



## Unpacking Your History

This tool is a series of prompts to help you reflect on your own journey. Feel free to skip to the section that most interests you.

**History as Trigger:** When you find yourself easily undone or powerfully provoked, it is time to unpack your history to look for places where you may be stuck. Are past events triggering an outsized reaction to today's circumstances?

Are you ruminating? Thinking or talking about something over and over without getting to any solution or healing? Stop. Write it out in a simple outline format. Look at it. Try finishing these sentences:

That happened and I feel .....

It reminds of the time when .....

Is a past event fueling your current emotions? Is this useful? Sometimes the answer is yes; you have lessons learned from the past that can be helpful. Other times it is no; that was then, this is now. Clarifying for yourself what is going on can help you feel more settled and ready to manage today.

**History as Clues to Happiness:** When were you happy, satisfied, feeling good in the past? Write out the scenario. What were you doing? Who else was involved? What skills were you using? Was it being inside or out of doors? For example, think of a work project that went well. Was this a solo position, small team or large group? Pull out those elements to look for in future opportunities.

When have you experienced joy, beauty or peace? Consider the small moments that brought you good feelings. Are there ways to add those back in on a regular basis?

Is there a person you haven't talked to in ages that would lift your spirits? If you can, call them. If you can't maybe write them a letter and imagine their response.

**History as Lessons Learned:** Have you coped with something similar? What about other rough spots? How did you get through that difficult time? Who, what helped then? Can any of that be useful now?

What do you wish you had done differently? In the end what helped you move on? Does any of that relate to now?

What helped or didn't help you in the past? You can't change the past but you can do this differently.

**Ask for Help:** Is there someone who can help you unpack your history? Someone supportive who is a good listener? Maybe someone who knows your past and can help you recall it more clearly. One thing to keep in mind is that you are a different person now. You have your own wisdom to learn from as you meet the challenges of today.