

***OVERCOMING***

**OBSTACLES  
TO**

**COMMUNICATION  
IN  
MARRIAGE**

**“OVERCOMING  
OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION  
IN MARRIAGE”**

**A Six Session Study**

**Developed By**

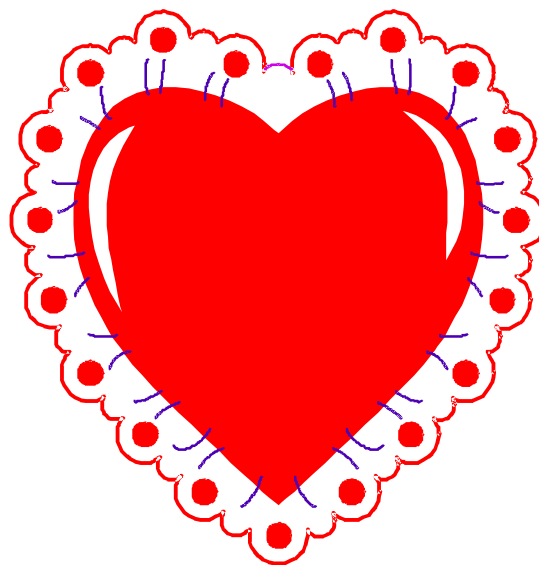
**Jim and Jeanne Leonard, 1988**

# **COMMUNICATION**

**Jim and Jeanne Leonard  
3334 Turner Rd SE  
Salem, Oregon 97302  
(503)581-6560  
[jnleonard@comcast.net](mailto:jnleonard@comcast.net)**

**Graphics by  
Halcyon Words and Word Play  
W. 325 Gordon  
Spokane, Washington 99205  
(509) 327-4119**

**Graphics cannot be reproduced without permission.  
Copyright 1991**



[The message to be communicated]

**THE COMMUNICATION OBSTACLES:  
LACK OF KNOWLEDGE  
ATTITUDE**

**EXTERNAL**

FAMILY HISTORY - CULTURE - EXPERIENCE - BIRTH ORDER - ETC.



**INTERNAL**

**TEMPERAMENT   SELF-CENTERED NATURE   GENDER   (WOUNDING)**

**Differences**

**ARE NOT**

**THE PROBLEM  
IN RELATIONSHIPS**

**IT IS THE**

**ATTITUDE**

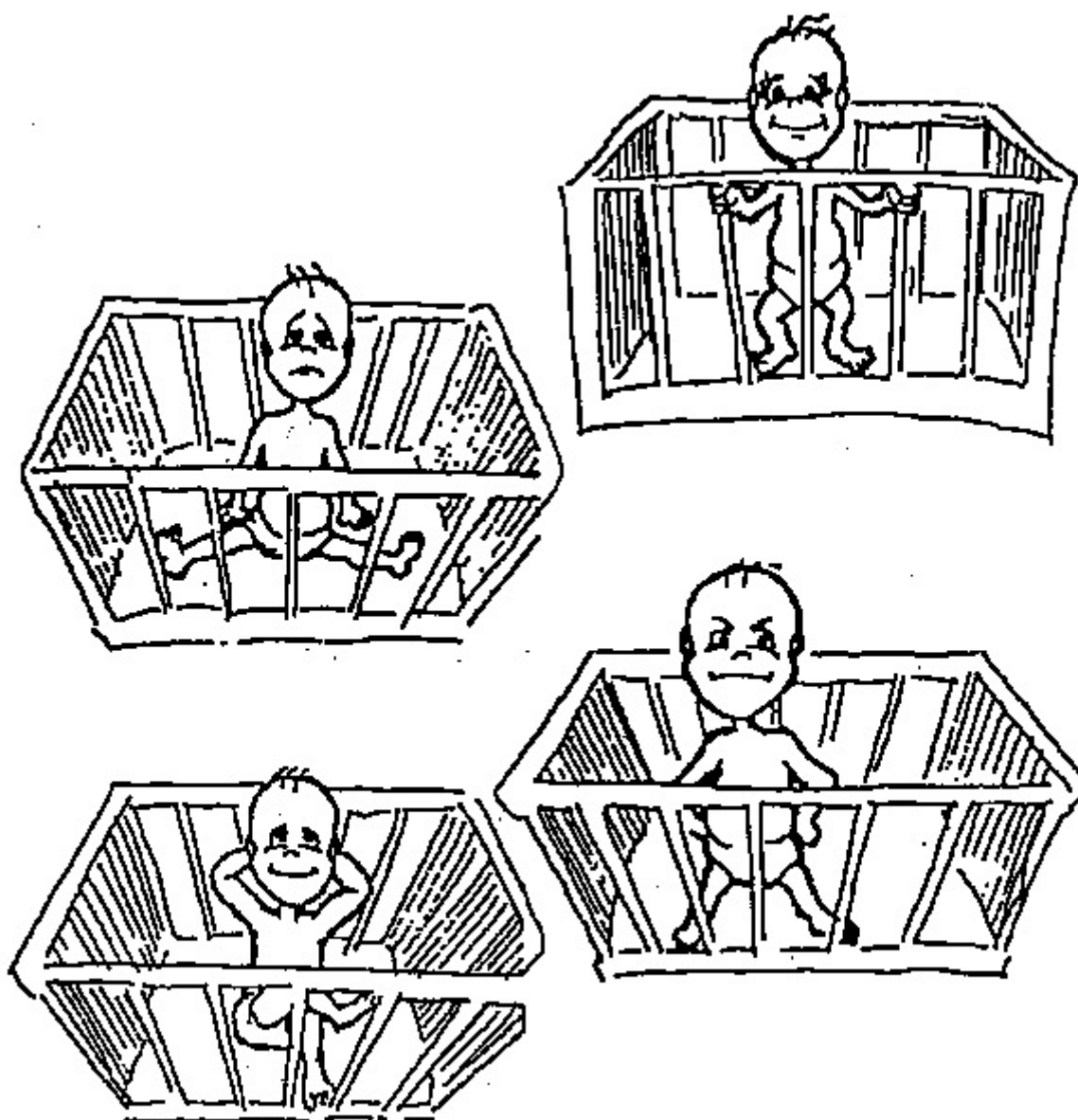
**ABOUT**

**THE DIFFERENCE**

**THAT IS THE PROBLEM**



# TEMPERAMENT Types



# ***OVERCOMING*** **OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION** **IN MARRIAGE**

## **Session 1**

### **TEMPERAMENT TYPES**

It is easy for us to misunderstand one another, to misconstrue another persons manners, words and deeds, and the reason is that **we judge others from our own standpoint and not from theirs**. We do not understand clearly enough the motives that prompted the other person to act as they did. It is obvious that differences of temperament are the main cause for such misunderstanding.

“Temperament and the Christian Faith”  
by O. Hallesby

When I act differently than you, it is because my behavior makes sense to me. Behavior “makes sense” because it is an external reflection of how I understand a situation.

“Please Understand Me”  
by David Keirse and Marilyn Bates

#### **I. ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT.**

##### **A. Hippocrates - Greek physician and philosopher**

1. @ 400 B.C.
2. Based on body fluids
  - a. Sanguine - “blood”, “lively” = Sanguine
  - b. Melancholy - “black bile”, “black” = Melancholy
  - c. Choleric - “yellow bile”, “active” = Choleric
  - d. Phlegmatic - “phlegm”, “slow” = Phlegmatic
3. ***Identified the differences***; but **interpreted the differences** from his world view. (His interpretation was not based on Scripture but on the secular philosophy of his day. His interpretation does not invalidate the fact of his identification that people are different.)

## II. TEMPERAMENT DEFINED:

- A. **Inborn** characteristics that cause you to respond to circumstances the way you do.
  - B. Basic traits, that are innately in us, that cause us to react differently to the same situation.
  - C. Combination of inborn traits that **subconsciously** affects man's behavior.
  - D. Remains throughout life, independent of our conscious being.
  - E. Soul's essential response to its surroundings.
  - F. As opposed to personality and character.
1. **Personality** applies to the personal qualities such as voice, bearing, cordiality, etc. that determine *the way a person acts in social and personal relations*.
  2. **Character** applies to the *moral qualities* that determine the way a person thinks, feels and acts in the important matters of life, especially in relation to the principles of right and wrong.

## JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE IS DIFFERENT DOESN'T MAKE THEM WRONG

## III. PURPOSE FOR STUDY:

- A. To lay down **FALSE EXPECTATIONS** and **JUDGEMENTS**.
- B. **TOLERANCE**.
- C. To examine our own **STRENGTHS** and **WEAKNESSES**.  
 Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, for each one should carry his own load. (Galatians 6:4-5)  
  
 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24)
- D. To **UNDERSTAND** why you and others function the way you do.

**EACH TEMPERAMENT  
HAS ITS INNATE WAY OF  
SEEING THINGS----**

**DIFFERENT VALUES,  
NEEDS, WANTS, FEARS  
NONE MORE "RIGHT."**

#### IV. COMPATIBILITY WITH SCRIPTURE:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>A. Bible: “Sinful nature”<br/>         “Besetting sins”<br/>         “Old nature”</p> | <p>Temperament: “weaknesses”<br/>         “Inborn traits”</p> |
|--|---|
- B. *Power over our weaknesses is found only in Christ.*

## THE HARMFUL MISCONCEPTION IS THAT ONE IS BETTER THAN ANOTHER

#### V. MISUSE OF CONCEPT:

- A. Applying it indiscriminately.
- B. “Informing others.”
- C. Rebuffing others by naming their unfavorable traits.
  - 1. Humiliation
  - 2. Exposure - “psychological nakedness”
- D. Invading privacy.
- E. Rejecting people because we **JUDGE** their combination of traits undesirable.
  - 1. False conclusions.
  - 2. Not allowing for the transformation of the Holy Spirit.
- F. Use it to excuse our behavior.

JUDGE  
ment

#### VI. TEMPERAMENT OVERVIEW:

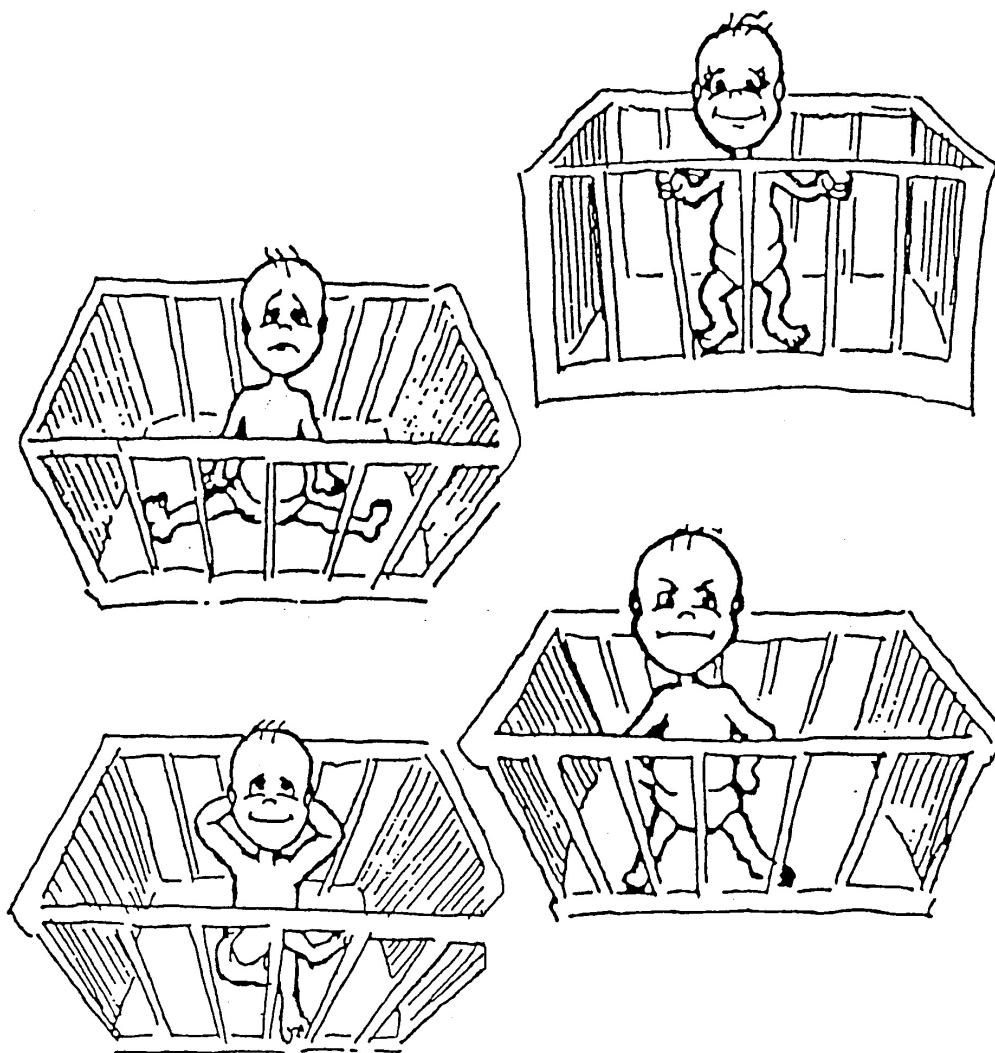
- A. Most people reveal a pattern of behavior that leans toward one basic temperament.
- B. Strengths carry corresponding weaknesses.
- C. Opposite poles — least tolerance for each other.

**S****SANGUINE****C****CHOLERIC****OUTGOING  
OPTIMISTIC  
OUTSPOKEN****LEAD****WITTY  
EASYGOING  
NOT GOAL  
ORIENTED****P  
L  
A  
Y****W  
O  
R  
K****DECISIVE  
ORGANIZED  
GOAL  
ORIENTED****ANALYZE****INTROVERTED  
PESSIMISTIC  
SOFT-SPOKEN****PHLEGMATIC****P****MELANCHOLY****M**



# UNDERSTANDING TEMPERAMENT PROCESSES

JIM AND JEANNE LEONARD  
Adapted from *Personality Patterns*  
by Lana Bateman



## A PERSONALITY TEST

# UNDERSTANDING TEMPERAMENT PROCESSES

Check one of the four words  
that describe you better than the others.

1.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ANIMATED</b>    | -Full of life, lively use of hand, arm, and face gestures.                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ADVENTUROUS</b> | -One who will take on new and daring enterprises with a need to master them.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ANALYTICAL</b>  | -One who is constantly in the process of analyzing people, places, or things. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>ADAPTABLE</b>   | -One who easily adapts to any situation.                                      |

2.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PERSISTENT</b> | -Refusing to let go, insistently repetitive or continuous, can't drop it.         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PLAYFUL</b>    | -Full of fun and good humor.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PERSUASIVE</b> | -One who persuades through logic and fact rather than charm.                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>PEACEFUL</b>   | -One who seems undisturbed and tranquil and who retreats from any form of strife. |

3.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SUBMISSIVE</b>       | -One who easily submits to any other's point of view or desire. This person has little need to assert his own view or opinion.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SELF-SACRIFICING</b> | -One who constantly sacrifices his/her own personal well being for the sake of or to meet the needs of others.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SOCIABLE</b>         | -This sociable refers to one who sees being with others as an opportunity to be cute and entertaining. If you are one who enjoys social gatherings as a challenge or business opportunity then do not check this word. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>STRONG-WILLED</b>    | -One who is determined to have his/her own way.  |

4.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>CONSIDERATE</b> | -Having regard for the needs and feelings of others.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>CONTROLLED</b>  | -One who has emotional feelings but doesn't display them.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>COMPETITIVE</b> | -One who turns every situation, happening, or game into an arena for competition. This person always plays to win. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>CONVINCING</b>  | -This person can convince you of anything through the sheer charm of his/her personality. Facts are unimportant.   |

5.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>REFRESHING</b>  | -One who renews and stimulates or pleasantly lifts spirits.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>RESPECTFUL</b>  | -One who treats others with deference, honor, and esteem.                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>RESERVED</b>    | -Self restraint in expression of emotion or enthusiasm.                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>RESOURCEFUL</b> | -One who is able to act quickly and effectively in virtually all situations. |

6.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SATISFIED</b>    | -A person who easily accepts any circumstance or situation.                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SENSITIVE</b>    | -This person is intensively sensitive to self and others.                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SELF-RELIANT</b> | -An independent person who can fully rely on his/her own capabilities, judgment, and resources. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SPIRITED</b>     | -One who is full of life and excitement.  |



7.

☐ **PLANNER**

-One who prefers to work out a detailed arrangement beforehand, for the accomplishment of project or goal. This person much prefers involvement with the planning stages and the finished product rather than the carrying out of the task.

☐ **PATIENT**

-One who is unmoved by delay – calm and tolerant.

☐ **POSITIVE**

-Characterized by certainty and assurance.

☐ **PROMOTER**

-One who can compel others to go along, join, or invest through the sheer charm of his/her own personality.

8.

☐ **SURE**

-One who is confident, not hesitating or wavering.

☐ **SPONTANEOUS**

-One who prefers all of life to be impulsive, unpremeditated activity. This person feels restricted by plans.

☐ **SCHEDULED**

-This person is controlled by his/her schedule and gets very upset if that schedule is interrupted. There is another type of person who uses a schedule to stay organized, but is not controlled by the schedule. If the second description is you, do not check this word.

☐ **SHY**

-Quiet, doesn't easily instigate a conversation.

9.

☐ **ORDERLY**

-A person who has a methodical, systematic arrangement of things. Can be obsessively tidy.

☐ **OBLIGING**

-Accommodating. One who is quick to do it another's way.

☐ **OUTSPOKEN**

-One who speaks frankly and without reserve.

☐ **OPTIMISTIC**

-This optimist is an almost childlike, dreamer type of optimist.

10.

☐ **FRIENDLY**

-This person is a responder to friendliness rather than an initiator. While he/she seldom starts a conversation, he/she responds with great warmth and enjoys the exchange.

☐ **FAITHFUL**

-Consistently reliable. Steadfast, loyal, and devoted sometimes beyond reason.

☐ **FUNNY**

-This person has an innate humor that can make virtually any story a funny one and is a remarkable joke teller. If you have a dry humor, do not check this word.

☐ **FORCEFUL**

-A commanding personality. One would hesitate to take a stand against this person.

11.

☐ **DARING**

-One who is willing to take risks; fearless, bold.

☐ **DELIGHTFUL**

-A person who is greatly pleasing, fun to be with.

☐ **DIPLOMATIC**

-One who deals with people both tactfully and sensitively.

☐ **DETAILED**

-A person who prefers working with the minute or fields that require detail work such as math, research, accounting, carving, art, graphics, etc.

12.

☐ **CHEERFUL**

-Consistently being in good spirits and promoting cheer.

☐ **CONSISTENT**

-A person who is agreeable, compatible, not contradictory.

☐ **CULTURED**

-One whose interests involve both intellectual and artistic pursuits, such as theatre, symphony, ballet, etc.

☐ **CONFIDENT**

-One who is self-assured and/or certain of success.

13.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **IDEALISTIC** -One who visualizes things in an ideal or perfect form, and has a need to measure up to that standard.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **INDEPENDENT** -One who is self-sufficient, self-supporting, self-confident and seems to have little need of help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **INOFFENSIVE** -A person who never causes offense, pleasant, unobjectionable, harmless.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **INSPIRING** -One who encourages others to work, join, or be involved.

14.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **DEMONSTRATIVE** -One who openly expresses emotion, especially affection. A toucher.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **DECISIVE** -A person with quick, conclusive, decision-making ability.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **DRY HUMOR** -One who exhibits dry wit, usually one-liners which can be sarcastic in nature, but very humorous.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **DEEP** -A person who is intense and often introspective with a distaste for surface conversation and pursuits.

15.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **MEDIATOR** -A person who consistently finds him/herself in the role of reconciling differences in order to avoid conflict.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **MUSICAL** -One who either participates in or has an intense appreciation for music. This type of musical would not include those who find it fun to sing or play. The latter would be a different personality that enjoys being an entertainer rather than one who is deeply committed to music as an art form.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **MOVER** -One who is so driven by a need to be productive, that he/she finds it difficult to sit still.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **MIXES EASILY** -One who loves a party and can't wait to meet everyone in the room, never meets a stranger.

16.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **THOUGHTFUL** -A considerate person who remembers special occasions and is quick to make a kind gesture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **TENACIOUS** -One who holds on firmly, stubbornly, and won't let go till the goal is accomplished.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **TALKER** -A person who is constantly talking, generally telling funny stories and entertaining everyone around them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **TOLERANT** -One who easily accepts the thoughts and ways of others without the need to disagree with or change them.

17.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **LISTENER** -One who always seems willing to listen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **LOYAL** -Faithful to a person, ideal, or job. This person is sometimes loyal beyond reason and to his/her own detriment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **LEADER** -A person who is a born leader. This is not one who rises to the occasion because they can lead, but one who is driven to lead and finds it very difficult to believe anyone else can do the job.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **LIVELY** -Full of life, vigorous, energetic.

