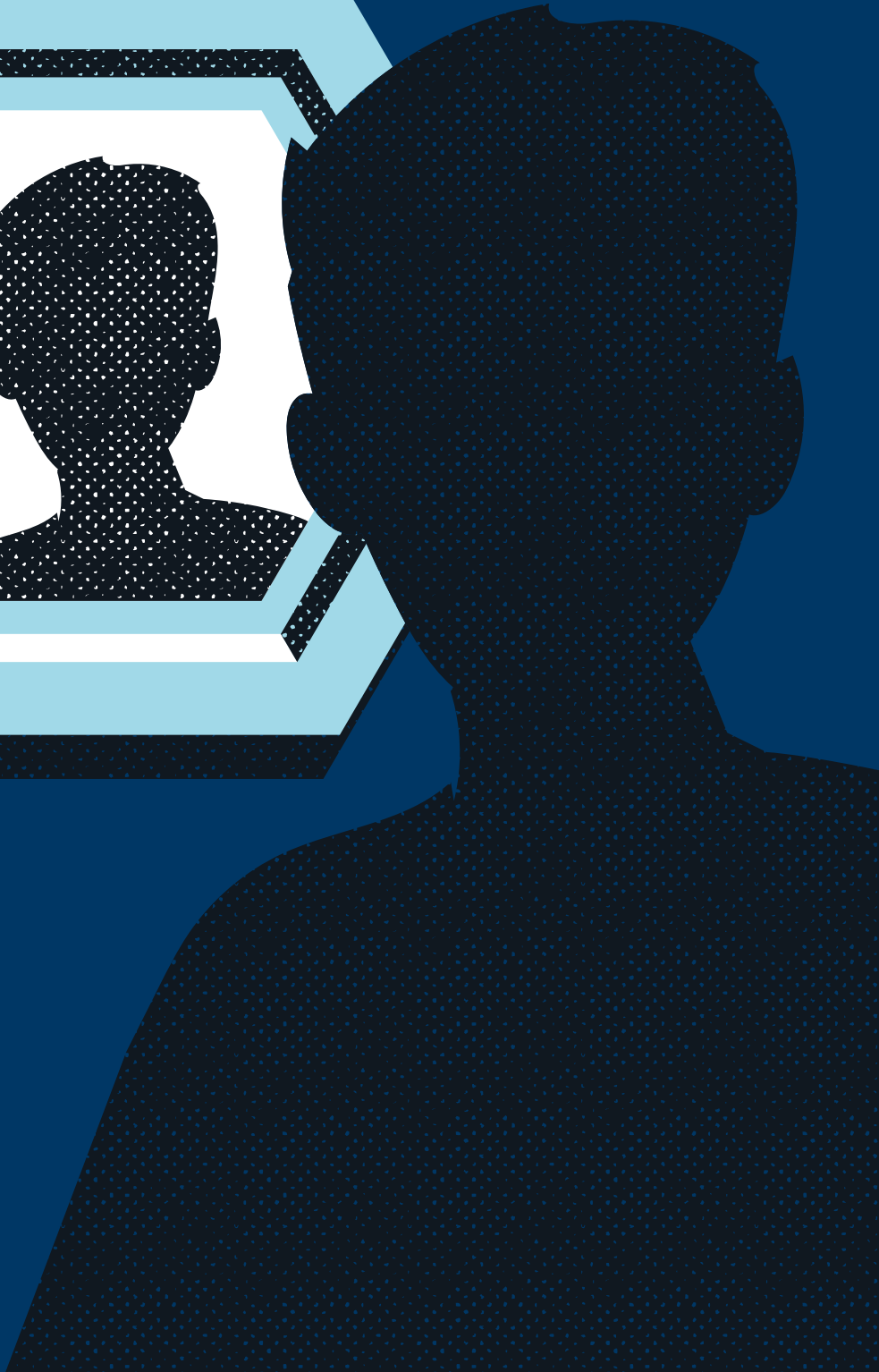
A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



