

The Art of Permanence:

Study Guide

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Part One: The Cave

Chapter 1

1. Have you ever been trapped?
How did it make you feel?
In what ways (if any) does singleness make you feel trapped?
Do you think having a mate would take away your feelings of being trapped?
Why or why not?
2. Who do you turn to for guidance in your life?
How much do you share with that person?
Do you think that person can give you the adequate guidance you seek in selecting a mate?
What criteria would you want someone to use in choosing a mate for you?
If that person chose a mate for you would you trust his or her judgement enough to marry the chosen person in an arranged marriage without meeting the chosen person before the wedding takes place?
3. Would you trust a friend more or Jesus more in choosing a mate for you?
What specific acts of guidance would you expect your friend to provide in giving proper guidance to you in selecting a mate? How good are you at hearing your friend and following his or her directions?
Do you believe Jesus will speak to you and give you direction?
How good are you at hearing Jesus and following His direction when He speaks to you?
What specific acts of guidance would you expect Jesus to provide in giving proper guidance to you in selecting a mate?
4. What happens to those who never find their way out of the cave?
5. If mate selection is the second most important decision we make in life, what is the first most important decision we make in life?

Chapter 2

1. Do you find the cave in your life to be life threatening? Do you agree with the purpose of the cave?
Do you believe the cave is painful but brings great growth in your life and development as a person?
2. How would you define intimacy?
Describe what makes you feel intimate with another person?
Do you believe an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ is essential for developing intimate relationships with other people? Why or Why not?
3. What is God's purpose for your life?
What brings meaning to your life?
Is there anything that you have told God you want to accomplish in this life that you believe might be a part of God's purpose for your life?
Does your choice of a vocation form a part of fulfilling God's vocation for your life?
4. Is your life about your God or is your god about your life?
5. How critical is your relationship with Jesus Christ to the ultimate success, duration, and quality of any marriage or relationship you enter into in life?
Does a relationship with Jesus enhance, improve, and bring health to your mental, physical, and social wellbeing, and relationships?

What aspects of your life need a greater quality of development to facilitate your relationships, with yourself, other people, your God, and your present or future mate?

- How important is it to you that your prospective mate live out a relationship with Jesus Christ? Describe the relationship with Jesus that you want a prospective mate to possess and to live? If you were deeply in love with a person and knew that the person was your “soul mate”, the person God created for you to marry and then you found out that the person lived like a Christian who had a personal walk with Jesus and did all the normal Christian things like going to church, bible study, praying etc., but could not profess that Jesus Christ is Lord, would you marry that person or would you break off the relationship?

- Read psalm 139:1-18. Do you think it is possible that God plans or creates someone for us to marry?

Is there a difference between the person you are “supposed to marry” (the person God originally created for you to marry) and the person you “should marry” (a person who is more appropriate as a mate than the person you are “supposed to marry”)?

If you are faced with the choice between the person you are “supposed to marry” and the person you “should marry” which one do you think God would want you to choose?

Part Two: God’s Design

Chapter 3

- Define the purpose of mate selection?
- How does the purpose of mate selection effect God’s plan for our lives?
- Does your relationship with your spouse and your relationship with God intertwine? How?

Chapter 4

Erick Erickson’s Eight Stages of Life				
<u>Stages</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Psychosocial crisis</u>	<u>Virtue</u>	<u>Radius of Significant</u>
1 Infancy	0-2	Trust vs Mistrust	Hope	Maternal Person
2 Early Childhood	2-3	Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt	Will	Paternal Person
3 Play Age	3-5	Initiative vs Guilt	Purpose	Basic Family
4 School Age	6-12	Industry vs Inferiority	Competence	Neighborhood and School
5 Adolescence	12-18	Identity vs Identity Confusion	Fidelity	Peer Groups and Outgroups, Models of Leadership
6 Young Adulthood	19-35	Intimacy vs Isolation	Love	Partners in Friendship, Sex Competition, Cooperation
7 Adulthood	35-65	Generativity vs Stagnation	Care	Divided Labor and Household
8 Old Age	65+	Integrity vs Despair	Wisdom	“My Kind”, Mankind
(Linn, D., Linn, M., Fabricant, 1988)				

- How does brokenness and trauma in a person’s life correlate with Erickson’s stages of life?

2. Why does brokenness and trauma impede a person's ability to complete development in the stages of life as a person ages?
3. Do you believe traumatic events in your life may impede your ability to engage in successful intimate relationships?

Discuss why and how traumatic events effect a person's development.

What does it mean to be locked or stuck in a developmental stage?

4. What happens when a person becomes unlocked or unstuck from a stage of life?

Caution: answering the questions below may unlock events in your life, which are so traumatic that you will need to seek professional help.

5. Examine the eight stages of life with a person you deeply trust and who will be honest, but not betray your confidentiality. Ask your trusted person what areas/stages of your life evidence some degree of being stuck. Discuss with trusted family members to see if they can remember any traumatic events which occurred in your life at the ages you consider you might have been stuck or locked.

Child sexual abuse statistics:

Studies by [David Finkelhor](#), Director of the [Crimes Against Children Research Center](#), show that:

1. 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 20 boys is a victim of child sexual abuse;
2. Self-report studies show that 20% of adult females and 5-10% of adult males recall a childhood sexual assault or sexual abuse incident;
3. During a one-year period in the U.S., 16% of youth ages 14 to 17 had been sexually victimized;
4. Over the course of their lifetime, 28% of U.S. youth ages 14 to 17 had been sexually victimized;
5. Children are most vulnerable to CSA between the ages of 7 and 13.

<http://victimsofcrime.org/media/reporting-on-child-sexual-abuse/child-sexual-abuse-statistics>

If you are a victim of child sexual abuse you will need to pursue professional assistance in working through any issues which remain unresolved in your life. You will not be properly prepared for a relationship of permanence until you are healed. Severe abuse over a longer period of time takes multiple years to resolve. One set of sessions with a therapist is not sufficient. Full healing takes several years with breaks between years and periods for the victim to heal sufficiently to face the next set issues needing to be resolved in therapy.

6. Discuss the consequences of failing to develop your identity (p20).
7. A locus of control is simply who controls your life. Do you control your life or do you allow outside circumstances and events to control your life? Do you allow other people to control your life? The measure of an adult is that he or she controls his or her own life along with

allegiance and obedience to Jesus Christ. Outside people and events are not granted control over the person's life.