18.

\_\_\_\_\_ **CONTENTED**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **CHIEF**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **CHART-MAKER**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **CUTE**

-One who is easily satisfied with what he/she has.  
 -A person who commands leadership.  
 -One who enjoys either graphs, charts, lists.  
 -Bubbly-beauty, cutie, precious, diminutive.

19.

\_\_\_\_\_ **PERFECTIONIST**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **PERMISSIVE**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **PRODUCTIVE**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **POPULAR**

-One who desires perfection but not necessarily in every area of life.  
 -This person is permissive with employees, friends, and children in order to avoid conflict.  
 -One who must constantly be working and/or producing. This person finds it very difficult to rest.  
 -One who is the life of the party and therefore is much desired as a party guest.

20.

\_\_\_\_\_ **BOUNCY**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **BOLD**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **BEHAVED**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **BALANCED**

-A bubbly, lively personality.  
 -Fearless, daring, forward.  
 -One who consistently desires to conduct him/herself with the realm of what is proper.  
 -Stable, middle of the road, no extremes.

21.

\_\_\_\_\_ **BRASSY**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **BOSSY**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **BASHFUL**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **BLANK**

-One who is showy, flashy, comes on strong.  
 -Commanding, domineering, overbearing. (Do not relate this to the raising of children. All mothers seem bossy and domineering.) Think only of adult relationships.  
 -One who shrinks from notice, resulting from self-consciousness.  
 -A person who shows little facial expression or emotion.

22.

\_\_\_\_\_ **UNDISCIPLINED**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **UNSYMPATHETIC**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **UNENTHUSIASTIC**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **UNFORGIVING**

-A person whose lack of discipline permeates virtually every area of his/her life.  
 -One who finds it difficult to relate to the problems or hurts of others.  
 -A person who finds it hard to get excited or feel enthusiasm.  
 -One who has difficulty forgiving or forgetting a hurt or injustice done to them. This individual may find it hard to release a grudge.

23.

\_\_\_\_\_ **RELUCTANT**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **RESENTFUL**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **RESISTANT**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **REPETITIOUS**

-One who is unwilling or struggles against getting involved.  
 -This person easily feels resentment as a result of real or imagined offenses.  
 -One who strives, works against, or resists accepting any other way but his/her own.  
 -This person retells stories and incidents to entertain you without realizing he/she has already told the story several times before. This is not a question so much of forgetfulness, as it is of constantly needing something to say.

24.

       **FUSSY**

-One who is insistent over petty matters or details, calling for great attention to trivial details.

       **FEARFUL**

-One who often experiences feelings of fear, apprehension or anxiousness.

       **FORGETFUL**

-This person is forgetful because it isn't fun to remember. His/her forgetfulness is tied to a lack of discipline. There is another personality that is more like the absent-minded professor. This person tends to be off in another world and only remembers what he/she chooses to remember. If you are the latter, do not check this word.

       **FRANK**

-One who is straightforward, outspoken, and doesn't mind telling you exactly what he/she thinks.

25.

       **IMPATIENT**

-A person who finds it difficult to endure irritation or wait patiently.

       **INSECURE**

-One who is apprehensive or lacks confidence.

       **INDECISIVE**

-This person finds it difficult to make a decision at all. There is another personality that labors long over each decision in order to make the perfect one. If you are the latter, do not check this word.

       **INTERRUPTS**

-This person interrupts because he/she is afraid of forgetting the wonderful thing they have to say if another is allowed to finish. This person is more of a talker than a listener.

26.

       **UNPOPULAR**

-A person whose intensity and demand for perfection can push others away.

       **UNINVOLVED**

-One who has no desire to become involved in clubs, groups, or people activities.

       **UNPREDICTABLE**

-This person may be ecstatic one moment and blue the next, willing to help and then disappear, promising to come and then forgetting to show up.

       **UNAFFECTIONATE**

-One who finds it difficult to verbally or physically demonstrate affection openly.

27.

       **HEADSTRONG**

-One who insists on having his/her own way.

       **HAPHAZARD**

-One who has no consistent way of doing things.

       **HARD TO PLEASE**

-A person whose standards are set so high that it is difficult to ever please them.

       **HESITANT**

-This person is slow to get moving and hard to get involved.

28.

       **PLAIN**

-A middle-of-the-road personality without highs or lows and showing little if any emotion.

       **PESSIMISTIC**

-This person, while hoping for the best, generally sees the down side of a situation first.

       **PROUD**

-One with great self-esteem who sees him/herself as always right and the best person for the job.

       **PERMISSIVE**

-This personality allows others (including children) to do as they please in order to keep from being disliked.

29.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **ANGERED EASILY** -One who has a childlike flash-in-the-pan temper that expresses itself in a child's tantrum style. It is over and forgotten almost instantly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **AIMLESS** -A person who is not a goal-setter and has little desire to be one.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **ARGUMENTATIVE** -One who incites arguments generally because he/she is determined to be right no matter what the situation may be.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **ALIENATED** -A person who easily feels estranged from others often because of insecurity or fear that others don't really enjoy his/her company.

30.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **NAIVE** -A simple and childlike perspective, lacking sophistication or worldliness. This is not to be confused with uninformed. There is another personality that is so consumed with his/her own particular field of interest that he/she simply could not care less what is going on outside of that sphere. If you are the latter, do not check this word.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **NEGATIVE** -One whose attitude is seldom positive and is often able to see only the down or dark side of each situation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **NERVY** -Full of confidence, fortitude, and sheer guts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **NONCHALANT** -Easy-going, unconcerned, indifferent.

31.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **WORRIER** -One who consistently feels uncertain or troubled.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **WITHDRAWN** -A person who pulls back to him/herself and needs a great deal of alone or isolation time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **WORKAHOLIC** -This is one of two workaholic personalities. This particular one is an aggressive goal-setter who must be constantly productive and feels very guilty when resting. This workaholic is not driven by a need for perfection or completion but by a need for accomplishment and reward.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **WANTS CREDIT** -One who is almost dysfunctional without the credit or approval of others. As an entertainer this person feeds on the applause, laughter, and/or acceptance of an audience.

32.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **TOO SENSITIVE** -One who is overly sensitive and introspective.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **TACTLESS** -A person who can sometimes express him/herself in a somewhat offensive and inconsiderate way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **TIMID** -One who shrinks from difficult situations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **TALKATIVE** -A compulsive talker who finds it difficult to listen. Again, this is an entertaining talker and not a nervous talker.

33.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **DOUBTFUL** -A person who is full of doubt, uncertain.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **DISORGANIZED** -One whose lack of organizational ability touches virtually every area of life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **DOMINEERING** -One who compulsively takes control of situations and/or people. Do not consider the mothering role. All mothers are somewhat domineering.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **DEPRESSED** -A person who struggles with bouts of depression on a fairly consistent basis.

34.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **INCONSISTENT** -Erratic, contradictory, illogical.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **INTROVERT** -A person whose thoughts and interest are directed inward. One who lives within him/herself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **INTOLERANT** -One who appears unable to withstand or accept another's attitudes, point of view or way of doing things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **INDIFFERENT** -A person to whom most things don't matter one way or the other.

35.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **MESSY** -This person is messy because it isn't fun to discipline him/herself to clean. The mess is hardly noticed. There is another personality that gets messy when depressed, and yet another that is messy because it takes too much energy to do the cleaning. Be sure you are the first one mentioned if you check this word.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **MOODY** -One who easily slips into moods. This person doesn't get very high emotionally, but does experience very low lows.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **MUMBLES** -This person may mumble quietly under the breath when pushed. This is a passive display of anger.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **MANIPULATIVE** -One who influences or manages shrewdly or deviously for one's own advantage. One who *will* find a way to get his/her own way.

36.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **SLOW** -One who is slow-moving, easy-going.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **STUBBORN** -A person who is determined to exert his/her own will. Not easily persuaded; obstinate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **SHOW-OFF** -One who needs to be the center of attention.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **SKEPTICAL** -Disbelieving, questioning the motive behind the words.

37.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **LONER** -One who requires a lot of alone time and tends to avoid other people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **LORD OVER** -A person who doesn't hesitate to let you know that he/she is right or has won.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **LAZY** -One who evaluates work or activity in terms of how much energy it will take.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **LOUD** -A person whose laugh or voice can be heard above others in the room.

38.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **SLUGGISH** -Slow to get started.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **SUSPICIOUS** -One who tends to suspect or distrust.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **SHORT-TEMPERED** -One who has a demanding impatience-based anger and a very short fuse. This type of anger is expressed when others are not moving fast enough or have not completed what they have been asked to do.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **SCATTER-BRAINED** -A person lacking the power of concentration, or attention. Flighty.

39.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **REVENGEFUL** -One who knowingly or otherwise holds a grudge and punishes the offender, often by subtly withholding friendship or affection.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **RESTLESS** -A person who likes constant new activity because it isn't fun to do the same things all the time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **RELUCTANT** -One who is unwilling or struggles against getting involved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **RASH** -One who may act hastily, without thinking things through, generally because of impatience.

40.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **COMPROMISING** -A person who will often compromise, even when he/she is right, in order to avoid conflict.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **CRITICAL** -One who constantly evaluates and makes judgments. Example: One who is critical might see someone coming down the street and within seconds might try to evaluate their cleanliness, look of intelligence or lack of it, style of clothing or lack of it, physical attractiveness or lack of it, and the list goes on. This person constantly analyzes and critiques, sometimes without realizing he/she is doing so.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **CRAFTY** -Shrewd, one who can always find a way to get to the desired end.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **CHANGEABLE** -A person with a childlike short attention span that needs a lot of change and variety to keep from getting bored.

**TRANSFER TO THE SCORING SHEET EACH OF THE WORDS YOU CHECKED AND THEN TOTAL THE NUMBER OF CHECKS IN EACH COLUMN.**





## PERSONALITY SCORING SHEET

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## STRENGTHS

SANGUINE	CHOLERIC	MELANCHOLY	PHLEGMATIC
1 ___ Animated	___ Adventurous	___ Analytical	___ Adaptable
2 ___ Playful	___ Persuasive	___ Persistent	___ Peaceful
3 ___ Sociable	___ Strong-willed	___ Self-sacrificing	___ Submissive
4 ___ Convincing	___ Competitive	___ Considerate	___ Controlled
5 ___ Refreshing	___ Resourceful	___ Respectful	___ Reserved
6 ___ Spirited	___ Self-reliant	___ Sensitive	___ Satisfied
7 ___ Promoter	___ Positive	___ Planner	___ Patient
8 ___ Spontaneous	___ Sure	___ Scheduled	___ Shy
9 ___ Optimistic	___ Outspoken	___ Orderly	___ Obliging
10 ___ Funny	___ Forceful	___ Faithful	___ Friendly
11 ___ Delightful	___ Daring	___ Detailed	___ Diplomatic
12 ___ Cheerful	___ Confident	___ Cultured	___ Consistent
13 ___ Inspiring	___ Independent	___ Idealistic	___ Inoffensive
14 ___ Demonstrative	___ Decisive	___ Deep	___ Dry humor
15 ___ Mixes easily	___ Mover	___ Musical	___ Mediator
16 ___ Talker	___ Tenacious	___ Thoughtful	___ Tolerant
17 ___ Lively	___ Leader	___ Loyal	___ Listener
18 ___ Cute	___ Chief	___ Chart-maker	___ Contented
19 ___ Popular	___ Productive	___ Perfectionist	___ Permissive
20 ___ Bouncy	___ Bold	___ Behaved	___ Balanced

## WEAKNESSES

21 ___ Brassy	___ Bossy	___ Bashful	___ Blank
22 ___ Undisciplined	___ Unsympathetic	___ Unforgiving	___ Unenthusiastic
23 ___ Repetitious	___ Resistant	___ Resentful	___ Reluctant
24 ___ Forgetful	___ Frank	___ Fussy	___ Fearful
25 ___ Interrupts	___ Impatient	___ Insecure	___ Indecisive
26 ___ Unpredictable	___ Unaffectionate	___ Unpopular	___ Uninvolved
27 ___ Haphazard	___ Headstrong	___ Hard-to-please	___ Hesitant
28 ___ Permissive	___ Proud	___ Pessimistic	___ Plain
29 ___ Angered easily	___ Argumentative	___ Alienated	___ Aimless
30 ___ Naive	___ Nervy	___ Negative attitude	___ Nonchalant
31 ___ Wants credit	___ Workaholic	___ Withdrawn	___ Worrier
32 ___ Talkative	___ Tactless	___ Too sensitive	___ Timid
33 ___ Disorganized	___ Domineering	___ Depressed	___ Doubtful
34 ___ Inconsistent	___ Intolerant	___ Introvert	___ Indifferent
35 ___ Messy	___ Manipulative	___ Moody	___ Mumbles
36 ___ Show-off	___ Stubborn	___ Skeptical	___ Slow
37 ___ Loud	___ Lord-over-others	___ Loner	___ Lazy
38 ___ Scatter-brained	___ Short-tempered	___ Suspicious	___ Sluggish
39 ___ Restless	___ Rash	___ Revengeful	___ Reluctant
40 ___ Changeable	___ Crafty	___ Critical	___ Compromising

TOTALS

Reprinted by permission from PERSONALITY PLUS, Florence Littauer, Fleming H. Revell Publishers



**TEMPERAMENT OVERVIEW:**

	SANGUINE	MELANCHOLY	CHOLERIC	PHLEGMATIC
ORIENTATION:	Freedom	Service	Intelligence	Introspective
VALUES:	Spontaneity	Work	Power	Meaning
TIME:	Here & Now	Past	Now - Future	Tomorrow
NEEDS:	Action	Belong	Competency	Recognition
WANTS:	Excitement	Rules	Productivity	No Change
USES:	Tools	Tradition	Logic	Metaphors
<b>FEARS:</b>	<b>BOUNDARIES</b>	<b>CHANGE</b>	<b>MISTAKES</b>	<b>REJECTION</b>
LEADERSHIP:	Expediency	Organizer	Visionary	Facilitator
CONTRIBUTION:	Resolver	Stabilizer	Builder	Catalyst
FOCUS:	Impulses	Efficiency	Pragmatic	Relationships
DECISIONS:	Need	Standards	Principles	Intuition

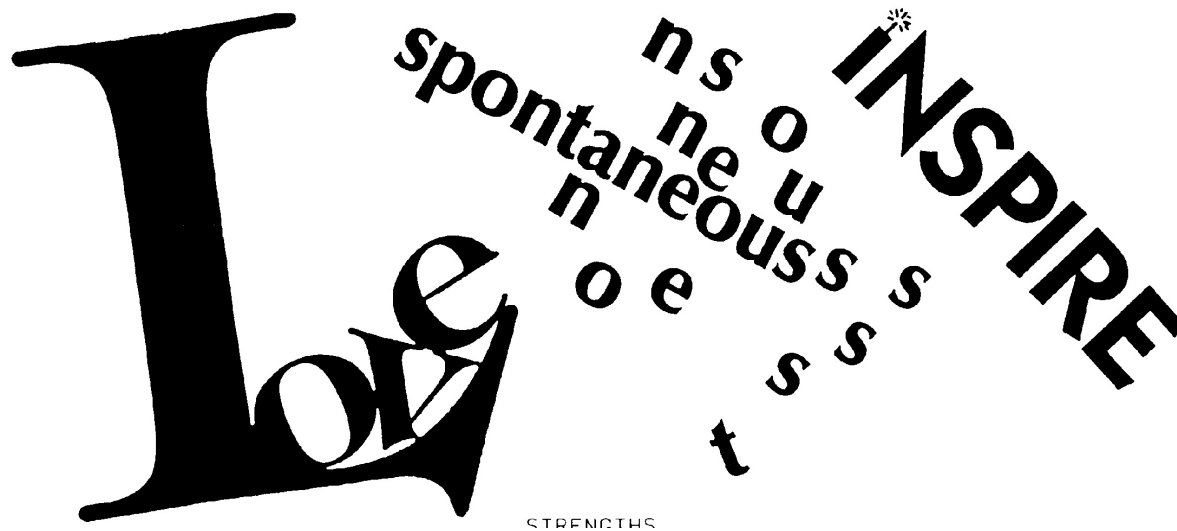
**OTHER TEMPERAMENT DESCRIPTIONS:**

:

Personality Plus (Littauer/LaHaye)	<b>Sanguine</b>	<b>Choleric</b>	<b>Melancholy</b>	<b>Phlegmatic</b>
Larry Crabb	Emotional	Volitional	Rational	Personal
Smailly & Trent	Otter	Lion	Beaver	Golden Retriever
Merrill-Reid Social Styles	Expressive	Driving	Analytical	Amiable
Alessandra & Cathcart	Socializer	Director	Thinker	Relater
Personal Profile System (DISC)	Influencing	Dominance	Compliance	Steadiness

**THE EXTROVERT****SANGUINE  
THE TALKER****THE OPTIMIST**

Circumstantial, lives in the present, spontaneous, feelings predominate, demonstrative, expressive, enthusiastic, people oriented, conversationalist

**STRENGTHS**

Emotional, sincere, warm, outgoing, genuine love for people, responsive, affectionate, compassionate, tender, sympathetic, feels needs of others, ability to converse, life of the party, good sense of humor, instant friendships, good on stage, inspires other people, always a child, strong persuasive skills.

*As A Friend:* Makes friends easily, loves people, doesn't hold grudges, apologizes readily, trusting, naive and direct, prevents dull moments.

**stimulating**

## *HOW TO LIVE WITH A SANGUINE*

- ▶ Remember - **THEY THRIVE ON COMPLIMENTS**
- ▶ Recognize - Their difficulty in accomplishing tasks
- ▶ Realize - *They like variety*
- ▶ Help them keep from accepting more than they can do.
- ▶ Don't expect them to remember times, schedules, and dates
- ▶ Remember - They mean well, **THEY ARE NOT PLOTTING AGAINST YOU!!**
  
- **THEIR BIGGEST FEAR:**      **LOSS OF APPROVAL**
- TO INFLUENCE THEM:      Be Stimulating
- TO MOTIVATE THEM:      Give them applause and public recognition
- MAKES DECISIONS:      Based on feelings
- THEY WANT:      Social recognition, people to talk to,  
                                 freedom from controls and details,  
                                 warmth and feeling, recognition of their abilities.
  
- *STRONGEST TRUST ELEMENT:* *Openness*
- *WEAKEST TRUST ELEMENT:* *Reliability*

# Openness

## *RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE SANGUINE*

- Recognize their need to be leaders in groups and to express themselves verbally.
- Recognize their tendency to test boundaries to their limits.
- Recognize their tendency to have high levels of confidence in themselves and others.
- Recognize the difficulty they have in following through on their commitments.
- Provide a friendly and fun environment, with lots of variety.
- Give them the opportunity to express their thoughts and opinions.
- Give them ideas for transferring talk to action.
- Give them positive social recognition.
- Use confrontation styles only when necessary.

**MELANCHOLY****THE INTROVERT****THE THINKER****THE PESSIMIST**

Deep and thoughtful, analytical, serious and purposeful, philosophical, detail conscious,  
chart-maker, good with graphs and figures, precise, genius prone

**STRENGTHS**

Orderly and organized, reliable, humble, quiet spirit, creative and talented, artistic and musical, sensitive to others, self-sacrificing, conscientious, idealistic, economical, deep concern for other people, always prepared, able to diagnose problems and obstacles, keeps commitments, most dependable of all the temperaments

*As A Friend:* Faithful and devoted, doesn't call attention to self, makes friends cautiously, good listener

**ana + ly + ti = cal**

### ***HOW TO LIVE WITH A MELANCHOLY***

- ▶ Know they are sensitive and **GET HURT EASILY**
  - ▶ Realize they are programmed with a pessimistic attitude
  - ▶ Encourage them to express their feelings
  - ▶ **NEVER TELL THEM THEIR PROBLEMS ARE STUPID**
  - ▶ Insist they get up and get going when they are depressed
  - ▶ Try to keep a ***REASONABLE SCHEDULE***, it is important to them
  - ▶ Know they are insecure about other's love for them
- 
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>THEIR BIGGEST FEAR:</b></li> <li>▶ <b>TO INFLUENCE THEM:</b></li> <li>▶ <b>TO MOTIVATE THEM:</b></li> <li>▶ <b>MAKES DECISIONS:</b></li> <li>▶ <b>THEY WANT:</b></li> </ul> | <p><b>CRITICISM</b></p> <p>Be Correct</p> <p>Ask them to develop a better system</p> <p>Based on information</p> <p>Things to be done the right way<br/>(according to the book), no sudden changes,<br/>personal attention, exact job description,<br/>order, reassurance</p> |
|---|---|
- 
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>STRONGEST TRUST ELEMENT:</i></li> <li>▶ <i>WEAKEST TRUST ELEMENT:</i></li> </ul> | <p><i>Reliability</i></p> <p><i>Openness</i></p> |
|--|--|

**SECURIE**

### ***RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE MELANCHOLY***

- ▶ They have preference for intellectual pursuits.
- ▶ When requesting their participation in a project, be prepared to give specific details.
- ▶ They will usually exercise caution and restraint.
- ▶ Offer them assurances of your support.
- ▶ Be prepared to answer questions in a patient and persistent manner.
- ▶ Be willing to provide reassurance that no surprises will occur.
- ▶ Support your plans with accurate data and specific information.
- ▶ Disagree with the facts and not the person.
- ▶ Be willing to offer assistance if their fears persist.

