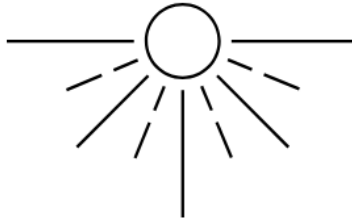




THE HOLISTIC COUNSELOR PODCAST



From the Mic to the Community

What is church hurt?

Name painful experiences and consider boundaries and support.



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LEARN · REFLECT · FIND SUPPORT

[THEHOLISTICCOUNSELOR.COM/RESOURCE](https://theholisticcounselor.com/resource)

A little clarity.

Understand the topic. Find words for your questions.

When a place connected with belonging becomes a place of pain, it can be confusing. You are allowed to ask what happened and what you need now.

1 Use words that fit your experience

Church hurt is an everyday phrase for pain connected with a church community. It may describe rejection, betrayal, conflict, discrimination, or abuse. It is not a clinical diagnosis, and these experiences are not all the same.

2 Pay attention to patterns and power

Conflict can involve disagreement between people. Coercion, threats, retaliation, or abuse of authority raise different safety concerns. The label matters less than understanding the behavior and its impact.

3 Support does not have to come from the same system

You may want a therapist, a trusted person outside the community, or an appropriate safeguarding service. You do not owe anyone a public account of your story.

Research & perspective

This guide uses church hurt as a reader-friendly description. Guidance on spiritual abuse can help identify coercive patterns, but it should not be used as a checklist to diagnose a person or group.

General education for adults. This is not therapy, diagnosis, or an individual treatment plan. Sources and helpful links are on page 4.

Let's pause and reflect.

Your answers can stay private. Take this at your own pace.

Choose one question or explore all three. Skip anything that feels like too much. You do not need to revisit painful details to use this guide.

1 What happened that I can describe without minimizing or guessing motives?

2 What boundary would help me now?

3 Who can listen without pressuring me to reconcile?

Optional faith reflection

What would care look like if I did not have to rush forgiveness or reconciliation?

One next step

Choose a private source of support. You can discuss your options before deciding whether to make contact, report, return, or leave.

If reflection brings up too much, pause. Reach out to someone you trust or a qualified professional. You do not have to do all of this today.

Continue the conversation.

Bring your questions. Learn more. Reach for support.

QUESTIONS TO ASK A PROFESSIONAL

- ☐ Can you help me think through boundaries and safety?
- ☐ How will you handle a difference between my beliefs and yours?
- ☐ What support is available outside the group involved?

Listen with curiosity

[Episode 57 - Joe Padilla discusses church hurt and mental health support.](#)

[Episode 109 - Explore church hurt and leadership pressure with Robin Goad.](#)

Selected conversations are starting points, not an exhaustive list or treatment recommendations. Guests share their own perspectives.

Sources & useful resources

[Church of England: Understanding spiritual abuse](#)

[National Institute of Mental Health: Understanding psychotherapy](#)

Confirm services, credentials, location eligibility, and fees directly. Linked organizations operate independently.

NEED SUPPORT NOW?

United States and territories: the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline supports people in emotional distress or a suicidal crisis. [Call 988](#) · [Text 988](#) · [Chat online](#)

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