8. Discuss the importance of locus of control in singleness, dating, and marital relationships respectively.
9. Discuss the consequences of failing to develop intimacy (P22).

Chapter 5

1. Have you ever rushed into a relationship in an immature need for security? List the positive and negative impacts which this relationship had on your life?
2. Discuss the importance of the peer group in preparing a person for mate selection.
3. What are the locuses of control in your life?
4. Do you have a dual locus of control? How is a dual locus of control balanced in your life?
5. Discuss your personal perspective on the importance of having a dual locus of control with Jesus in your life.
6. What is your personal answer to the two great questions of the adolescent?
7. Who am I?
8. What is my purpose in life?
9. Define and discuss a performance based relationship.
10. Is your relationship with Jesus performance based? How do you arrive at this conclusion?
11. Define fidelity and discuss the ramifications of your definition for aspects of your relationships with yourself, with others, and with God.
12. Recall and discuss simple encounters or events where special persons had significant impacts upon your life. What kind of impact is your life having on other people? Discuss how your life as impacted one person.
13. How does your life model mate selection for other people?

Chapter 6 Understanding Intimacy

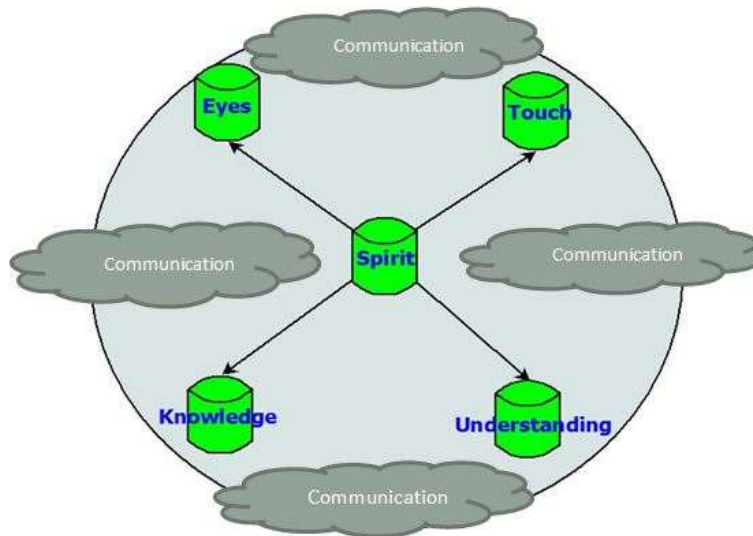
Erickson's Stages

<u>Age</u>	<u>Conflict</u>	<u>Crisis Result</u>
0-2	Trust vs Mistrust	Hope
2-3	Autonomy vs Shame & Doubt	Will
3-5	Initiative vs Guilt	Purpose
6-12	Industry vs Inferiority	Competence

12-18	Identity vs Identity Confusion	Fidelity
19-35	Intimacy vs Isolation	Love
36-65	Generativity vs Stagnation	Care
65+	Integrity vs Despair	Wisdom
(Linn, D, Linn, M., Fabricant, 1988)		



The Five Pillars of Intimacy



1. Define intimacy.
2. Who are the people in your life that you trust even when intimacy with them is painful?
In what relationships in your life have you been most successful at expressing and receiving intimacy?
3. Read the description of the relationship between sex and intimacy (page 47).
Why must sexual purity and relational intimacy function together in building a relationship?
If you are in a relationship with a significant other and you are sexually active with that person is your sexual relationship building intimacy between the two of you?
4. What is the significance of measuring intimacy at the weakest point?
5. Do you find the secular descriptions of intimacy (pages 46-50) to be adequate descriptions?
6. What is your understanding of the fragile nature of the male ego?

What is the importance for men of feeling respected in a relationship? If you are in a relationship do you feel respected by your prospective mate? What does a woman need to do to make you feel respected?

7. What is the importance for women of feeling loved in a relationship? If you are in a relationship do you feel respected by your prospective mate? What does a man need to do to make you feel loved?
8. Define Character.

Examine the relationship between Erickson's Stages and character in the chart below.

<i>Character Outcomes in Erickson's Stages of Development</i>		
Age	Stage	Character Result
0 to 2	Trust	Hope
2 to 3	Autonomy	Self-individuation
3 to 5	Initiative	Purpose
6 to 12	Industry	Competence
12 to 18	Identity	Fidelity
19 to 35	Intimacy	Love
36-65	Generativity	Care
65+	Integrity	Wisdom
(Linn, D., Linn, M. & Fabricant, 1988),		

9. Do you believe you have adequately accomplished the character formation outcomes relative to your age shown in the categories above?
10. What is the relationship between character and intimacy?
11. Examine the attributes of character expressed in the beatitudes (Mark 5:1-12). Which of these aspects of character are displayed in your life? Are your friends able to easily discern these aspects of character in your life?
12. How well does the five pillars of intimacy diagram (63) fit into your personal definition and understanding of intimacy?
13. Do you feel you are known by Jesus?
Do you want to be understood by Jesus?
Do you want to know and understand Jesus? How can this be accomplished?
14. Is there anyone in your life who fully knows you? Is there anyone who fully understands you?
15. What is the one key factor for the development of intimacy?

16. What is your love language?
17. How does sexual abuse in a person's life, effect his or her ability to be intimate?
18. Do you feel comfortable giving or receiving intimate touch from other people in social settings?
19. Do you consider the Hollywood couple (page 73) to be mentally, spiritually, and relationally healthy?
20. What is the significance and importance of forgiveness?
Why is it important to forgive sexual predators and abusers? Is it easy? Does it take time?
Does forgiveness heal our personality?
21. Do you personally practice any of the types of intimacy avoidance (page 76)?
22. What are the four types of forgiveness?

Chapter 7 God's Plan for Intimacy

1. Do you have an intimate relationship with Jesus?



2. Read Genesis 3:8-9. Do you believe God wants to have intimacy with us?
3. What is the difference between covenant and contract?
4. Do you consider your relationship with God to be a lifelong obligation to sacrifice your life and family for Him?
5. Would you consider a covenant relationship to be a safe place in which to develop intimacy with God? How does a covenant relationship with God provide a basis for intimacy?
6. Why was it so important for Abraham to offer Isaac in sacrifice? Is child sacrifice condoned by God in the Old Testament? Is it a normal practice in some other religions of the Old Testament?