***THE EXTROVERT*****CHOLERIC  
*THE DOER******THE OPTIMIST***

Born leader, dynamic and active, confident and aggressive, strong-willed and decisive, exudes confidence, independent and self-sufficient, goal oriented, sees the whole picture, compulsive need for change, practical, insists on production

# CHALLENGE

**STRENGTHS**

Not easily discouraged, organizes well, moves quickly to action, can run anything, stimulates activity, takes a definite stand on issues, not frightened by adversity, has intuitive appraisal of emergencies, tells you like it is, thrives on opposition, sees something wrong - must make it right

*As A Friend:* Excels in emergencies, has little need for friends, leads and organizes

# DECISIONS





**PHLEGMATIC**  
***THE INTROVERT***      ***THE WATCHER***      ***THE PESSIMIST***

Low-key, easygoing, relaxed, calm and cool and collected, well balanced,  
 keeps emotions hidden, happily reconciled to life, steady, mediates problems,  
 quiet-but witty, all purpose person, avoids conflict, peace at all costs

**stabilizer**

**STRENGTHS**

Patient, sympathetic, kind, good under pressure, dry sense of humor, natural peacemaker, doesn't worry, takes it the way it is, doesn't fall apart, causes the least trouble, pleasant, the most liked of all the temperaments

*As A Friend:*      Easy to get along with, pleasant and enjoyable, good listener, inoffensive,  
 enjoys watching people, has many friends, compassionate and concerned

**P.....PATIENCE**

### *HOW TO LIVE WITH A PHLEGMATIC*

- > Realize they need direct motivation.
- ▶ Help them set goals.
- ▶ **DO NOT EXPECT ENTHUSIASM**
- ▶ ***HELP THEM GET COMFORTABLE WITH MAKING DECISIONS.***
- ▶ Encourage them to accept responsibility.
- ▶ Appreciate their even disposition.
  
- ▶ **THEIR BIGGEST FEAR:**                      **REJECTION,  
LOSS OF SECURITY AND ORDER**
- ▶ **TO INFLUENCE THEM:**                      Be Sincere
- ▶ **TO MOTIVATE THEM:**                      Be Sincere, and give private recognition
- ▶ **MAKES DECISIONS:**                      Based on gut-level feeling (intuition)
- ▶ **THEY WANT:**                      Security and belonging,  
DISCIPLINED BEHAVIOR, status quo,  
time to adjust, predictable environment
  
- ▶ ***STRONGEST TRUST ELEMENT:***                      *Acceptance*
- ▶ ***WEAKEST TRUST ELEMENT:***                      *Congruence (may not say what they feel)*

# inhibitions

### *RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE PHLEGMATIC*

- > Communicate acceptance and try to maintain stability.
- ▶ They have the need to keep the “status quo” unless specific reasons are given for change.
- ▶ Try to avoid conflict and dissension.
- ▶ They demonstrate loyalty to and support of those they respect.
- ▶ They strive for security within their families.
- ▶ They need to be given time to adjust and the opportunity to visualize requests made to them. (Consequence inspectors).
- ▶ They like close personal friendships.
- ▶ Their greatest struggle is in handling change and saying “NO.”

**“CIRCLE OF CREATION”**

*Words and Music by  
Jeanne Leonard*

You spoke me into being, a reflection of Your Seeing.  
You formed me with the very hands that framed this universe.  
And with *anticipation*, you breathed my animation.  
Affirmed me with a sense of joy - *a creature of great worth*.

Chorus:

And You said, “It is good what I have made!  
Yes!! Very Good!! I have displayed My Life in you.  
It is good, what I have done!  
Yes!! Very Good!! I have begun a circle of endless creation.”

In the image of my Father, I now become the potter.  
Designing with my mind and hands “praise works” that are sweet.  
And like the song I’m singing, creation’s well is springing,  
Bringing forth this melody. The circle is complete.

Chorus:

Now I say, “It is good what I have made.  
Yes!! Very Good!! I have displayed Your life in me.  
It is good what I have done!  
Yes!! Very Good!! I have re-spun the circle of endless creation.”

INFINITE DESIGNER, You are the source of all I do.  
Everything I fashion, I want to glorify You.

# Blessed

**VII. ASSIGNMENT:**

1. Discipline yourself to focus only on the strengths of yourself and your spouse.
2. Read Psalms 139:14-18 And Genesis 1:26-27, 31. Discuss them with your spouse.
3. Share with your spouse those temperament characteristics that you appreciate about them.

# OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION IN MARRIAGE

## Session 2

### TEMPERAMENT TYPES

#### I. SHARING:

- A. Were you able to identify temperament differences in your spouse? Children? Friends?
- B. What new insights did you gain?

#### II. REVIEW:

#### III. IN-DEPTH LOOK AT TEMPERAMENT WEAKNESSES:

- A. How each temperament reacts to his weaknesses:
  1. Sanguine - *Laughs*
  2. Melancholy - *Gets depressed*
  3. Choleric - *Refuses to admit to any*
  4. Phlegmatic - *Shrugs them off with a superior smile*
- B. Judgements that cause us to become defensive.
- C. Be as compassionate with your weaknesses as you are with your strengths.



EXTROVERT

#### INTROVERT

#### SANGUINE

#### CHOLERIC

#### MELANCHOLY

#### PHLEGMATIC

Weak-willed  
Restless  
Egotistical  
Emotionally unstable

Self-sufficient  
Impetuous  
Cruel  
Hot-tempered

Moody  
Self-centered  
Critical  
Pessimistic

Indolent  
Teasing  
Stubborn  
Indecisive

^  
^

ANGER

^  
^

^  
^

FEAR

^  
^

^  
-

^

SELF-CENTEREDNESS

^  
-

^

# NEED

WHAT COMMONLY HAPPENS IN RELATIONSHIPS IS “MIS-COMMUNICATION OF NEEDS.” WE FREQUENTLY IMPOSE OUR NEED SYSTEM ON OTHERS AND EXPECT THEM TO REACT ACCORDINGLY. WHEN THEY DON’T, WE PRESS HARDER, ONLY TO BECOME MORE FRUSTRATED.

## IV. CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR CHANGE:

- A. Too often we assume the responsibility for creating change in others, when, in fact, true change can only come from within each individual. But it is our responsibility to create an environment where changes are likely to take place.
- B. You cannot motivate other people to change.
- C. However, all people are motivated to change.
- D. People become motivated to action for their own reasons - not the reasons others have for them.
- E. The very best a motivator can do is to *create a healthy environment* that allows others to **motivate themselves** into action.

## V. NEEDS VERSUS VALUES:

- A. Needs motivated behavior has to do with **HOW a person acts**.  
It has to do with what is most natural and easy for a person to do. One person might have a need for being involved with a variety of social activities. Another person might prefer to spend time alone rather than with people.
  - 1. Two different people with different kinds of *NEEDS*.
  - 2. Neither involves a choice of right or wrong, just a difference.
- B. Values motivated behavior has to do with **WHY a person does something**.  
Values are standards of right and wrong.
- C. People often interpret *NEEDS-BASED DIFFERENCES* as having *VALUES-BASED SIGNIFICANCE*. A person with a different personality style gets judged as wrong or inferior, when in fact all that is involved is a temperament difference.

**THE EXTROVERT****SANGUINE  
THE TALKER****THE OPTIMIST**

Circumstantial, lives in the present, spontaneous, feelings predominate, demonstrative, expressive, enthusiastic, people oriented, conversationalist

# Forgetful

## DISTRA

CTIONS

**WEAKNESSES**

Unreliable, undependable, undisciplined, no follow-through, easily distracted, forgetful, angered easily, impulsive, priorities not in order, loud voice and laugh, talks too much, interrupts, talks and answers for other people, restless energy, egotistical, exaggerates.

*As A Friend:* Hates to be alone, need to be center stage, wants credit, dominates conversations, interrupts, doesn't listen, repeats stories, loves you today and forgets you tomorrow, (out of sight, out of mind), fickle.

# exaaaaaaaggerate

**WHAT TO EXPECT UNDER PRESSURE OR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS:**

When a Sanguine fears **rejection** or **loss of approval** they will :

- .....attack on a personal level (To direct unfavorable criticism against someone)
- .....then will acquiesce (To assent tacitly; comply quietly; agree; consent)
- .....then become autocratic (Taking control of situations, people, circumstances)
- .....then withdraw (To draw back or away from someone; retreat; remove oneself)

**RELEASING STRESS:**

People with a High Sanguine temperament respond to stress by becoming more talkative than usual. Their emotional release seems to be more of an attempt to express nervous energy, which may tire others out.

**RECOVERY FROM EMOTIONAL STRESS:**

High Sanguine people usually recover by seeking and spending more time with people. After all, they need others, lots of others, to listen to them talk! They are always willing to take a break and get away for some fun. Other people re-energize them rather than drain them.

# ბავშვები-ჩვენ

# OBSSESSION

***ADVICE TO THE SANGUINE***

- ▶ Be sensitive to other's interests.
- ▶ Talk less.
- ▶ Don't think you have to fill the gaps in conversation.
- ▶ Learn to listen.
- ▶ Tone down your strong approach.
- ▶ Try to discipline yourself to be dependable.
- ▶ Condense your comments.
- ▶ Be consistent in your friendships.
- ▶ Learn to say "no" to extra responsibilities.
- ▶ Try to remember people's names.



## UNDERSTANDING THE SANGUINE'S GREATEST STRUGGLES

High Sanguines have a great need for social recognition. Tensions can occur when a High Sanguine must share the attention with another, for the need for recognition is a strong force in his life.

The need for social recognition is one of the most important measurements of a Sanguine's self-acceptance. Without it a Sanguine feels empty. An important lesson for the Sanguine to learn, as well as all of us, is that a need for lasting acceptance can only be fulfilled in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Looking to others to fulfill this need will lead to compromise and failure.

If nothing stimulates the High Sanguine more than being publicly accepted, nothing is more likely to create intense fear than is the prospect of social rejection. Social rejection can destroy the confidence of the Sanguine. Just facing the "possibility" of being rejected is enough to cause major tension in his life. If this fear is not controlled, it can lead to failure.

Sanguines have a tendency toward dis-organization, because nothing gets in the way of their drive to socialize. Excuses and good intentions often keep the Sanguine from being productive and achieving his potential.

High Sanguines are first, relational creatures. They desire a positive social environment and are particularly sensitive to maintaining a positive social relationship with their peers. The fear of rejection is a real and dynamic force in the life of a Sanguine. We are being unrealistic in expecting them to not let social pressure affect them. Instead, they need our support in dealing with the issue, not our criticism. If this factor does not affect the decision making process, real maturity has occurred.

**SPOR AD IC AL LY**

## SANGUINE

### *What do you consider the most difficult part of relating to the High Sanguine?*

- High C:* “It is difficult for us to listen to a problem knowing that the High Sanguine is not necessarily interested in hearing about a solution. We have a tendency to want to get to the bottom line.”
- High S:* “To allow another Sanguine to share the stage with me.”
- High P:* “It is difficult for us to keep up with their need to change plans while they are speaking. We need time to process changes, whereas they can come up with new ideas in mid-sentence.”
- High M:* “To be less inhibited, to loosen up.”

### *What can you do in order to build a better relationship with the High Sanguine?*

- High C:* “Be willing to accept the fact that High Sanguines desire to build relationships first and that goals may be of secondary importance. Their bottom line is not the same as ours.”
- High S:* “We need to be willing to share the stage with others and not be threatened by it.”
- High P:* “We need to be willing to take risks allowing them to participate in activities that don’t make sense to us. Be willing to break our routine and try something different with them.”
- High M:* “Be willing to lower our expectations and modify our demand for perfection. We have a tendency to try to build a rigid structure around the High Sanguine and it doesn’t work.”

### *When I am under stress, the most helpful thing you can do for me is:*

**“Listen to me, feel with me, mirror my feelings, help me to see and focus my thoughts.”**

The High Sanguine continually conveys his need to have others hear them out when they are under stress. However, they do not necessarily want the problem to be fixed. The wise partner is one who listens first and waits for the High Sanguine to tell them if they want objective feedback. In dealing with a High Sanguine under stress, never ask a confronting question that requires an answer, unless you are doing a research project on creative excuses or are writing a script for a television sit-com.

## WHAT TO EXPECT UNDER PRESSURE OR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS:

When a Sanguine fears **rejection** or **loss of approval** they will :



- 4 .....attack on a personal level..... 1
- 3 .....then will acquiesce..... 2
- 2 .....then become autocratic..... 3
- 1 .....then withdraw..... 4



When a Melancholy fears **criticism** they will:

When a Choleric fears **loss of control** or **feels taken advantage of** they will:



- 4 .....become autocratic..... 1
- 3 .....then will withdraw..... 2
- 2 .....then attack on a personal level... 3
- 1 .....then acquiesce..... 4



When a Phlegmatic fears **rejection** they will:

**WE REACT TO EACH OTHER AS IF THEY WERE AT THE SAME PLACE IN THE PROCESS AS WE WOULD BE IF WE WERE TO DO WHAT THEY WERE DOING.**

**WE MUST LEARN TO RESPECT WHERE THE OTHER PERSON IS IN THEIR PROCESS AND LEARN HOW TO RESPOND TO THEM IN A WAY THAT WILL BE PRODUCTIVE IN RESOLVING THE SITUATION RATHER THAN AGGRAVATING IT.**

**MELANCHOLY****THE INTROVERT****THE THINKER****THE PESSIMIST**

Deep and thoughtful, analytical, serious and purposeful, philosophical, detail conscious,  
chart-maker, good with graphs and figures, precise, genius prone

**WITHDRAWAL****CRITICISM****WEAKNESSES**

Negative, pessimistic, moody, depressed, enjoys being hurt, self-centered, too introspective, persecution complex, prefers analysis to work, hard to please, too high standards, self-examination, tends to hypochondria, easily offended and insulted, critical, revengeful, suspicious, low self-image, insecure socially, dislike those who don't agree with them.

*As A Friend:* Critical of others, antagonistic and vengeful, unforgiving, skeptical, withdrawn and remote, lives through others.

**spi** ~~ø~~

**WHAT TO EXPECT UNDER PRESSURE OR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS:**

When a Melancholy fears **criticism of themselves or their work** they will:

- .....withdraw (To draw back or away from someone; retreat; remove oneself)
- .....then become autocratic (Taking control of situations, people, circumstances)
- .....then acquiesce (To assent tacitly; comply quietly; agree; consent)
- .....then attack on a personal level (To direct unfavorable criticism against someone)

## RELEASING STRESS:

People with a High Melancholy temperament prefer to tune out stress. This response is largely due to their dislike of chaos. When they are under stress, they need to be alone with their thoughts so they can process a response. If you notice that a Melancholy person is deliberately avoiding you, that may be a sign that you are the cause of his stress.

## RECOVERY FROM EMOTIONAL STRESS:

The High Melancholy needs time alone to recover from emotional stress. He prefers doing something quiet, maybe reaching for a good book, pursuing a hobby, preferably alone, to recover from emotional stress.



## *ADVICE TO THE MELANCHOLY*

- > Realize that no one likes to be around a gloomy person.
- ▶ Don't take everything so personally.
- ▶ Don't look for trouble.
- ▶ Keep your eyes on the positives.
- ▶ Force yourself to meet and talk to people.
- ▶ Learn to accept imperfect people the way they are.
- ▶ Don't expect everyone to think as you do.

## UNDERSTANDING THE MELANCHOLY'S GREATEST STRUGGLES

Melancholy people are driven by a commitment to excellence. However, one of their greatest struggles is with unrealistic expectations. Their self-imposed minimum standards are frequently next to perfection, which is impossible to achieve. Therefore, they will at times put themselves down unnecessarily, because they perceive that they have failed to meet their own standards.

Since High Melancholies also struggle with the fear of criticism, they may keep good ideas to themselves. The tragedy of this is that others fail to benefit from a potentially outstanding contribution. One mark of Melancholy maturity is a willingness to take the risk of expressing his own opinions. True confidence in himself can only be gained as a High Melancholy assumes sole accountability for his actions. Two important factors to them in developing independence are these:

1. To learn how to lower their own expectations to a reasonable level by getting personal feedback from discerning friends.
2. To clarify their role in a project so that they know what is expected and can avoid setting unrealistic and un-achievable standards.

# PESSIMIS



## **YOU ARE NOT A MISTAKE!!!!!! REJOICE IN WHAT GOD HAS CREATED.**

From the world's point of view, we need to be able to have it all together in one big package. That's the world's view, not the scriptural view.

The scriptural view is that we are all a part of the body, not complete unto ourselves. Each of us is just a part. When we function within that part, the whole body is glorified.(1 Cor. 12:12-31) What I (Jim) tried to be all my life was the full body myself. I thought that all the strengths of all the temperaments should be functioning within the framework of my being if I were to be the man God wanted me to be. I found myself so upset when I could not be all those parts when I needed to be. I finally realized that was not what God was asking me to be.

All he intended me to be was the best phlegmatic male that he would empower me to be because that was what he had made me to be. He hadn't made a mistake. His task for me was to allow him to take my strengths and use them by his power for his glory and to bring my weaknesses to him at the foot of the cross and let him do for me what I was powerless to do in and of myself.

He also wanted me to depend upon the strengths of the rest of the people around me, and not to think that I could, or should, do it all myself. He desires me to strengthen the rest of the body by functioning as the most godly phlegmatic male I could become.

**You are not a mistake. God designed you just the way you are.** Yes, you're not perfect. Yes, you're a sinner. That's the issue he continues to deal with you about. He doesn't expect you to have all of the temperament strengths wrapped up in your being. You are not a mistake. You are God's workmanship, created to do the good works that he planned for you while you were yet in your mother's womb.(Eph. 2:10)

Would you make the decision to believe what God says about you. . . .

that you are not a mistake.

that he takes great delight in you.

that while you were still in your sin and rebellion from him,

he died for you to redeem you back to himself.

that he created you for specific works that he had in mind and gave you the exact temperament and gender to accomplish those works with his direction, power and life.

that it is your task to find out what it is he has called you to and to walk in obedience before him with the power of his Spirit.

**He has called you to be the best melancholy you can be!**

Father, thank you for your creation, and the way you did it. And the ultimate need we have for each other. Lord, that goes against our sin nature, our self-centeredness, but it is your plan and your design. So, would you help us to quit fighting you and to begin to believe you and understand what you made us for. Then we will accomplish the tasks you have called us to.

We thank you that you have called us together for this specific time and this specific information that you want to teach us. Help us to be willing to receive and to renew our minds with your truth.

## MIS-UNDERSTANDING THE MELANCHOLY PROCESS

In the book, "Depression, What It Is and What to Do About It", Roger Barrett says this:

"A number of psychological studies have attempted to find out what kind of personality characteristics are common to persons who eventually become depressed. These studies have taken groups of depressed patients (usually hospitalized) and given them personality tests or investigated their histories for personality characteristics that existed *before* they become depressed. This is a very difficult kind of research (getting retroactive data), and so the results are not considered especially trustworthy by psychologists. But what has at least been suggested by these studies is very interesting, and I would like to sum them up for you.

One study suggested that depressed persons had been perfectionists who led narrow lives filled with exaggerated concern for being on time, doing the right thing, and always meeting their responsibilities. Another characteristic was that they had limited capacity for relaxation and emotional expression, i.e., they kept their emotions under tight constraint. It was also interestingly found that these individuals were highly regarded by others as they could always be relied on. But they were also considered to be rather rigid and highly moralistic.

Another study suggested that the personality of the eventually depressed person was characterized by an overriding need to gain the approval of others first, as well as slavish sensitivity to do's and don'ts, shoulds and shouldn'ts. Their lives were dominated by strict order and rules. They seemed to have a life-style devoted to fulfilling their sense of order and avoiding risk.

Yet another study suggested that these individuals were over-conscientious, striving, and conforming persons who had very high needs to achieve. They had difficulty accepting contradictory facets in other people. They tended to operate on an all-or-none basis, i.e., things are either good or bad, desirable or objectionable.

Another study found that depressed personalities were marked by high needs for order, high needs to have others care for them and attend to their needs. They did not like change or to assume positions of dominance.

