

Identifying Symptoms

Reflect on these questions. If some of these experiences describe your growing-up years, you may be sure they are reflected in the way you deal with life and in your relationships with others and with God.

- Did you lose a parent by either divorce or death?
- Were either of your parents absent from home a great deal?
- Was one of your parents critical or perfectionist?
- Did either parent look to you to be his or her confidant?
- Were you strongly tied to one parent?
- Is it difficult for you to hear your mate or siblings express any negative comments about your family of origin?
- Were your feelings acknowledged and validated?
- Did you experience a traumatic event in your child/adolescent, and how did others respond to you?
- Did you experience abuse or neglect in some form?
- Did you come from a rigid home, possibly due to religious expectations?
- Was either of your parents alcoholic? Or were they dry but had an alcoholic parent themselves?

Other symptoms: (these may have been common in your family of origin and are likely present in your current relationships)

- Unspoken family rules such as:
 - o "Don't talk, don't trust, don't feel."
 - o "Only _____ is allowed to be angry."
- Sarcasm- means literally to 'tear or rip away flesh.'
- Hidden feelings- from others and yourself
- Ridicule and humiliation
- Need to maintain control.
- Difficulty with unexpected changes

Three options:

1. We can spend a lifetime blaming our current condition on our past;
2. We can ignore our past and its results in our present;
3. We can go through the process of healing our past in order to set our present free.