

BASIC TRAINING
FOR TAKING PEOPLE THROUGH
THE STEPS TO FREEDOM IN CHRIST
BY DR. NEIL T. ANDERSON

*Compiled by Brian and Jewl Westphalen
Modified by Sharon Chapman and Patty Minnihan (2018 + 2020)*

INTRODUCTION

Freedom in Christ Ministries is a ministry of reconciliation to help captives find and walk in the freedom of their identity in Christ.

Freedom in Christ Ministries is a Discipleship Counseling Ministry.

Discipleship Counseling is the process where two or more people:

- Meet together in the presence of Christ
- Learn how the truth of God's Word can set them free
- Enables them to conform to the image of God as they walk by faith in the power of the Holy Spirit

What is a Freedom Appointment? How does it relate to Discipleship Counseling?

- An encounter with the Lord!
- Taking a personal, spiritual inventory in 7 critical areas of your relationship with God
- For the purpose of setting you free

The Steps to Freedom are not technically a counseling appointment unless you are a certified professional counselor.

You and I are not the Wonderful Counselor. The Holy Spirit is!

The Steps to Freedom create a safe and confidential atmosphere for the Holy Spirit to reveal the lies behind one's sin patterns so that a child of God can KNOW the TRUTH to experience and live out their FREEDOM IN CHRIST.

The people involved in *The Steps to Freedom* Appointment are:

God: the One with whom the Inquirer is doing business and the One who will set the Inquirer free

Encourager: the one guiding the inquirer through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* appointment

Inquirer: the one seeking Freedom

Prayer Partner: the one (or more) there to pray; may be chosen by Inquirer or provided by your team

Biggest Danger: Leaning on your own strength.

Biggest Encouragement: Lean on God because He is always present.

PREPARING INQUIRERS FOR A FREEDOM APPOINTMENT

Motivation for Inquirers:

WHY DO THEY WANT A FREEDOM APPOINTMENT?

1. Crisis situations such as:
 - Marital discord or divorce
 - Domestic violence
 - Troubling situations with children or other family members
 - Financial distress
 - Complicated medical situations, etc.
 - Severe Spiritual attacks
2. Desire to resolve conflicts—personal and/or spiritual.
3. Desire to get right with God.

Ask yourself: Which of these motivations is most likely to result in the greatest amount of freedom for the Inquirer?

Process of Preparation:

HOW CAN YOU BEST PREPARE AN INQUIRER FOR THE MOST SUCCESSFUL FREEDOM APPOINTMENT?

The best preparation for a *Steps to Freedom* Appointment is to have read the books *Victory Over The Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker* or go through the 10-week *Freedom in Christ Course* (which covers the same content). Ideally, one of these should be done in a group setting where they can be studied and discussed.

Or someone could go through the free, interactive e-Book *Restored*.

WHAT DEFINES A “GOOD CANDIDATE?”

- Sincere desire to get right with God.
- Ready to take responsibility for self.

You and the Inquirer must understand **YOU** cannot set them free. **ONLY JESUS!**

Freedom will result as they **confess, renounce** and **forgive** because of their desire to be right with God.

HOW TO DECIDE WHEN TO TAKE SOMEONE THROUGH *THE STEPS TO FREEDOM*:

Intake Meeting—crucial first step in the process of preparing Inquirer for the Freedom Appointment.

- Meet at church with access to pastoral staff if possible
- Hear their story:
 - What brings you here?
 - What do you hope to accomplish by going through the Steps?
 - Record basic information on the Intake form (Appdix #7 in CFM 101)
 - Determine if this is the right time for a Steps Appointment or not

THINGS TO CONSIDER IN DETERMINING IF IT IS THE RIGHT TIME TO TAKE SOMEONE THROUGH *THE STEPS TO FREEDOM*:

Do take them through *The Steps* when. . .

- **They are motivated** to get right with God and willing to confess, repent, forgive, and live according to God's truth.
- **They are committed** to doing the necessary preparation (**Including the CPI**).
- **At the very least, they are committed** to read *Restored* or watch the new Freedom in Christ Course or another FICM course.

BUT WAIT when . . .