7. If the opposite of covenant is control and manipulation as in the worship practices of nations and peoples outside of Israel who are presented in the Old Testament, Would you consider a relationship of control and manipulation to be healthy? Why or why not? Have you ever been a in a control or manipulation relationship?
8. To what extent do you manipulate God and other people in order to experience intimacy in a relationship? Have you ever put God in a Box and tried to manipulate Him in to answering your prayers?
9. What does God's request for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac teach you about God's Sacrifice of Jesus for us? What aspects of covenant exist in a dating relationship? Is a dating relationship more covenant based or contractual based? How does a couple move from a contractual relationship to a covenant relationship?
10. What does God expect us to do when we break covenant with Him? With a spouse?
11. How does the bible define witchcraft? Have you or are you practicing idolatry or witchcraft in any of the relationships of your life? Read the description of forms of manipulation (page 94). Have you experienced or practiced any of these forms of manipulation?
12. What gives your life meaning? How important is it for you to feel that you are understood by the most significant people in your life?
13. Which is more important to you – That Jesus died for the forgiveness of your sins or that Jesus died and resurrected so that you can live in an intimate relationship with Him? Both?

Part Three: Factors in Attraction and Bonding

1. Define personality integration. Define personality compartmentalization.
2. How is intimacy related to personality integration? What is the relationship between personality integration and holiness? Are you intimate with yourself?
3. Is your personality integrated?
4. Does sin in your life create compartmentalization in your personality?
5. Does sin in your life destroy your relationship with God, with yourself, with other people?

What is the most profound experience of intimacy you can ever encounter?

Chapter 8

1. Define Character.
2. How important is character to you as an aspect of mate selection?
3. Is your character something you would be proud to offer to a prospective mate?
4. Compare the list of traits in 2 Peter 1:5-9 to Erickson's list of virtues. How do the two lists of items compare?
5. Does your life show a godly character? See Ephesians 6:
6. Make a list of the character traits you would most desire in a mate.
7. How important is integrity to the development of character?
8. What is the purpose of relationships? (see page 107 highlight box)

Chapter 9

1. What is your attitude for dating no one over dating the wrong one?
2. How important is purity in a relationship?
3. What is the purpose of dating?
4. What is your attitude toward using prayer as a method of selecting a mate?
5. What has been your experience with sexual predators or with sexual monogamy in relationships?
6. Would you be comfortable with an arranged marriage? Why or why not?
7. Make a list of the pros and cons of traditional western marriage. Make another list of the pros and cons of arranged eastern marriages. What benefits does each one offer the other?
8. What are the most valuable things you have learned in your dating experiences?
9. What is the greatest pain you have ever suffered in the loss of a relationship? Have you ever been truly in love with potential spouse whom you did not marry? Have you ever fully healed from these losses? Have you been in any relationships for which you did not receive closure?
10. Males watch for signs of flirtation to assure them that approaching a woman will not be a great risk to their ego. Women look for signs of flirtation as reaffirmation that they are desirable. How efficient are you at flirting?
11. How important to you is the voice of a prospective mate (tone, pitch, etc.)?

Chapter 10

1. Does your search for a mate include looking for a lifelong ministry partner?
2. Of the various kinds of ministry what interest you most?
3. In searching for a mate, which is more important to you – outer beauty or inner beauty?
4. Are you comfortable expressing your emotions in public and in front of a group composed of the opposite sex?
5. Rate yourself on each of the three levels of attraction presented (on pages 123-124).
6. Why do women prefer mates who appear superior and dominant?
7. Why is age brain development important to the success of a marriage?
8. How important do you view the key factors of emotional maturity for men and loyalty for women.

Chapter 11

18 Characteristics Most Desirable in a Mate			
1939 Ranking	Characteristic	2012 Male Ranking	2012 Female Ranking
1	dependable character	2 dependable	2 dependable
2	emotional stability/maturity	3 disposition	3 disposition
3	pleasing disposition	5.5 health	8 domestic
4	mutual attraction/love	1 character	1 character
5	good health	7 refinement	9 ambition

6	desire for home/children	10 chastity	7 refinement
7	refinement/neatness	13 religion	13 religion
8	Good cook/housekeeper (domestic)	14 looks	15 education
9	ambitious/industrious	9 ambition	6 home and children
10	chastity	12 social	12 social
11	education/intelligence	5.5 health	5 health
12	sociability	8 domestic	11 intelligence
13	similar religious background	4 mutual love	4 mutual love
14	good looks	11 intelligence	14 looks
15	similar educational background	16 social status	16 social status
16	favorable social status	17 financial stability	17 financial stability
17	good financial prospect	15 education	10 chastity
18	similar political background	18 politics	18 politics

(Henry et al., 2013)

<i>Primary Factors in Mate Selection</i>	
Factors	Percent
Character	98
Fertility	94.3
Education	90.3
Intelligence	89.7
Religion	89.6
Physical Health	83
Body Structure	72.2
Profession	71.8
Dentition	68.8
Financial Standing	67
Weight	64.4
Height	48.2
Age	58.9
State of Origin	44.8
Complexion	39.8

AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN SOUTH-

1. Do you believe a person's character indicates his or her ability to be mentally, socially, and physically healthy in all areas of life?
2. Do you seek a mate who is flashy (fashionable clothes, good looks, big spender, nice car, etc)?
3. Do you seek a godly mate?
4. What is your opinion of Gottman's magic ratio (pages 137-138)?
5. What impact does brain development have on mate selection decisions?
- 6.

Maladaptation in the Stages of Life					
Stage	Age	Maladaptation	Crisis	Malignancy	Examples
Infancy	0-2	Sensory Distortion	Trust vs Mistrust	Withdrawal	unrealistic, spoiled, deluded, neurotic, depressive, afraid
Early Childhood	2-3	Impulsivity	Autonomy vs Shame/Doubt	Compulsion	reckless, inconsiderate, thoughtless, anal, constrained, self-limiting
Play Age	3-5	Ruthlessness	Initiative vs Guilt	Inhibition	exploitative, uncaring, dispassionate, risk-averse, unadventurous
School Age	6-12	Narrow Virtuosity	Industry vs Inferiority	Inertia	workaholic, obsessive specialist, lazy, apathetic, purposeless
Adolescence	12-18	Fanaticism	Identity vs Role Confusion	Repudiation	self-important, extremist, socially disconnected, cut-off
Young Adulthood	19-35	Promiscuity	Intimacy vs Isolation	Exclusivity	sexually needy, vulnerable, loner, cold, self-contained
Adulthood	35-65	Overextension	Generativity vs Stagnation	<u>Rejectivity</u>	do-gooder, busy-body, meddling, disinterested, cynical
Old Age	65+	Presumption	Integrity vs Despair	Disdain	conceited, pompous, arrogant, miserable, unfulfilled, blaming
(Chapman, 2006-2013), Erickson's psychosocial development theory,					

Chapter 12

1. What is your view of submission in a relationship?
2. What is your opinion of Adam's expression in genesis 2:23 "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh"? Do you seek someone who is your equal as a mate?
3. What does the fact that both Jesus and God have wives (see highlighted text on page 145) teach us about the importance of marriage?
4. Do you consider 2 Corinthians 6:14 to provide good advice for mate selection?

