HEALING THE DAUGHTERS OF NARCISSISTIC MOTHERS WORKSHOP

STEP ONE: ACCEPTANCE AND GRIEF

“If we don’t clean up trauma, nothing about recovery sticks.”
Karyl McBride, Ph.D.

You have just completed the lecture on Step One: “Acceptance and Grief.” Below you will find journaling exercises to follow this video segment.

Journal on Acceptance:

1. Write about what it means to you, if you accept that your own mother cannot give you the love you need or needed?
2. Do you struggle with what this means about you?
3. If I accept Mom for who she is, what am I accepting?
4. What is my biggest barrier in accepting my mother’s limitations?

How Do I Know I Have Totally Accepted My Mother’s Limitations?

(Check these off, and don’t worry if you have not accomplished all of them yet. It does take some time. Write about the ones you are having difficulty with.)

1. Do I continue to wish and hope that my mother will be different each time I talk to her?
2. Do I continue to have expectations of my mother?
3. Have I accepted my mother for who she is?
4. Am I expecting someone else to meet my childlike needs because I have given up on my mother?
5. Do I continue to try to get my childlike needs met in relationships instead of relying on myself?
6. Am I looking for a partner to replace my mother?
7. Do I feel a sense of entitlement about my needs?
8. Am I now relying on myself to meet most of my needs, and when someone else is there for me, do I see it as an added blessing rather than my due?

With this in place, you are ready to grieve.

**Journal on Grief:**

1. Write about the ideal mother you wished you had.
2. Write about the little girl you didn’t get to be.
3. If you have a therapy doll, picture of you, or stuffed animal that can represent you: Sit with the doll and ask her what she needs from you now.
4. Sit with your therapy doll and ask her what she missed in childhood.
5. When I grieve the loss of the mother I needed, I feel…
6. You may have separate entries about different feelings, for example: anger, rage, sadness, betrayal, lack of trust, mother’s envy…
7. How do you see this past effecting your life now?
8. Write: If I Were Good Enough, I Would…

Allow the feelings to come up and expect anger, rage, sadness, betrayal, guilt, and loss. Be sure to sit with the feelings, write about them, talk about them, and let them process.

**Resource for EMDR:** [www.emdria.org](http://www.emdria.org)

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Karyl McBride 2011

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