- **People want a quick fix**—you will want it too but remember God is in charge of timing.
- **People are in a serious crisis or deeply grieving**—let that wound close up some first.
- **People are not willing to or capable of taking personal responsibility** to read VOD and BB if possible or the equivalent. (The more they renew their mind with truth, the less teaching you'll do).
- **The exception is when people are very oppressed.**

IF YOU ARE DEALING WITH A COMPLEX INQUIRER:

(See the *Complex Inquirer appendix in Notebook*)

- History of seeing many different counselors, treatment centers, ministry leaders for help with **little or no apparent improvement**.
- Difficulty getting connected or staying connected to healthy healing community of believers.
- An aversion to being under authority .
- Tendency to gravitate to unhealthy, over dependent relationships (especially if they are expecting you to become a caregiver).
- Exhibits guilt-producing behavior to get attention and control caregivers.
- Looking for **DELIVERANCE**—a power encounter not a truth encounter.

THREE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES TO REMEMBER:

1. Stay in the kingdom niche to which God has called you (a healthy operation of a CFM).
2. You are not called by God to work individually with everyone who asks for help.
3. Continually develop an up-to-date network of other caregivers and professionals that can become your own CFM's referral network.

Wait when Holy Spirit warns you to “Stop” or “Wait.”

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- It certainly is possible to proceed with a Steps appointment and refer the Inquirer for other help simultaneously if the crisis is not debilitating.
- If the Inquirer expresses a desire to harm self or others, you may need to refer them to your pastor or director of counseling for immediate help. You can ask if they have a plan worked out to harm themselves to determine if it is necessary to refer them.
- If the Inquirer is not a good candidate at this time, refer them to an appropriate member of the pastoral staff who can connect them to the kind of help needed.
- DO NOT take someone of the opposite sex through The Steps alone.
- Neither is it advisable to have a family member sit in as prayer partner except a parent with a child unless there is evidence of parental abuse.

THE STEPS TO FREEDOM IN CHRIST

Emphasize at the beginning of each step that the Inquirer will pray a prayer in which he/she is asking God to do **something specific** for him/her. Tell them to **expect God to respond** to these requests. And **rejoice with them** at the end of each step after He does. **This will keep their focus on their interaction with God rather than with you.**

Here are the specific things the Inquirer asks God for in each prayer at the beginning of each Step:

Step One: Bring to my mind anything and everything that I have done knowingly or unknowingly that involves occult, cult, or false religious teachings and practices.

Step Two: I invite the Spirit of truth to guide me into all truth... and protect me from all deception.

Step Three: Please bring to my mind all the people I need to forgive in order that I may now do so.

Step Four: Please show me all the ways I have been rebellious.

Step Five: Please examine my heart and show me all the specific ways I have lived my life in pride.

Step Six: Please reveal to my mind all the sins of the flesh I have committed and the ways I have grieved the Holy Spirit.

Step Six (second part): I ask you to bring to my mind every sexual use of my body as an instrument of unrighteousness.

Step Seven: Please reveal to my mind all the sins of my ancestors that have been passed down through family lines.

Overcoming Fear: I ask you to reveal any and all controlling fears in my life and the lies behind them.

Step I: Counterfeit vs. Real

Remember it is perfectly acceptable for the Encourager to read the introduction in the booklet to each step as you go along.

Explain that the world offers many forms of guidance apart from God that seem innocent and/or attractive.

This step will reveal times they sought counsel, guidance, or direction from some source other than God.

Explain that in this step they will be closing doors they may have inadvertently opened to the enemy, even if it was long ago or doesn't seem to be a current issue.

This is the beginning of modeling to them the process of confession:

1. **RECOGNIZE THE LIE**—behind every sin is a lie believed.
2. **REPENT**—to change one's mind.
3. **RENOUNCE**—to turn around; to take a stand against the enemy and his lies.
4. **REPLACE WITH TRUTH.**

It's okay for them to group specific confessions together in the prayer.

INTRODUCTION TO EXERCISE #1

In the second part of Step One (pg 6 in *The Steps Booklet*) there are 8 questions that the Inquirer looks at to see if there is anything they need to renounce.