5. Look at God's criteria for mate selection (page 148). Do you consider this to be sound and adequate criteria for mate selection?
6. What is your opinion of the highlighted text (page 150)- "Perfect people create perfect spouses and crippled people create crippled spouses"?
7. Read the summary of what to look for in a mate (page 153-154). Would you consider this list to be a good checklist for mate selection?

Chapter 13

1. Do you believe the marital practices described in the bible promoted marital permanence? Why or why not?
2. Do you consider submission to be an essential qualification for marriage?
3. How would you consider divorce to be an act of violence to a marital partner?
4. If we know whom we are to marry the first time we see that person why would God leave the final decision up to us?
5. Do you believe that marriage completes you as a person?
6. Name some bible instances of bad marriages. Why were they bad?
7. Did bad marriage decisions have a profound negative effect on God's people in the Old Testament? Why or why not?
8. Are some of those bad decisions still effecting Israel and the world today? Explain your answer.
9. Read the story of Hezekiah. Why is it important that your life be about God instead of God being about your life?

Chapter 14

1. To what extent are you willing to rely on your parent's judgement in assisting you to select a mate?
2. Would you reject a mate if he or she developed strong religious beliefs? Would you reject a mate based on his or her religious beliefs?
3. What is the maximum age difference acceptable between you and an acceptable mate? Consider both older and younger mate prospects.
4. Are you seeking a mate in order to escape a difficult situation in your life?
5. Virgins frequently have much greater happiness and success in marriage. Do you consider virginity within yourself to be important to marital success?
6. Read the list of risk factors (page 175). How many risk factors do you bring to a potential marriage? List them.
7. What "seeds of disaster" do you bring to your relationships? How important is sexual purity to you – both in yourself and in your mate?

Part Four: The Role of Sex

Chapter 15

1. What does it mean to you to realize that sex is meant to prepare you to experience aspects of intimacy in your relationship with God? How is this possible?
2. Are you bound by sexual addictions which will impede your ability to experience emotional intimacy within a marital relationship?
3. Do you consider it important to be a virgin and to marry a virgin?
4. Who is most responsible for guarding the sexual purity of all parties in the relationship – the male, the female, both?
5. Read the descriptions of a real man and a real woman (pages 185-186). Do you want to be a real man or a real woman? Do you want to marry a real man or real woman?
6. Do you believe that a lack of personal sexual purity impacts the intimacy which you are able to share in a relationship? If your sexual purity was lost in previous relationships can you start over?
7. Do you consider it possible to live in a successful marital relationship which is devoid of sex? Would you be willing to live without sex if this was critical to your mate's health?

Chapter 16

1. Read the second paragraph on page 193. Have you ever felt that God wanted to remove anything from your life which was bad for you?
2. In what ways have you limited or destroyed your personal potential for a long and successful marriage? List them.
3. Do you trust the sexual purity and faithfulness of the person you are presently dating? Do you consider your experiences in your personal sexual history to be beneficial to finding a mate and living in a successful long term marriage? Are you or your potential mate ashamed of your sexual history?
4. Read Sex by God's Design (pages 194-196). Do you consider sex to bring health wholeness and holiness in a marital relationship?
5. People frequently jump to the same level of sexual practice in a new relationship as they left off at in a previous relationship. Will a resumption of your personal sexual practice be a benefit or a hindrance to building intimacy and permanence in a new relationship?
6. Why are sexually promiscuous practices forbidden in the bible?
7. How do impure thoughts or impure motives fit into the concept of sexual purity?
8. What constitutes sexual purity outside of a marital relationship for a single person? What constitutes sexual purity inside of a marriage relationship for a married person? Does God prize sexual purity and does He consider it to be the most normal and healthy practice both inside and outside of a marital relationship?

Chapter 17

1. Does brain chemistry influence sexual behavior?
2. What is your most important sex organ?

3. What are two negative effects of premarital sexual activity? Ware people with premarital sexual activity more likely to divorce? Are adolescents with premarital sexual history more likely to be depressed?
4. Why do females experience extreme emotional pain with the ending of a relationship?
5. Do multiple sexual partners cause both males and females to lose their ability to bond in relationships? Can this be reversed?
6. What role does cognitive development play in mate selection?
7. Who is responsible to stop males from pressuring for premarital sex?
8. How important is it to teach teens to practice sexual abstinence?
9. Who has more success in marriage the sexually chaste or the sexually promiscuous? Why?
10. How much more likely are cohabitating partners to be unfaithful in a relationship?
11. How likely are adolescents to wish they were virgins when they marry?
12. Name three negative outcomes of premarital sex.

Chapter 18

1. Is God a sexual being?
2. What is the biblical evidence for the sexuality of God?
3. How is sexuality displayed in the three persons of the godhead?
4. What is the main difference in the presentation of the sexuality of God and the sexuality of the gods of the other religions of the countries surrounding Israel in the Old and New testaments?
5. What is the main difference in the presentation of the sexuality of God and the sexuality of the gods of the other religions throughout history and our present world?
6. What is the most biblical expression of the sexuality of God?
7. Who created sex? Was sex created as something good?
8. What is the view of the people of this world regarding sex and sexuality?
9. How did Jesus express His sexuality?
10. What do you consider to be the boundaries for the expression of your personal sexuality. List them.

