

HOPE

*BEGINNING TO
DREAM ANEW
AFTER THE HURT*

AGAIN

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"Shattered dreams are never random, they are always a piece in a larger puzzle, a chapter in a Larger Story. The Holy Spirit uses the pain of shattered dreams to discover our desire for God. To help us begin dreaming the highest dream."

Larry Crabb, Shattered Dreams

hope AGAIN

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INSPIRATION TO HOPE AGAIN

At the beginning of this worksheet, an excerpt from *Shattered Dreams* is provided to stir your heart and get you thinking about how the Spirit is moving in your life right now. This excerpt will provide the theme for the three conversations in this guide.



THREE CONVERSATIONS TO REDISCOVER HOPE ANEW

ABOUT

Larry Crabb believed in having a conversation with ourselves and God, an honest conversation with ourselves, and then in community with others that can walk with us into further depths of what God has revealed. Each conversation is designed to invite you into the “new way to live” that Dr. Larry Crabb began to articulate over 20 years ago. It is our prayer that these conversations would begin to revolutionize the way you relate to God, yourself and others. These conversations and their accompanied practices are:

1. AN ENLIGHTENING CONVERSATION WITH GOD

This conversation is designed to create a space where you can respond to God’s call to *encounter* Him in a way that fills your soul with more joy than any other experience and equips you to lead others toward a similar encounter. Because this encounter cannot be arranged, the conversation must be engaged through faith and with an earnest plea for God’s sovereign mercy to bring a meaningful, life-changing, and life-sustaining encounter. In this section, you will also find a time called Practicing His Presence. This section offers you an opportunity to sit in the presence of the One who is always doing you good, waiting for the beautiful work He is doing in your heart

2. AN EXPOSING CONVERSATION WITH MYSELF

This conversation encourages you to walk into a space set for rigorous self-awareness- awareness of your brokenness, your reluctance to trust in God’s goodness, and your deep need for the Spirit to change you. This awareness of your true self ushers you to a table set with God’s abounding grace where the deep transformation of your personality can begin. A daily practice of gratitude and repentance stokes the fires of personal transformation that was sparked by the honest examination of your internal world.

3. AN EDIFYING CONVERSATION WITH OTHERS

These conversations are the building blocks of a community where people are known, explored, discovered and touched so their true selves as followers of Jesus can be released. Whether the conversation is with one other spiritual friend or with a group of like-minded sojourners, this opportunity to engage in authentic community helps to sustain and deepen the transformation within and the intimacy found with God and others. This safe place to practice offers a foundation for community that nurtures and nourishes us as we relate.



inspiration:

HOPE AGAIN

“When you hurt, hurt. Hurt openly in the presence of God. Hurt openly in the presence of the few who provide you with safe community. Feel your pain. Regard brokenness as an opportunity, as the chance to discover a desire that no brokenness can eliminate but that only brokenness reveals.

Remember what brokenness is. It's the awareness that you long to be someone you're not and cannot be without divine help. Never pretend to God, to yourself, or to your safe community that you feel what you don't or that you are what you're not.” (pg 70)

“God is always working to make His children aware of a dream that remains alive beneath the rubble of every shattered dream, a new dream that when realized will release a new song, sung with tears, till God wipes them away and we sing with nothing but joy in our hearts.” (pg 78)

Larry Crabb, *Shattered Dreams*

INSPIRATION, CONTINUED

- As you read these excerpts what are you thinking? Don't be afraid of your negative thoughts- capture those as well.
- What emotions rise in you as you read these excerpts? Again, don't be afraid to capture your negative emotions. Sometimes it is processing these negative emotions that brings us closest to God.
- What desires are stirred in you by reading this passage?

conversation WITH GOD

AN ENLIGHTENING CONVERSATION BETWEEN YOU AND GOD

Find some time before you meet with your spiritual community to soak in this conversation with your Father. Come prepared to share all that is on your heart with Him. Then, take your time and wait expectantly for the One who is always doing you good, even in the midst of shattered dreams, to speak tender words of life into your heart.

Take a few minutes and wait for the Lord. Quiet your thoughts and relax. Listen for the soft voice of your Father. Ask Him to speak to you through His Word.

Now spend a few minutes meditating on Psalm 62, especially verses 5-8.

5 Yes, my soul, find rest in God;
my hope comes from him.

6 Truly he is my rock and my salvation;
he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.

7 My salvation and my honor depend on God;
he is my mighty rock, my refuge.

8 Trust in him at all times, you people;
pour out your hearts to him,
for God is our refuge.

- What stirred in your heart as you read Psalm 62?
- What hurt are you experiencing right now?

AN ENLIGHTENING CONVERSATION BETWEEN YOU AND GOD, CONTINUED

- Look at the definition offered for true brokenness: “It’s the awareness that you long to be someone you’re not and cannot be without divine help.” How is your current hurt leading you into a place of brokenness? Write about that experience here.
- How are you finding it hard to rest in God in this hurt place? Where are you numbing your pain instead of offering it fully to God? Write about your struggle to trust God in this difficult place and tell your Father about it.
- What gives you hope? Do you feel a bigger dream stirring inside of you? Whatever you are feeling, talk to your Father about it.
- Re-read the verses above and tell God all that is in your heart, both the good and the bad, about the challenges that you are facing. Write down anything you want to remember for later.

AN ENLIGHTENING CONVERSATION BETWEEN YOU AND GOD, CONTINUED

PRATICING THE PRESENCE

Use these questions below to take a little time each day to sit in the presence of your God. Open your heart to all that He wants to reveal to you through this shattered dream.