STEP 6

QUESTIONS TO IDENTIFY CONTROLLING BELIEFS

At this point in the Core Story Process, have the person reflect on all that has been shared so far, ponder what is displayed on the Core Story Process diagram, and decide what are believed to be the controlling beliefs that provided the most controlling influence while growing up. In order to facilitate the identification of these



Core Beliefs, have the person answer the questions below. To assist in responding to these questions, refer to the Examples of Core Beliefs illustration in Section A. This illustration presents only possible responses to be considered, and the most appropriate response to the questions may not appear on the list of examples.

CONTROLLING BELIEFS

1. Picturing yourself in your early teens, what did you think you needed to be safe? You may want to look at the Examples of Core Beliefs to prime the person's thinking for a possible response.
2. Picturing yourself in your early teens, what did you think you needed to gain affection and esteem? What did you decide that you needed to do to be loved? You may want the person to look at the Examples of Core Beliefs to prime their thinking for a possible response.
3. Picturing yourself in your early teens, what did you think you

needed to attain and hold power and control? What did you feel you needed to do in order to assert yourself? What did you decide that you needed to do in order to have control over how others perceived you? The person may want to look at the Examples of Core Beliefs to prime your thinking for a possible response.

4. How do you prevent your thirteen year-old self from wrecking your life as an adult?



STEP 7

QUESTIONS TO IDENTIFY CORE WOUNDS, LIES & TRUTHS

It is now time to apply the information gained through the Core Story Process to identify how core beliefs may be reinforcing misconceptions about personal identity. A person's core beliefs are established early in life and represent how a person was able to navigate the world as a child. These early formed beliefs were counted on to



provide a way to flourish or survive. Following these beliefs was a way to gain recognition and affirmation. These beliefs provided a way to gain some control of or power over individual circumstances.

However, the core beliefs that worked for the child may actually be toxic to the adult. These early-formed beliefs create a “false self” that may not serve an individual well when experiencing the stresses of adulthood. As you are helping the person work through the Core Story Process, you might consider sharing some of your own experience with the “false self” in order to create a context for the next series of questions.

To facilitate this process of self-discovery, let's proceed by asking the following questions on the next page.

CORE WOUNDS, LIES & TRUTHS

1. What might you consider to be your core wound? The core wound is a deep hurt, fear, or anger that results from childhood experience. Many people have a core wound by the time they are twelve years old. Even if an individual had what could be called a perfect loving home, the core wound many times surfaces when they imagine putting their arm around the 12-year-old self and asking the child within how they might have been wounded. Some people will say, “I have no wound.” Allow them time to reflect. The wound may be deep and hard to recognize. Examples of some answers: abandoned, rejected, invisible, alone, etc. NOTE: As you are working with the person, never press them to give any more of the details of their core wound than they are willing to share comfortably.

2. What might you consider to be your core lie? The core lie centers on the deep feelings and perceptions a person holds about their own person, and these feelings will often persist into adulthood. The core lie is founded on misinterpretations, misconceptions, and reactions that a person has about their capabilities and potential. These misperceptions arise from their core wound. The core lie is at the end of a cascade of unconscious thought that tries

to make meaning of and adapt to a core wound that creates the basis for core beliefs that support core lies. Naming these core lies is a key step in an individual understanding what is fundamental in life and what is controlling their life. It is possible that up to 95 percent of a person's behavior is driven by their core lie. Examples could include: I'm not good enough. I don't count. I'm less than. I'm responsible. It's my fault.

3. Can you accept the premise of the existence of core truths? Core truth is information that people must accept in faith believing that it is better than the information they have developed for themselves. "A core truth, if it is accepted, will challenge and then transform the faulty and dysfunctional core beliefs that have developed around core wounds and core lies.

Lined writing area with horizontal blue dotted lines.



