

the CCross

A Whole-Life Healing Path

A Self-Help Guide from the CCross Holistic Deliverance Ministry • Mid Michigan

by clay cross
theccross.org

Deliver Us, Lord

Deliver us Lord from every evil, and grant us peace in our days.

┆ *"We are all clay in the Potter's hands."*

— *adapted from Isaiah 64:8*

This book exists for one reason: to help you get well — spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, and environmentally — starting today, wherever you are.

It grew out of a ministry built for the elderly, the infirm, the disabled, and the troubled: people the world tends to walk past. If that's you, or someone you love, this book was written with you specifically in mind.

PART ONE — FOUNDATIONS

Chapter 1 — We Are All Made of Clay

Start with your name, or in this case, with a name deliberately chosen not to draw attention to itself. clay — lowercase, on purpose — because Scripture tells us God formed man from the dust of the ground. We are all clay in the Potter's hands, still being shaped, still capable of being reformed no matter how many times we've been dropped, cracked, or left out in the weather.

To call yourself basic, in this sense, is not an insult. It's the most honest thing you can say about yourself. It means you are willing to know and live by the very true and basic facts: that you were made, that you were made for a purpose, and that the path back to wholeness runs through your Maker, not around Him.

This matters before any of the practical chapters that follow, because every technique in this book will fail you if it's built on the wrong foundation. Diet advice without humility becomes vanity. Prayer without honesty becomes performance. You have to start as clay — soft, workable, honest about your condition — before anything can be shaped.

Reflect

- Where in your life have you been acting more like finished stone than workable clay — resistant to being reshaped?
- What would it look like this week to approach one hard situation with humility instead of defensiveness?

Chapter 2 — The Five Pillars of Wellness

If you are unhappy, or struggling just to maintain each day, there is usually a reason, even when it's hard to name. Something is out of order — a sin left unaddressed, a toxin still in your system, a wound still open. Whole-life healing starts by looking honestly across five connected areas of life, rather than fixing one and ignoring the rest.

Spiritual

Your relationship with God — the ground everything else stands on.

Mental

Your thought patterns, your emotional regulation, and what you allow to occupy your mind.

Physical

Your body — how you feed it, move it, and let it rest.

Emotional

How you process grief, anger, joy, and connection with the people around you.

Environmental

The physical and relational spaces you live in — your home, your habits, the people and influences you surround yourself with.

These five are not separate compartments. A crisis in one almost always shows up as symptoms in another. Chronic stress (mental) shows up as inflammation (physical). Isolation (environmental) deepens despair (emotional). This book will ask you to look at all five together, because healing that ignores four of the five rarely holds.

Reflect

- Rank the five pillars from strongest to weakest in your life right now, honestly.
- Where is your weakest pillar quietly dragging down the others?

Chapter 3 — The Step Down

The Step Down is what we call the process of humbling yourself enough to become open and obedient to the truth about your own life. It is not a single event. It is a posture you return to again and again: drawing on Scripture, prayer, fasting, the Church and its Sacraments, nature, and Creator-designed nutrition and living choices.

Natural healing, in this sense, isn't opposed to modern medicine or mental health treatment — it works alongside them. It simply insists that the deepest healing available to a human being follows the pattern God built in from the beginning, rather than working against it.

The chapters ahead walk through eight practical tools that make up this path. None of them are new or exotic. What's different is committing to all eight together, honestly, instead of picking the one that feels comfortable and skipping the rest.

Reflect

- What would it cost you, specifically, to step down — to stop insisting you already have this figured out?
- Which of the eight tools ahead do you suspect you most need, and which are you most tempted to skip?

PART TWO — THE EIGHT TOOLS OF HEALING

Chapter 4 — Scripture

Every path to healing has to start somewhere solid, and Scripture is the ground floor. Not as a book of quotations to pull out when convenient, but as daily bread — something you return to on ordinary days, not just hard ones.

Daily intake of the Word renews the mind. It works slowly, the way food and sleep work slowly. You will not read one passage and feel transformed. But read it daily, honestly, and let it argue with you where you need arguing with, and over months something in you reorganizes around what is actually true instead of what is merely loud.

Start small. A single passage read slowly beats ten chapters skimmed. Ask what it is asking of you today, not just what it meant to someone else long ago.

Reflect

- What is one passage of Scripture you keep returning to, and why?
- Where in your week could five quiet minutes of reading actually fit?
- What would it look like to let this week's reading challenge a decision you're facing, instead of just comforting you?

Chapter 5 — Prayer

Prayer is not a technique for getting what you want from God. It is the practice of staying in relationship with Him long enough that your wants start to change.

The goal is to pray without ceasing — not one long prayer a day, but a running conversation that continues underneath everything else you do: driving, working, waiting in line, lying awake. It will never feel like enough, and that is fine. The aim is not a perfect prayer life. The aim is to keep showing up.

Prayer also steadies the body, not just the soul. People who pray regularly report calmer nervous systems and better sleep — not because prayer is a relaxation trick, but because surrender and vigilance cannot fully coexist. When you actually hand something over, some part of you stops carrying it.

Reflect

- What is the one thing you are carrying right now that you have not actually handed over yet?
- Could you build a two-minute prayer into a habit you already have — coffee, the drive to work, brushing your teeth?
- What would it change if you prayed before making today's hardest decision instead of after?

Chapter 6 — Fasting

Fasting is one of the most misunderstood tools available to us, mostly because our culture only knows how to talk about food in terms of appearance. Fasting was never about that. It is about breaking the grip that appetite has over the will.

