



## **WORKBOOK**

By Rose Noland

All of us want to be content in life; to have a grateful heart. Although difficult in this troubled world it is possible! I know because I am well on the path of experiencing a full life each and every day. I want to help you in *your* journey with this workbook. If you put in the effort God will do His part. You will, in increasing manner, become more content!

As you do this exercise, make sure you are enlisting God's divine help with an open humble attitude. If you become stuck on any question, move on to the next one. Return to that question later. Remember this is *just a guideline* to aid you. Don't let the Evil One stop you in finding the abundant life (Jn 10:10).

Before you begin, please review the blog series on contentment.

[Learning to be Content- Part 1: Gratitude Flows from a Contented Heart](#)

[Learning to be Content Part 2: Getting the RIGHT Perspective](#)

[Learning to be Content Part 3: Satisfying Unmet Needs and Desires](#)

[Learning to be Content Part 4: Signs and Sources of Discontentment](#)

[Learning to be Content Part 5: The Biggest Key in How](#)

[Learning to be Content Part 6: Two More Keys in How](#)

[Learning to be Content Part 7: The Last 4 of 7 Keys in How](#)

# **DETERMINING *WHERE* YOU ARE DISCONTENT**

1. In what places or circumstances do you frequently find yourself complaining, grumbling or losing patience? (Example: traffic, food not to your liking, health issues, children, inconveniences, trials)
2. Discontentment stems from our needs or wants not being met. Mark the areas below in which you believe your needs are not being met. Be as specific as you can.

## **Possible Needs**

### **Tangible/Physical**

Food, water, clothing, shelter

Health

Money

Job

Protection from harm

Rest

Relaxation

Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **Intangible**

Love

Acceptance

Approval

Security

Value/significance/to feel useful and needed

Purpose in life

Companionship/friend

Hope

Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **Thinking outside the box**

Fun, excitement, adventure

Strength to endure/persevere

Courage

Wisdom/Direction

Knowledge: knowhow for school, job, role, or a task

Respect

Deliverance from an addiction, bad habit or lifestyle

Ability to trust others again; to trust God  
Forgiveness from someone  
Forgiveness from God  
Ability to forgive someone  
Power to obey God/withstand temptation/do the right thing/stand firm in your faith  
The right words to speak in a given situation  
Other\_\_\_\_\_

3. Name the top 3 areas in which you are discontent.

**Tangible:**

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**Intangible:**

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4. Are there any areas in which you *are* content? List them here:

5. In question 3, are any of those listed not true needs but desires? If so, is it something God would want you to have (i.e. does it align with His Word)?

6. Make a list of your desires (include dreams, goals).

7. Do any of these desires conflict with God's Word?
- If you're not sure, ask God. If you're still not sure, get counsel from someone who knows the Bible.
  - If the answer is *yes*, would you be willing to give it up?
  - Even if your desire did not conflict with God's Word, would you be willing to give it up if God asked you to?

*He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all - how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? (Rom 8:32)*

8. Look at your lists of needs and desires again (#3 and #6).
- Are you knowingly or *unknowingly* trying to fill any of those needs or wants in your own way, strength, or timing?
  
  - Will you accept the way and timing that your loving Father wants to meet your needs? Would you be willing to let God fulfill your longing at a later time or with something better? Write a prayer telling Him so; asking for His help. Trust that He will answer that prayer.

*Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart. (Ps 37:3)*

9. Of your top areas of discontentment, which is the most important and urgent? Which of these areas do you think the Lord would have you work on first? If you don't immediately know where the Holy Spirit is leading, would you pray about it? Narrow it down to 3. Then asked the Lord to finish the fine-tuning. Even if you select incorrectly, trust that the Lord will redirect your focus. He *can* do that, you know!
10. Are you ready to do something about this one area of discontentment? If not, ask God to give you the motivation to change. Often, we won't make the effort until we are desperate to do so.

Now that you've determined in *what* areas you are dissatisfied and have expressed your willingness to do something about it God's way, figuring out the root cause will take you to *lasting change*.

## **DETERMINING *WHY* YOU ARE DISCONTENT**

Since we are all different it should be obvious the reason for *your* discontentedness will be unique to you. Therefore, you need to get down to the nitty gritty. This is just a guideline to get you started. The Holy Spirit will be your true Guide to digging out *your* root cause.

The source of discontentedness can be traced to 3 areas: wrong thinking, an unwillingness to believe and apply that change in information (=truth) to our lives, and/or an unacceptance of our circumstances.

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Rom 12:2)*

As you do this section, work on only ONE area at a time. Otherwise you will become overwhelmed. Start with the area determined in Question #9. Don't worry so much if you have picked the right one. Just be open to God's leading. If you are submitted, He will communicate to you any change in direction. Also be willing to confess and repent any area in which God shows you are sinning. Remember being RIGHT with God is the key to contentment.

1. Begin with prayer, asking God to help you find applicable truths and practical tips for your issue.
2. *Using pen and paper*, determine what, if anything, you can do about your situation. It is *vital* that you write it down, not just think about it. It would be best to use a different sheet of paper or notebook, but I have left you some space here.  
For example, you may need to go to the doctor, discuss the issue with the people involved, or research information on your problem. Sometimes we cannot move forward because we're lacking key information to making an intelligent decision. Afterwards apply the Serenity Prayer (see below).