STEP 8

MAKING THE DECISION

It is now time for the person to acknowledge that they get to decide how to respond to life. The awareness, mindfulness, and understanding that is represented in the following points will help the person you are helping get unstuck and begin moving toward hope and joy. Have the person reflect on the personal empowerment expressed in these statements:



-
1. I get to decide to renounce and revoke my core lie.
 2. I get to choose to replace my core lies with core truths.
 3. I have the ability to change because I am larger than my pain, trauma, and circumstances. I will break free and not make friends with my pain.

Deciding to accept core truth is an internal spiritual matter for each person. Renouncing core lies on a daily basis is a spiritual process that will renew the mind and is supported through spiritual disciplines such as contemplation, meditation, listening, reading, journaling, etc. These constructive steps will help in healing, not forgetting.

The step to make life-changing decisions is often slow. Life is a marathon and not a sprint, as healing and personal transformation are lifelong processes.

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.

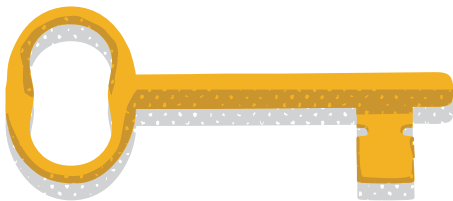


STEP 9

FINAL THOUGHTS & REFLECTIONS

Help the person reflect on the Core Story Process that has just been completed. Review and emphasize with them the following points:

-
1. Ask the person: What is the one thing you will take away from your own story today? Then, ask if they have any questions for you.
 2. Ask the storyteller to look at the core story visual that has been created and share any interesting reflections or observations they might have.
 3. If a friend, mate, or a small group is present, ask each person to share briefly how their story is similar or different. Then you, as the facilitator, can share with the person being interviewed how your story is similar or different. This need not be a long recitation but a brief connecting point of how your story may be connected to that of the person being interviewed.
 4. Set up another meeting, with the only assignment being for the individual to reflect on their own story.



Remarks on Healing Through Hearing and Understanding

Over my career I have continued to refine the genogram tool into what is now the Core Story Process. I want to provide in these remarks some first-hand testimony about the universal usefulness of this process for personal story development, core belief identification, and the discovery of core truths.

What the Core Story Process reveals is that our belief system is a composite of what we have learned and experienced on our own and what beliefs and impressions have been handed down generationally from our parents and relatives. The Core Story Process is one way to discover that our system of personal beliefs

may not be strong enough to handle real life.

The Core Story Process is a tool to aid in looking for and reframing faulty beliefs.

We all have unmet emotional needs and expectations. We may look to being married, our work, or friends to meet these needs, and when these needs and expectations are not met we feel let down. We find that the personality traits we depended upon to get us through youth, the early-formed core beliefs, won't always serve us well as adults. When the beliefs we are depending upon begin to fail, we will be judgmental of our own shortcomings and as equally judgmental of the shortcomings of others.

Physical and psychological trauma is a particularly tragic path for the formation of core beliefs. My experience has been that even the core wounds and core lies resulting from

such trauma can be exposed, placed into a proper context, and thus lessened in their impact as a result of the Core Story Process. I have worked my entire professional life with people throughout the United States who have experienced trauma. I have worked with combat veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), male and female prison inmates, and children traumatized by parents who have abused their children physically, sexually, and mentally. I have worked with people who have suffered emotional trauma due to failed relationships and harsh self-judgment.

I have also worked in India with victims of sex trafficking and alcoholics in rehabilitation clinics. In Nicaragua I worked with 12-year-old children who survived by carrying an AK-47 rifle. In Israel I met with the adult

children of Holocaust survivors who had been beaten and abused by parents who survived the concentration camps but carried brutality and abuse into their homes. In El Salvador, Guyana, and Italy I worked with those who were also traumatized as children. In every case I found that the Core Story Process helps people understand their story and provides a way for them to access and remodel their innermost world.