Part Five: Human Bonding

Chapter 19

Twelve Steps in the Human Bonding Process	
1	Eye to body
2	Eye to eye
3	Voice to voice
4	Hand to hand
5	Arm to shoulder
6	Arm to waist
7	Face to face

8	Hand to Head
9	Hand to body
10	Mouth to Breast
11	Hand to privates
12	Privates to private
(Joy, 1986)	

1. In the relationships you have had with a prospective mate, have you followed the proper order of bonding steps (page 225)? How did the order of bonding which you followed impact the final outcome of your previous relationships?
2. Examine the marriage of your parents in light of the four principles of fighting for your marriage (page 226). What principles did your parents accomplish well? Which principles did they fail to achieve?
3. Read number five in Fowler's Stages of Faith (page 228). Examine your personal faith in light of the author's comments on this stage. Do you consider God to be mostly irrelevant or impersonal in your life? Why?

Moral Development: Links to online test:

<http://www.moralsensetest.com/>

https://profile.moraldna.org/gen/include/ethic2/default/user_t/newindex.html

Moral Development by Kohlberg, Piaget, God			
Piaget Level	Kolberg Stage	Views	Age
Pre-conventional Morality	1.Obedience and Punishment	Children assume that powerful authorities hand down a fixed set of rules which they must unquestioningly obey. Doing the right thing is obeying authority and avoiding punishment.	5-8
	2.Individualism and Exchange	Children recognize that there is not just one right view that is handed down by the authorities. Different individuals have different viewpoints. Since everything is relative, one is free to pursue one's own interests, although it is often useful to make deals and exchange favors with others.	7-10
Conventional Morality	3.Good Interpersonal Relationships	Adolescents see morality as more than simple deals. They believe that people should live up to the expectations of the family and community and behave in "good" ways. Good behavior means having good motives and interpersonal feelings such as love, empathy, trust, and concern for others. They emphasize being a good person, which basically means having helpful motives toward people.	10-12

	4. Maintaining the Social Order	Adolescents become more broadly concerned with society as a whole. Now the emphasis is on obeying laws, respecting authority, and performing one's duties so that the social order is maintained. The concern shifts toward obeying laws to maintain society as a whole.	12-25
Post-conventional Morality	5. Social Contract and Individual Rights	Young adults basically believe that a good society is best conceived as a social contract into which people freely enter to work toward the benefit of all. They recognize that different social groups within a society will have different values, but they believe that all rational people would agree on two points. First, they would all want certain basic rights, such as liberty and life, to be protected. Second, they would want some democratic procedures for changing unfair laws and for improving society. They emphasize basic rights and the democratic processes that give everyone a say.	16-25
	6: Universal Principles	Adults believe in defining the principles by which we achieve justice. Justice requires us to treat the claims of all parties in an impartial manner, respecting the basic dignity of all people as individuals. The principles of justice are therefore universal and apply to everyone. Morals define the principles by which agreement will be most just.	25-35
Holiness Morality	7: Redemption	The biblical design is always for redemption. This is not just to buy back or ransom from sin, but to restore an individual to living and functioning in Holiness. Holiness is achieved when a person is able to live and function according to the original purpose for which the person was created. It encompasses all aspects of the person's relationships to God, self and others.	Any
Adaptation by Tim Swick, (Flemming, 2006; "Jean Piaget," 2015; "Lawrence Kohlberg"; "Kohlberg's Theory," 2012)			

4. See the discussion about morals and absolutes (page 229-230). Do you believe in absolute truth, Why or why not? Read John 8:32, 14:6, 17:17. The greek word for truth (aletheia) used in these passages means truth that is true, or true truth.
5. Where do absolutes come from? Is God absolute? Why or why not? How do you know if your prospective mate is morally mature (pages 234-235)?
6. Does the bible put forth a level of moral development not postulated by Piaget or Kohlberg? What is this level?
7. What are the main differences between male and female moral views? List them. What do these differences teach us about how we should accommodate the perspectives of the opposite sex in our relationships?
8. What is the greatest indicator of the moral development maturity of a prospective mate (page 240)? Does your prospective mate hold the same moral values as you? What is the best measure of a person's moral development?
9. What are the differences between morals and ethics?

10. How does our moral development enhance our relationship with God self and others?
11. What provides the ultimate meaning to a person's life (page 245)?
12. Why is rejection in the young adult stage so devastating to a person's relationship with God (page 246)? What is the greatest thing you can accomplish in the adulthood stage?
13. Have you ever felt that you did not have worth to God? Have you ever felt that you did not accomplish that which you most wanted to accomplish in life?
14. Do you feel that you have wisdom to share with other people in this world? Do you believe that wisdom comes not just from sharing what you know, but from sharing your life with other people?

Maladaptation in the Stages of Life					
Stage	Age	Maladaptati	Crisis	Malignancy	Examples
Infancy	0-2	Sensory Distortion	Trust vs Mistrust	Withdrawal	unrealistic, spoiled, deluded, neurotic, depressive, afraid
Early Childhood	2-3	Impulsivity	Autonomy vs Shame/Doubt	Compulsion	reckless, inconsiderate, thoughtless, anal, constrained, self-limiting
Play Age	3-5	Ruthlessness	Initiative vs Guilt	Inhibition	exploitative, uncaring, dispassionate, risk-averse, unadventurous
School Age	6-12	Narrow Virtuosity	Industry vs Inferiority	Inertia	workaholic, obsessive specialist, lazy, apathetic, purposeless
Adolescence	12-18	Fanaticism	Identity vs Role Confusion	Repudiation	self-important, extremist, socially disconnected, cut-off
Young Adulthood	19-35	Promiscuity	Intimacy vs Isolation	Exclusivity	sexually needy, vulnerable, loner, cold, self-contained
Adulthood	35-65	Overextension	Generativity vs Stagnation	Rejectivity	do-gooder, busy-body, meddling, disinterested, cynical
Old Age	65+	Presumption	Integrity vs Despair	Disdain	conceited, pompous, arrogant, miserable, unfulfilled, blaming

(Chapman, 2006-2013), Erickson's psychosocial development theory

Faith Development

Links to online test:

<https://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/story.php?title=what-stage-of-faith-are-you>

Original Fowler Stages of faith chart.

<http://www.psychologycharts.com/james-fowler-stages-of-faith.html>

Stages of Faith – James Fowler	
1. Pre Faith	This is the faith of a young child who is totally self-centered. This is the faith in adults to provide for every need of the child. What little concept of God the child holds is mimicked from the child's total reliance and trust of caretaking adults. This trust enables the child to form a level of personal security, which will in turn enable him or her to evaluate the concept of a divine being throughout the rest of his or her life.