The **third question** says "Have you ever heard voices in your head... like nagging thoughts...?"

This exercise will show the Inquirer **how to identify and renounce those thoughts as lies and how to replace them with God's truth.**

This is the first time in *The Steps to Freedom* where the Inquirer can learn how to **practice taking thoughts captive and make them obedient to Christ.**

A DOCUMENT TO BE USED WITH STEP ONE
(Nagging Thoughts, Question #3 on page 6 of *The Steps to Freedom* booklet)

CONCERNING THINGS THE INQUIRER HAS HEARD IN HIS/HER HEAD THAT ARE NAGGING/WRONG THOUGHTS. Many thoughts are a result of things you have believed about yourself as a result of past experiences. You will consider **three lies** in this exercise. **Find scriptural truths** to combat each one of them.

HERE ARE THE THREE LIES YOU WILL BE ADDRESSING:

- I am not good enough or I am inadequate
- God does not love me
- God will not forgive me for what I have done

Lord Jesus, I confess that I have participated in believing that **I am not good enough or I am inadequate**, which I now know is a lie.

I renounce it!

I will not let it influence me anymore!

I choose to believe what is true instead.

Fill in scriptural truths that contradict that lie:

PRAY THE FOLLOWING PRAYER AFTER ALL THE WRONG THOUGHTS HAVE BEEN RENOUNCED AND ALL THE SCRIPTURAL TRUTHS HAVE BEEN STATED.

Father God, I pray you will fill me with your Holy Spirit so that I may be guided by You alone. Thank you that in Christ I am forgiven for believing lies. Amen.

STEP 2: Deception vs. Truth

Feel free to have the Inquirers revise the words to fit their situation here or add their own lies but keep pressing through. This can be a long but important step.

Encourage them not to let this become **just an intellectual exercise**, but to slow down and **consider the meaning**.

You can say “You may know the truth in your head, but **how you live** shows what you **really believe**.”

BELIEFS → THOUGHTS → EMOTIONS → BEHAVIOR → HABITS → STRONGHOLDS

Analytical people will strain, trying to remember or figure out what they need to confess. Remind them to ask GOD to reveal to them their sin issues in that category.

Watch for unnatural pauses or other signs of interference while they read out loud “The Statement of Faith” which may indicate their life does not line up with that truth—they’ve believed a lie. You may have them highlight meaningful truths here.

Here is another good exercise to do in your own time:

Look at page 8 in your *Steps to Freedom* Booklet (the ways you can be deceived by the world). See if you can identify which of these deceptions are attempts to meet a need for security, acceptance, or significance apart from God.

STEP 3: Bitterness vs. Forgiveness

Reassure of confidentiality.

Be patient with this step.

Reassure that you desire to stay with them as long as it takes.

Encourage the Inquirer to trust God to deal with the offenders.

Be sure to give them time to write down the names God brings to their minds after they ask Him to do that. **DON'T INTERRUPT THEIR TIME WITH GOD. BE QUIET AND PRAY!**

You will likely have to prompt them to add their own name and God to the bottom of the list.

Then read through Step 3, emphasizing the highlighted phrases.

Have them forgive one person at a time.

- Starting with the first on their list (usually the hardest)
- Remembering each specific incident God brings to their mind
- Encourage them to identify how each incident made them feel (You will likely have to gently prompt them to say the feeling each time at the beginning).
- Encourage them to acknowledge any consequences they have suffered

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

- Prompt them to say “I choose to forgive.” not “I want to” or “I need to forgive.”
- Do not allow them to blame or excuse. Remind that they are choosing to let go for freedom.
- Merciful prayer partners will want to touch the inquirer to comfort them.
- But Do NOT touch the inquirer during the appointment, in particular during Step 3, as they can feel violated. Instead, let this be their encounter with God!
- *If they cry, don't try to stop it. Let them feel the pain.*
- If there are no emotions here, you may ask if they ever heard the lie that negative emotions were wrong or only for girls or babies. Or perhaps they made a vow not to show emotion, which can be renounced, gently reminding that denial is a form of deception.
- BUT: Do NOT imply that they're not doing it right. Abuse survivors have always believed that it was their fault; they weren't good enough; they can't do anything right. If you imply that they're not doing *The Steps* right, they'll lock up emotionally.
- Watch the Inquirer's eyes: it's important to watch for interference happening in their mind.

