



How to Make Any Encounter Life-Changing

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It doesn't matter if your encounter is high definition or if you can barely perceive what's going on. Enjoy it however it comes. Then take it through these three steps to make it life-changing.

1. Experience it.

Enjoy your encounter.

2. Retell it.

Write it in a journal or record yourself recounting the experience. Retelling it does several things. First, it makes you think about the encounter from a different angle. By having to think of words to describe a feeling you had or a color you saw, you analyze it from a different perspective. So you glean more from the encounter. And it takes the encounter deeper inside you.

Second, often the encounter will reopen for me as I'm recording it. God will continue a conversation we were having. Or I'll notice a detail I had overlooked (or not been able to see) before. I'll gain more from the encounter for those reasons.

Third, by retelling the story, you live it again. Research shows that the brain can't tell the difference between experiencing something and remembering the experience. To your brain, retelling your heavenly encounter is like having the encounter all over again. It's like having a second (or third or fifteenth encounter). Retelling multiplies the effect of a single encounter.



Living Loved--Exercises

3. Relive it.

Reread or listen to the encounter you recorded again and again. Focus on how you felt in the encounter. When I'm trying to break into a new truth, I will reread my encounters countless times until the feeling I had in the encounter is the feeling that I'm living from on earth.

For example, if I had a heavenly encounter where I felt incredibly loved by God, I will reread my encounter, focusing on the feeling the vision created inside me. I will keep rereading the encounter until the feeling I had in heaven is how I feel on earth. As I go about my day, if the feeling I had in the heavenly encounter fades, I'll read my encounter again. My goal is to take the *feeling* I had in heaven and bring it into my everyday life on earth.

Why it works

Feelings shape thoughts. The best way to move into a new truth is to *feel* your way into it. What I mean is I can have the thought, "God loves me." But if I don't *feel* like God loves me, then the thought doesn't shape my reality. We live from how we feel, not from what we think. If I want to live *feeling* like I'm loved, then I must teach my body and emotions what it feels like to be loved--rather than stuffing my brain with declarations or Bible verses about how much God loves me.

That's why I focus on the feelings the heavenly encounter produced inside me. If I felt sweetly loved by God, I write down my encounter. Then I read it over and over, reliving it until the feeling it sparked inside me is how I feel on earth.

You see why it doesn't matter how clear your spiritual sight was in the encounter. What makes a vision life-changing is rarely the initial impression it has on us. It's what we do with the encounter. If we retell it and then *re-feel* it, the experience goes deep inside us, transforming us in permanent ways.