

A 21-DAY BREAKTHROUGH DEVOTIONAL • COMPANION
RESOURCE

SENT AHEAD



THE LEADER'S TOOLKIT

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The principles in this book only matter if they become practice. These tools turn several of the daily Breakthrough Steps into worksheets and checklists you can use on your own, with your team, or in a conversation with a young person.

Feel free to photocopy these pages for use within your own ministry.

1. **Family Pattern Map:** see what you inherited (Day 4)
2. **Attention Audit:** see who you're favoring and who you're missing (Day 3)
3. **Hope Map:** help a young person move from a dream to a next step (Day 7)
4. **If-Then Plans:** decide before the test (Day 11)
5. **Safeguarding Checklist:** protect young people and leaders (Days 11–12)
6. **When a Young Person Discloses Harm:** what to do in the moment (Day 12)
7. **Forgiveness or Reconciliation?** tell them apart (Day 18)
8. **The Repair Conversation:** apologize well (Day 20)

TOOL 1: FAMILY PATTERN MAP

From Day 4: *It Didn't Start with You*

Joseph's family passed deception down like an heirloom: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, then Jacob's sons. Use this map to see what's been passed down to you. Fill in what you know. It's okay to leave blanks.

Generation (write the names)	Patterns I see: faith, addiction, anger, silence, divorce, resilience, generosity
My grandparents:	
My parents, aunts, uncles:	
Me and my siblings:	
My children or the young people I raise:	

Reflect

- Which patterns do I want to pass on?
- Which patterns still “knock on my door” (Exodus 20:5-6)?
- Where do I see God’s “unfailing love for a thousand generations” already breaking a cycle?
- Who could I talk to about what I discovered?

A note of care: if this exercise brings up painful memories, don't carry them alone. Talk to a pastor, a trusted friend, or a Christian counselor.

TOOL 2: ATTENTION AUDIT

From Day 3: The Coat

Favoritism rarely feels like favoritism to the leader. It feels like chemistry. List the young people you lead, then answer honestly for the past month.

Young person	Real conversation this month?	Opportunity to lead or serve?	Public encouragement?

Reflect

- Who has a “coat” in our group? Who is watching from outside?
- Which two young people with no marks will I reach out to this week?
- How can we rotate the opportunities that carry honor?

TOOL 3: HOPE MAP

 From Day 7: We'll See What Becomes of His Dreams

Psychologist C. R. Snyder found that hope has three parts: a goal, pathways, and agency. Walk through this map with a young person who feels stuck.

Part of hope	Question to ask	Their answer
Goal	"What do you hope for? What would you love to see happen?"	
Pathways	"What are two or three possible ways to get there?"	
Agency	"What's one small step you could take this week?"	
Support	"Who could help you? How can I help?"	
Faith	"What do you think God might be doing in this season?"	

Follow up: Put a reminder on your calendar to ask about their next step in one week.

TOOL 4: IF-THEN PLANS

From Day 11: Decide Before the Test

"In the middle of temptation is not the time to decide who you want to be." Research shows that specific if-then plans make it far more likely we'll follow through. Write your own, then help young people write theirs.

Area	If...	Then I will...
Personal temptation		
Online and phone use		
A hard ministry moment		
A young person in crisis		
When I'm tired or discouraged		

Examples for young people

- *If* someone sends me an inappropriate photo, *then* I will delete it, not forward it, and tell a trusted adult.
- *If* I'm at a party where things get out of hand, *then* I will text my code word to my parent or leader and leave.
- *If* I feel like hurting myself, *then* I will call or text someone on my safe-people list right away.

TOOL 5: SAFEGUARDING CHECKLIST

— From Days 11–12: *Decide Before the Test and Falsely Accused*

Good boundaries protect young people, and they protect leaders. Review this list as a team at least once a year. Follow your church's policies and the laws where you live; this checklist does not replace them.

Practice	Yes	Partly	No
We have a written child-safeguarding policy.			
Every leader has completed a background check.			
Every leader has completed safeguarding training.			
We follow a two-adult rule: no leader is alone with a young person behind closed doors.			
One-on-one meetings happen in visible, public places.			
Leaders don't use private, disappearing, or secret messaging with young people.			
Parents are included or copied on digital communication.			
Overnight events have clear rules for rooms, supervision, and transportation.			
Every leader knows how to respond if a young person discloses harm.			
Every leader knows our legal reporting requirements.			
We have a list of trusted counselors for referrals.			

Our most important next step: _____

Who will lead it, and by when: _____

TOOL 6: WHEN A YOUNG PERSON DISCLOSES HARM

 From Day 12: *Falsely Accused*

If a young person tells you someone has hurt them, how you respond in the first few minutes matters. Keep this page somewhere you can find it.

1. **Stay calm.** Your reaction teaches them whether it was safe to tell you.
2. **Listen and believe.** Let them tell it in their own words. Don't interrogate, and don't ask leading questions.
3. **Thank them for telling you.** Say, "I'm so glad you told me. This is not your fault."
4. **Don't promise to keep it secret.** Say, "I care about you too much to keep this to myself. I'm going to get you help."
5. **Make sure they're safe right now.** If they're in immediate danger, call emergency services.
6. **Write it down.** As soon as you can, record what they said in their own words, with the date and time.
7. **Report it.** Follow the law where you live and your church's policy. Don't investigate it yourself, and don't confront the person they named.
8. **Follow up.** Check on the young person in the days and weeks that follow. Connect them with a qualified counselor.

Never keep quiet to protect someone's reputation, including a leader's. The safety of the young person always comes first.

TOOL 7: FORGIVENESS OR RECONCILIATION?

From Day 18: Joseph Remembered the Dreams

Joseph's heart softened toward his brothers long before he trusted them. Use this chart to help young people (and yourself) understand the difference.

	Forgiveness	Reconciliation
Who it involves	One person	Two people
What it means	Releasing the desire for revenge	Restoring trust in the relationship
What it requires	A choice of the heart, by God's grace	Honesty, changed behavior, and time
Can it be given to someone who hasn't changed?	Yes	Not safely
Does it erase consequences or justice?	No	No
In Joseph's story	His tears in Genesis 42–43	His reveal after Judah's change, Genesis 44–45

Signs that trust can begin to be rebuilt (look for Judah's pattern)

- They are honest about what they did, without excuses.
- Their behavior has changed over time, not just their words.
- They show care for the people they hurt.
- The person who was harmed feels safe.

If a young person has been abused or is afraid of someone, their safety comes first. Forgiveness never requires them to be alone with or return to someone unsafe.

TOOL 8: THE REPAIR CONVERSATION

 *From Day 20: Break the Cycle*

Few things break the cycle of hardness faster than an adult who apologizes. When you've wronged a young person, use these four steps.

1. **Own it.** "I was wrong when I ____." Name the specific thing. No "if you were hurt."
2. **Name the impact.** "I imagine that made you feel ____." Then ask, "Is that right?"
3. **Make it right.** "What can I do to make it right?" Then do it.
4. **Commit to change.** "Next time, I'm going to ____."

Avoid these phrases

- "I'm sorry, but..."
- "I'm sorry you feel that way."
- "I was just trying to help."
- "Let's just move on."

After the conversation

- Follow through on what you committed to.
- Don't require the young person to forgive you on the spot.
- Notice what this models for them about how relationships heal.