

## Life Discovery Grid Instructions

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**“Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am.”**  
*—Parker J. Palmer*

### WHAT IS A LIFE DISCOVERY GRID?

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A Life Discovery Grid is a simple tool designed to reveal important patterns in your life. It does this by stimulating the awareness and connection of significant life events and relationships. Once the grid has been completed, it can be presented to others within the process group.

### WHY DO A LIFE DISCOVERY GRID?

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The Life Discovery Grid is the first tool on the Personal Clarity Journey that connects to the “Courage to Know” imperative on Clarity Spiral. The tool guides an individual through reflective work that will provide a context for other tools along the way. The Grid can also create a structured process for building community and inspiring worship within any small group setting. Every time someone shares their Life Discovery Grid, there is an incredible potential for fellowship, laughter, reflection and encouragement. Life Discovery Grids can bring people to a great awareness of what God is doing in life and a greater intensity to follow Christ. The primary focus in a Life Discovery Grid is God; the process allows the group to reflect on God’s goodness and grace as it reflects itself differently in every person. The secondary focus is you; what has been God doing through you and preparing you for?

### HOW IS A LIFE DISCOVERY GRID STRUCTURED?

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A Life Discovery Grid is a blank grid for you to record specific people and events. The grid allows you to divide your life into five chapters. These chapter divisions are completely up to you based on natural dividing points in your life experience. (To help you think through the five life chapters, we start with The Life Line tool.) The grid includes 5 “H’s” that help focus the people and events that you to record:

- Heritage
- High Points
- Hard Times
- Hand of God
- Heroes



## Life Discovery Grid Instructions (continued)

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### HOW TO PREPARE A LIFE DISCOVERY GRID

#### **Step #1** *Use The Life Line tool to determine your top ten "hinge moments."*

A hinge moment is when the trajectory of your life changed. Examples of hinge moments include: marriage, change in jobs, relocation, graduation, divorce, or death. Questions to reveal hinge moments include:

- How did relationships impact my life direction?
- What major life events sent me in a new direction?
- How did tragedy or loss mark a new chapter in my life?
- What recognitions, achievements or promotions created a new trajectory for my life?
- What spiritual awakenings (conversion) changed me?

Each hinge moment can be scored on a scale of one to ten either as a hard time hinge moment or a high point hinge moment. Some hinge moments will have a mixture of both. Don't worry about a "right answer;" simply use the tool to stimulate reflection.

#### **Step #2** *Identify the chapters of your life story.*

- Think about natural divisions of your life after completing The Life Line. Examples may include early childhood years, college, single, before children, preparation, Vermont years, My 30s, First Baptist years, multiplication, etc.
- Record these on the Discovery Grid and be as creative as you want to with the titles.



## Life Discovery Grid Instructions (continued)

What if the positive and negative turns in your life have prepared you for something great?

—Donald Miller

**Step #3** Identify the characters & events of your life story by filling in 2-5 bullet points in each square of your grid.

**Heritage**—that which comes or belongs to one by reason of birth; an inherited lot or portion.

—Random House Dictionary

### HERITAGE

- What qualities in my parents influenced me most?
- What was the atmosphere in my home as I grew up?
- What cultural or ethnic factors influenced me?
- What geographic factors influenced me?
- What financial factors influenced me?
- How did my parents define success?
- What were the types of brokenness in my home?
- How do heritage factors continue to influence beyond childhood?



## Life Discovery Grid Instructions (continued)

**Hero**—a person who, in the opinion of others, has heroic qualities or has performed a heroic act and is regarded as a model or ideal.

—Random House Dictionary

### HIGH POINTS

- What experiences demonstrate my abilities?
- What successes have I enjoyed?
- What events have brought me great joy?
- What season of life has been my happiest?
- How have I made significant contribution to others?
- What memories do I daydream about?

### HARD TIMES

- Who or what has been a source of pain in my life?
- What do I tend to harbor bitterness toward?
- Where do my deepest disappointments lie?
- What injustices have I had to suffer?
- What addictions and abuse have I been exposed to?
- What incidents are hard to talk about with others?