STEP 4: Rebellion vs. Submission

The only time God permits us to disobey earthly leaders is when they require us to do something morally wrong or attempt to rule outside the realm of their authority.

It is an act of faith to trust God to work in our lives through leaders who are something less than perfect.

But if those in positions of power abuse their authority and break the laws designed to protect you, you need to seek help from a higher authority.

Be sure to discuss the need to set healthy boundaries with Inquirers in relationships if authority is being abused. And to seek counseling if needed for support or help in learning how to set biblical boundaries.

The Inquirer will pray “please show me all the ways I have been rebellious.”

Remind them that disrespect in the heart is the same as outward rebellion.

Ask them to be specific in the actual things they have done or thought. Not just say for instance “I have been rebellious against my spouse, etc.”

Ask them to consider what might have happened in their lives to cause them to develop an attitude of rebellion. It may be a defense or coping mechanism.

STEP 5: Pride vs. Humility

The Inquirer will pray “please examine my heart and show me the specific ways I have lived my life in pride.”

Times when they have centered their life around themselves instead of God.

There is a list of common ways that people exhibit pride.

They may not have previously considered these to be prideful.

Ask them to rate each one they check from 1–10 indicating how much these are present in their lives.

Remind them that negative self-image or false humility can be pride also – being consumed with self.

Encourage them to think carefully as they read these—not just read these as an intellectual exercise.

STEP 6: Bondage vs. Freedom

This step addresses fleshly sin, including sexual sin. But not all fleshly sins are sexual. Walking in the flesh is behaving according to your sinful human tendencies, which are out of harmony with God.

The first part of this step deals with these fleshly sins.

The second part of this step will deal specifically with sexual sins.

Behind every sin there is a lie that makes you feel like it’s a good idea. We are exposed to these lies as we live life, especially in childhood.

Our daily experiences, as well as any traumatic experiences, lead us to form conclusions about life, ourselves, and God. Often those conclusions are not true, especially once we become Christians and are given a **Totally New Identity**.

But we keep believing the lies, and those lies keep us in bondage to sin.

We try to meet our innate needs for **acceptance, security, and significance** in illegitimate ways (often from the common sins listed in this step).

Again, you can have the Inquirer rate these sins from 1 – 10 to indicate how much of an issue they are in their lives.

ON SEXUAL SIN

Sexual Sin is really a “walk with God” problem. Get in step with God then self-control and right desires will follow. You will be able to **count yourself dead to sin** once you see yourself as cleansed by God from sexual sins.

You get a new start with a cleansed body, soul and mind.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Have them pray the prayer to reveal sexual sin even if they feel it is not needed.

WE GET CLEAN AND FREE

- Reassure the Inquirer of confidentiality at this point.
- Assure them that you won't think less of them; that there's no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus!
- Remind them that you just want them to be free.
- “Holy Amnesia!”
- Proceed with gentleness.
- Remember, this is hard, but don't skip it.
- You may be the ONLY person to hear their sin in this area—be safe; don't gawk!
- You may experience some resistance. They may say, “We'll be here all night . . .”
- Respond with “It's for your freedom. This is your appointment with God.”
- James 5:16: “Confess to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed.”
- Remind them that their sins are already forgiven.
- They can accept God's forgiveness and His cleansing.
- And God will break the bonds—emotional, physical and spiritual.
- Don't worry about names if can't remember—God knows.
- Make a **clear distinction** between sexual sins that they willingly participated in and those that were thrust upon them without their consent. (sexual abuse)
- Not guilty of sexual abuse. It was not your fault. You did not choose it. God does not hold it against you.
- But still need God to break bonds—physical, emotional and spiritual.
- Include here: fantasy and emotional affairs; breaking ties with an old boyfriend or girlfriend.
- May need to go back to forgive others and themselves.