2.	Intuitive-Productive faith	This preschool faith is based on imagination. God is more of a fantasy being. A relationship with God is as much a relationship to the stories about God as to a real being. The child's understanding of the ultimate questions of life, derive from the child's growing sense of self identity, separate from parents and other persons.
3	Mythic-Literal faith	This school age faith is adopted from the faith of the persons in the child's social environment. A literal approach is taken by the child in understanding religious practices, beliefs, morals, and rituals.
4	Synthetic-Conventional	This is an adolescent faith. The person conforms his or her faith to what he or she personally experiences. This faith is tied to the peer group and may easily be discarded when the person moves beyond the need for the peer group. At this stage the person seeks a personal relationship and integration with God. In an attempt to unify experience and individuality into an understanding of ones place in the world. He or she relies on conformity to the peer group and significant others for an understanding of spiritual reality and ultimate questions about God.
5	Individual-Reflective faith	This young adult faith seeks to integrate a world view that takes personal responsibility for one's own beliefs, morals, and behaviors as part of the greater fabric of building intimacy with others and with God. (In my personal opinion, if intimacy is not developed in the relationship with God at this point of life, then God becomes mostly irrelevant and impersonal. Likewise, moral absolutes become guidelines instead principles which are to be followed in order to preserve the integrity and wholeness of the person's life.)
6	Conjunctive faith	Is a midlife attempt to integrate the faith understanding of all religious approaches into a comprehensive whole. Faith at this point is focused more on justice and equality. All faiths and practices are to be tolerated as the only just way to liberate human beings from societal norms in pursuit of a relationship with God.
7	Universalizing Faith	This faith at the later stages of life is very visionary. It may also become self-sacrificing and activism centered. It disregards all norms and constraints in an effort to transform society in a universal faith. In this stage the older adult seeks to develop a world view that is not personal, but theistic. He or she attempts to understand spirituality, morals and ethics from God's viewpoint instead of a human viewpoint. Most people will never reach this stage of development because they never develop an adequate understanding of God (Fowler, 1981, pp. 244-245)

RIASEC: Links to online test:

<https://openpsychometrics.org/tests/RIASEC/> (Click the start button)

<https://openpsychometrics.org/tests/RIASEC/1.php>

<https://www.truity.com/test/holland-code-career-test>



15. What three characteristics are most dominate in your personality? Determine the three most dominant letters in your personality before examining the descriptions of the personality profiles. What profiles provide strong overlap to your profile?

FIRO-B (pages 254-256)

Links to online test:

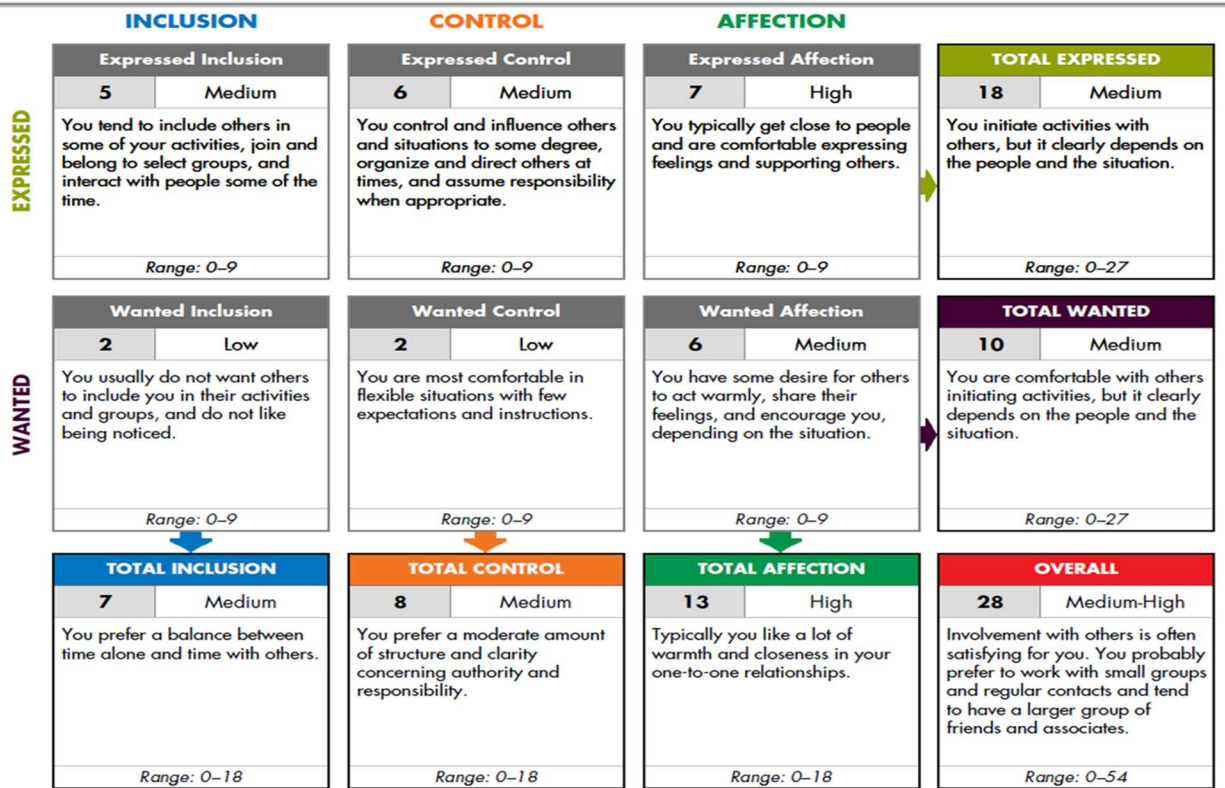
<http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/users/p/padilla/www/435-Leadership/Scale%20-%20firo-b.pdf>

Description

<http://careerassessmentsite.com/tests/firo-business-firo-b-tests/about-the-firo-b/>

http://bj1oh303t6x351kzp35xea4o.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/sample/SR_FIRO-B_Pro.pdf

16. Which behaviors do you most strongly demonstrate? Which behaviors do you most desire from others?



17.

Gender Differences (pages 256-261).