I don't know your reaction to these findings, but mine was amazement and disbelief, at least at first glance. Many of these characteristics were ingrained into me in my evangelical Christian background as a child and youth as high virtues, personality characteristics to be highly desired and sought after in both myself and others. If they can bring on depression, they can hardly be virtues, can they? Being on time, being conscientious, always meeting responsibilities, concern for doing the right thing, being the kind of person others can rely on, having things done properly and in order -- these are the marks of what a Christian *should* be like, are they not? And these people sound pretty normal, too. And all this, these virtues, are the seed-bed for depression? How can it be? Is it possible to have too much of a good thing?" (pp. 38-39)



In another book, "Counseling the Depressed," by Archibald Hart, (The fifth book in a series called **RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN COUNSELING** edited by Gary Collins), depression is termed a "disorder" or "abnormal." He describes "abnormal" depression as something that 17 to 20 percent of our population will experience in their lifetime.

It seems to me that if the temperaments were equally divided, and I don't know whether they are or not, but if they were, 25 percent of the population would be melancholy. That would make 75 percent of the population, a very great majority, experience the depressive situations in life in a very un-melancholy way. They would therefore assume that the way everyone else handles depression is the "normal" experience. They would also assume the way that this small minority of the population, the melancholy, experiences depression is the "abnormal" way.

The melancholy has been made to feel ashamed for their natural and normal process. They have been told that they are "abnormal" and they have believed it. They have tried in every way to be "different" and have continually fought against accepting their God-given process. They have found that no matter how hard they try, they cannot be different. Their conclusion is that something must be wrong with them. They have been made to feel ashamed for that which by nature is normal for them.

John Bradshaw, in Healing the Shame that Binds You, describes two forms of shame: *nourishing (healthy) shame* and *toxic shame*. *Healthy shame*, he says, is an emotion that defines our limits. We need structure and we develop boundaries to provide that structure. Healthy shame sets boundaries for us as humans. It is the emotional energy that tells us we are not God. It keeps us humble; we know we don't know it all. The person who has healthy shame has a good relationship with himself.

*Toxic shame* is the emotion that gives a person the feeling that he is defective as a human being. He views himself as an object worthy of contempt. A shame-based person resists exposing his inner self to others and to himself as well.

The person who has toxic shame doesn't just *feel* shame; his identity is shame. He feels the need to create a false self. Shame-based persons act *shameless* (pass their shame on to another) by giving perfectionist messages, trying to control, criticizing and blaming, patronizing; being judgmental, being filled with rage, being arrogant, being envious, and by being people-pleasers. People who have toxic shame can become addicts of one sort or another; they may use chemicals or they may develop addictive forms of behavior.

The melancholy process must be given its due respect. People must change their attitude about a God-given process and help the melancholy know how to productively work their process so that it does not end in self-destructive behaviors.

## MELANCHOLY

### *What do you consider the most difficult part of relating to the High Melancholy?*

*High C:* “It is difficult providing the kind of detail they need in order to satisfy their questions.”

*High S:* “To patiently deal with all their questions without getting defensive. Sometimes we just respond without intending to be taken seriously, but they take everything to be a concrete commitment.”

*High P:* “Consistency in understanding their sensitivity levels.”

*High M:* “Being able to forgive ourselves and lower our expectations.”

### *What can you do in order to build a better relationship with the High Melancholy?*

*High C:* “If our plan to include them involves change, we shouldn’t expect them to make a decision right away. The loving thing is to allow them time to think about it.”

*High S:* “Submit to the fact that a little structure in our life won’t hurt us.”

*High P:* “Understand their sensitivity levels and being more patient with their questions.”

*High M:* “Being able to state my position, whether it’s popular or not.”

### *When I am under stress, the most helpful thing you can do for me is:*

**Allow me to be alone with my thoughts until I am ready to speak. I need time to process all the information. Don’t crowd me; allow me quiet time.**

**CHOLERIC*****THE EXTROVERT******THE DOER******THE OPTIMIST***

Born leader, dynamic and active, confident and aggressive, strong-willed and decisive, exudes confidence, independent and self-sufficient, goal oriented, sees the whole picture, compulsive need for change, practical, insists on production

**WEAKNESSES**

Bossy, impatient, quick tempered, too impetuous, can't relax, enjoys controversy and arguments, dislikes tears and emotions, unsympathetic, little tolerance for mistakes, rude and tactless, hard, self-sufficient, cruel, hard to apologize, demanding, domineering, superior attitude.

*As A Friend:* Uses people, dominates others, decides for others, knows everything, can't say "I'm sorry," may be right but unpopular, can do things better.

**manipulative** **IRRITABLE**

**WHAT TO EXPECT UNDER PRESSURE OR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS:**

When a Choleric fears **loss of control** or **being taken advantage of** they will:

- .....become autocratic (Taking control of situations, people, circumstances)
- .....then withdraw (To draw back or away from someone; retreat; remove oneself)
- .....then attack on personal level (To direct unfavorable criticism against someone; fight)
- .....then acquiesce (To assent tacitly; comply quietly; agree; consent)

**RELEASING STRESS:**

Since people with a High Choleric temperament prefer to be in control of their environment, emotional intensity builds up in them when their personal goals are blocked. They will usually seek a physical stress release. Once their emotions are released, they will begin to respond better to the people around them. Unfortunately, they may have selected a stress release that looks to others like a personal attack, with the result that the Choleric will have alienated them.

**RECOVERY FROM EMOTIONAL STRESS:**

High Cholerics usually need to get involved with physically activity as a way of working out the build-up of stress.


***ADVICE TO THE CHOLERIC***

- > Let others make some decisions.
- ▶ Keep advice until asked.
- ▶ Tone down your strong approach.
- ▶ Aim for quiet dignity.
- ▶ Try not to look down on the “dummies.”
- ▶ Keep quiet about your accomplishments.
- ▶ Try to give compliments.
- ▶ Don’t feel that you are indispensable.

▶

## UNDERSTAND THE CHOLERIC'S GREATEST STRUGGLES

Dealing with pride is probably the High Choleric's greatest struggle. The Bible indicates that often God's strategy for overcoming pride is to allow us to go through personal pain. The Lord used a discomfort referred to by Paul as a "thorn" to constantly remind him of his need for God. In Second Corinthians 12:7-10, Paul records asking the Lord three times for relief from this "thorn in my flesh" before he understood its purpose.

The person with a High Choleric temperament has a struggle over turning weaknesses into strengths. It is not uncommon for a High Choleric to develop a plan of action and offer a quick prayer to the Lord to bless it. Learning patience and allowing the Lord to lead in directing their activities is always a good indicator of maturity.

The risk of humbling himself and losing control is a particularly difficult mountain for the High Choleric to climb. But if he does, the rewards can be magnificent.

Paul is the positive model of success through submission to God. Pharaoh is the negative model who shows us that rejecting a necessary confrontation can be fatal. The opportunity to grow and be blessed was available to both men. Paul chose to respond in submission after his first encounter. Pharaoh stubbornly refused and had to be subjected to ten difficult lessons. In the end, Paul won and Pharaoh lost. We have the choice of becoming submissive to God or an object lesson for others.

**PRE SS URE**

## CHOLERIC

### *What do you consider the most difficult part of relating to the High Choleric?*

- High C:* “It’s no problem for us to become confrontational; however, our body language and tone of voice sometimes becomes a catalyst for Escalating events into an all out war.”
- High S:* “Providing short answers, sticking to their plan, and being committed to a goal without a relationship is hard for me to relate to.”
- High P:* “Using confrontation and having to respond quickly is so out of character for me.”
- High M:* “Being brief! .... You have to be kidding. We feel a compelling need to give out all the details.”

### *What can you do in order to build a better relationship with the High Choleric?*

- High C:* “Continue to talk straight with them, but know when to back off.”
- High S:* “Modify our need for a totally unstructured environment.”
- High P:* “Be willing to risk change and security.”
- High M:* “Be willing to modify the rules and structure if it doesn’t sacrifice quality.”

### *When I am under stress, the most helpful thing you can do for me is:*

**Talk to me about what you want me to do and not about abstract feelings.**

**THE INTROVERT**

**PHLEGMATIC  
THE WATCHER**

**THE PESSIMIST**

Low-key, easygoing, relaxed, calm and cool and collected, well balanced, keeps emotions hidden, happily reconciled to life, steady, mediates problems, quiet-but witty, all purpose person, avoids conflict, peace at all costs

**STUBBORN**

**STUBBORN**

**WEAKNESSES**

Finds the easy way, indolent, unenthusiastic, keeps emotions hidden, indecisive, avoids responsibility, selfish, quiet will of iron, too compromising, self-righteous, not goal oriented, lacks self-motivation, resents being pushed, lazy and careless, seldom convey their true feelings, works only under pressure, don't make unpopular decisions, stingy.

*As A Friend:* Dampens enthusiasm, stays uninvolved, indifferent to plans, judges others, sarcastic and teasing, resists change, not exciting.

**PROCrAsT in a Tion**

**MISSION**

**WHAT TO EXPECT UNDER PRESSURE OR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS:**

When a phlegmatic fears **rejection** they will:

- .....acquiesce (To assent tacitly; comply quietly; agree; consent)
- .....then attack on a personal level (To direct unfavorable criticism against someone)
- .....then withdraw (To draw back or away from someone; retreat; remove oneself)
- .....then become autocratic (Taking control of situations, people, circumstances)

**RELEASING STRESS:**

When a build-up of emotion occurs, High Phlegmatics prefer to release stress by getting a little rest! Because of their intense dislike for conflict, emotional stress has its greatest toll on people with the High Phlegmatic temperament. Sleep can be a great escape.

**RECOVERY FROM EMOTIONAL STRESS:**

They usually need to keep on sleeping. They need the opportunity to break the routine of all mental stress with “nothing time.” Watching television, working in the yard, or taking a leisurely walk all qualify.

zzzzzzzz  
zzzz  
LAZY

***ADVICE TO THE PHLEGMATIC***

- ▶ **Force** yourself to participate.
- ▶ Practice making decisions.
- ▶ Try to get **enthused** over what others do.
- ▶ Open your mind to new ideas.
- ▶ **Get up out of the chair.**
- ▶ Make a list of chores, and then **do them**.
- ▶ Do not **procrastinate**.



## UNDERSTANDING THE PHLEGMATIC'S GREATEST STRUGGLES

Probably the greatest hindrance to the High Phlegmatic is handling change with confidence and a positive attitude. In addition, the High Phlegmatic typically has difficulty being firm and assertive, preferring that others take action and make decisions.

This struggle with indolence may easily result in an apparently blameless, well balanced daily life, which nevertheless conceals egotism, self-righteousness and sins of omission.

One last thing helpful to know in understanding the High Phlegmatic temperament better is that he often has difficulty realizing his own strengths and what he can accomplish. However, once he begins to develop confidence in his skills, he can become a very effective leader.

*Each profile has its own set of defenses to handle stress. As members of the body of Christ, our response must be to recognize and accept the behavior for what it is. Then we can create an environment for the person so that he has the best opportunity to work through his internal struggles and grow.*

In the case of the High Phlegmatic, giving them assurances of support, providing them with concrete information, and allowing them time to ponder are key elements in helping them work through their personal struggles.

**b  
etter**

## PHLEGMATIC

***What do you consider the most difficult part of relating to the High Phlegmatic?***

*High C:* “Without a doubt, patiently giving them time to process information before making a decision.”

*High S:* “Accepting the status quo and allowing them time before accepting change.”

*High P:* “Having to carry a conversation so that a meaningful interchange takes place. I’d rather just listen, but they are usually not talking.”

*High M:* “Knowing what to say in order to draw them out.”

***What can you do in order to build a better relationship with the High Phlegmatic?***

*High C:* “Backing off from our need to have immediate answers and working within their pace.”

*High S:* “By being more patient in drawing them out.”

*High P:* “By patiently listening as they try to give their insights.”

*High M:* “We need to be more patient in knowing we won’t get a lot of feedback from them. We have a tendency to desire a great deal of information, and phlegmatics are not in the habit of sharing that much.”

***When I am under stress, the most helpful thing you can do for me is:***

**“Provide me with time and space in which I can enjoy peace and quiet. I need time to think and assimilate.”**

**“When I’m under stress, I don’t always know how to put in words what is happening to me. It’s OK to use reassuring, supportive humor to relax me so that I have a better opportunity to express to you what I am feeling.”**

# MARRIAGE MARRIAGE MARRIAGE

## VI. IDENTIFYING THE OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION IN MARRIAGE:

- A. *LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.*
- B. *KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT VALUE.*
  - 1. *JUDGEMENTS* on other people's process as well as our own.
  - 2. Judge other's actions as *personal*.
    - a. "They don't like me."
    - b. Intentional to hurt.
    - c. Childish.
    - d. Value judgements.
    - e. Intolerant.
- C. Unwillingness to look at my weaknesses with the intent to change.
- D. Use temperament as an excuse for my behavior.

## VII. PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE:

- A. Can you identify any judgements you may have on your spouse's process?
- B. Can you identify judgements your spouse may have on your process?

# MARRIAGE

### ASSIGNMENT:

Continue to identify judgements. Discuss them. Ask forgiveness.  
Read and discuss together Hebrews 4:14-16; 2 Corinthians 12:10; and Romans 8:22.





**MALE\FEMALE**

**Diffifferences**



# ***OVERCOMING*** **OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION** **IN MARRIAGE**

## Session 3

### MALE\FEMALE DIFFERENCES

#### **I. SHARING:**

- A. Were you able to identify judgements on your spouse?
- B. Were you able to identify judgements your spouse has on you?

# ACCEPTANCE

#### **II. PERSONHOOD: A Theology of Sex and Marriage.**

##### **A. CREATION: Humankind was created to be in intimate relationship with the God of the Universe.**

Genesis 1:27

So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:7

YHWH God formed the man

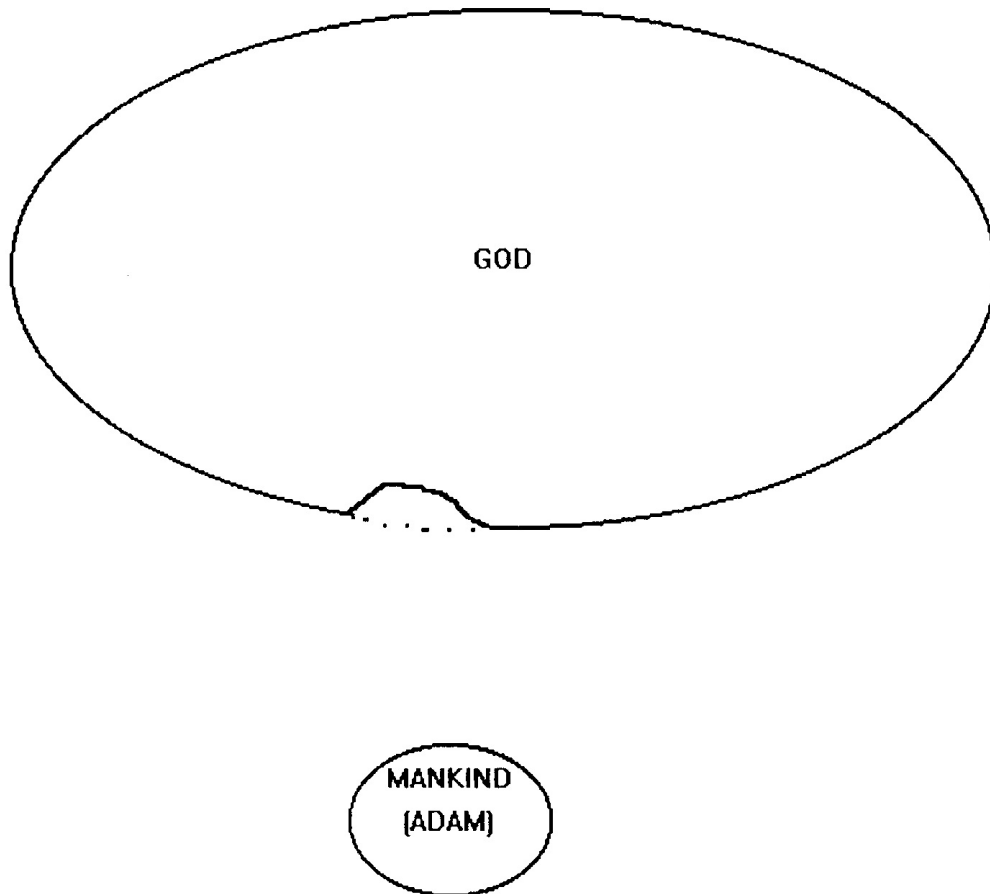
{The Hebrew for [man (adam)] sounds like and may be related to the  
Hebrew for [ground (adamah)]; it is also the name [Adam]  
(see Gen. 2:20).}

from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,  
and the man became a living being.

**WHEN GOD CREATED HUMANKIND, HE CREATED HIS COUNTERPART.**

**HE TOOK PART OF HIMSELF AND PLACED IT IN MANKIND.  
GOD SHOWS US THE EXAMPLE AS HE SPLITS ADAM  
INTO A MALE AND FEMALE EXPRESSION OF BEING.**

**WHEN YOU TAKE SOMETHING OUT, IT LEAVES A VOID, A VACUUM.**



**GOD IS DRAWN TO MAN AND MAN TO GOD BECAUSE OF THIS.**

Genesis 2:18-25

The LORD God said,

**"It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."**

Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground  
all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air.

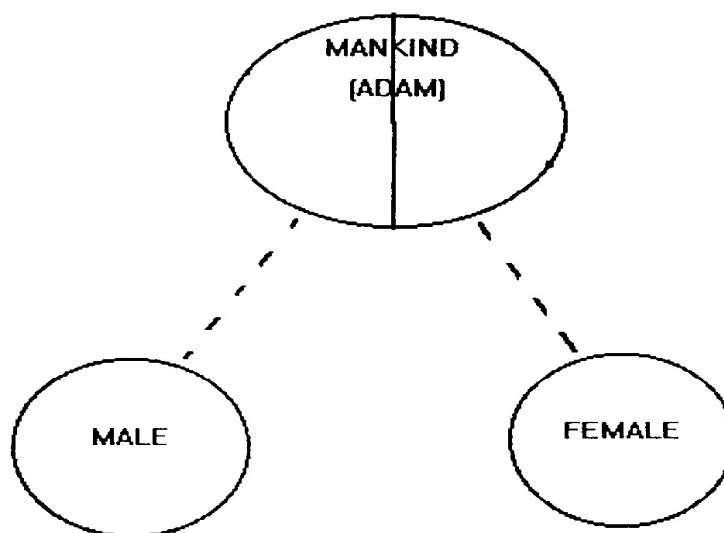
He brought them to the man to see what he would name them;  
and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

So the man gave names to all the livestock,  
the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

**But for Adam {Or [the man]} no suitable helper was found.**

So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep;  
and while he was sleeping,  
he took one of the man's ribs {Or [took part of the man's side]}  
and closed up the place with flesh.

**Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib {Or [part]}  
he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.**



**GOD'S PLAN WAS THAT THE HUMAN COUNTERPARTS (MALE AND FEMALE)  
WOULD FUNCTION LIKE HE AND HIS COUNTERPART (HUMANITY).**



Husbands, love your wives,  
 just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy,  
 cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,  
 and to present her to himself as a radiant church,  
 without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.  
 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies.  
 He who loves his wife loves himself.

After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it,  
 just as Christ does the church -- for we are members of his body.

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,  
 and the two will become one flesh."

**This is a profound mystery -- but I am talking about Christ and the church.**

However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself,  
 and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:25-33 )

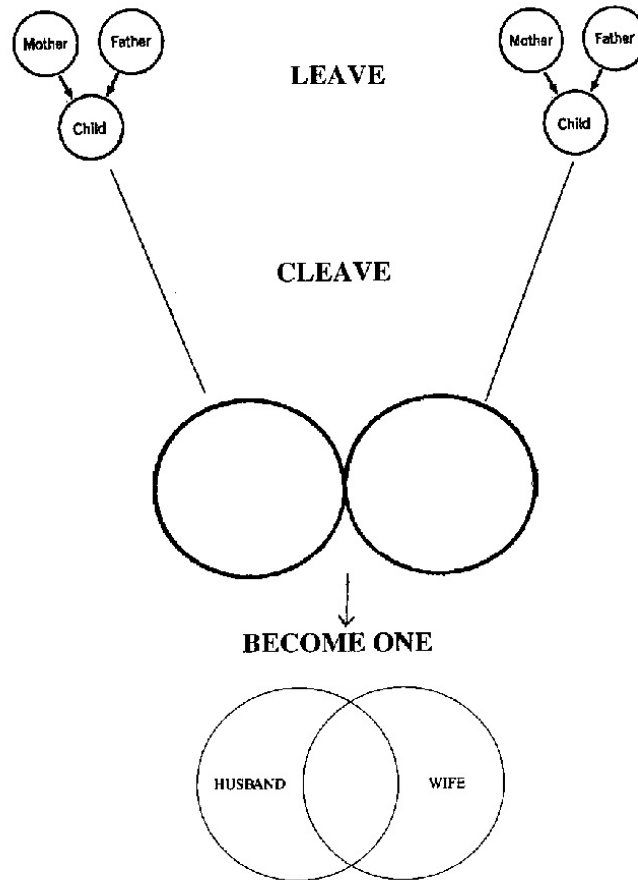
valued

The man said,

"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called 'woman, for she was taken out of man."