ACTION YOU CAN ENCOURAGE THEM TO TAKE:

- **Prayer for Pornography at end of this step.**
- Ask them to commit to get rid of anything that needs to be destroyed or cut off.
- Internet: Plan to block sites and set boundaries on Social Media.
- If there is a current affair, Neil has them call the person right there to break it off.
- They'll resist, but they do not owe the one they are involved with anything.

SPECIFIC ISSUES: PAST OR PRESENT

Don't assume you know it all or tell them what is or isn't their issue. Have them look at each of these prayers and choose to read those that are relevant. These prayers will help them identify lies and replace with truth.

MARRIAGE

- Spiritual between male and female for life
- Commitment to remain faithful to spouse

DIVORCE

- Reassurance that God still loves me
- I choose to forgive ex-spouse
- I want to learn from any mistakes I made
- I will trust God to heal me and provide for my needs

GENDER IDENTITY

- Acknowledges social pressures to question gender ID
- Recognizes God created us male and female and we are to maintain distinction between the two
- Choose to believe and accept my biological gender identity
- Choose to believe I am a new creation in Christ

ABORTION (MEN TOO)

- Acknowledge sinned in taking the life of my child
- Accept God's forgiveness
- Forgive myself
- Commit my child to God for all eternity

SUICIDAL TENDENCIES - INCLUDING DEPRESSION

- Thoughts and Attempts
- Renounce lie that life is hopeless
- Choose life in Christ
- Accept God's Forgiveness
- Forgive Self

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Be specific, not all on the list: (alcohol, food, tobacco, prescription drugs or street drugs)
- Cast anxieties on Christ
- Choose to allow Holy Spirit to direct and empower me to not yield to substance abuse any longer

IF CURRENTLY OR RECENTLY ON DRUGS, HAVE THEM

- Change their phone number
- Break contact with all dealers and “using” friends
- Suggest Rehab/Recovery Program

EATING DISORDERS OR SELF-MUTILATION

- Renounce lie that value is dependent upon performance or appearance
- Renounce trying to cleanse self from evil
- Will rely on Christ’s sacrificial blood to cleanse me from sin
- Thank God for accepting me just the way I am in Christ

DRIVENNESS AND PERFECTIONISM

(almost all people can benefit from this)

- World has convinced us that our value depends on what other people think of us
- Renounce lie that my worth is dependent on ability to perform
- Already approved and accepted in Christ

GAMBLING

- Admits chasing a false god for the love of money
- Asks God to show the way of escape when tempted
- Addictive behaviors may need further counseling or rehab in order to recover fully

BIGOTRY

- Admits judging others by external appearance or behaviors
- Asks God to show the root of my bigotry
- Pledges to God to walk in a manner worthy of my calling in Christ

Step 7: Curses vs. Blessings

The iniquities of one generation can **adversely affect** future generations unless those sins are renounced and their new spiritual heritage in Christ is claimed. **The BUS STOPS HERE!**

Assure them they are **not responsible** for the sins of their ancestors—but they most likely have been influenced by them.

They ask God to show them all the sins of their ancestors that have been passed down through family lines.

Then they simply renounce those sins and state the fact that they will have nothing to do with them in their life going forward.

Missing ingredient between salvation and maturity = freedom.

Participants are encouraged to read through the follow up and conclusion on their own.

Overcoming Fear: (Appendix C on pages 28-29)

This one is vital. Fear can be considered a form of idolatry.

Take a look also at the **Overcoming Anxiety** Appendix D on pages 30-31.

In the prayer to **overcome fear**, the Inquirer will ask God “to **reveal** any and all controlling **fears** in my life and the **lies** behind them.”

They should **take time** to carefully review all the fears listed in *The Steps* booklet.

Have them add their own specific fears.

Their fears will usually stem from **events in their life**.

It's important to **uncover the lies** that those events caused them to **believe about themselves**.

It is equally important for them to identify and **announce the truths that clearly contradict the lies**.

The Fear Worksheet will help them to obey God's command in **2 Corinthians 10: 5** “to take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ.”