When you say no to a craving on purpose, in a small controlled way, you are practicing a muscle you will need for every larger temptation and every hard decision life throws at you later. Strongholds — habits, addictions, patterns you cannot seem to shake — rarely break through willpower alone. They break through the humility that regular fasting builds.

Start modestly and honestly. Skip one meal with intention. Give up something specific for a defined period. Notice what comes up in you when you don't get what you want right away, and bring that discomfort into prayer instead of numbing it.

Reflect

- What is the smallest honest fast you could try this week?
- What craving, when denied for even an hour, reveals the most about your current state?
- What would you do with the willpower fasting builds, once it's built?

Chapter 7 — The Church & Sacraments

Healing was never meant to happen alone. Isolation is where wounds fester; community is where they are tended. The Church — the actual gathered body of believers, not an abstract idea — exists to hold you up on the days you cannot hold up yourself.

The Sacraments in particular are not symbolic gestures. They are appointed places where grace is offered concretely: confession that actually releases guilt instead of just naming it, a shared meal that actually nourishes instead of just reminding you to eat well, anointing that meets you specifically in sickness. Show up to them consistently, even when you don't feel like it, and let them do their slow work.

If you don't currently belong to a church community, that absence is worth naming honestly, and worth addressing before anything else on this list. No single person, book, or ministry can substitute for a body of people who know your name and notice when you're gone.

Reflect

- Who would notice, this week, if you disappeared for a month?
- What has kept you from fuller participation in a faith community — logistics, hurt, doubt, habit?
- What is one concrete step toward belonging you could take in the next seven days?

Chapter 8 — Nature & Rest

The body was designed to move under an open sky and to rest when the sun goes down, and most of us do neither. We are indoors, under artificial light, awake past when we should be, and then we wonder why we feel disordered.

This is not a call to abandon modern life. It is a call to notice what was designed in from the start: sunlight, clean air, unhurried walking, silence without a screen, sleep on a regular rhythm. These are not luxuries. They are maintenance.

Rest, especially, has been made to feel like laziness in a culture built on constant output. But a Creator who rested on the seventh day built rest into the pattern of things on purpose. Refusing rest is not discipline. It is often just another form of not trusting God to hold what you can't finish today.

Reflect

- When did you last spend twenty unhurried minutes outside, without a phone?
- What is your actual sleep schedule this week, honestly, and how does it compare to what your body needs?
- What are you refusing to rest from because some part of you thinks it makes you more faithful?

Chapter 9 — Nutrition

Food is not neutral. What you eat becomes the material your body is built from, and your body is the instrument through which you live out everything else — your prayer, your work, your love for the people around you. Treating it carelessly has consequences that show up everywhere else.

This isn't about guilt or a rigid diet. It's about attention. Whole, real, minimally processed food nourishes in ways that convenience food quietly fails to. Most of us already know the difference between how we feel after each. The work is closing the gap between knowing and choosing.

Start with one honest swap this week rather than an overhaul you won't sustain. Small, consistent fidelity here compounds the same way it does in prayer.

Reflect

- What is one meal or snack pattern you know is not serving you, and what could replace it?
- How does your energy, mood, or sleep change on days you eat well versus days you don't?
- What would it look like to treat your next grocery trip as an act of stewardship rather than just a chore?

Chapter 10 — Mental Health

Whole-life healing takes the mind as seriously as the soul, because they are not actually separable. Anxiety, depression, trauma, and disordered thinking are real, and pretending they will simply resolve through more faith alone is neither honest nor kind.

Seek real help where real help is needed — a counselor, a physician, a trusted mentor — and do not treat that as a failure of faith. God works through means, and a skilled counselor or a wise course of treatment can be exactly the means He is using to answer your prayer for relief.

At the same time, examine what you are feeding your mind daily: what you watch, scroll, and dwell on shapes your inner life as surely as food shapes your body. Guard that input the way you would guard anything else you depend on.

Reflect

- Is there a mental health struggle you have been carrying alone that actually needs outside support?
- What has your media and scrolling diet looked like this week, and how has it left you feeling?
- What is one true thought you could deliberately return to when the anxious or dark ones show up?

Chapter 11 — Obedience

This is the pillar that ties every other one together, and the one most easily skipped, because obedience asks something of the will, not just the schedule. You can read Scripture, pray, fast, attend church, rest, eat well, and manage your mental health, and still hold back the one thing you know you're being asked to change.

Obedience is simply doing the next right thing once you know what it is, even when it costs you something — a relationship, a habit, your comfort, your pride. Most people don't lack clarity about what they should do next. They lack the willingness to do it.

Whole-life healing is not a checklist you complete once. It is a posture you keep choosing, day after day, of actually following through on the truth you already have.

Reflect

- What is one thing you already know you should do, that you have been putting off?
- What would obedience cost you this week, specifically?
- Who can you tell about this step, so it isn't just between you and your own good intentions?

PART THREE — LIVING IT OUT

Chapter 12 — Your Healing Journey

You don't have to master all eight tools this month, or even this year. Whole-life healing is a direction, not a finish line. Pick the one pillar from Part Two that felt most urgent as you read it, and start there this week — small, honest, and consistent.

You also don't have to walk this alone. If you'd like a personalized whole-life healing plan, or simply want someone to talk to, reach out. Every intake is reviewed personally, confidentially, and at no cost.

"Whether it's spiritual, mental, physical, emotional, or environmental — we must recognize they are all connected. Every cleansing begins on our knees, because from the spirit all maladies come."

Take the Next Step

Website: theccross.org

Intake: theccross.org/intake

Phone: 517-261-9870

Serving Mid Michigan, by appointment.

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, and grant us peace in our days. God bless you and yours.