For this reason a man will **leave** his father and mother  
and **be united** to his wife, and they will **become one flesh**.

The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (Genesis 2:18-25)



Another thing you do: You flood the LORD's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer pays attention to your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. You ask, "Why?"

It is because the LORD is acting as the witness between you and the wife of your youth, because you **have broken faith** with her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant.

**Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one?**

**Because he was seeking godly offspring.**

So guard yourself in your spirit, and **do not break faith** with the wife of your youth.

"I hate divorce," says the LORD God of Israel, "and I hate a man's covering himself {Or [his wife]} with violence as well as with his garment," says the LORD Almighty.

So guard yourself in your spirit, and **do not break faith. (TO ACT TREACHEROUSLY)**

(Malachi 2:13-16)

**B. THE FALL AND REDEMPTION: After humankind breaks the relationship, God provides a way to make the relationship healed. (Salvation History)**

**And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."**(Genesis 3:15)

**From Genesis 3 to Revelation 22, there is only one message: How God has pursued His counterpart from the beginning of time until the close of this age.**

"The kingdom of heaven is like **treasure hidden in a field.**  
When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.  
**When he found one of great value,**  
he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.(Matthew 13:44-46)

The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save.  
**He will take great delight in you,**  
he will quiet you with his love,  
he will rejoice over you with singing."(Zephaniah 3:17)

**Revelation 20-22 gives us a picture of the final fulfillment of history. There is to be a great feast called the "Wedding supper of the Lamb." Jesus and the Church will be finally re-united in marriage.  
The two shall become one again.**

**Do you really understand your value??**

**JESUS IS STANDING AT YOUR HEARTS DOOR, WAITING FOR YOUR INVITATION TO COME BACK INTO HIS PROPER PLACE WITH YOU AS HIS PERFECT COUNTERPART.**

**HE IS THE ONE YOU WERE MADE TO CO-EXIST WITH AS CREATOR/CREATED, SOVEREIGN LORD/SUBJECT, INTIMATE FRIEND.**



### III. MALE\FEMALE DIFFERENCES:

“You husbands, likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.” (1 Peter 3:7)

“Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, and respect their **God-given nature** as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder God’s response to your requests.” (Living Bible)

#### A. Mental\Emotional Differences:

1. Women tend to be more **PERSONAL** than men.      **(RELATIONAL)**
  - a. Women have a deeper interest in people and feelings.  
(Building and nurturing relationships)
  - b. Men tend to be more preoccupied with practicalities that can be understood through logical deduction.
2. Men tend to be more **CONQUER ORIENTED**.  
**(COMPETING FOR DOMINANCE)**
  - a. Automobile trips, Vacation, etc.
  - b. Shopping.

3. Is Genesis 3 **descriptive** or **prescriptive**???

  - a. “Your desire will be to your husband.”                      **(Relational)**
  - b. “He will rule over you.”    **(Dominance, conquering)**

4. Women become an intimate part of their surroundings.  
A man is able to remain apart and does not become entwined with them.
5. Women often need more time to adjust to change.  
Because of a women’s emotional identity with people and places around them,  
she needs more time to adjust to changes that may affect her relationships.
6. Women tend to express their hostility **VERBALLY**.  
Men tend to be more **PHYSICALLY** violent.

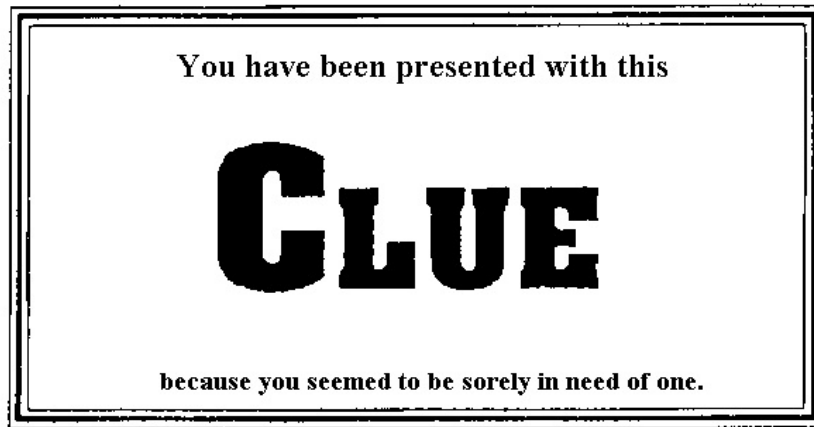
*processssssssssss*

7. Women and men are genetically different.
  - a. The 23 set of chromosomes determines the gender of a human fetus.  
The female will always produce an X gene.  
The male will either produce an X or a Y gene.  
XX produces a female.  
XY produces a male.

## 8. MEN ARE BRAIN DIFFERENT BY DESIGN:

- a. Between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy, a chemical bath of testosterone and other sex-related hormones wash over a baby boy's brain.
- b. The brain has two halves connected by fibrous tissue called the corpus callosum.
- c. A chemical bath causes the right side of the brain to recede slightly, destroying some of the connecting fibers of the brain, making boys generally left brained.
- d. Women use both sides of their brain, while men use one side at a time.

Computer/Adding machine



## 9. Women, by nature, are skilled in communication.

2 to 4 year old children were wired for sound on a playground.

Girls — 100% of the sound had to do with conversation to self or others.

Boys — 60% of the sound had to do with conversation to self or others.  
40% of the sound was non-language. **(NOISE)**

## 10. Women function like a river; Men compartmentalize.

## 11. A woman is fulfilled by exploring her feelings through verbal expression.

A man likes to communicate in as few words as possible so he can get on to other things. When a task is accomplished, a woman wants to feel good about the process, whereas the man is excited about what he accomplished.

## B. Sexual Differences:

1. A woman's sex drive tends to be related to her menstrual cycle, while a man's sex drive is fairly constant.
2. A woman is stimulated more by touch and romantic words  
- far more attracted to a man's personality,  
while a man is stimulated by sight.  
(Pornography: male- sex pictures / female- romance novels)
3. A woman often needs hours of emotional and mental preparation.  
A man needs very little preparation.
4. A woman makes **A CHOICE** for sex  
based upon the feeling of having her love needs met.
5. A woman makes a distinction between "a meaningful, affectionate touch" and  
and "a sexual touch." A "sexual touch" demands a "choice."

# frustration

## C. Communication Styles:

1. Women talk face to face; men talk side by side.  
Face to face is intimacy for women; a challenge to men.
2. Women ask questions for the purpose of negotiation.  
Men will express their preference.
3. Women approach life as a network of connections, in which people seek consensus.  
Men approach life as a place where people try to achieve and maintain status.
4. For a woman, a complaint is a vehicle by which she can find emotional support.  
For a man, a complaint is a challenge to come up with a solution.
5. A woman practices all her life verbalizing her feelings. This shows involvement and caring. All his life, the man has practiced keeping his inner-most thoughts to himself.

In a world of **CONNECTION**, *Intimacy* is key, where individuals negotiate complex networks of friendship, minimize differences, try to reach consensus, and avoid the appearance of superiority, which would highlight differences.

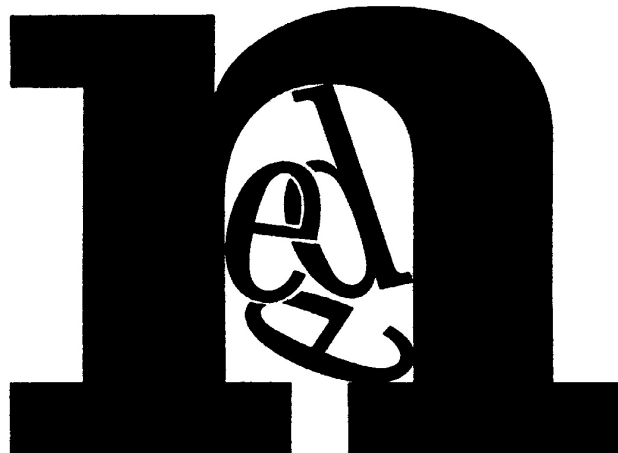
In a world of **STATUS**, *independence* is key, because a primary means of establishing status is to tell others what to do, and taking orders is a marker of low status. Though all humans need both intimacy and independence, women tend to focus on the first and men on the second.

(Taken from Deborah Tannen's book, *You Just Don't Understand*.)

### C. Basic Need Differences:

Below are listed the ten basic marital needs and space has been left for you to add other needs important to your marital happiness. In the space before each need, put a number from 1 to 4 that ranks the need's importance to you. Put a 1 before the most important need, and so on. These first 4 needs are those on which you want your spouse to focus greatest effort. (Explain whether the need is important because it is first on the list and *your mate is meeting it*, or, that it is first on the list because it is not being met.)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Affection
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sexual relations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Conversation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recreational partner
- \_\_\_\_\_ Financial support
- \_\_\_\_\_ Admiration
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attractiveness of spouse
- \_\_\_\_\_ Honesty and openness
- \_\_\_\_\_ Domestic support
- \_\_\_\_\_ Family commitment
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_





1. The man's five most basic needs in marriage are:
  - a. Sexual fulfillment.
  - b. Recreational companionship.
  - c. An attractive spouse.
  - d. Domestic support.
  - e. Admiration.
  
2. The woman's five most basic needs in marriage are:
  - a. Affection.
  - b. Conversation.
  - c. Honesty and openness.
  - d. Financial support.
  - e. Family commitment.

(From *His Needs, Her Needs*, by William F. Harley, Jr.)



The basic differences, which usually surface soon after the wedding, are the source of many conflicts in marriage. From the start, the woman has a greater intuitive awareness of how to develop a loving relationship. Because of her sensitivity, she is initially more considerate of his feelings and enthusiastic about developing a meaningful, multilevel relationship.

That is, she knows how to build something more than a sexual marathon; she wants to be a lover, a best friend, a fan, a homemaker and an appreciated partner.

The man, on the other hand, does not generally have her instinctive awareness of what the relationship should be. He doesn't know how to encourage and love his wife or treat her in a way that meets her deepest needs.

Since he doesn't have an understanding of these vital areas through intuition, he must rely solely upon the knowledge and skills he has acquired prior to marriage. Unfortunately, our educational system does not require a training program for a husband to be. His only education may be the example he observed in his home. For many of us that example may have been insufficient.

We enter marriage knowing everything about sex and very little about genuine, unselfish love.



# ***OVERCOMING*** **OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION** **IN MARRIAGE**

## Session 4

### MALE/FEMALE PERCEPTIONS OF LOVE

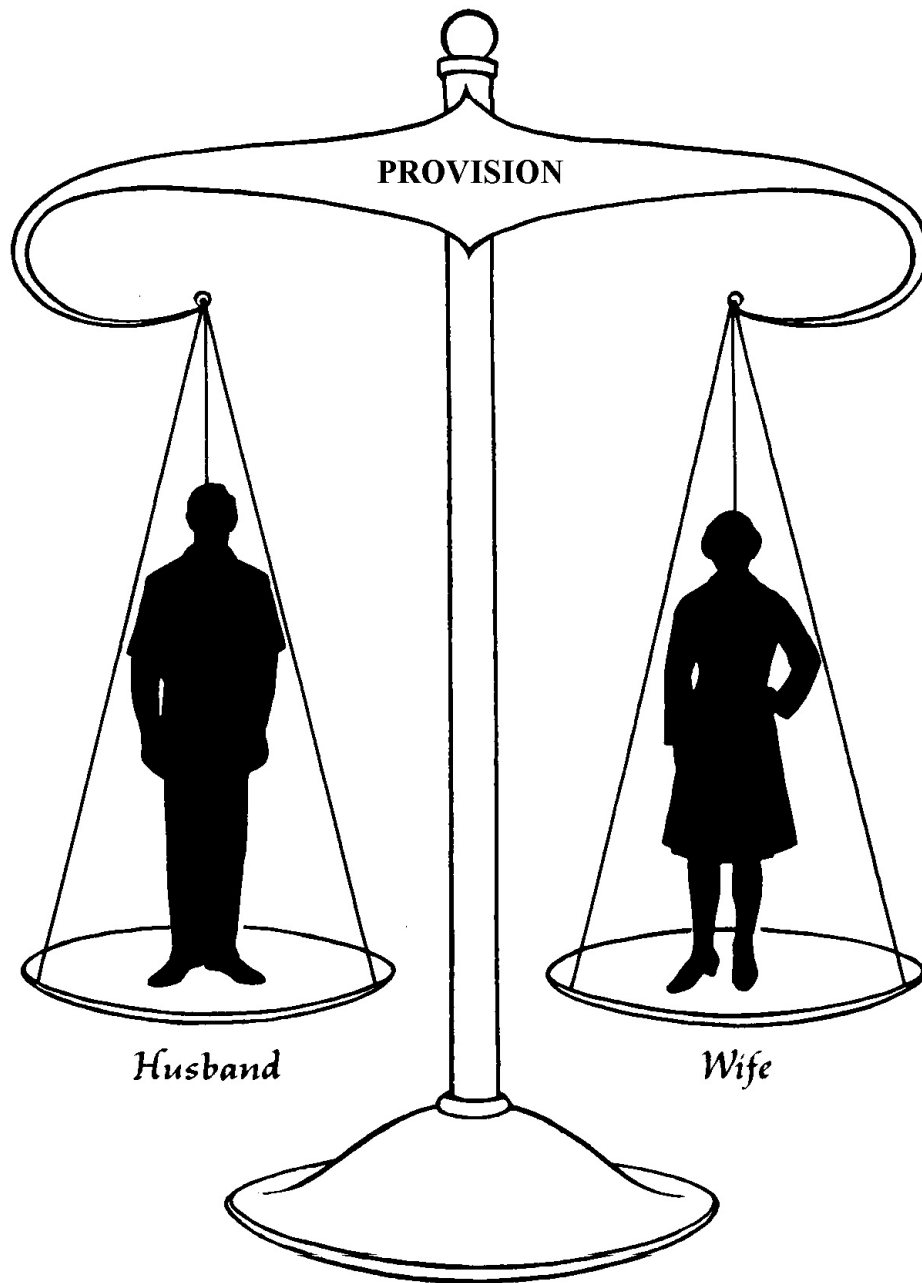
#### I. SHARING:

What new insights have you gained?

# EXPECTATIONS

#### II. MALE PERCEPTION OF LOVE: PROVISION ORIENTATION

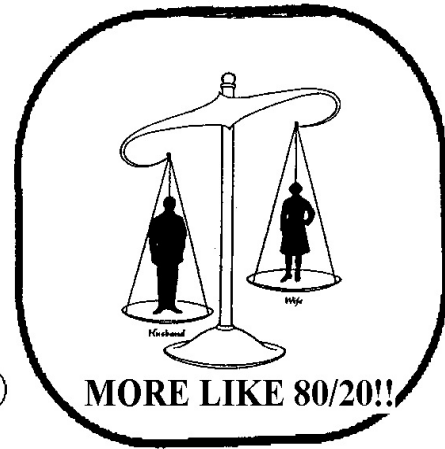
- A. After the male has succeeded in “conquering” his mate at the wedding ceremony,  
He becomes “provision oriented.”  
(In some relationships it is put off until children arrive.)  
(During “courtship” he was the most relational he had ever been.)
- B. His “conquering” focus changes to a career and providing for his family.  
He feels the load of *responsibility*.
- C. His relationship with his wife is now approached on a “provision” basis.
  1. Provision expectations:  
“My wife and I both have responsibilities to fulfill in this relationship.  
If we are both fulfilling our responsibilities to the best of our abilities,  
we are expressing to each other how much we love, honor, and respect  
each other.”
  2. When the wife calls into question his love, he will respond:  
“I come home every night. I bring home the pay check. I don’t mess around with  
any other woman. I take care of my part of this relationship. I married you.  
What do you mean, ‘I don’t love you.’”



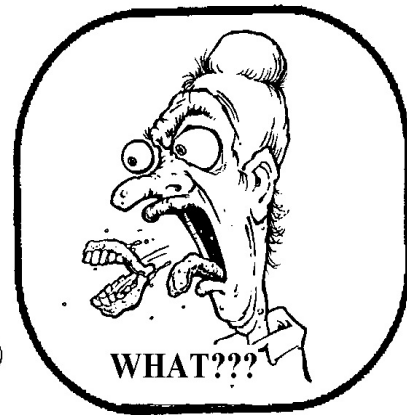
**50/50**

If the wife fulfills her “part of the bargain” and  
**MEETS THE MALE *EXPECTATIONS*,**  
the husband perceives that he is loved, honored, and esteemed.

**What the man usually thinks:**



**What a woman usually thinks:**



### III. FEMALE PERCEPTION OF LOVE:

- A. During the courting period, the female has been convinced that, of all the women in the world that the male could choose to value, **he holds her to be the most valued and loved.** She is willing to spend her whole life with a man that feels and acts that way about her.
- B. Every man has a TV screen located on his forehead. **It can only be seen by his wife.** This screen shows the thing that is the most important to him (*as determined by his wife*) based on the amount of time and energy he spends with it and the affectionate way in which he treats it. (What does he get enthused and excited about and talk about to his friends and other people.) This is what she sees is the most important thing of value to him.

**IF SHE IS NOT REFLECTED IN THE NUMBER ONE POSITION ON THAT SCREEN, SHE PERCEIVES THAT SHE IS NOT LOVED, HONORED OR CHERISHED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN HIS LIFE.**



**If she is not in the priority position, she perceives whatever is in that position as if it were his mistress.**

# COURTING

EXPLORING AND FINDING  
A PERSON TO LOVE AND  
ONE WHO WOULD LOVE IN RETURN



YOU CONVINCED HER THAT IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS  
SHE WAS THE MOST SPECIAL AND VALUABLE PERSON IN YOUR LIFE!!!  
Who wouldn't want to spend the rest of your life with someone like that?

# MARRIAGE

## CONQUERING

Some time after the marriage ceremony, maybe after the birth of the first child,  
the differences of the perceptions of love come full force in reality.

The wife assumes that the relational things that the husband did in the courting phase  
would be a continual part of their relationship.

**She did not know that "courting" for the male is a "conquering" process.**

Once the marriage takes place, the husband feels no need to continue the "courting."

He has "conquered" so there is no need for more.

It's time to get on with life and take care of the **responsibility** he now has.

## CRISIS

The wife does not see herself reflected in the TV screen on the husbands forehead.

She has been moved to the side and other things have become priority.

She begins to ask **"WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME THAT YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE?"**

He replies: **"WHAT DO YOU MEAN? ? I COME HOME EVERY NIGHT.**

**I DON'T MESS AROUND WITH ANY OTHER WOMAN.**

**I BRING HOME THE PAYCHECK. I PROVIDE THE BEST I CAN!!!**

**I MARRIED YOU!!! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND??? I LOVE YOU!!!!!!**

He is clueless and does not know that the simple thing he must do is "court" her for the rest of her life.

He misses the "clue" and continues to keep in the same pattern because that is what makes sense to him.

She begins to feel taken for granted (property is granted, not persons) and that she is not the most important thing in his life.

She then puts into place the most destructive conclusion possible: **HE DOES NOT LOVE ME ANYMORE!!!!!!**

**This is the most deadly conclusion to come to because it is not a TRUE CONCLUSION.**

**THE TRUTH IS THAT HE DOES LOVE YOU. HE JUST HAS NOT SHOWN YOU IN THE WAY THAT MAKES SENSE TO YOU.**

***INSANITY IS DOING THE SAME OLD THING***

***IN THE SAME OLD WAY***

**EXPECTING IT TO BE DIFFERENT THIS TIME.**

**DIFFERENCES ARE NOT THE PROBLEM IN RELATIONSHIPS.  
IT IS YOUR **ATTITUDE** ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE  
THAT IS THE PROBLEM.**

There is usually no problem in a relationship until each other's need systems are crossed.  
This is the time that attitudes show themselves.

We interpret other people's actions through our own grid of understanding.  
This grid is limited by ones temperament and gender processes and experiences.  
We thereby form a conclusion/judgement about that action from our limited point of view.

**This conclusion/judgement is usually wrong**

because it does not interpret the action from the other person's point of view.

We judge the other person's response

**to mean the same thing that we would mean if we did what they just did or said.**

That conclusion/judgement fuels our reaction to the other person.

That reaction usually exhibits itself as an attitude of disrespect.