### HAND OF GOD

- What were the most life-changing moments in my life?
- When and how have I been awakened to God?
- What blessings have I received that I did not know were blessings at the time?
- What “God Memories” are forever etched in my mind?
- When did I first start thinking about God?
- How has God directed me through supernatural experiences, encounters or communication?



## Life Discovery Grid Instructions (continued)

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### HEROES

- Who have I looked up to or admired?
- Who has influenced me for good?
- Whose life would I like to model mine after?
- Who has given me inspiration; who has believed in me?
- Who has shaped my character and life direction?
- What parents, relatives, neighbors, teachers, coaches and friends could be heroes?

Make sure that for each of the 5 "H's", you write down specific words or phrases that will bring a character or event to your mind when you present your **Life Discovery Grid**.

**Step #4** *Re-evaluate your chapter titles and make any changes.*

**Step #5** *Discover God's authorship in your life.*

After your **Life Discovery Grid** is complete, continue to reflect so that you can identify and record patterns. Use the questions on the following page as a guide.



## Life Discovery Grid Instructions (continued)

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### DISCOVERY GRID QUESTIONS

1. What are my truly formative experiences in life; that is, what has made lasting impact?
2. Is there any common thread to my Hand of God experiences?
3. Is there any common thread to my Hard Times?
4. What are the patterns of sin that emerge in my life; how I have dealt with those sin patterns?
5. What are the consistent gifts and abilities in my life?
6. Why do I do what I do vocationally? Did one person or event significantly determine this?
7. Who are my most meaningful friends?
8. Who taught me how to live; how am I learning to live like Christ?
9. How has God's grace been revealed in my life?
10. How does my unique story bring God glory?
11. What would my life be like without God's hand?
12. What may God be preparing me to do in future chapters of my life?
13. What one word title would I give my Life Discovery Grid?



## Hinge Moments

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**LIST TOP TEN HIGH POINTS**

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**LIST TOP TEN HARD TIMES**

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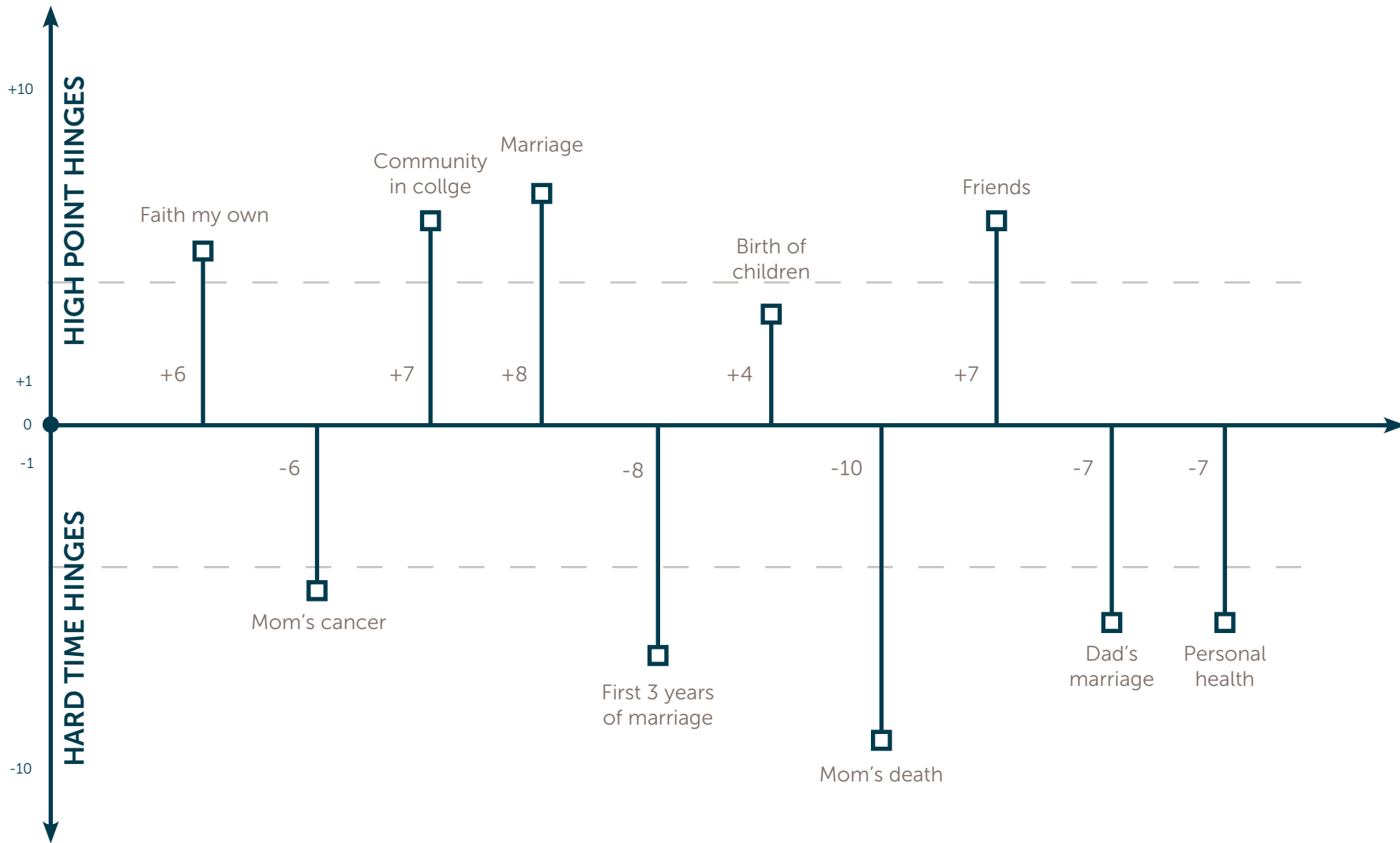
Identify your top ten "hinge moments" ranking them 1-10 as either high points or hard times.



