WORKSHEET 121 · FOR THE PSYCHOLOGIST

The common threads in my story

What repeats from one chapter to the next

AIM

Identify the recurring themes in the life story (situations, roles, reactions, beliefs) and distinguish those worth keeping from those worth loosening.

WHO IT IS FOR

Repetitive relationship patterns, a feeling of “always living the same thing”, work on core beliefs.

DURATION

20-30 min, ideally after worksheet 116 or 117

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Reread the lifeline or the chapters with the person.
2. Look for what repeats: situations, roles (the one who helps, the one who leaves…), emotions, inner sentences.
3. For each thread, explore what it brought (often protection) and what it costs today.
4. Choose one thread to keep and one to loosen, with a small concrete step.

POINTS TO WATCH

> Phrase the threads without judgement: a repeated pattern has usually been useful at some point. Going back over one’s life can bring up painful memories. At home, the instruction is to write just one word for a difficult moment, without going into detail; work on traumatic memories is done in session (EMDR, NET), once there is enough stabilisation.

REFERENCES

McLean, K. C., Pasupathi, M. & Pals, J. L. (2007). Selves creating stories creating selves: A process model of self-development. Personality and Social Psychology Review, 11(3), 262-278.

White, M. & Epston, D. (1990). Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends. Norton.

McAdams, D. P. & McLean, K. C. (2013). Narrative identity. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 22(3), 233-238.

PSYCHOLOGIST’S NOTES

© 2026 Gonzalo Garzo, clinical psychologist · gonzalogarzo.com · CC BY-NC-ND 4.0: free to share, no commercial use or modifications

WORKSHEET 121 · WORKSHEET TO HAND OUT

The common threads in my story

In a life, some things come back: situations, roles, reactions. Seeing them lets you keep what does you good and loosen what hems you in.

1. Reread your lifeline or your chapters (worksheets 116 and 117).
2. Note what repeats: situations, roles, emotions, sentences you tell yourself.
3. For each thread, write what it gave you and what it costs you today.
4. Choose one thread to keep and one to loosen.

What repeats	When (examples)	What it gives me / costs me	Keep or loosen?

The thread I want to loosen, and a small first step:

These exercises do not replace therapy. If you are in distress or having suicidal thoughts: 112 (European Union), 3114 (France) or the emergency number of the country where you live.

© 2026 Gonzalo Garzo, clinical psychologist · gonzalogarzo.com · CC BY-NC-ND 4.0: free to share, no commercial use or modifications