I was first introduced to the predecessor of my Core Story Process, the genogram, in 1983 by a friend, Tim Lowry, who was a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. This multi-generational diagram of family behavior patterns was developed in the 1940's by a psychiatrist, Murray Bowen, and was documented in a book he co-authored with Michael Kerr titled Family

Evaluation. Since then physicians and therapists have used the genogram tool to identify generational behavioral pathology.

As I developed and improved the Core Story Process, the publications by several other behavioral professionals helped me along the way. Dr. Merle R. Jordan, a professor at Boston University where I completed my doctorate degree, is the author of *Reclaiming your Story: Family History and Spiritual Growth*. I was also influenced a great deal by the thinking of Edwin Friedman, author of the book titled *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, where he identifies and explains the power of the psychodynamic pressure that is present in familial relations. Thomas Keating's books titled *Invitation to Love and Open Mind-Open Heart* helped me to develop my concepts of core beliefs,

core wounds, and core lies. The book titled *Refocusing Your Passions: A Christ-Centered Approach to Overcoming Addictive Behavior* by Don Crossland also proved useful to me.

The Core Story Process has been a journey in the making, and it is my hope that this tool provides a trustworthy method for helping people get unstuck and for helping individuals to identify and differentiate from the emotional lies that have ruled their life and influenced their decision-making. Under the pressure of real life, I have found a way through the use of the Core Story Process to open the door to a person's spiritual dimension. People need insight, understanding, knowledge, and a safe place to process their life's journey. I have experienced that when people are given good information, time, and safety, they can work through any life issue and trauma.

It has become evident to me that when people get serious about personal transformation, they benefit from committing to a regimen that reinforces their attempt to incorporate core truths to replace their core lies. This transformation process, as outlined by Don Crossland in the book cited previously, will need to center on the regular practice of these five steps:

1. **REFRAME** faulty system of beliefs: recall all that was learned as a result of completing the Core Story Process.
2. **REBOND** with the love that can heal: be willing to forgive yourself and move forward.
3. **REANCHOR** around core truths: make truth the target of your transformation journey.
4. **REBUILD** around appropriate boundaries: take respectful action and reconcile with others.
5. **REPLACE** core lies and refocus on core truths: reject the intrusion of your old ways of thinking as core lies will not be forgotten but can be overcome.

As my lifelong mentor and founder of Heartbeat, Inc., and current moderator of the website On Being Human, Landon Saunders, says, “There is nothing in the world more important than a human being.” I stand amazed at the greatness of a person. This greatness is revealed as they learn to think and to believe in and to love themselves. I believe there is an invisible power in each person, and the Core Story Process awakens that dimension and a passion for life.

Biography



TERRY S. SMITH, D.MIN.

My professional career began in 1969 at the University of Memphis. After spending ten years teaching and counseling within the university setting, our family moved to metropolitan Boston in 1979 where I directed a non-profit Resources for Life Center. There, I worked directly with people who were dealing with trauma and broken relationships.

In 1989, our family moved to Searcy, Arkansas to serve as the Director of a Family Life and Counseling Center where we stayed until 1993. I resigned from that position and moved with my family to Nashville, Tennessee to begin work as a professional Life Coach.

My work at Coaching: Life Matters centers around helping people discover how they can overcome trauma. I believe that unless there is a medical diagnosis — when a person is given good information, safety and time — there is not anything they cannot work through in this life.

For more information about my personal journey, please check out my book, *Delta Blues: From Darkness to Light and Being Better at Being Married* co-authored with Ron Joyner which uncovers the relational healing process I went through in my own traumatic family of origin. I have been married to Charlotte B. Smith since 1965 and we have four daughters, Sara Ross, (Ashley), Missy Smith Hayes (Bill), Margaret Roark (Brian), Liz Kendrick (Daniel), and 13 grandchildren: Sydney, Wallace, Addison, Aubrey Anne, Preston, Sterling, Maia, Peter, Isaac, Avie, Olivia, Charlotte (Charley), Ellie.