Male – Female Communication Styles Differences	
<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>
Emotional –Empathetic	Concrete – Logical
Discounted	Valued
Build relationships in order to work	Work in order to build relationships
Social	Non-Social
Inclusion – intimacy and consensus	Superiority – status and dominance
Disagreement impacts the whole relationship	Disagreement is subject based not relationship based
Relationships	Accomplishments
Verbal and collaborative problem solving	Silent and private problem solving
Non-linear thinking	Linear thinking
Emotional problem solving	Analytical problem solving
Indirect	Direct
Understanding	Fixing

18. Read the Gender differences. In what ways does understanding these differences enhance your understanding of the opposite sex?

Conflict and communication issues (pages 262-264)

19. Women - what difficulties have you experienced in getting men to talk about their feelings? Why are men so reluctant to discuss feelings? How do previous traumatic experiences affect a man's ability to express feelings?

20. Men - What reactions have you received from women when you try to solve their problems? Why do women have issues with a man solving their problems?

21. Is it worth delaying a marriage for a woman to teach a man to express his feelings?

22. What are the most important aspects of conflict resolution?

23. Why are the expression of feelings so important to making a mutually agreed upon decision?

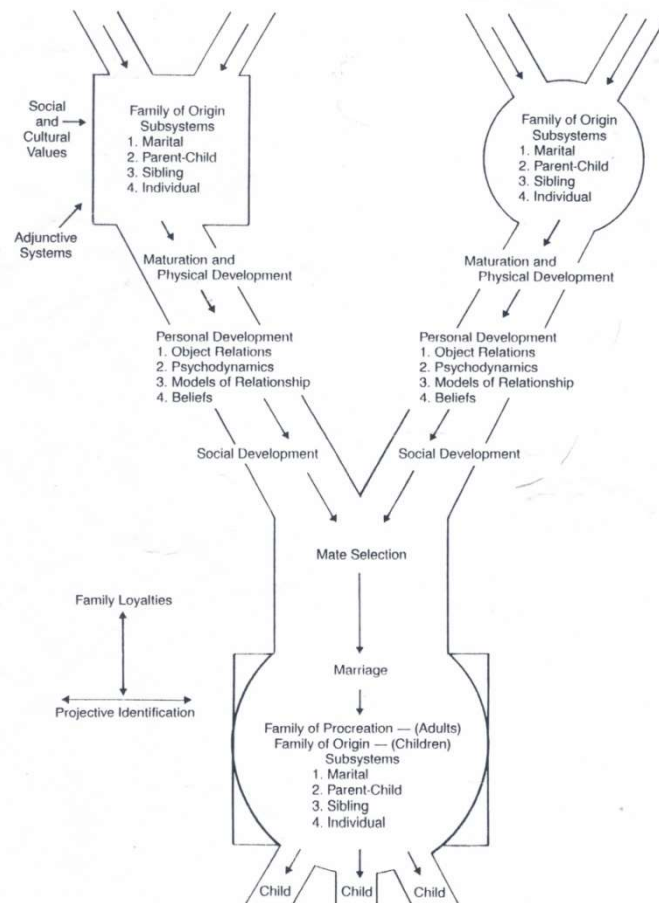
Chapter 20

1. How important is self-confidence to a person's ability to thrive in a relationship and bonding in marriage?
2. What is the greatest indicator of a person's self-confidence?
3. What is a parents most important role in building a child's self-confidence?

Chapter 21

1. Do you understand the basic concept of object relations theory?
2. How does object relations theory give insight into the attraction people may have to one person but not to another person?
3. Why is it important to have closure when a relationship is ended? How do you get closure? When you break up with someone always tell them why.
4. How does the tributary model help you to understand that when you marry a person, you also marry that person's family, culture, and history and vice versa?

Tributary Model of Relationships



Chapter 22

1. Why is it so important for people to attain healing for broken relationships?
2. What destroys long term relationships more than any other factor in our lives?
3. Is it important for a spouse of an abused person to receive counseling/training to understand the healing that is necessary for abuse victims if a marriage is to have long term success (279)?
4. How greatly will a broken heart from a former relationship impact a present relationship, if you are still in love with the person in the former relationship?
5. What is the most important place to start in preparing for marriage?
6. Do people with mental health issues tend to marry people with equally strong mental health issues? How do mental health issues of parents effect the children and grandchildren over the period of their life?
7. What happens when a person has arrested development and is suddenly healed of the issues which traumatized that person? Do people who have arrested development exhibit behavior more appropriate to the age level at which they are stuck because of the trauma that occurred at an earlier point in their lives?
8. If a person has issues trusting the church or wanting to go to church what does that tell you? If a person has issues trusting God what does that tell you?
9. Do you know of anyone who masks their behavior and emotions before the people they meet in public settings?
10. What occult practices have you practiced in your life? Have you repented? Have you removed all occult items and idols from your residence? Have you ever witnessed or been used as a part of witchcraft or satanic ritual?

Chapter 23

1. Read the Biblical steps in Psychological Healing listed at the end of this study guide. These steps have been revised from the book.
2. Read Genesis 50:15-21. Make a list of the traumatic events in your life especially the big ones.

Chapter 24

1. Read the opening Statements about cohabitation. If you have cohabitated in the past, have you experienced any of these negative results of cohabitation?
2. Cohabitation is marriage lived out on a contractual basis instead of a covenant basis. Why does cohabitation not lead to more successful marriages? Does cohabitation treat both partners as disposable?
3. What would your date say if you told him or her that you wanted to enter a relationship in which you considered him or her as disposable?
4. Is the pain of a failed cohabitation any less than the pain of a divorce?
5. Would you choose to cohabit prior to marriage if you knew:
Cohabitation increases your chances of divorce by 22%?
Only 40% of cohabiting couples ever get married to each other?

6. What is the impact upon children raised in a cohabitation relationship?
7. What are the implications of cohabitation for mental health of both partners?

Part Six: Faith Dynamics

Chapter 25

Perceptions of God

1. Describe a performance based relationship with God. What denominational churches within Christendom are highly performance based? Are cults and sects mostly performance based?
2. Read the highlighted statement (page 299). Does either of these views present a biblical approach/understanding of God? Why or why not?
3. How does a belief in a God of Tolerance create relationships which are disposable?
4. Does either performance based or tolerance based relationships with God create marriages of permanence or relationships with God which are permanent? Why or why not?
5. Would you want to be in a relationship with a spouse where your performance determined if the relationship would continue or not? Would you want to be in a relationship with a spouse where you were simply tolerated?
6. Why is a permanent relationship with God so critical to a permanent marriage?
7. How difficult do you find evaluating a date or prospective mates understanding and depth of relationship with Jesus? How do you make this evaluation?
8. How does the questions
 - a. is your God about your life?
 - b. Is your life about your God?
 reveal the true nature of a person's relationship with Jesus Christ?