**Your present relationship is as good as it is going to get if your attitudes are not changed.**

**Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:**

Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be **grasped**, (to hang on to)  
but made himself nothing, (emptied himself)  
taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.  
And being found in appearance as a man,  
**he humbled himself**  
and became obedient to death---even death on a cross!  
(Philippians 2:5-8)



#### IV. SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP/SUITABLE HELPER:

**In order not to be bound by the dictates of our temperament and gender processes, we must become so sensitive in our spirit as to become aware of the Holy Spirit and His leading in our lives. He is our only hope in being able to do the different thing.**

##### A. Spiritual Leader:

A man who has the ability **to perceive his wife's spirit** (her inner person), **understand her need**, and **know how to care for that need**. A man who would be able to have his wife **experience his love in a way she totally understands**. This would apply to his children as well.

1. He can use the condition of his wife's emotions and spirit as a means of effectively measuring his success at being the leader of her spirit.

(As she has been under your leadership, have you provided the environment in which her emotions and spirit are healthy and mature?)

2. He has cared for her as Christ would.
3. He can determine whether he is growing spiritually and exchanging his natural, ungodly, human ways for Christ-likeness by his wife's response to him.

(Does she trust you with her inner feelings and fears and emotions?)

##### B. Suitable Helper:

She is the completer; complement; to help her husband see life from an altogether different perspective. A reflector, through whom he examines his ability to portray Christ to her. (The Holy Spirit is the other person in scripture called a suitable helper.)

1. She is so committed to Godliness in their marriage as to risk the safety of emotional self-protection. She does not give into the fear of being vulnerable, but constructively and precisely shares even the inner-most feelings of her heart.
2. She honestly expresses her appraisal of their relationship, positive or negative, **in the vehicle of his temperament and gender processes**, so that her husband can truly live with her in an understanding way, caring for her as Christ does.

# disillusionment

IT ISN'T UNTIL WE UNDERSTAND HOW AND WHY THE DIFFERENT TEMPERAMENTS AND GENDERS THINK AND SPEAK AND ACT SO DIFFERENTLY THAT WE WILL BEGIN TO MAXIMIZE OUR COMMUNICATION.

## THE LAW OF CHANGE

**Things do not stay the same. If they don't get better, they get worse.**

If relationships do not get stronger, they will get weaker.

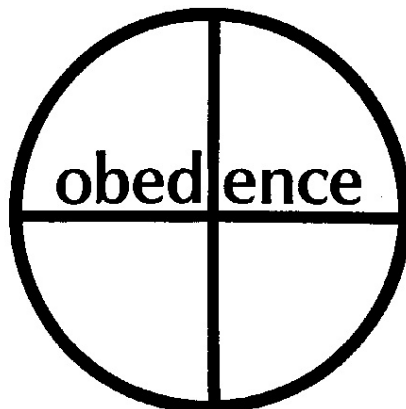
If they do not become closer, they will become more distant.

If they do not become more productive, they will become less productive.

You not only **can** change the way you relate with others,  
you inevitably will change the way of relating.

**It is better to manage changes skillfully than to just let life happen to you.**

**INSANITY IS  
DOING THE SAME OLD THING  
IN THE SAME OLD WAY  
EXPECTING IT TO BE *DIFFERENT* THIS TIME.**



The word "SIN" is rendered in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter "I" is replaced by a white graphic element: a small cross at the top, a vertical line, and a curved path leading downwards from the cross, resembling a road or a spiritual journey.

NATURE

**ADAM, WHERE ARE YOU?**  
Words and Music by Don Francisco

Unashamed and naked, in a garden that has never seen the rain;  
Rulers of a kingdom, full of joy, never marred by any pain.  
The morning all around them seems to celebrate the life they've just begun;  
And in the majesty of innocence, the King and Queen come walking in the sun.

But the master of deception now begins with his dissection of the word;  
And with all his craft and subtlety the serpent twists the simple truth they've heard.  
While hanging in the balance is a world that has been placed at their command;  
And all their unborn children die as both of them bow down to Satan's hand.

Just before the evening in the cool of the day, they hear the voice of God as He is walking;  
And they can't abide His presence, so they try to hide away;  
But still they hear the sound as He is calling:

**ADAM, ADAM, where are you?**  
**ADAM, ADAM, where are you?**

In the stifling heat of summer now the gardener and his wife are in the field;  
And it seems that thorns and thistles are the only crop his struggles ever yield.  
He eats his meals in sorrow until he sinks into the dust from whence he came;  
But all sown through the ages he can hear his maker calling out his name:

**ADAM, ADAM, where are you?**  
**ADAM, ADAM, where are you?**

Though the curse has long been broken and the sons are still the prisoners of their fears;  
Rushing helter-skelter to destruction with their fingers in their ears.  
While the Father's voice is calling with an urgency I've never heard before;  
To come in from the darkness now, before it's finally time to close the door.

**ADAM, ADAM, where are you?**  
**ADAM, ADAM, where are you?**

**ADAM, ADAM, I LOVE YOU?**

# ***OVERCOMING*** **OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION** **IN MARRIAGE**

## **Session 5**

### **SIN NATURE**

Strength is needed in every truly human conversation. But it is especially necessary in the dialogue in which the special word is addressed to us, the word that makes us face who we are, that reveals to us the destructive and superficial in us. This special word is always a threat to us. We are tempted to draw up our defenses against it. We tend to feel that if we listen to it we may not survive the judgement contained in it. Whenever man is called to open himself to the truth, then the power to respond is not something that can be taken for granted. On the contrary, a man finds present in himself a hundred hesitations to respond, to act and to be in a new way.

# **FORGIVE ME**

## **I. THE INCREDIBLE WORTH OF HUMANKIND:**

Unashamed and naked, in a garden that has never seen the rain;  
Rulers of a kingdom, full of joy, never marred by any pain.  
The morning all around them seems to celebrate the life they've just begun;  
And in the majesty of innocence, the King and Queen come walking in the sun.

### **A. CREATION:**

Humankind was created to be in intimate relationship with the God of the Universe.  
When God created humankind, He created **HIS COUNTERPART**.  
He took part of Himself and placed it in mankind.  
God shows us the example as He splits Adam into a male and female expression of being.  
When you take something out, it leaves a void, a vacuum.  
God is drawn to man and man to God because of this.  
God's plan was that the human counterparts  
would function like He and **HIS COUNTERPART**

## B. THE FALL AND REDEMPTION:

After humankind breaks the relationship,  
 God provides a way to make the relationship healed. (Salvation History)  
 From Genesis 3 to Revelation 22, there is only one message:  
 How God has pursued **HIS COUNTERPART**  
 from the beginning of time until the close of this age.  
 Revelation 20-22 gives us a picture of the final fulfillment of history.  
 There is to be a great feast called the **WEDDING SUPPER OF THE LAMB**.  
 Jesus and the Church will be finally re-united in marriage.  
 The two shall become one, again.  
**HOW INCREDIBLY VALUABLE YOU ARE!!!!**

## II. THE INCREDIBLE DECEPTION:

"But the master of deception now begins with his dissection of the word;  
 And with all his craft and subtlety the serpent twists the simple truth they've heard.  
 While hanging in the balance is the world that has been placed at their command;  
 And all their unborn children died as both of them bow down to Satan's hand."

- A. **DID GOD REALLY SAY?** (Must not eat - but it looks good for food)
- B. **DOES HE REALLY MEAN IT?** (Can't be dangerous - it's pleasing to the eye)
- C. **HE IS WITHHOLDING SOMETHING FROM ME.**  
 (I'll be **like** God - I'll gain wisdom of good and evil)

Genesis 3:1-7

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman,

"Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

The woman said to the serpent,

"We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say,

'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden,  
 and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman.

**"For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened,  
 and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."**

*When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food  
 and pleasing to the eye,  
 and also desirable for gaining wisdom,  
 she took some and ate it.*

She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked;  
 so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

### III. THE INCREDIBLE RESULT OF SIN:

#### A. HUMANKIND DIES SPIRITUALLY.

Gen 2:17

For when you eat of it (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) you will surely die.

Ezekiel 18:4

The soul who sins is the one who will die.

1 Corinthians 15:22

For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

#### B. SATAN USURPS THE RULE OF THE EARTH FROM HUMANKIND.

2 Corinthians 4:4

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers,  
so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Ephesians 2:1-2

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world  
and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

#### C. HUMANKIND HAS POWERLESS KNOWLEDGE

Romans 7:14-8:11

We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.  
I do not understand what I do.

**For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.**

And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good.

As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. {Or [my flesh]}

**For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.**

For what I do is not the good I want to do;

no, the evil I do not want to do -- this I keep on doing.

Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it,

but it is sin living in me that does it.

**So I find this law at work:**

**When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.**

For in my inner being I delight in God's law;

but I see another law at work in the members of my body,

waging war against the law of my mind

and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

**Thanks be to God -- through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law,

but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,  
 because through Christ Jesus  
 the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.  
**For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature,  
 God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering.**  
 And so he condemned sin in sinful man,  
**in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us,  
 who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.**

**Those who live according to the sinful nature  
 have their minds set on what that nature desires;  
 but those who live in accordance with the Spirit  
 have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.**  
 The mind of sinful man is death,  
 but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;  
 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.  
 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.  
 You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit,  
 if the Spirit of God lives in you.  
 And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

### CONTRARY CHOICES:

(Taken from The Way of Agape, Nancy Missler)

A choice that ***goes against*** what we naturally think, feel, and desire.

A "faith" choice or "non-feeling" choice.

A choice to walk by faith and not by sight.

We are so programmed to "feel" everything we choose. And when we don't "feel" our choices, we don't think they are genuine. However in God's Kingdom this does not have to be the case. Born-again believers are the only ones who possess a supernatural ability to go against "self." And the reason is, we are the only ones who possess a supernatural power within us to perform something different than what we naturally think, feel, and desire.

Certainly, non-believers have a choice to decide what they want to do. But, none of them have the **authority** to choose to go against how they feel, what they think, and what they desire because they don't possess a supernatural power within them to perform anything different than what they think, feel, and want. Therefore, they don't really have any other choice but to follow what their self life is telling them to do. (i.e., "go with the flow").

Christians, however, don't have to be carried on by the "tide of emotion" like non-believers, because we have **God's authority**, not only to choose what He desires (regardless of how we feel), but we also have His power to perform that will in our lives (regardless of how we feel.)

for it is God who works in you **to will** and **to act** according to his good purpose.  
 (Philippians 2:13 )

As Christians we can be honest with God and say, **"I don't** want to love this person anymore.  
 I don't want to forgive this person. I hate this person right now. I don't feel Your Presence.  
 I am doubtful that You are leading me to do this. I don't understand what You are doing.  
 I am fearful of what is going to happen.



**But**, I don't want to follow what these thoughts and emotions are telling me. I want to follow what You want me to do.

**So**, by faith, I give these negative thoughts to you for I know I have **Your authority** to say like Jesus did in Matthew 26:39, 'Not my will [not my natural feelings and desires], but Thine.'

Then I can know, by faith, that I am cleansed vessel and that God has been freed to perform His Will in and through me.

Our new supernatural willpower is simply **God's authority** to choose His Will over our own thoughts, emotions, and desires ( our self life), no matter how we feel, what we think, or what we desire. To me, this is the most incredible gift of all. I don't have to "feel" my choices; I just have to be willing to make those choices. God then does the rest.

Born-again believers, because of the power of the indwelling Spirit of God, are the only ones who have this free choice decision. We have the authority and power of God to follow His Will regardless of what we naturally think, feel, or want to do. Again, nonbelievers have a choice to decide what they want to do. However, none of them has the authority to choose to go against how they feel or what they think because they don't possess a supernatural power within them to perform anything different than what they feel and think. Therefore, they really don't have a free choice!!! They really don't have any other choice but to "allow self" and to follow what their own thoughts, emotions, and desires are telling them.

So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.  
(Ephesians 4:17-18)

These people, even though they might desperately want to change and not follow their own emotions and desires, can't make those "contrary choices" because they don't possess the supernatural power within them to do so.

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.  
For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. (Romans 7:18)

What is so exciting about choosing God's Will over our own desires is that after we have made the appropriate "faith choices" God, in His perfect timing, changes our feelings and our thoughts to match the faith choices we have made. In other words, in His timing God aligns our feelings with our choices.

So we are not responsible to change our negative feelings and thoughts. There is no way we can do that!! We are only responsible to put in charge the Person who can change our feelings, and that is God. And we do that by loving God and by being willing to make contrary choices. God then is the One who will align our feelings with our choices and make us "feel" genuine.

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed,  
"I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24)

But solid food is for the mature,  
who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:14 )

The mature Christian, is the one who is constantly watching for and recognizing the differences between their will and God's Will. They are mature only because they know how to make "contrary choices" (who by constant use have trained themselves) to give their "self life" over to God.

#### **IV. THE INCREDIBLE RELEASE PROVIDED:**

##### **A. INCREDIBLE RELEASE FROM GUILT.**

1. Romans 8:1 - ***NO CONDEMNATION***
2. Substitutional death of Christ

##### **B. INCREDIBLE RELEASE FROM BONDAGE.**

##### **C. OUR RESPONSE: (Romans 12:1-2)**

1. "Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice"  
(because of God's great mercy to you)
2. "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind."
  - a. To know God's ways and
  - b. To approve of them
3. Die to your selfish nature.

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy,  
to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God --  
this is your spiritual {Or [reasonable]} act of worship.  
Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world,  
but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.  
Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is --  
his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Philippians 2:5-11

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature {Or [in the form of]} God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,  
but made himself nothing,

taking the very nature {Or [the form]} of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to death --  
even death on a cross!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

Ephesians 5:25-33

Husbands, love your wives,  
just as Christ loved the church  
and gave himself up for her  
to make her holy,  
cleansing {Or [having cleansed]} her by the washing with water through the word,  
and to present her to himself as a radiant church,  
without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish,  
but holy and blameless.

**In this same way,**

husbands ought to love their wives **as their own bodies.**

He who loves his wife loves himself.

After all, no one ever hated his own body,  
but he feeds and cares for it,  
just as Christ does the church --  
for we are members of his body.

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,  
and the two will become one flesh." {Gen. 2:24}

This is a profound mystery -- but I am talking about Christ and the church.

**However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself,  
and the wife must respect her husband.**



THE WOLF WILL LIVE WITH THE LAMB, THE LEOPARD WILL LIE DOWN WITH THE GOAT, THE CALF AND THE LION AND THE YEARLING TOGETHER; THE COW WILL FEED WITH THE BEAR, THEIR YOUNG WILL LIE DOWN TOGETHER, AND THE LION WILL EAT STRAW LIKE THE OX. THE INFANT WILL PLAY NEAR THE HOLE OF THE COBRA, AND THE YOUNG CHILD PUT HIS HAND INTO THE VIPER'S NEST.

**IN ORDER FOR THIS PICTURE TO BE A REALITY, EACH ANIMAL MUST HAVE A  
CHANGE OF NATURE**

**THAT IS WHAT IT WILL TAKE IN ORDER FOR YOU TO LIVE  
IN AN UNDERSTANDING AND PRODUCTIVE WAY WITH YOUR SPOUSE.**

## V. TEMPERAMENT “BESETTING” SINS:

### A. ANGER

1. Choleric: Erupts, re-erupts, carries anger.
2. Sanguine: Instant anger.
3. Costs of anger:
  - a. Emotionally
  - b. Socially
  - c. Physically
    - (1) Tension causes systems to break down.
    - (2) Your brain cannot absorb that tension forever.
    - (3) Anger is not related to just one area of our lives.
    - (4) Destroys sex drive.

### B. FEAR

1. Melancholy: Turns it inwardly.
2. Phlegmatic: Paralyzation.
3. Reasons for fear:
  - a. Temperament.
  - b. Childhood experiences.
  - c. Traumatic experiences.
  - d. Selfishness because of past rejection.
  - e. Living in the wrong direction.
  - f. Unbelief.

### C. FORMULA FOR OVERCOMING ANGER/FEAR:

1. Face anger/fear as sin.
2. Confess it as sin.
3. Ask God to break the anger/fear pattern.
4. Ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit.
5. Repeat this every time you get angry/fearful.



# EMOTIONAL **woundings**

# ***OVERCOMING*** **OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION** **IN MARRIAGE**

## **Session 6**

### **EMOTIONAL WOUNDING**

**wal**

**ls**

#### **I. WOUNDEDNESS: THE MOST COMPLICATING FACTOR IN COMMUNICATION**

It works on all areas of communication, making them more difficult.

#### **II. HOW ARE WE WOUNDED?**

##### **A. Result of being born into a sinful world.**

Things outside our control. (Not purposeful action to us.)

1. Generational sin.
2. Accidents.
3. Poverty.

##### **B. Purposeful action: Wounds inflicted by others.**

1. In utero.
2. People sin against us. (Intentional or not)
  - a. Poor parenting.
  - b. Alcoholism.
  - c. Psychological, physical, sexual abuse.
  - d. Failed relationships.

##### **C. Personal sins we commit.**



# JUDGE ment

## III. TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY REACTION:

**NO MATTER WHAT PAINFUL THING WAS DONE TO US, THERE IS ALWAYS A CORRESPONDING *SINFUL REACTION* ON OUR PART. WE MUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR REACTION.**

A. ANGER, HATE, UN-FORGIVENESS, RESENTMENT, ETC.  
(See Genesis 4:1-10)

B. BITTER ROOT JUDGEMENTS:

See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to defile many. (Hebrews 12:15)

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. (Matthew 7:1-2)

Do not be deceived; God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. (Galatians 6:7)

C. INNER VOWS:

# Bi ~~ver~~ness

**IV. MOST COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF WOUNDED PEOPLE:**

- A. LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S LOVE AND CHARACTER.
- B. EXTREME SELF-CENTEREDNESS.

**V. THE HEALING PROCESS:**

- A. FORGIVE THE OFFENSE.
- B. ASK GOD TO SHOW YOU WHAT HAS GROWN IN YOUR HEART AS A RESULT OF THIS OFFENSE.
- C. CONFESS AND REPENT OF YOUR RESPONSE/JUDGEMENT.
- D. REPLANT THE TRUTH.
- E. CULTIVATE THE NEW TRUTH UNTIL IT “FEELS REAL.”
- F. NEW TRUTH WILL PRODUCE THE SPIRITUAL FRUIT YOU NEED.

**OFFENSE**  
“Real or Perceived”

**JUDGEMENT SEED PLANTED**  
“Not the Truth”

**FRUIT OF SEED**  
“Behavior”

**FORGIVENESS**

**REPENTANCE**

**PLANT AND CULTIVATE  
NEW TRUTH**

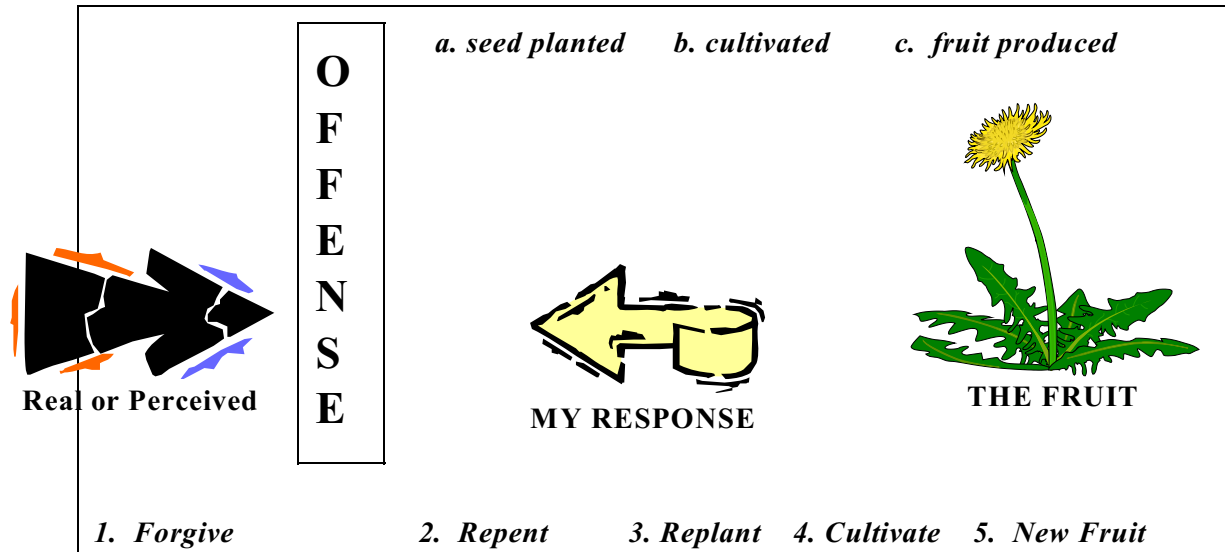
**THE POWER TO PRODUCE FRUIT  
RESIDES IN THE SEED.**

**TO CHANGE THE FRUIT;  
CHANGE THE SEED!!!!**



## FORGIVENESS

1. Forgive - an act of obedience, be specific
2. Ask God to show you what has grown in your heart.  
Confess it as sin.  
Ask for forgiveness.
3. Ask God to show you what the truth is.



