

learning to be content:

GUIDED REFLECTION AND PRAYER JOURNAL



SHE WORKS HIS WAY



CONTENTMENT

Contentment. It's a word we are familiar with, but a feeling that is all too easy to come and go. In Philippians 4:11, Paul writes words that bring me so much comfort: *"I am not saying this because I am in need, for I **have learned to be content** whatever the circumstances."* Paul learned to be content. Contentment is not natural; it is learned.

So in addition to the companion workshop inside the network portal, *Learning to Be Content*, I wanted to provide you this resource that I pray will guide you into an honest dialogue with the Lord. You certainly don't have to watch the workshop before you dig in, but if you have 30 minutes to spare, log in so we can walk through the encouragement Paul gives us in Philippians 4 together.

If you look for contentment in your circumstances or what the world has to offer, you will constantly encounter reminders of what you *don't* have – which explains why contentment is something that's hard to keep, even if you can get it for a little while. In the following pages, I'm praying you'll have the courage to write down what is distracting you from learning contentment and focus on Whose you are and everything He has graciously given you.

Lord, help us to learn to be content. We trust You.

In Him,
Michelle

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DISCONTENTMENT BRAIN DUMP

In case you've never done one before, brain dumps are really simple. Don't overthink it. As quickly and as unfiltered as you can, simply write down all the things that you think of that can cause you to battle discontentment. *(Reminder: this exercise will only be as helpful as you are honest!)*

SURRENDER

When I did the exercise above, I couldn't believe some of the things I wrote down. Some were really serious. Others were embarrassing to admit. As it always goes with a brain dump, I was all over the map – you probably were too. But after examining my list, I realized that everything I had written down fit into just two categories: something I must give to God (*ex - a loved one with an illness*) or a lie that isn't from Him (*ex - feeling unqualified for what He's called me to do*).

Go ahead and try it with your list below:

Give to God

Lies

It's time to replace the lies you identified with truth. For the lies that can really cripple you, I recommend looking up Scripture you can read and re-read. *(If you're struggling to find one, email me at michelle@sheworkshisway.com and I'll see if I can help!)* But at the very least, write down what you know is true instead of the lie.

Lie

Truth

Read these verses aloud. Really think about what they mean. Underline/circle words that stand out to you. You can use the following blank pages to write down what the Lord shows you as you learn to be content. (This is certainly not an exhaustive list – but a great start!)

■ **PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13**

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.

■ **DEUTERONOMY 31:8**

It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.

■ **PSALM 71:15-16**

My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day, for their number is past my knowledge. With the mighty deeds of the Lord God I will come; I will remind them of Your righteousness, Yours alone.

■ **1 TIMOTHY 6:10-11**

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

■ **GALATIANS 2:20**

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

■ **2 CORINTHIANS 12:10**

That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

■ **2 CORINTHIANS 5:21**

For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

■ **1 TIMOTHY 6:6-7**

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

■ **2 PETER 3:9**

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

■ **HEBREWS 13:5**

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

A PRAYER WHEN I BATTLE DISCONTENTMENT

Lord, I need You.
Guide my eyes to see Your goodness.
Guard my mind to remember Your grace.
Fill my ears with Your truth,
And help my mouth overflow with Your praise.
Firmly fixed on Jesus,
Keep me in step with Your Spirit.

Father, Your presence alone comforts me.
But I confess that I still fight my flesh's desire for lesser things.
I know they are empty pursuits,
That they will never satisfy.
But in my weakness,
I get curious.
I get distracted.
I get discontent.
Forgive me.

Thank You for protecting me,
For loving me so fiercely,
For always providing me a way out
When I am tempted to want what You haven't given me.
God, I desire for You to be my only desire.
Help me to make You my one desire.

Keep me in awe of what You've done,
Instead of dwelling on what I haven't done.
Remind me of all I have in You,
Instead of being reminded of what I don't have.
Show me who You are over and over again,
So I will stop being consumed with myself.

Teach me to be content.
I trust You to teach me.
Make me more like Jesus.
I love You.
Amen.