FEAR WORKSHEET

1. Record the thing you are afraid of (it is already filled in for this exercise).
2. Discuss what might have happened in your life to make you develop this fear.
3. Record what defense or coping mechanisms you have developed to cope with this fear.
4. Record what lies you have believed that are keeping you stuck in this fear.
5. Record truth from God's word (and even just common-sense truths) that will prove what you have believed to be a lie.

Then go back and read the confessions after each of these categories that you have filled in.

Finally pray the "I choose to believe..." statement at the end of the exercise.

1. I am afraid of: **BEING REJECTED**
I Confess I have been stuck in this fear but now I choose to RENOUNCE it and be done with it. Thank you, God, for your forgiveness.

2. This is what happened in my past that made me fear this:

3. Defenses/Coping Mechanisms that I have used to cope with this fear are:

I Confess I have used these defense and coping mechanisms to deal with this fear instead of obeying and trusting you Lord. I RENOUNCE them all now. Thank you, God, for your forgiveness.

4. LIES that I have believed that are keeping me stuck in this fear are:

I Confess I have participated in believing these lies and I RENOUNCE each one of them. Thank you, God, for your forgiveness.

5. GOD'S TRUTHS that contradict each lie I have believed are:

I Choose to Believe these Truths and to live my life according to them from now on.

These exercises help reveal how important it is for Inquirers to identify any lies they have believed and make a conscious decision to stop believing them and start believing what God is true about them instead. 2 Corinthians 10:5 is our theme song or moto.

**“WE TAKE EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO
MAKE IT OBEDIENT TO CHRIST.”**

Follow Up

Call attention to the prayers on pages 24-25, especially the Daily Prayer and Declaration.

Call or send a card. Encourage the Inquirer to marinate on the truths they learned, continuing to:

- Recognize lies
- Repent
- Renounce
- Replace with truth

Very oppressed people need months of follow-up.

Refer them to a Freedom Bible Study and/or counseling (especially if they've been in denial). Other resources are listed at the end of this document.

Follow up with the prayer partner too, especially if in training.

Encourage the Inquirer to be in fellowship, study and prayer. Satan loves to isolate people. Don't fall for it!

Conclusion

A FREEDOM APPOINTMENT IS MUCH LIKE SURGERY.

The main difference is that the patient is (hopefully) conscious and doing the work!

Rely on the REAL SURGEON – God!

Initial Consultation: Discern if they are ready.

Pre-op:

Sanitize yourself: Choose to consider them as better than yourself.

Be rested and fresh.

Study the Word and Pray.

Confess any sins.

Communicate clearly: What to expect; what not to expect.

Have a plan, but God will likely surprise both of you.

Operation:

Take all the time needed.

Shine the Light of the Holy Spirit. (You're just holding the light!)

Remind them **they** will be communicating **with God directly** all during *The Steps*.

If must end before finishing *The Steps*, close or sew him/her up spiritually, usually by having them pray thru Step 7 and praying a covering blessing over them.

Post-op:

Follow up. Just like a patient usually needs physical therapy, the Inquirer will need to work to keep their freedom.

Draw attention to the follow up prayers at the end of *The Steps* booklet (pgs. 24 and 25).

Sometimes deep pain is like cancer surgery: the denial caused the patient to know something wasn't quite right ahead of time, but feels pretty good compared to the pain of post-surgery recovery!

Remind them that the truth (even the truth of our own past) allows for freedom so one can heal.

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER GROWTH:

Some good resources include...

- *Freedom in Christ Course* by Neil Anderson & Steve Goss
- *The Grace Course* by Rich Miller & Steve Goss
- Discipleship Counseling Collection (includes the Encourager Training Manual by Hal and Alandra Parks)
- *The Discipleship Series 4-Pack* by Steve Goss
- *Walking in Freedom* (21-day devotional) by Neil Anderson & Rich Miller
- *Who I Am in Christ Devotional* by Neil Anderson
- *Daily in Christ* (devotional) by Neil Anderson
- *Prayer Portions* by Sylvia Gunther
- *The Essential Guide to Spiritual Warfare* by Neil Anderson & Timothy M. Warner
- For professionals: *Christ Centered Therapy* by Neil Anderson
- Various FIC Bookmarks
- Who I am in Christ poster