2 Corinthians 2:5-11

The punishment inflicted on him by the majority is sufficient for him.  
Now instead, you ought:

- (1) to forgive and (2) comfort him,  
so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.
- (3) I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him.

The reason I wrote you was to:

- (1) see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything.
- (2) in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

Ephesians 6:12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.



# USING THE ~~tools~~

## USING THE TOOLS

1. The areas of my life where I need the gifts of my spouse are:  
(Temperament and gender qualities that I don't have.)
2. When I'm under stress, the most loving thing you can do for me is:

3. In order to develop a better relationship with my spouse, I need to work on the following areas of my temperament and gender processes:

4. As I reflect on the most favorable environment for my spouse, the most difficult for me to create and communicate is:

5. As I review the differences between my temperament and that of my spouse, I see the greatest potential for conflict is:

Because:

6. In order to communicate with my spouse I need to be willing to modify my need for:

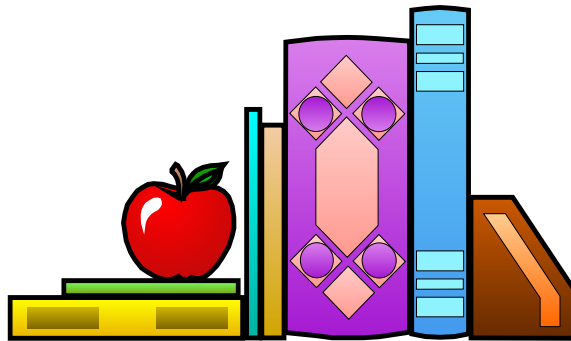


7. The judgements I have on my spouse's process that I need to repent from are:

8. How does my attitude about my spouses's behavior affect the way I treat him/her?

9. The most helpful thing I learned at this seminar is:

# BIBLIOGRAPHY



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### TEMPERAMENT:

Barrett, Roger. *Depression: What It Is and What To Do About It*. Elgin, Ill: David C. Cook Publishing Co., 1977.

Bradshaw, John. *Healing The Shame That Binds You*. Deerfield Beach, Fla.: Health Communications, Inc. 1988.

Hallesby, O. *Temperament And The Christian Faith*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1962.

Hart, Archibald. *Counseling The Depressed*. (Vol. 5, Resources for Christian Counseling. ed. Gary Collins.) Dallas: Word Publishing, 1987.

LaHaye, Beverly. *The Spirit Controlled Woman*. Irvine, CA: Harvest House, 1976.

LaHaye, Tim. *The Spirit Controlled Temperament*. Wheaton: Tyndale, 1966.

*Understanding The Male Temperament*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Revell, 1977.

Littauer, Florence. *Personality Plus*. Revell, 1983.

Martin, Sara Hines. *Shame On You*. Nashville, Tenn: Broadman Press, 1990.

Voges, Ken and Braund, Ron. *Understanding How Others Misunderstand You*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1990.

### MALE/FEMALE DIFFERENCES:

Edwards, Gene. *The Divine Romance*. Auburn, Maine: Christian Books, ? .

Hardisty, Margaret. *Forever My Love*. Irvine, California: Harvest House, 1975.

*Your Husband and Your Emotional Needs*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1980

Harley, William F. Jr. *His Needs/Her Needs*. Fleming Revell Co., 1986.

Joy, Donald. *Bonding*. Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1985.

Nair, Ken. *Discovering The Mind Of A Woman*. Phoenix, Arizona: Life Partners, 1990.

Smalley, Gary. *If He Only Knew*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1979.

*The Incredible Worth Of A Woman*. Cassette tape.

Tannen, Deborah. *You Just Don't Understand*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1991.

#### **SIN NATURE AND WOUNDING:**

Missler, Chuck and Nancy. *The Way of Agape*. Coeur d'Alene, Id: Koinonia House, 1995

Sanford, John and Paula. *Healing the Wounded Spirit*. Bridge Publishing, Inc. 1985.

*Transformation Of The Inner Man*. Bridge Pub, Inc. ?

Verny, Thomas. *The Secret Life Of The Unborn Child*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1981.



# APPENDIX

# DEPRESSION: THE REACTION TO LOSS

**DEPRESSION HAS THREE BASIC CAUSES:**

- 1. THE RESULT OF LOSS**
- 2. THE RESULT OF ILLNESS**  
(FLU, OTHER ILLNESS CAUSE THE BODY TO SLOW DOWN AND HEAL)
- 3. BIOCHEMICAL DISTURBANCES**  
(CHEMICAL IMBALANCES CAUSED BY VARIOUS REASONS)

**THE MOST COMMON OF ALL FORMS OF DEPRESSION IS CAUSED BY  
THE EXPERIENCE OF LOSS.**

**WHEN WE KNOW WHAT CAUSES OUR DEPRESSION,  
WE MORE RAPIDLY MOVE TO THE PLACE OF HEALING.**

**WHAT DEPRESSION IS NOT:**

- 1. ALL DEPRESSION IS NOT THE RESULT OF SIN.**

People can sin and not be depressed. **Depression is the result of loss.** If you sin, you break relationship with Christ. This is a loss, therefore depression may result. Depression may result from sin *because of the loss* but it is not sin's result. Sinful behaviors can give rise to the necessary conditions that cause depression (sense of loss of God's approval), but depression should never be seen as God's punishment for sin.

We must be careful to distinguish between  
the *cause* of depression (those acts or beliefs that create a sense of loss) and  
the *consequence* of the loss (depression).

## **2. ALL DEPRESSION IS NOT CAUSED BY LACK OF FAITH.**

This implies that if you were "strong in faith" or "deeply spiritual" you would not get depressed or you would get over your depression quickly. And that if you don't get over it quickly, then you are a spiritual failure. Sometimes, LOSS, the cause of depression, can be clearly traced back to an inability to accept God's conditions for our lives or to adjust to situations in which God has placed us. This lack of faith or trust in God's plan for us can both create and perpetuate the experience of loss, which results in depression. This is quite common.

## **3. DEPRESSION IS NOT GOD'S FACE TURNED AGAINST YOU.**

There is a form of punishment that psychologists call, "punishment through conditional loving," and it is the cruelest form of punishment any child can experience. It means that if the child does good things, he or she gets love. If the child does bad things, he or she gets rejection. Often the child sets up a pattern of behavior that later tries to please others just to get their love. It is a major cause of neurosis in our age. Such children, when grown up, develop neurotic forms of guilt that cannot receive forgiveness. Because they can never be good enough.

Is depression a form of God's abandonment? There are important theological questions here that we need to answer: Is God like a neurotic parent who will withdraw his love when he wants to punish his disobedient child?

It is true that if we reject Christ we will one day be judged (John 12:48). It is also true that God chastises his children (Rev. 3:19), but this is not the same as his punishment. How can God punish us now? If he did, then we wouldn't need his forgiveness. The idea that God punishes us now is very commonly held, but it is theological nonsense. This is the age in which we are called to repentance. God is patiently waiting for our response. There is no punishment now, because if there were then where would there be room for repentance? God may be displeased with our sin, but his love for the sinner continues. 2 Peter 3:9 assures us that "The Lord.....is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." His punishment does not come now (in the form of depression) but later, on the day of judgment.

It is not God who is conditional in his love to us, but we who are conditional in our love to him. Unlike Job, we do charge God foolishly (Job 1:22) and withdraw our love when we don't get our way.



## DEPRESSION IS A TOOL:

From the descriptions given in Scripture, we can clearly see that many biblical characters suffered at times from depression. King Saul, Job, and Elijah are just a few of the many in the Bible whose depressions are clearly recorded. Historical as well as modern day servants of God have suffered from depression. John Calvin, Martin Luther, and John Wesley knew depression intimately.

Great national leaders have suffered from depression. Abraham Lincoln was a sufferer, as was Winston Churchill. Novelists, poets, and playwrights have endured it. **If anything, it has helped them to understand the human condition better.** Poe, Dostoyevsky, Milton, and Eugene O'Neill, to name just a few, were all the better at their craft because they knew and could describe the pain of human depression.

But not everyone has benefitted from depression. The bleakness of discouragement and despair has caused many to end their lives prematurely. Many depressed persons see their sadness, apathy and lack of energy as reasons for not wanting to go on. Hopelessness and pessimism has moved many to want to end their marriages or turn to alcohol and drugs.

Our hope in these sessions is to empower the melancholy:

By identifying what is happening to them when they find themselves depressed.

By giving them a tool to work with so that the depression can come to a resolve.

Early psychologists viewed depression as:

### **RESTITUTION AND REPARATIVE PUNISHMENT.**

In this way it was "**DIVIDEND PAYING**" for the person. **A type of penance.**

They saw depression as being triggered by an intolerable breach between (who one is) and (who one would like to be). This results in lowered self-esteem. It reflects an excessive dependence on others in order to maintain a fragile self-esteem.

They also saw the depressed person as being torn between the rage of not being given a "fair deal" and fear of expressing their rage at the lost object. Unable to respond, their self-esteem is diminished and a mind-set is established that includes *feelings* of worthlessness, hopelessness, inferiority, and dependency. This negative mind-set is seen as the cause of the depression (feeling of loss) and not the consequence of the depression.

From this mind-set the depressed person develops a constellation of negative perceptions of the self, the world, and the future. These errors in thinking cause a depressed person to interpret events within a schema of self-depreciation and self-blame.

In order to prevent the continual plunge into depression, the melancholy person **MUST FIND WAYS to change their negative thinking patterns.** Much effort must be placed in identifying the relationship between the *behavior* (reaction to the loss) and the *events* that occur immediately *before and after* the behavior.

The melancholy will respond to the lack of reinforcement, either less than they expected or none at all. Insufficient personal gratification or appreciation can precipitate the feeling of loss. Being deprived of rewards or what ever the expectation can produce the feeling of loss. The resulting depression will remove the person further from the social and other reinforcing situations they need. **The behavior in depression becomes the reinforcer of the depression itself.** The person has diminished personal and environmental resources to "self-reinforce." Because the person is withdrawn, few effective coping skills are available. All this can lead to prolongation of depression.

Uncontrollable traumatic events can be very debilitating. A person can experience the overwhelming sense of loss and thereby fall into depression when, in the face of emotional stress, he or she *could not learn how to control or remove the stress*. In short, the person believed he or she was helpless (which causes paralyzation). For self-esteem and a sense of competence, one must feel in control of one's own environment. In states of helplessness and paralyzation, these feelings are removed. The depressed person is experiencing a loss, a loss of control. This loss causes the person to react by retreating into depression.

**DEPRESSION IS A RESPONSE TO LOSS; IT IS THE GRIEVING PROCESS.**

**IT IS THE SAME PROCESS WHETHER THE LOSS IS  
MINOR, AS WHEN I CANNOT FIND MY FAVORITE BOOK, OR  
MAJOR, AS WHEN THE LOSS IS THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE.**

**THE DIFFERENCE IS ONLY IN THE MEANING OF THE LOST OBJECT:  
THE GREATER THE LOSS, THE GREATER THE DEPRESSION.**

**THE DEPRESSION IS, THEREFORE, A PROCESS BY WHICH THE MIND  
AND BODY COMES TO TERMS WITH THE LOSS IT HAS SUFFERED.**

### **THREE MAJOR THOUGHT DISTORTIONS CHARACTERISTIC OF DEPRESSIVES:**

1. Seeing themselves as deficient and unworthy
2. Seeing the world as frustrating and un-fulfilling
3. Seeing the future as hopeless.

### **SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION**

#### **1. MOOD:**

The mood is sad, unhappy, and "blue"; crying may be present in some forms of depression, but not all.

#### **2. THOUGHT:**

Thinking is negative, with pessimism about the future; ideas of guilt and self-denigration are frequently present; there is loss of interest and motivation; there is a decrease in efficiency and concentration, even with some memory disturbance; suicidal thoughts are common in the more severe depressions.

#### **3. BEHAVIOR:**

Energy is depleted; there is sluggishness, retardation, or agitation; personal appearance can be neglected.

#### **4. PHYSICAL:**

Many physical symptoms can be present, including loss of appetite, loss of weight, constipation, poor or excessive sleep, loss of sexual drive.

#### **5. ANXIETY:**

Although sadness is the central mood disturbance, many depressed persons complain of fears, anxiety, tension, uncertainty, and indecisiveness.

### **WORKING THROUGH YOUR DEPRESSION:**

- 1. IDENTIFY THE ROOT LOSS.**
- 2. COMPREHEND THE FULL MEANING OF THE LOSS.**
- 3. PLACE THE LOSS IN SOME PERSPECTIVE.**

### **GRIEVING IS THE PATHWAY THROUGH THE DEPRESSION OF LOSS.**

Whether the loss is real, symbolic, imagined, or anticipated, depression will be the consequence and grief work must be done before the depression can be resolved.

If the loss is not identified, the grieving process as such never even begins and cannot complete itself.

### **WHEN THE WORK OF MOURNING IS COMPLETED, DEPRESSION IS RELIEVED.**

#### **MOURNING:**

Is the process of withdrawing emotional attachment or investment from the lost object or person. It takes place whether the loss is tangible or simply an idea.

#### **GRIEF:**

Is the emotion experienced in mourning. It is a longing for something that is lost.

#### **GRIEVING:**

Involves allowing yourself to have the *feelings* of grief. It is generally believed that one cannot complete the mourning process without allowing oneself to feel the emotions of grief. These feelings are essential to the cognitive adjustments that must be made to the loss.

### **STAGES OF GRIEVING:**

#### **1. DENIAL:**

This is a refusal to accept the loss and see what is clearly true. The recognition of reality is too painful to bear. Attempts are repeatedly made to recover the lost person, object, or idea.

#### **2. ANGER:**

When the reality of the loss finally dawns, a feeling of "unfairness" emerges. This gives rise to anger and resentment. It can be directed at the self, the lost object, or others.

#### **3. DEPRESSION:**

Despair over the loss sets in and hopelessness pervades the emotions. Self-rejection, lowered self-esteem, and guilt feelings are experienced. During this period the cognitive process of adjustment to the loss begins to take place, and this leads to stage 4.

#### **4. ACCEPTANCE:**

Understanding, tolerance, and acceptance of the loss finally emerge with the realization that one can survive and flourish in spite of the loss. The loss is placed in perspective.

From a theological point of view, the loss is ***not*** the central issue in depression. The real problem lies not with the absence of the lost object but with the **attachment** to it. In other words, depression continues because ***we will not let go of the loved object***; we will not free it to be dead, lost, removed, or not materialized. This distinction between the ***loss*** and the **attachment** is crucial. We all suffer loss. We do not all need to be so attached!! We can accept our losses with less pain and depression if we will learn how to let go of our attachments.

We humans are remarkably tenacious. For reasons of security or just plain simple hoarding, we do not let go very easily. When we love, we also want to possess; when we want something we desire, it becomes an obsession. Powerful forces attract us to what we own. Because we cling to possessions, ideas, reputations, and people, we experience losses very deeply and the ensuing depression is painful and prolonged. I repeat: The problem of depression is not the loss; it is the attachment to the lost object. ***We simply won't let it go!!***

### **DON'T SHORT-CIRCUIT DEPRESSION (THE GRIEVING PROCESS)**

The most important point for every melancholy to grasp is that there is an appropriate amount of grieving that should be done for every loss. Losses will always be painful for melancholies to bear and God has made provision for this by providing us with the resources we need to heal our emotions. Depression helps us adjust to our losses and teaches us to change our values. Spiritual resources help to facilitate our letting go.

There is an appropriate depth to our grief. ***If we allow ourselves to experience this sadness and not fight against it,*** the grieving process can be speeded up considerably. As a melancholy you must give yourself the permission to GRIEVE THE LOSS, allow yourself to be alone, be sad, and forgo pleasure. This is an essential part of adjusting to the loss. When anyone tries to stop or shorten the grieving process, recovery is slowed because another loss is experienced. You must respect your body's need for rest and recovery, and why depression is necessary for healing. (It removes us from our environment so that we don't self-destruct.)

Telling someone to "snap out of it" or that "God is not pleased with you depression" only creates further loss--and depression. **It is callous advice and only reflects a person's own discomfort with another's pain.** Often people feel so guilty when someone else suffers that they desire their suffering to go away so **they** can feel better. Do not over psychologize or spiritualize your low feeling. It is **not** sinful to feel this way. It is **not** some **psychological defect**, but merely the body's natural recovery system at work. **If the melancholy does not use the tool of depression to come to a resolve, then the system may not be productively used and may end up in self-destructive behavior.**

Depressed people need to be understood. Not judged, not evaluated, not lectured, not pushed, not punished, not depreciated, and certainly not patronized, **but genuinely understood**. This brings healing by opening the person to the grieving process and by providing the insights needed to become detached from lost objects.

Whatever the dynamics of the depression are, these can only be determined in dialog with the sufferer. The source of the pain and the subjective reasons for the discouragement, negative thinking, and obstinate behavior can only be explored through verbal communication. This helps the grieving process by conveying understanding and empathy, by showing the depressed person that there are reasons why he or she feels sad. This is a form of reassurance that every depressed person desires. He or she doesn't want to be told that there is nothing wrong. On the contrary, depressed people do want to know how badly they feel. But at the same time they also want reassurance that there are others around who don't reject them for the way they feel and that their pain is deeply understood as being **their unique suffering**.

The melancholy can find a sense of relief when they see that his or her pain is a part of the larger pain of human existence; the melancholy is not alone in suffering nor the target of special punishment. The melancholy sees a glimmer of hope that if others have experienced this same pain and survived, then he or she will also.

### **DEPRESSION IS ESSENTIALLY A HEALING PROCESS: A RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES.**

But for many melancholies, this reparative process cannot take place properly because the person **is not equipped to cooperate with it**. Depression will occur more often in such an individual, and it will last considerably longer than it needs to. People have not prepared the melancholy for the adjustments that must be made to deal with their loss.

### **COMPOUNDING:**

**Compounding** produces problems for the melancholy. Compounding is the piling of loss upon another loss. In other words, instead of experiencing losses one at a time and keeping the grief appropriately focused on each individual loss, the melancholy losses are usually tied to other losses. The losses pile on top of each other so as to create a bigger loss. It is then hard to identify which loss to grieve first and how to separate them from each other. It just compounds.

# WORKING THROUGH GRIEF

## WORKING THROUGH THE GRIEVING PROCESS:

### 1. IDENTIFY THE LOSSES:

Some losses are easy to recognize. They are tangible, measurable, and certainly visible. Others are not. They are hard to pinpoint and grasp. They may only be ideas or vague feelings. But since **we can only grieve what we know to be lost**, the first step is to identify the loss or losses.

Very few losses are simple. Every loss represents many things. A loss is like a diamond with many facets or faces. It is these facets that give a diamond its brilliance. The more facets there are, the more a diamond sparkles. Each facet reflects light and, as the diamond is moved slightly, different facets come into the light and reflect their brilliance.

Losses, also, have many facets. For example, being fired from a job is not a single loss, but many. There is the loss of wages, the loss of status that comes with being a gainfully employed person, the loss of face or the feeling of humiliation at having to tell one's spouse and friends that you've been "fired." There is also a threatened loss of not being able to get another good job, a loss of friendships in the workplace, and a loss of familiar surroundings and pleasurable routine. And this is only the beginning!

### 2. UNDERSTAND EVERY FACET OF EACH LOSS:

The second step is to develop a more complete understanding of the full complexity of each loss. Every facet needs to be brought into focus in such a way that will help our mourning. Each of us will experience the same loss differently. We each have our distinctive emotional fingerprints; we differ in our history of losses, in our values, and in our world views. Some of us might place more emphasis on social values; others on material loss.

**Until we recognize all that has been lost we cannot complete the grieving process.**

### 3. SEPARATE THE CONCRETE FROM ABSTRACT LOSSES:

All losses and all aspects of a given loss can be divided into two general categories, concrete or abstract. It helps to separate concrete from abstract losses.

**Concrete losses** are of those objects that can be seen, touched, measured, and clearly defined. Loss of people, cars, jobs, pets, money, cameras, and special privileges are in this category. They are concrete in the sense that they have a material, perceptible existence.

**Abstract losses** are of those ideas or concepts that do not have a material existence. They may exist only in the mind, but they nevertheless do exist. Love, self-control, self-respect, ambition, a sense of God's presence, self-mastery, and the respect of others. All of these are examples of abstract notions that can be lost.

