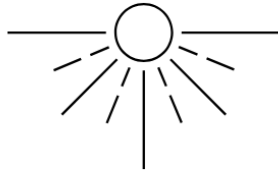


THE HOLISTIC COUNSELOR PODCAST



A LEARNING & REFLECTION GUIDE

Understanding Church Hurt

Naming painful experiences and considering
boundaries and care.

READ / LISTEN / REFLECT

Diana S. Rice

LMHC, CIMHP, QS

FROM THE MIC TO THE COMMUNITY

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Begin where you are.

A painful experience in a community you trusted can affect more than your Sunday routine. It may touch relationships, identity, and belonging. This guide offers a way to name what needs attention and consider support.

Listen alongside this guide

Conversations from The Holistic Counselor Podcast to explore with these pages.

EPISODE 57

Church hurt and mental health with Joe Padilla

Joe Padilla discusses church hurt and mental health support.

[Listen or read the transcript](#)

EPISODE 109

Church hurt and leadership pressure with Robin Goad

Explore church hurt and leadership pressure with Robin Goad.

[Listen or read the transcript](#)

IN THESE PAGES

Understanding the topic / Make room for your questions / Keep learning. Find support.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Understanding the topic

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.

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.

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 and 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.

What if the words church hurt make my experience sound smaller?

You can use words that describe what happened more accurately: rejection, discrimination, coercion, abuse, or another experience. A useful conversation pays attention to the behavior, its impact, and the support you need. You do not have to adopt this label for your experience to matter.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Make room for your questions

Choose a question that feels useful today. A few notes in your own words can be enough. Your reflections stay with you; this website does not collect them.

Type in the spaces below, or print and write by hand.

What would I like a trusted person to understand about what happened and how it affected me?

What boundary would help me now?

Who can listen without pressuring me to reconcile?

Questions for a conversation

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?

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

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EXPERIENCE

Keep learning. Find support.

OPTIONAL FAITH REFLECTION

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

Sources and further reading

Editorial revision: October 13, 2026. The linked authorities provide current rules, services, and evidence.

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

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

Wherever you are reading from, your culture, language, beliefs, access needs, and daily circumstances belong in the conversation. Professional titles and services vary between countries. Sources and directories identify their own regions; a local health service or professional regulator can explain the options where you live.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

These guides offer general education for adults. They do not provide personal therapy, diagnosis, medical advice, or a professional relationship with Diana. A qualified professional who can practice where you live can help you apply information to your circumstances. Changes to prescribed care belong in a conversation with your treating professional.

[Read the full educational disclaimer](#)

FROM THE MIC TO THE COMMUNITY

Keep exploring.



Read, listen, and return
at your own pace.

Scan for this guide and its episode links.

theholisticcounselor.com/resources

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IF YOU NEED URGENT SUPPORT

If you need urgent emotional support in the U.S. or its territories, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline offers phone, text, and chat support. For immediate danger or a medical emergency, use your local emergency number (911 in the U.S.). Elsewhere, contact a crisis service in your country. The podcast and its messages are not monitored for urgent care.

988lifeline.org/chat/

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