

FROM CONTROL TO HEALTHY TRUST

REBT, Vulnerability, Family-of-Origin & Christian Reflection Homework

Name: _____ Date: _____

Purpose: Recognize when old relational wounds, fear, or uncertainty activate control, second-guessing, pursuit, or withdrawal. The goal is healthy trust and discernment—not blind trust, passivity, or silencing legitimate concerns.

1. My Control Cycle

What happened immediately before I felt the need to control, correct, question, or second-guess?

What was I afraid would happen if I did not intervene?

What did I need emotionally in that moment?

What did I do to regain control?

How did my response affect my husband and our connection?

What could I do differently next time?

2. REBT ABCDE

A — Activating Event: What happened? State facts rather than interpretations.

B — Belief: What did I tell myself? Look for “must,” “need,” “I know better,” or “I cannot trust unless...”

C — Consequence: What emotions and behaviors followed?

D — Dispute: Am I demanding certainty? Confusing disagreement with danger? Is this mine to control?

E — Effective New Belief: What belief preserves discernment and my voice without demanding control?

3. Family-of-Origin: Then and Now

THEN: How did my parents respond when I needed emotional nurturing, understanding, autonomy, or reassurance?

PROTECTIVE LESSON: What did I learn about control, trust, vulnerability, and depending on others?

NOW: How might I unintentionally reproduce an old family pattern in my marriage?

NEW CHOICE: What response reflects the adult woman and wife I want to become?

4. Is This Discernment or Control?

- ☐ Is there an actual safety, betrayal, ethical, financial, or serious boundary concern?
- ☐ Do I have evidence, or am I reacting primarily to fear and uncertainty?
- ☐ Have I already communicated my perspective clearly?
- ☐ Am I seeking understanding, or trying to obtain the answer I want?
- ☐ Can I allow my husband to make a reasonable decision differently from me?
- ☐ What would respectful influence look like here?

5. The Trust Pause

- STOP — Do not immediately correct, interrogate, persuade, or pursue.

- BREATHE — Allow emotional intensity to decrease.
- NAME — “I feel _____ because I am afraid _____.”
- CHECK — Is the present situation activating an older wound?
- PRAY — Ask God for wisdom, humility, self-control, and discernment.
- CHOOSE — Decide whether this requires discussion, a boundary, a question, or release.

6. Vulnerability Practice

Practice: “When _____ happens, I feel _____. Underneath that, I am afraid/need _____.
What I would like to ask from you is _____.”

What I said: _____

Difficulty being vulnerable (0–10): _____

What happened when I used vulnerability rather than control?

7. Christian Reflection

Proverbs 3:5–6: Where am I being invited to trust God rather than demand complete certainty?

James 1:19–20: How can I become quicker to listen and slower to react?

Philippians 2:3–4: How can I consider my husband's perspective without erasing my legitimate needs?

Galatians 5:22–23: Which fruit of the Spirit do I most need during conflict?

Ephesians 4:15: What would speaking the truth in love look like this week?

8. Rational Beliefs to Practice

- ☐ I can prefer an outcome without demanding that it happen my way.
- ☐ I can tolerate uncertainty without trying to control another person.
- ☐ I can disagree with my husband while treating him with respect.
- ☐ Trust does not require abandoning discernment, boundaries, or my voice.
- ☐ My past explains some protective patterns, but it does not have to govern my marriage.
- ☐ I can allow another adult to make reasonable choices that differ from mine.
- ☐ Vulnerability is not the same as weakness.

☐ I can entrust what I cannot control to God while taking responsibility for what I can control.

9. Daily 5-Minute Journal

Today's trigger: _____

What I wanted to control: _____

What I feared: _____

Old belief activated: _____

New rational belief: _____

What was actually within my control:

How I responded: _____

What I will practice tomorrow:

10. Weekly Review for Therapy

When did I successfully resist the urge to control or second-guess?

What family-of-origin belief appeared most strongly?

Where did I practice healthy vulnerability?

Did I confuse surrender with silence or passivity?

Where did I appropriately use my voice or establish a boundary?

What did I learn about trusting my husband and trusting God?

What do I want to process with my clinician?

Important distinction: Christian humility and surrender do not require accepting coercion, abuse, betrayal, unsafe behavior, or surrendering appropriate boundaries. Healthy trust develops through truth, accountability, consistency, safety, and mutual respect.