\* Adapted from Donald Miller, Storyline







<b>Heritage</b>					
<b>High Points</b>					
<b>Hard Times</b>					
<b>Hand of God</b>					
<b>Heroes</b>					
<b>Life Drifts</b>					



	Happy	Hurt	Health	Hope	Hacked
Heritage	Pastors Kid, Wesleyan Denomination, Generations of family believers	Legalism in the Church, Personal Rebellion, Isolation and Rejection, Getting outside the US.	Independence, freedom, ability to choose, discover of my faith and it becoming personal.	Extended Family in Mission, Free to Discover, a deep sense of mission and purpose.	Covenantal Breakdown, Brokenness, People Leaving, Loss.
High Points	Being part of a small church. Getting Saved in 2nd grade, Being a kid.	First love relationship, Sports, chorus, art, trip to Haiti	College, Meeting my husband, Working sports camps. Gaining independence.	Married, Having children, Working at great organizations Family moved close.	Adoption of our son , 3 month rest sabbatical.
Hard Times	3rdGd Mean Girls, Moving 3X every 4 years, Eyes opened to ch. dysfunction and mean Christians	Mean Girls, Name painted on town bridge, Being a pastors kid. Mom hurt by church. Small Town	Being in College in FL while family lived in NY. Moving to AL my Senior year of college.	Working and always financially just getting by, Infertility.	Relationships w/Ministry Partners, rejection, called to cross, family business not family, Leaving PI
Hand of God	Christian Heritage, Grounded Family, Pastors Home, VBS Getting Saved	Mission trip to Haiti & Eyes open to real brokenness. Protection in relationships.	College, Meeting husband	My Mom able to watch the kids, Living in Community, Our miracle daughter	Growth in leadership, being delivered out of things not good. The courage/faith to leave.
Heroes	Grandparents, Bill and Ellie O. Mom and Dad, Mrs. Neff (teacher)	High School Coaches - Mr Conner and Mr Campbell.	Jesus, husband, Community of friends, Grandparents.	Mom and Dad, Grandparents, husband.	David and Courtney, Oldest Child, husband
Life Drifts					

