

# Lifeline Tool

This is a chance for you to look back over your life and the inflection points that have led to where you are now. This is a space for you to share your testimony, recalling God's faithfulness to you and how He has been at work in your life. It's a chance for you to reflect upon and share where you are at right now in your faith. ***How has God been with you?***

The art of knowing your story and telling your story is exceptionally helpful to the building of your personal faith and, as a result, the building of our church's faith. Taking the time to look back over your life and the inflection points that have led to where you are now gives you an opportunity to notice the themes and patterns of God's activity in your life: His presence, His faithfulness, His love.

Telling your story helps you confront your past, how your past may have shaped you, and what aspects of your past which may still deeply affect you – for better or for worse. Knowing your story helps you know both yourself and God more honestly and more closely. Looking back to understand your story can also give you confidence for your future. As you look back through your life and recall inflection points, you take note of those moments and seek to discern God's work in those times.

Many of us have difficult memories of hard times. Give yourself grace as you reflect on these inflection points. Whether the time was hard because of your own decisions, the decisions of others, or a combination of the two, do not neglect the truth that God is faithful and good. *Do not feel compelled to share all of the details of past traumatic experiences if you do not feel comfortable doing so, but if an event or season deeply affected your life, do your best to articulate how and why.*

Telling your story builds up the faith of those who are listening. As others hear of your struggles and celebrations, tears and laughter, failures, and victories, it pulls us closer together as the body of Christ – as his church. And as we know one another better, understanding how God has worked in the lives of one another, we get to know God better.

A common tool of the enemy is to deceive us into believing that we are alone in our struggles or our temptations. But seeing God at work in the lives of those around us gives us a healthier perspective of His faithfulness, a richer understanding of His love, and how He is on the move. Hearing one another's stories helps us to realize we are not alone and encourages us to see how others have found a way through similar inflection points full of faith. So, we learn in our testimonies about how we can trust God in the hard times, keep going in the confusing times, and celebrate Him in the good times.



## Building Your Lifeline

### Step 1: Reflect On Your Story (30-45 minutes)

Take time to think through the significant people, places and events of your life and write them down in chronological order. These “inflection points” can either be positive or negative. Sometimes an inflection point is neutral, but it represents a significant change in your life that caused you to adjust. These inflection points may include life changes, career or physical moves, times of loss, times of discovery,

*Do not rush this step.* You will probably want to build a rough draft, let it sit for at least a day or two, and then return to your work to add or adjust some points of emphasis. It’s likely you will remember things in your second (or third or fourth) reflection you missed the first time.

### Step 2: Cultivate Your List of the Most Significant Inflection Points

Go through your list of inflection points from step one and choose the ten to twelve *most* influential in your life (not necessarily most or least positive, but points of greatest influence). As you go through your list, assign a score to each one from -10 to +10, where -10 represents the most negative impact an inflection point might have and +10 is the most positive impact an inflection point might have based on its impact on your life at that time. Where does each inflection point fall on this spectrum?

### Step 3: Map Your Story on the Lifeline

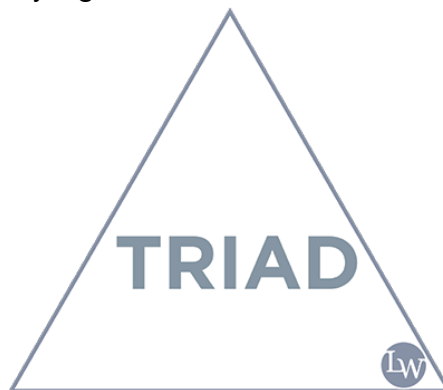
Print out the blank lifeline on the last page, plot your ten to twelve inflection points on your lifeline in chronological order (from left to right), putting positive experiences above the line and more challenging ones below it. The higher or lower you draw the line represents the degree to which that was a positive or negative experience. After plotting these points, label them with a title for each inflection point and your age when each inflection point took place.  
*(See example lifeline on the next page.)*

