

## Getting Rid of the Baggage



**Leader's Note:** Before class begins, be sure to make copies of the Participant Handout for the session. Begin by welcoming the ladies and open the class in prayer. Before you watch the video, introduce the topic by spending approximately five minutes going over the definition and Session Opening. After you watch the video, open the floor for discussion and move into your selected group exercise(s).

The group exercises are designed to facilitate meaningful discussion. Depending on how much time you have, you may not have time to discuss all of the exercises. Before class begins, select the exercise(s) you want to focus your session on. Remember, the goal is not to “get through” all of the exercises, but to create an atmosphere where revelation comes through group dialogue that creates “aha moments”. When women bond through shared experiences and increased knowledge of God’s word, healing comes and creates an opportunity where safe and solid relationships can be built that can last well beyond the group study.

### Definition of Relationship Addiction:



Relationship addiction is an attempt to quench our hunger for spiritual intimacy with the approval and affection we receive through romantic relationships—either real or imagined.

### Session Opening:



#### Getting Rid of the Baggage

As the facilitator, take a few moments to open the session by sharing your heart as it relates to unhealthy relationship patterns or toxic relationships you’ve had. Remember how important it is to be vulnerable. Your own transparency sets the stage for others to feel like the group is a safe place to open up and share. As you share with the ladies insight and healing you’ve received from God, through your own struggles or something you read in this week’s reading material from Love Junkies, they will see that while you may be imperfect, you serve a perfect God. Ironically, it’s when we take off our own masks that others receive hope that God is able to transform their lives, too. We overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony.



**Video & Discussion Time:** Watch the video for Session 2. Afterward, discuss the video before you transition into the group exercises. Pitch out a question or two to the group. Here is one to get you started:

- ?
- In today’s video, Christy showed how God turned her baggage into treasures. Which treasure or treasures do you most hope to obtain through this study? Why?



## Group Exercises

### Group Exercise A

In this week's reading material, Christy lists several behaviors and traits on page 45 that are common in women who have settled for toxic relationships. Let's go around the room and take turns reading the bulleted list. After each item is read, anyone is free to comment or share their thoughts.

- You can't imagine not being in a relationship. If you aren't in one, you are looking.
- You leave one unhealthy relationship only to find yourself drawn back into another one just as toxic.
- You are easily manipulated. You often fall for what men say and ignore what they do.
- Although you desire a man to be the spiritual leader, you often compromise your faith or settle for men with whom you are not equally yoked (2 Corinthians 6:14).
- You don't see character flaws until you're in too deep.
- You think God is going to use you to change your partner or spouse.
- A false sense of guilt makes you feel overly responsible for others.
- You give in to sexual temptation even when you only want affection.
- Your commitment is more important than your pain.
- You cater to the needs, opinions, and demands of your partner instead of your own.
- You fantasize about how a different relationship would eliminate your current heartache.
- You choose men who don't have the capacity to love or commit.
- You focus on their problems and ignore your own.
- You settle for less than you really want in a relationship.
- You find yourself thinking, "If only he would change, I could be happy."

### Group Exercise B

#### Discussion of Soul Assessment Profile

Based on your responses to your Soul Assessment Profile,

- Which of the 7 steps seem to be areas of strength for you?
  - Identity
  - Forgiveness
  - Imagination
  - Prayer
  - Resolve
  - Accountability
  - Yes

- Which steps revealed areas of vulnerability for you?
- Were you surprised at what the profiles revealed?
- Did you have any aha moments?

If any of the ladies have questions about the assessment, be prepared to spend a few minutes talking about the first profile, the Identity assessment. If you think it would be beneficial, you can have the ladies access the quiz on their phones to discuss the questions. Have them go to [www.christyjohnson.org](http://www.christyjohnson.org), click on the Soul Assessment Profile tab on the navigation bar and scroll down to the link for the Identity assessment. In this way, you can actually spend a few moments going over the identity step together in class.

## Group Exercise C

*The following are quotes from the reading assignment. Read each quote and accompanying question. Encourage group members to comment, giving their own insight or sharing their own experiences.*

- The best way to improve the health of our relationship is to improve our own soul health (page 31). How do you think improving your soul health can improve your relationships?
- Our craving for acceptance holds us captive even when the bond is toxic because the need for the affirmation a relationship promises can be very powerful (page 45).
- Thomas Edison said, “Restlessness and discontent are first necessities of progress.” Once we pinpoint the issues, there comes a bit of calm. At least we know what’s wrong. Now we can work on finding a solution (page 45).

What stage would you say you are in now and why?

- I am restless and unhappy with my current situation, but to be honest, I’m not sure I’m ready to change
- I’m afraid
- I feel stuck
- I’m not convinced it’s me that needs to change
- I am restless and discontent, but ready to make the changes I need to make
- I am content with my own soul health



### Reading Assignment for Next Week: Identity

Chapters 6-8