### **Serenity Prayer**

*God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.*

3. Again, using pen and paper, be honest before the Lord and just ask *Him* why you are dissatisfied? Ask Him where you are thinking wrongly, or what truths you might have forgotten? The Holy Spirit has perfect “memory” and knows exactly which truths you need to correct your area of discontentment. This will lead to #4.
  
4. Prayerfully look for *specific* truths and Bible verses that apply to your area of discontent. Write them down. Note: this will take you more than 1 sitting to do. Don't rush through this step! Take as long as you need—months if necessary. However, you will find peace and joy just in the process of seeking God and His principles. And then the truths you dig up will be *your* precious treasures forever!

**Study tip #1:** Use a concordance or internet sites like [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com) to do word searches. Use a dictionary and thesaurus to look up definitions, synonyms, and antonyms to help in your word search.

For example, if you have financial concerns do a word search on money, treasure, possessions. Some of the verses you will find are Mat 6:25-34; 1 Tim 6:6-10, 17 -19; Eccl 3:10; Mal 3:6-10.

**Study tip #2:** When you look up the verses, be sure to read the context, i.e. read the entire paragraph or even the whole chapter. This will add greatly to your understanding and help prevent any misinterpretation of the verse's true meaning.

5. Memorize and meditate on the verses the Holy Spirit impresses upon you.
6. By an act of your will, repeat these truths out loud (if possible) *emphatically and with conviction* whenever you experience feelings of dissatisfaction, worry, anxiety etc.

**The more you do #4, 5, & 6, the more you internalize God's principles into your being. They will become *part* of you—your thinking, feeling, and acting. You are being transformed (Rom 12:2)!**

7. Enlist a mature Christian friend if you get stuck or want an accountability partner. Write down possible people here:
8. Apply these truths to your life. The Holy Spirit will bring them to the forefront of your mind when needed.
9. Once you have had some victory in an area, you can move to the next issue in which you feel dissatisfied.
10. For further study do a general in-depth study of contentment using these words and their opposites and various forms (verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc.): contentment, satisfy, fill, fullness, complete, perfect, sufficient, enough, need, empty. Here are some key verses to get you started:

Deut 11:13-15

Ps 63:5

Ps 81:10-16

Ps 103:5

Hag 1:3-11

Mat 5:6

Mat 6:33

Eph 3:16-20

Phil 1:6

Phil 4:11-13

Col 2:2-3, 9-10

Heb 13:5-6

1 Peter 1:18-19

2 Pet 1:3-4

## A PERSONAL EXAMPLE

It was December 5, 2005. A home remedy for cleaning rugs nearly killed me! Although my life was spared, my nasal passages were not. I tried to remedy my injury myself, but only worsened it! (I hadn't learned my lesson yet about home remedies.) Now my taste and smell were greatly *distorted*.

This problem was ever before me. I couldn't get away from it! One has to eat you know. Being Italian, I loved food. With no exaggeration, there were less than 5 things that I could partly enjoy. Just the smell of onions and garlic repulsed me. No Italian or Chinese cuisine for me!

I was so unhappy and discontented. I prayed about it, but couldn't get the victory; couldn't get peace. I was desperate and knew I needed drastic intervention from God. As I implored God for help, He led me to do an in-depth Bible study on satisfaction in Christ alone. Prior to that, I had only done a very small-scale study on contentment which proved insufficient for my current situation. For months I dug in the Bible for answers. Oh, what treasures I found!

I also specifically asked God for practical tips in dealing with my issue. Then I took action. For example, I wrote down the foods and recipes I *could* tolerate. I then experimented with modifying some of my recipes and trying new ones. Additionally, I explored medical assistance by going to various specialists.

During this time, I had a wonderful husband who was dealing with cancer. He was already going through so much! I didn't want to add to his hardship with griping. Plus, complaining didn't help me or please God. So when the ever-present distorted smell and taste got to me, I emphatically repeated God's truths to my soul. My Savior saved me from constantly sinning in my state of dissatisfaction. Eventually, He transformed my mind and heart as I did my part. I became increasingly less discontented with my situation.

I made the best of it. I gained information so I could change what I could, and accept what I couldn't—all with the divine help of God.

Many wonderful things have resulted from this long 12+ year trial:

- First, my priorities are more in line with God's. He has become more important to me than anything, including food. I've learned how to better submit to Him and put Him first in everything.
- Jesus also taught me that He is indeed enough! A truth I needed to grasp if I was going to, not only survive, but thrive as a widow which occurred about 3 years later.



- On top of that, this hardship has provided many opportunities to glorify God; to tell others how the Lord has helped me and continues to help me not complain, but accept whatever He allows. Now I have a blog series on this topic, a website based on the abundant life in general, *this* a freebie to help you. Interesting huh? Romans 8:28-29 in action!

By the way, my taste and smell issue is much better! I am very grateful for the improvement. However, I am not expecting to fully regain my senses here on earth. I only know that at the wedding feast of the Lamb in heaven (Rev 19:9) it will be a glorious feast for me and all others who have had to deal with eating limitations!

**Until then, I will find my satisfaction in Christ alone!**

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**If you have any questions or need further assistance please  
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