

Chapter 12

Questions to Ponder

1. Thinking back, when do you believe you first started turning the volume down on your gut? If you recall, you do this by minimizing, rationalizing, or denying what you instinctively know to be true.
2. Where can you see evidence that you valued the relationship more than yourself?
3. What toll has your abuser's demeaning behavior and verbal assaults taken on you physically, emotionally, spiritually, or in other ways?
4. Do you see how a pseudo self has developed over time? How have you changed in order to survive or somehow try to manage the chaos in your private life?
5. What messages has your gut been trying to tell you? Are you ready and willing to begin turning the volume up on your gut by listening to it and starting to apply what it's telling you?

Prayer of Reflection

God, for so long now, I have ignored what I sense deep down inside. You made me with a built-in alarm system in order to protect myself from unsafe situations and unsafe people. For

many reasons, some of which I don't totally understand yet, I have not listened to my gut. Please help me, Lord, to start to listen once again. Give me the courage and the strength to call it what it is and to stop denying or minimizing what's happening to me. I want to honor the gift of my gut that You have given me, but I don't quite trust myself anymore. Ignoring it has made it really hard to hear. I think I'm hearing it, but I'm not sure. Please make it clear to me. Please help me to distinguish between what is true and what is not. I feel so unsure of myself most of the time. I need You to heal the way I see myself and the faulty beliefs I have held on to.

My heart feels so injured and broken by the demeaning messages and abuse that I have lived with for so long. Heal my broken spirit and revive my ability to listen to my gut. I know You are the Spirit of truth who leads me into all truth. You use my inner voice to lead me. I trust that You can and will help me to respect and rely on this wonderful gift again. I am Your precious girl . . . even though I don't always feel this way and even though I struggle to believe it. Because I am Your girl, I can count on You. Thank You, God. I love You. Amen.

God's Enduring Promises

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted
and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (Psalm 34:18)

My eyes grow weak with sorrow;
they fail because of all my foes.
Away from me, all you who do evil,
for the LORD has heard my weeping.
The LORD has heard my cry for mercy;
the LORD accepts my prayer. (Psalm 6:7-9)

But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted;
you consider their grief and take it in hand.
The victims commit themselves to you;
you are the helper of the fatherless. (Psalm 10:14)

I will praise the LORD, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.
I keep my eyes always on the LORD.
With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. (Psalm
16:7-8)

I call on you, my God, for you will answer me;
turn your ear to me and hear my prayer.
Show me the wonders of your great love,
you who save by your right hand
those who take refuge in you from their foes.
Keep me as the apple of your eye;
hide me in the shadow of your wings. (Psalm 17:6-8)