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COACHING

# Rebuilding Self-Trust After a Toxic Relationship

**A GUIDED REFLECTION WORKBOOK**

Eight guided reflection exercises to understand your past with compassion, explore the five strategies on rebuilding self-trust from the companion article, and make more confident choices for your future.

# A Note Before You Begin

After a toxic relationship, you may question not only another person's behavior but also your own judgment. Rebuilding self-trust is possible. By reflecting on your experiences and gradually learning to value your own perspective again, you can begin to regain confidence in yourself and your decisions.

You'll start by looking back to better understand the circumstances, hopes, and experiences that shaped your past decisions. The purpose is not to put your past self on trial. Instead, the main focus will be on looking forward—reconnecting with yourself, rebuilding confidence in your own judgment, and learning to make choices that reflect your needs, values, and the life you want to create.

Use these pages at your own pace. Write a few words or a full paragraph, and use additional pages if you need more space. There are no right or wrong answers.

If a question brings up overwhelming emotions or leads you into a cycle of self-blame, feel free to skip it, take a break, or do something that helps you feel grounded.

The first two exercises focus on understanding your past without judgment. The next five explore the five strategies on rebuilding self-trust from the companion article. The final exercise helps you carry what you've learned into your future.

This is a coaching-oriented reflection resource, not psychotherapy or a substitute for mental-health treatment or specialist safety support.



Heal from your past.



Reclaim yourself.



Create a life you love.

# See Your Past Self in Context

You know things now that you couldn't have known at the beginning of the relationship. Looking back at the circumstances, hopes, and experiences that shaped your decisions can help you recognize that what seems obvious today may not have been clear at the time.

**What drew you to the relationship?**

**What did you hope the relationship would bring to your life?**

**What information or understanding do you have now that you didn't have at the time?**

## FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

**Now that you understand more about what was happening at the time, how do you feel about the decisions you made?**

# Understand Why You Stayed

There may have been many reasons why you stayed in the relationship, some of which are easier to understand now than they were at the time. Exploring the factors that influenced your decisions can help you better understand your past, let go of self-blame, and begin to forgive yourself for the choices you made.

**What made leaving or changing the relationship difficult?**

**What influenced your decision to stay in the relationship?**

**How do you understand those influences today?**

## FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

**What would you like to remember when you find yourself judging your past decisions?**

# Reconnect With Your Own Voice

When you've spent a long time questioning yourself or putting someone else's needs first, you may lose touch with your own perspective. Exploring how your relationship shaped the way you see yourself, as well as your current needs, preferences, and values, can help you reconnect with your own voice.

**How has the relationship shaped your beliefs about yourself?**

**Which needs, preferences, or interests have you lost touch with?**

**What matters most to you now, and how do you want that to guide your choices?**

## FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

**What is one small way you could act on your own preferences this week?**

# Listen to Your Gut

Your gut feelings can offer valuable clues about what feels right or wrong for you. Learning to recognize and explore these feelings, rather than automatically dismissing them, can help you make more thoughtful decisions.

**Think of a time when you ignored a gut feeling. What happened?**

**Looking back, how accurate was your initial instinct?**

**What led you to dismiss that feeling at the time?**

## FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

**How could you make space to notice and explore your gut feelings before making a decision?**

# Learn How to Evaluate Relationships

Knowing how to evaluate relationships can help you feel more confident in your judgment. Pay attention to how people treat you, how you feel around them, and whether their behavior aligns with your needs and boundaries. Recognizing red flags—signs of unhealthy or potentially harmful behavior—and green flags—signs of healthy relationship dynamics—can help you make more informed choices about the relationships you want in your life.

**What have your experiences taught you about what you need in a relationship?**

**What red flags would you want to recognize and avoid in future relationships?**

**What green flags would you want to look for in future relationships?**

## FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

**How can you use what you've learned about red and green flags to make more informed choices in future relationships?**

# Allow Support Without Giving Away Your Authority

Seeking advice and hearing different perspectives can help you make more informed decisions. What matters is surrounding yourself with people who listen, respect your perspective, and help you find your own answers rather than telling you what to do.

**Who do you tend to turn to when you have a concern or need advice, and how do they typically respond?**

**Who in your life helps you feel heard and understood while encouraging you to explore your own perspective rather than telling you what to think or do?**

**What kind of support would help you feel more confident in your own judgment?**

## FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

**Think of a decision you're currently facing. Who could help you explore your options without making the decision for you, and what kind of support would be most helpful?**

# Start With Decisions That Feel Manageable

Rebuilding confidence in your judgment takes practice. By recognizing decisions you've made well in the past and starting with small, manageable choices, you can gradually strengthen your ability to trust yourself again.

**In what situations do you struggle to make decisions, and what makes those decisions difficult?**

**Think of a decision you made that turned out well. What helped you make that choice?**

**What are some small, everyday decisions you could start making more independently?**

## FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

**Choose one small decision you'd like to make on your own this week. What will you do, and how will you recognize the progress you've made?**

# Turn Understanding Into a Future You Choose

Understanding your past is an important step, but rebuilding self-trust is also about looking forward. This final exercise invites you to reflect on what you've learned and how you want to approach your future.

**What have you learned about yourself that you want to carry forward?**

**When self-doubt returns, what would a compassionate and realistic response sound like?**

**What would greater self-trust make possible in your life?**

## FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

**Complete this sentence in your own words: "The next time I notice myself questioning my judgment, I will…"**

LOOKING AHEAD

# Your Next Chapter

You don't need to have made all the right decisions in the past to trust yourself again. What matters is learning from your experiences, recognizing your own needs and preferences, seeking support when needed, and gradually building confidence in your ability to make decisions that are right for you.

Take a moment to reflect on what you've discovered through these exercises. Recognize the progress you've already made, and remember that rebuilding self-trust is an ongoing process, not something you need to accomplish all at once.

### READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP?

While you can do much of this work on your own, you don't have to navigate it alone. If you'd like support as you continue putting what you've learned into practice, I invite you to book a free 30-minute introductory coaching session. We can explore what you're looking for and whether coaching might be a good fit.

## Book Your Free Introductory Call

Scan the QR code or visit the booking link.

Explore the companion article on melisgirardat.com/blogs.html