- Ask God for courage and for His perspective on your situation. Where is His goodness in your situation? Where is His mercy? Where is His kindness? What Opportunity is God offering you through this shattered dream?
- Take some time today to ask the Holy Spirit to help you find Him in the midst of whatever you are currently experiencing, without putting demands on what that might entail. Ask Him to show you any way you may be resisting His voice.
- What new desire is your current suffering and ensuing brokenness revealing to you?

conversation WITH YOURSELF

AN EXPOSING CONVERSATION WITH YOURSELF

- Take some time for introspection before you meet with your spiritual community. Journal your answers to the following questions and anything else that God might be speaking to you about as you reflect.
- In your conversation with God, did anything come up that you need to repent of? Anything you need to surrender? Any place in your heart where sense the Spirit is guiding you to spend more time listening and processing all that God is doing in you and for you?
- What happened this week that was particularly hard or disappointing? What questions do you have for God about this circumstance?
- Consider a relationship struggle you have experienced over the past few days. How has your fear shaped your response? Where are you struggling to trust God in and with this relationship? As a result of the conflict, have you withdrawn either from God or from seeking to see the other person as God does?
- When did you feel like you needed to protect yourself this week? Or when did you feel the need to take control of a situation? Were there ways in which you demanded that others respond to you in a particular way? Does your response indicate a struggle to trust in God to be your refuge?

AN EXPOSING CONVERSATION WITH MYSELF, CONTINUED

- Look back to the first page and the definition of brokenness. What are you longing to be and how do you fall short in ways that bring you to a place of brokenness?
- How have you resisted bringing your brokenness to God in these experiences? What divine help do you need? Spend some time in the presence of your Father offering Him your heartfelt repentance and expect to find Him there.

A DAILY PRACTICE

This week, at the end of each day, reflect on what happened, primarily in your closest relationships, and how you responded. Note where your response indicated a lack of willingness to wait on God and track where you were able to rest in the confidence that He is your refuge. Consider any ways that you chose to minimize your struggle rather than bring it to God or ask others for appropriate help. As you note your responses over the course of a few days, look back and see if you notice any trends or patterns that God might be drawing your attention to.

- Day 1:
- Day 2:
- Day 3:
- Day 4:
- Day 5:

conversation WITH OTHERS

AN EDIFYING CONVERSATION WITH OTHERS

Hopefully the other person or people you are talking with have also engaged in these conversations with God and with themselves. If not, use your sharing as an opportunity to invite them into a deeper conversation with you and God about their own brokenness and shattered dreams.

As you enter this time of conversation pray for your time together. Share what touched you most during this time of reflection and then invite each person to share their significant takeaways if they also did the reflection.

Take a few minutes to read the inspirational excerpt again. Discuss this section as a group:

“Regard brokenness as an opportunity, as the chance to discover a desire that no brokenness can eliminate but that only brokenness reveals.

Remember what brokenness is. It’s the awareness that you long to be someone you’re not and cannot be without divine help. Never pretend to God, to yourself, or to your safe community that you feel what you don’t or that you are what you’re not.”

AN EDIFYING CONVERSATION WITH OTHERS, CONTINUED

Use the following questions to deepen your discussion:

- When you think of brokenness, do you see it as a flaw to be fixed, or a wound to be healed, or a reality of being human?
- Are you more prone to be overly focused on fixing your brokenness or to minimize/hide it?
- What situations cause you to feel shame over being broken? Why?
- What do you personally tend to do to escape or numb that sense of shame?
- In what ways do you demand that others relieve your sense of shame or pain over your brokenness?
- How do your efforts to escape your brokenness and the shame you feel about it actually keep you from seeking God as a refuge?
- When are you most likely to pretend to God, yourself, or others about what's actually happening in your heart?
- How can embracing your brokenness as an opportunity to rest in God release you from shame and demand and instead empower you to love well in the midst of your brokenness?
- Do you believe that God can be trusted with the truth of you? Why or why not?
- What new dream of desire is emerging from the rubble of your shattered dream?

A PLACE TO PRACTICE

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. James 5:16 NLT

If you feel comfortable, share your repentance from the week with your group and invite them to pray for you as you seek to change.

Spend some time together in thanksgiving for what God has offered you and what He is doing in you and for you and with you.

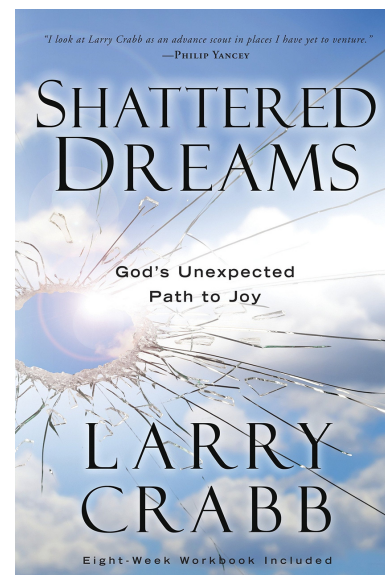
As you end your time together, spend some time praying for each other, remembering that the prayers of righteous people have great power. Take some time to note ways you can continue to pray for each other in the days to come.

ABOUT DR. LARRY CRABB



Dr. Larry Crabb was a well-known psychologist, conference and seminar speaker, Bible teacher, popular author, founder of New Way Ministries and the catalyst for the Larger Story, his legacy organization. In addition to many other speaking opportunities, Dr. Crabb founded the School of Spiritual Direction and was the distinguished Scholar in Residence at Colorado Christian University. Dr. Crabb has authored more than 30 books including two Gold Medallion award winners, *Inside Out* and *Understanding People*.

In *Shattered Dreams*, we are shown how God stripped Naomi of happiness in order to prepare her for joy. Dr. Larry Crabb retells and illuminates the sometimes disturbing and often profoundly touching story. And we gain an unforgettable picture of how God uses shattered dreams to release better dreams and a more fulfilling life for those He loves.



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