Concrete losses are the easiest to grieve and get over. Abstract losses can be just as powerful in causing depression but, because they are more difficult to visualize and sometimes understand, they are harder to grieve. **Most depressions will be found to hover around significant abstract losses.** Unfortunately, many concrete losses will also have significant abstract losses attached to them, and it is there abstract aspects that will be the more difficult to come to terms with. **Because abstract losses are less tangible, they lend themselves to all sorts of distortions.**

### 4. SEPARATE REAL, IMAGINED, AND THREATENED LOSSES:

Besides each of the categories of concrete and abstract losses, there are three subcategories: REAL, IMAGINED, AND THREATENED LOSSES. **These subcategories are important to identify because one can complete the grieving process for only REAL losses.** In other words, one cannot grieve imagined losses nor can you complete the grieving of threatened losses, whether they are concrete or abstract.

Step four is to determine what aspects of the loss are REAL (sensible and rational) and what are IMAGINED (the figment of imagination). If there are imagined components, you then attempt to convert imagined losses to real losses. If you cannot, you must **DISCARD THEM.**

The reason you cannot grieve imagined losses is simple: **Your mind knows that no real loss has taken place and that there is nothing to mourn. You only go on being depressed.** This is how a great deal of depression is perpetuated. Similarly, THREATENED losses begin the grieving process but, since no actual loss has taken place, **you cannot complete your mourning.**

Both concrete and abstract losses are REAL when there is no doubt that something has been lost. Receiving a supplementary tax notice, having your car break down, or hearing that your best friend is being transferred to another city are REAL losses. Some of them are concrete (there may be monetary or other physical deprivations involved), and some are abstract (you may feel that you are losing significant emotional support or that you are being blamed for someone else's mistakes).

REAL losses are the easiest to grieve when compared to other losses. Your mind understands the limits of the loss and, while there may be quite a lot of pain involved in major losses, sooner or later hope returns, sadness abates, and life resumes. This adjustment process is quite natural and built into all of us.



## 5. CONVERT IMAGINED LOSSES INTO REAL LOSSES:

Imagined losses are the product of exaggeration and distortion. Fed by fear and anxiety, we can "imagine" all sorts of terrible consequences. We can take a very little real loss and turn it into a huge imagined loss, all in our minds. We can distort reality very easily.

Imagined abstract losses are very common. We imagine that people don't like us; we imagine that someone has betrayed our trust, and we become depressed. Imagination knows no boundaries so there are no limits to the losses we can create.

The imagined components of every loss must be put to the **"test of reality."** Whenever possible, convert an imagined loss to a real one, because real losses, no matter how devastating, are the only ones we can grieve. For instance, if you fear that you will get fired because of certain rumors you have heard, "test the reality." Go ask your boss what he thinks about your work performance. You may find out that your job is quite secure and your fears will be relieved. Or you may find out the truth that your being fired. Then the loss is real.

If an imagined loss cannot be converted to a real loss through reality testing, **IT MUST BE DISCARDED.** This will be your hardest work. But unless it is REAL it cannot find resolve in the mourning process. **Overactive, negative, or suspicious patterns of thinking that are producing the losses must be looked at and correction applied. (The renewing of the mind in Romans 12:2). God can help us with our distorted thought patterns.**

## 6. CONVERT THREATENED LOSSES INTO REAL LOSSES:

In some cases, the impending loss or the potential loss may be real, but it is too early to know when or if the loss will occur. These threatened losses are very common. Life is full of potential for these losses: changed life plans; children growing up and leaving home; sudden illnesses and world catastrophes. These all hold certain "threats." These threats of loss start the depression process, **but since there is no finality to the loss, there can be no closure on the depression.** The grieving process cannot be completed so that the depression could go on for as long as the threat lasts.

The threatened loss must be converted into real loss as much as possible. If it cannot be done, **THEN THE LOSS MUST BE ABANDONED.** For instance, suppose you discover a lump in your body. Tests prove it is cancerous and you must undergo treatment. The doctor gives the treatment a 50 percent chance of succeeding and suddenly you find yourself faced with a "threatened" loss of your life. You cannot complete an adjustment to a threatened loss. It must either become real (the treatment has failed) or be abandoned as a loss (forcing yourself to await the outcome).

Some threatened losses must be tolerated for a while because they cannot be resolved right away. There is no way of knowing whether a seriously sick parent will "pull through" or not. One hovers on the brink of loss, one moment believing it is "all over," and the next seeing hope restored. There is nothing to do but wait. The only help is to pray for courage and endurance while the threat waits to be resolved.

## 7. FACILITATE THE GRIEVING PROCESS:

One of the consequences of exploring the full implications of a loss is to **intensify the feeling of depression**. This facilitates the grieving process. It may seem paradoxical, but, the more effectively we *experience* our "low" the quicker we will recover. **Fighting off depression or trying to minimize the pain of it only serves to prolong it.**

Step seven, therefore, is to facilitate the grieving process by allowing the feelings of depression to intensify. **Give yourself permission to feel the pain.** Stop running away from it. Talk about it. Healing takes place when we allow grieving to run its course.

This step should be carried out in conjunction with the next, but don't move too quickly through this stage.

## 8. FACE THE REALITY OF THE LOSS:

The ultimate outcome of depression is to **"let the lost object go."** The sooner we accept the reality of the loss, assuming that there is a real loss, the sooner we will recover from the depression.

Step eight, therefore, is to face the reality of loss. Denial is common at the start of a depression. Wishful thinking tries to restore or delay the loss.

In bereavement counseling we understand this principle very well. The grief-stricken family is confronted with the reality of the loss in many ways: the open coffin, the memorial service or grave-side service, and so on, all serve to *drive home the reality of the death*. **But we tend to hide from other losses and don't have readily accessible rituals to help us confront reality.**

*Facing the reality of the loss* facilitates the process of "letting go." Cognitively there is a readjustment of thinking about the lost object, and the development of a new attitude to it.

## 9. DEVELOP A PERSPECTIVE ON THE LOSS:

Step nine follows naturally from the previous two steps. The loss has to be placed in the context of the larger perspective on life. **It is here that knowing God through Christ must make a difference in the way we adjust to loss. It give us a vantage point from which to evaluate our losses and interpret our future.**

One important process every Christian must go through is to learn how to separate the essentials of life from the nonessentials. This means that our attitude toward money, possessions, careers, ambitions, dreams, loved ones, and even ourselves, should be shaped by our belief about the ultimate value of our life and how this fits into God's greater scheme.

By developing such a perspective, and often this can only be done when one is coping with the depression accompanying a significant loss, the pain can be eased and recovery speeded up. It is also the best way to protect yourself against future depressions.

**10. AVOID NEGATIVE COGNITIVE SET:**

While the grieving process is a normal process in the sense that we all have the capacity to mourn and adjust to our losses, there are ways in which this process can be sabotaged. **What people "tell themselves" can often be a catalyst for deep and resistant depression.**

*Negative thinking* can be the cause of depression as well as one of its consequences. Errors in thinking about the self, the world, and the future can cause and maintain some depressions. These thinking errors, called "cognitive sets," are invariably negative, causing the depressed person to interpret events in the world in a bleak manner.

This negative thinking style leads to self-depreciation and self-blame, which are taken as truth by the depressed individual. Errors of logic then follow.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable -- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy -- think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me -- put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:8-9)

Adapted from COUNSELING THE DEPRESSED by Archibald Hart (pg. 133-144)

## **RENEWING THE MIND (AFFIRMATIONS)**

**This section is taken from Neil Anderson's RELEASED FROM BONDAGE**

## IN CHRIST

**John 1:12**  
**John 15:15**  
**Rom. 5:1**  
**1 Cor. 6:17**  
**1 Cor. 6:19-20**  
**1 Cor. 12:27**  
**Eph. 1:1**  
**Eph. 1:5**  
**Eph. 2:18**  
**Col. 1:14**  
**Col. 2:10**

**I AM ACCEPTED:**

**I am God's child.**  
**I am Christ's friend.**  
**I have been justified.**  
**I am united with the Lord, and I am one spirit with Him.**  
**I have been bought with a price. I belong to God.**  
**I am a member of Christ's body.**  
**I am a saint.**  
**I have been adopted as God's child.**  
**I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.**  
**I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.**  
**I am complete in Christ.**

**I AM SECURE:**

<b>Rom. 8:1-2</b>	<b>I am free forever from condemnation.</b>
<b>Rom 8:28</b>	<b>I am assured that all things work together for good.</b>
<b>Rom. 8:31-34</b>	<b>I am free from any condemning charges against me.</b>
<b>Rom. 8:35-39</b>	<b>I cannot be separated from the love of God.</b>
<b>2 Cor.1:21-22</b>	<b>I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God.</b>
<b>Col. 3:3</b>	<b>I am hidden with Christ in God.</b>
<b>Phil. 1:6</b>	<b>I am confident that the good work that God has begun in me will be perfected.</b>
<b>Phil. 3:20</b>	<b>I am a citizen of heaven.</b>
<b>2 Tim. 1:7</b>	<b>I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind.</b>
<b>Heb. 4:16</b>	<b>I can find grace and mercy in time of need.</b>
<b>1 John 5:18</b>	<b>I am born of God, and the evil one cannot touch me.</b>

## I AM SIGNIFICANT:

<b>Matt. 5:13-14</b>	<b>I am the salt and light of the earth.</b>
<b>John 15:1,5</b>	<b>I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life.</b>
<b>John 15:16</b>	<b>I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.</b>
<b>Acts 1:8</b>	<b>I am a personal witness of Christ's.</b>
<b>1 Cor. 3:16</b>	<b>I am God's temple.</b>
<b>2 Cor. 5:17-21</b>	<b>I am a minister of reconciliation for God.</b>
<b>2 Cor. 5:1</b>	<b>I am God's co-worker (1 Cor. 3:9).</b>
<b>Eph. 2:6</b>	<b>I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.</b>
<b>Eph. 2:10</b>	<b>I am God's workmanship.</b>
<b>Eph. 3:12</b>	<b>I may approach God with freedom and confidence.</b>
<b>Phil. 4:13</b>	<b>I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.</b>

## **DECEPTION VS. TRUTH**

**Truth is the revelation of God's Word, but we need to acknowledge the truth in the inner self (Ps. 51:6). When David lived a lie, he suffered greatly. When he finally found freedom by acknowledging the truth, he wrote: "How blessed is the man ... in whose spirit there is no deceit" (Ps. 32:2). We are to lay aside falsehood and speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15,25). A mentally healthy person is one who is in touch with reality and relatively free of anxiety. Both qualities should characterize the Christian who renounces deception and embraces the truth.**

**Begin this critical step by expressing aloud the following prayer. Don't let the enemy accuse you with thoughts such as: "This isn't going to work" or "I wish I could believe this but I can't" or any other lies in opposition to what you are proclaiming. Even if you have difficulty doing so you need to pray the prayer and read the Doctrinal Affirmation.**

**Dear Heavenly Father. I know that You desire truth in the inner self and that facing this truth is the way of liberation (John 8:32). I acknowledge that I have been deceived by the father of lies (John 8:44) and that I have deceived myself (1 John 1:8). I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that You, Heavenly Father, will rebuke all deceiving spirits by virtue of the shed blood and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. By faith I have received You into my life and I am now seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). I acknowledge that I have the responsibility and authority to resist the devil, and when I do, he will flee from me. I now ask the Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth (John 16:13). I ask You to "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way" (Ps. 139:23-24). In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.**

**You may want to pause at this point to consider some of Satan's deceptive schemes. In addition to false teachers, false prophets, and deceiving spirits, you can deceive yourself. Now that you are alive in Christ and forgiven, you never have to live a lie or defend yourself. Christ is your defense. How have you deceived or attempted to defend yourself according to the following?**

**SELF-DECEPTION:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Being hearers and not doers of the Word (James 1:22; 4:17)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Saying we have no sin (1 John 1:8)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thinking we are something when we aren't (Gal. 6:3)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thinking we are wise in this age (1 Cor. 3:18-19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thinking we will not reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thinking the unrighteous will inherit the Kingdom (1 Cor. 6:9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thinking we can associate with bad company and not be corrupted (1 Cor. 15:33)

**SELF-DEFENSE: (defending ourselves instead of trusting in Christ)**

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| _____ Denial               | (conscious or subconscious)                 |
| _____ Fantasy              | (escape from the real world)                |
| _____ Emotional insulation | (withdraw to avoid rejection)               |
| _____ Regression           | (reverting back to a less threatening time) |
| _____ Displacement         | (taking out frustrations on others)         |
| _____ Projection           | (blaming others)                            |
| _____ Rationalization      | (defending self through verbal excursion)   |

**For those things that have been true in your life, pray aloud:**

Lord, I agree that I have been deceived in the area of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Thank You for forgiving me. I commit myself to know and follow Your truth.  
 Amen.

Choosing the truth may be difficult if you have been living a lie (been deceived ) for many years. You may need to weed out the defense mechanisms you have depended upon to survive. The Christian needs only one defense----Jesus. Knowing that you are forgiven and accepted as God's child is what sets you free to face reality and declare your dependence on Him.

Faith is the biblical response to the truth, and believing the truth is a choice. When someone says, "I want to believe God, but I just can't," they are being deceived. Of course you can believe God. Faith is something you decide to do, not something you feel like doing. Believing the truth doesn't make it true. It's true; therefore we believe it. The New Age movement is distorting the truth by saying we create reality through what we believe. We can't create reality with our minds; we face reality. It's what or who you believe in that counts. Everybody believes in something, and everybody walks by faith according to what he or she believes. But if what you believe isn't true, then how you live (walk by faith) won't be right.

## DOCTRINAL AFFIRMATION

**Historically, the church has found great value in publicly declaring its beliefs. The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed have been recited for centuries. Read aloud the following affirmation of faith, and do so again as often as necessary to renew your mind. Read it daily for several weeks.**

**I recognize that there is only one true and living God (Ex. 20:2-3) who exists as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and that He is worthy of all honor, praise, and glory as the Creator, Sustainer, and Beginning and End of all things (Rev. 4:11; 5:9-10; Is. 43:1,7,21).**

**I recognize Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:1,14). I believe that He came to destroy the works of Satan (1 John 3:8), that He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public display of them, having triumphed over them (Col. 2:15).**

**I believe that God has proven His love for me because when I was still a sinner, Christ died for me (Rom. 5:8). I believe that He delivered me from the domain of darkness and transformed me to His kingdom, and in Him I have redemption, the forgiveness of sins (Col.1:13-14).**

**I believe that I am now a child of God (1 John 3:1-3) and that I am seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). I believe that I was saved by the grace of God through faith, that it was a gift and not the result of any works on my part (Eph. 2:8).**

**I choose to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might (Eph. 6:10). I put no confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3:3) for the weapons of warfare are not of the flesh (2 Cor. 10:4). I put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-20), and I resolve to stand firm in my faith and resist the evil one.**

**I believe that apart from Christ I can do nothing (1 John 15:5), so I declare myself dependent on Him. I choose to abide in Christ in order to bear much fruit and glorify the Lord (John 15:8). I announce to Satan that Jesus is my Lord (1 Cor. 12:3), and I reject any counterfeit gifts or works of Satan in my life.**

**I believe that the truth will set me free (John 8:32) and that walking in the light is the only path of fellowship (1 John 1:7). Therefore, I stand against Satan's deception by taking every thought captive in obedience to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). I declare that the Bible is the only authoritative standard (2 Tim.3:15-16). I choose to speak the truth in love (Eph.4:15).**



**I choose to present my body as an instrument of righteousness, a living and holy sacrifice, and I renew my mind by the living Word of God in order that I may prove that the will of God is good, acceptable, and perfect (Rom. 6:13; 12:1-2). I put off the old self with its evil practices and put on the new self (Col. 3:9-10), and I declare myself to be a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17).**

**I ask my heavenly Father to fill me with Your Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18), lead me into all truth (John 16:13), and empower my life that I may live above sin and not carry out the desires of the flesh (Gal. 5:16). I crucify the flesh (Gal. 5:24) and choose to walk by the Spirit.**

**I renounce all selfish goals and choose the ultimate goal of love (1 Tim. 1:5). I choose to obey the two greatest commandments, to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul, and mind, and to love my neighbor as myself (Matt. 22:37-39).**

**I believe that Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18) and that He is the head over all rule and authority (Col. 2:10). I believe that Satan and his demons are subject to me in Christ since I am a member of Christ's body (Eph. 1:19-23). Therefore, I obey the command to submit to God and to resist the devil (James 4:7), and I command Satan in the name of Christ to leave my presence.**

## **BITTERNESS VS. FORGIVENESS**

We need to forgive others so that Satan cannot take advantage of us (2 Cor. 2:10-11). We are to be merciful just as our heavenly Father is merciful (Luke 6:36). We are to forgive as we have been forgiven (Eph. 4:31-32). Ask God to bring to mind the names of those people you need to forgive by expressing the following prayer aloud:

Dear Heavenly Father. I thank You for the riches of Your kindness, forbearance, and patience knowing that Your kindness has led me to repentance (Rom. 2:4).

I confess that I have not extended that same patience and kindness toward others who have offended me, but instead I have harbored bitterness and resentment. I pray that during this time of self-examination You would bring to my mind those people that I have not forgiven in order that I may do so (Matt. 18:35). I ask this in the precious name of Jesus. Amen.

As names come to mind, make a list of only the names.

At the end of your list, write "myself." Forgiving yourself is accepting God's cleansing and forgiveness. Also, write "thoughts against God." Thoughts raised up against the knowledge of God will usually result in angry feelings toward Him. Technically, we don't forgive God because He cannot commit any sin of commission or omission. But you need to specifically renounce false expectations and thoughts about God and agree to release any anger you have toward Him.

Before you pray to forgive these people, stop and consider what forgiveness is, what it is not, what decision you will be making, and what the consequences will be.

### **FORGIVENESS IS NOT FORGETTING.**

People who try to forget find they cannot. God says He will remember our sins "no more" (Heb. 10:17), but God, being omniscient, cannot forget. Remember our sins "no more" means that God will never use the past against us (Ps. 103:12). Forgetting may be the result of forgiveness, but it is never the means of forgiveness. When we bring up the past against others, we are saying we haven't forgiven them.

**FORGIVENESS IS A CHOICE, A CRISIS OF THE WILL.  
SINCE GOD REQUIRES US TO FORGIVE, IT IS SOMETHING WE CAN DO.**

But forgiveness is difficult for us because it pulls against our concept of justice. We want revenge for offenses suffered. However, we are told never to take our own revenge (Rom. 12:19). You say, "Why should I let them off the hook?" That is precisely the problem. You are still hooked to them, still bound by your past. **You will let them off your hook, but they are never off God's. He will deal with them fairly, something we cannot do.**

You say, "You don't understand how much this person hurt me!" But don't you see, they are still hurting you! How do you stop the pain? **You don't forgive someone for their sake; you do it for your sake so you can be free. Your need to forgive isn't an issue between you and the offender; it's between you and God.**

**FORGIVENESS IS AGREEING TO LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF  
ANOTHER PERSON'S SIN.**

**Forgiveness is costly. You pay the price of the evil you forgive. You're going to live with those consequences whether you want to or not; your only choice is whether you will do so in the bitterness of un-forgiveness or the freedom of forgiveness.** Jesus took the consequences of your sin upon Himself. All true forgiveness is substitutionary, because no one really forgives without bearing the consequences of the other person's sin. God the Father "made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Where is the justice? It's the cross that makes forgiveness legally and morally right: "For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all" (Rom.6:10).

**HOW DO YOU FORGIVE FROM YOUR HEART?**

**You acknowledge the hurt and the hate.** If your forgiveness doesn't visit the emotional core of your life, it will be incomplete. Many feel the pain of interpersonal offenses, but they won't or don't know how to acknowledge it. Let God bring the pain to the surface so He can deal with it. This is where the healing takes place.

**DECIDE THAT YOU WILL BEAR THE BURDENS OF THEIR OFFENSES BY  
NOT USING THAT INFORMATION AGAINST THEM IN THE FUTURE.**

This doesn't mean that you must tolerate sin; you must always take a stand against sin.

**DON'T WAIT TO FORGIVE UNTIL YOU FEEL LIKE FORGIVING;  
YOU WILL NEVER GET THERE.**

Feelings take time to heal after the choice to forgive is made and Satan has lost his place (Eph. 4:26-27). **Freedom is what will be gained, not a feeling.**

As you pray, God may bring to mind offending people and experiences you have totally forgotten. Let Him do it even if it is painful. Remember, you are doing this for your sake. God wants you to be free. Don't rationalize or explain the offender's behavior. Forgiveness is dealing with your pain and leaving the other person to God. Positive feelings will follow in time; freeing yourself from the past is the critical issue right now.

Don't say "Lord, please help me to forgive," because He is already helping you. Don't say, "Lord, I want to forgive," because you are bypassing the hard-core **choice to forgive** which is your responsibility. Stay with each individual until you are sure you have dealt with all the remembered pain, what they did, how they hurt you, how they made you feel (rejected, unloved, unworthy, dirty, etc.).

You are now ready to forgive the people on your list so that you can be free in Christ with those people no longer having any control over you. For each person on your list, pray aloud:

**Lord, I forgive** (name)  
**for** (specifically identify all offenses and painful memories or feelings).