Academic Credentials:

BA, Harding University - Communication

MA, Harding University - Counseling

M.TH, Harding University - Theology

D. MIN, Boston University - Personality, Religion and Culture

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bloodworth Jr., Russell, Visions, Dreams & Encounters*
- Bloodworth Jr., Russell, Who Are You, Anyway?*
- Bowen, Murray, and Michael Kerr, Family Evaluation*
- Foster, Richard, Celebration of Discipline*
- Friedman, Edwin, Generation to Generation*
- Jordan, Merle, Reclaiming Your Story*
- Jordan, Merle, Taking on the Gods*
- Keating, Thomas, Invitation to Love*
- Keating, Thomas, Open Mind, Open Heart*
- Litz, Brett T., Lebowitz, Leslie, Gray,, Matt J., Nash, William P., ADAPTIVE DISCLOSURE, A New Treatment for Military Trauma, Loss and Moral Injury*
- Menger, William A., The Process of Forgiveness*
- Payne, Leeanne, HEAVEN'S CALLING: A Memoir of One's Steep Ascent*
- Rohr, Richard, Divine Dance*
- Rohr, Richard, Falling Upward*
- Saunders, Landon, LIFE THAT LOVES TO HAPPEN...no matter what happens*
- Seamands, David, Healing Damaged Emotions*
- Smith, Terry S., Delta Blues From Darkness to Light*
- Smith, Terry S., Ron Joyner; Being Better at Being Married*
- Snodgrass, Klyne, Who God Says You Are*
- Van Der Kolk, Bessel, M.D., THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE*
- Willard, Dallas, Divine Conspiracy*
- Woodroof, James, Sayings That Saved My Sanity*
- Hebrew Scriptures*
- New Testament Documents*

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.



Core Story

Every human life is complex. Factors both obvious and hidden shape us. All of us carry impressions of ourselves that determine how effectively we can deal with life. This book is a tool for starting a conversation with trusted partners that can heal deep wounds, clarify motivations, and give focus to one's life.

Rubel Shelly, Ph.D., Past President of Rochester College and Professor of Philosophy and Religion.

Dr. Terry Smith's Core Story technique provides a kind and caring way to give people a revealing and valuable look at themselves. The Core Story also creates a unique opportunity for a person to discover and acknowledge their Core Beliefs and the powerful role these beliefs have in shaping a person's life.

Joseph McLoughlin, Ph.D., Associate Professor of the Practice of Psychology and Human Development at Vanderbilt University

As someone who went through the process of recounting my Core Story with Dr. Terry Smith almost two decades ago, I know personally that it can be a powerful experience. In this booklet, he goes step by step through his approach to drawing out the Core Story which highlights special relationships and controlling beliefs. It instructs the reader on how to replicate the process he has developed to transform lives over decades as a counselor.

Trina R. Shanks, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Michigan, School of Social Work

The Core Story provides insight into broken attachments and the meaning we place on those family attachments we experienced as children. Through the tool, we learn what we had to do to get our needs met! I think this should be an excellent accompaniment to addiction treatment.

Leslie S. C. Cole, M.D., Author of Quit Pain Pills Without the Withdrawal: How to Break Free from Your Dependence and Finally Woke Up Feeling Normal

Every man, woman and child have a Core Story. Unlocking that story, understanding the unconscious drivers, and discovering the true self has freed thousands from addictive and obsessive behaviors. On the job and in countless marriages, those behaviors sabotage success. The Core Story manual speeds the process of discovery and is an important tool for recovery.

Russell Bloodworth, Jr., Executive Vice-President of Boyle Investment, Inc.

COACHING: LIFE MATTERS

7100 Executive Center Drive

Suite 105

Brentwood, TN 37027

www.coachinglifematters.org



9 781458 304872

ISBN: 978-1-4583-0487-2

Copyright © 2022, Coaching: Life Matters. All Rights Reserved.