### Step 4: Discern Themes or Patterns in Your Story

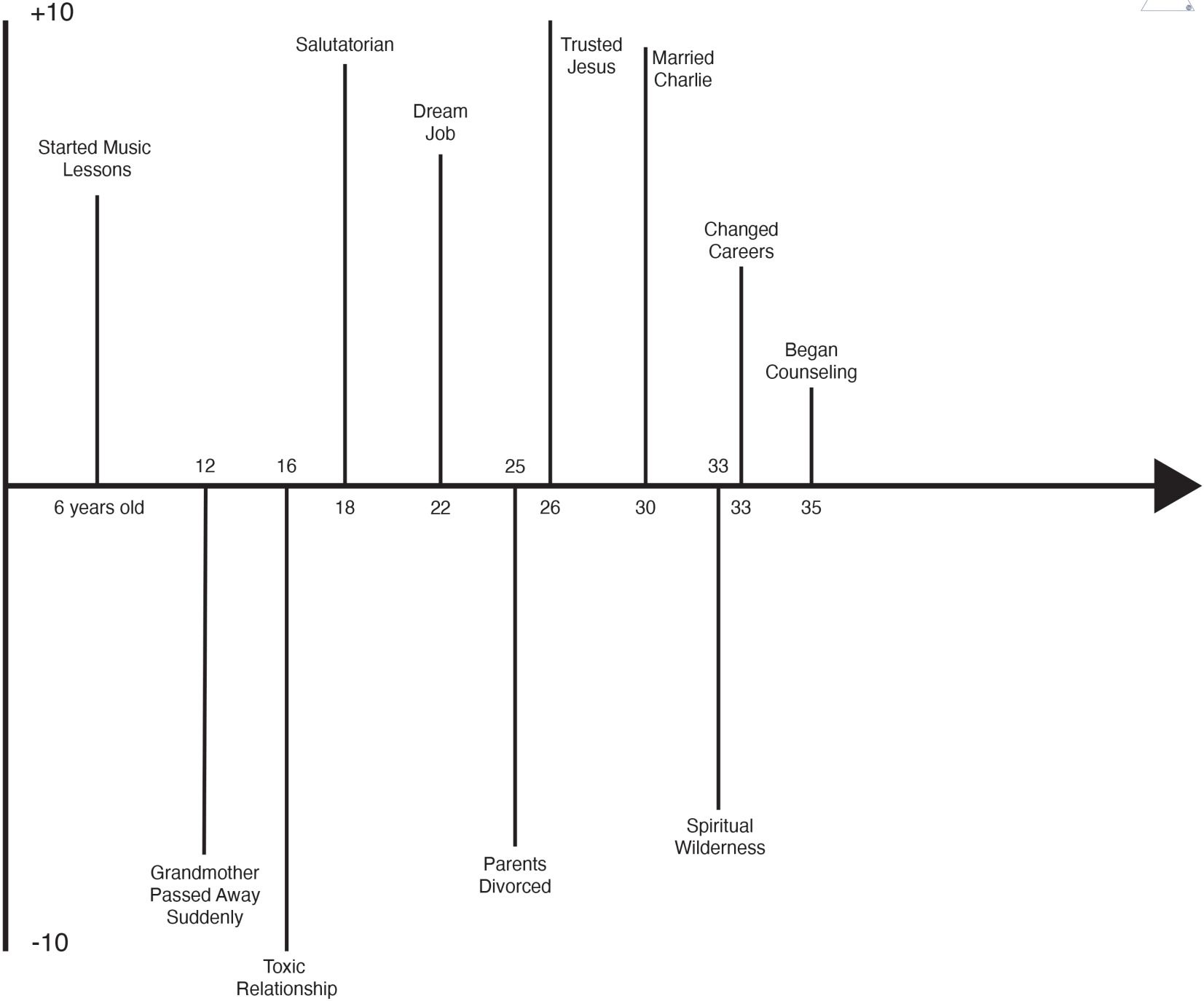
As you look back over this broad visualization of your story, do you notice any themes developing? Do you see patterns of behavior and/or ways of thinking? If so, note them down too. What about themes or patterns of God’s work in your life? How was He present?

### Step 5: Tell Your Story

Each person in your Triad will have a day to tell their story. Telling your story will require honesty and vulnerability, so ask God for courage and grace as you prepare your lifeline and leading up to the triad meeting. Ask God to go before you to create a trusting environment where you will feel heard and not judged or shamed.



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+10

-10