Beliefs Matter

1. Define the term supreme being.
2. Do the characteristics (page 303) adequately describe a supreme being?
3. Why is it that multiple gods cannot be supreme beings?
4. Why is it that a supreme being cannot be manipulated or controlled? Would a god who is manipulated or controlled be capable of truly loving or forgiving us? Is love that is manipulated and controlled pure and perfect love? Why or why not?
5. Why do we need absolutes?
6. What would you be like if you had no free will? Is the existence of both good and evil necessary for free will to exist?
7. Can a perfect God be amoral? Why or why not?
8. Can the good we do in life outweigh the bad we do in life?
9. What is the only thing in the universe that reestablishes justice?
10. Does real love permit self-destructive behavior? Why or why not?

11. If an absolute and moral God would not tolerate any acts of evil without destroying the perpetrator, how would a merciful and loving God solve this dilemma? Describe the solution (pages 310-314).
12. Can a single person supreme being die and then come back to life? Assuming the answer is no, what is the requirement for the nature of a supreme being who is capable of dieing and coming back to life? What is the only type of supreme being who can do this?
13. Can multiple persons exist in a supreme being? How can a multi-person supreme being be integrated and unified into a whole?
14. Describe the nature of a single-person supreme being. If God were not a multi-person supreme being would our salvation be possible?
15. Read appendix C (page 381). What is the one attribute of God which is almost never mentioned in church doctrines? Name one major character in the bible to whom God did not speak. What are the ways in which God speaks to us? Which method is most common for you?
16. Can a relationship exist with no strings attached? What are the normal boundaries and requirements for a relationship to exist? Does God require us to maintain these boundaries in a relationship with Him?
17. Does God require you to change your behavior in order to have a relationship with him? Is all change painful?
18. What is the greatest value you have in life?
19. What is the theological term for God's rescuing us in life?
20. Why should God be considered to be and exclusive God? What are the benefits of having and exclusive God?
21. Do you have the right to choose the path you will take to God? What is God's path to a relationship with Himself? Why would you prefer God's path over your own path?

Chapter 26

1. Why would you choose to ask Jesus whom you should marry as opposed to making all your own decisions?
2. Do you believe a man knows whom he is supposed to marry the first time he sees her. Have you ever had this kind of experience?
3. What stories of women have you heard about how they knew who to marry?

Chapter 27

1. What are you looking for in a mate?
2. How is marriage like cutting a diamond?
3. Which is more likely to enable God to bring the best mate into your life:
 - a. staying in a relationship until someone better comes along?
 - b. dating no one in a steady relationship and being willing to have no mate instead of a lesser quality mate?
4. How much do you trust God through prayer to bring you a proper mate?
5. Why does your choice of a mate always impact more than one person?

6. Why should you never marry the person who tells you he or she loves you? What is a more important criteria for selecting a mate?
7. Have you ever experienced God's introduction to a mate?
8. What is the difference between the person you are supposed to marry and the person you should marry?
9. I believe the person you are supposed to marry is the person God created as the best match for you. This is the person God intends to introduce to you as your intended mate. Sometimes the person you are supposed to marry has not prepared him or herself to be an adequate mate for you. This is especially true when the person you are supposed to marry is not a Christian. If you cannot marry the person you are supposed to marry, then the mate choice becomes the person you should marry. This person is the next most compatible person who is acceptable to you as a marriage partner. Will God also introduce you to the person you are supposed to marry?
10. Please know that a person can hide their personality for up to five years. What is the shortest period you should know a person before marriage?
11. What should you do if you find warning flags in your prospective mate?
12. What one practice will bond a couple together more strongly than anything else? What is the danger of praying together with a prospective mate before engagement?
13. Why should you never bind yourself to another person spiritually before marriage?

Part Seven: Marriage

Chapter 28

1. Define marriage.
2. What constitutes a marriage in God's eyes? What does God's definition of marriage say about promiscuous sex or cohabitation?
3. What are the pieces and parts of a typical marriage ceremony in the Old Testament period?
4. What were the benefits to the bride and groom of these pieces and parts? In what ways at these benefits provided for in a western marriage?
5. What is the difference between a moral marriage and an immoral marriage?
6. What does the blood seal of a covenant say to you about marriage?
7. What constitutes a marriage in Old Testament custom and practice?

Chapter 29

1. Read the highlighted section (page 347). How does this statement speak to you?
2. What are the three main passages dealing with marriage in the bible?
3. Read the meaning of the word submit (page 348). Who is supposed to submit in a marriage (see verse 21)?
4. Does this passage in Eph5: deal mainly with wives, husbands or both? What is the significance of who the passage deals with?
5. Is a husband supposed to rule over his wife? Does this constitute witchcraft? What is the relevance of Genesis 3:16 to husbands ruling over a wife?

6. What is the difference between a husband being the ruler of his wife and a husband being the head of his wife? In what way did Jesus love the church? How does the example of Jesus clarify the role of a husband as head of his wife? What are the three ways in which Jesus demonstrates headship?
7. Who's responsibility is it to maintain love in a marriage?
8. Define the word holy. How can a man make his wife holy?
9. What does the story of Baalam illustrate about the power of speech? What other references to the power of speech do we find in the bible? Genesis 1:3-31, Proverbs 18:21, Proverbs 31:26, Mark 11:23, Hebrews 11:3,
10. In what manner does a Jewish bridegroom present his wife to himself?
11. What is the significance of a sacrificial animal being without stain, wrinkle, or any other blemish? Do you see your prospective mate as deficient or in some way less than yourself? Do you see your prospective mate as perfectly equal to yourself?
12. If you do not love your wife can you love yourself?
13. In what situation do men feel they are most loved? In what situation do women feel they are most loved? How does this create a cycle of love? What is the context which men need to build for their wives (page 361)?
14. How is a husband to be like a coach?
15. Why is it important for men to leave home? What is one of the most important things parents can do for their children?
16. Why is divorce so painful?
17. Is a covenant breakable?
18. What is the definition of the Hebrew word hesed? Why is this word so important?
19. What does it mean for a wife to respect her husband? Why is this respect so important? What does it mean for a husband to love his wife? Why is this love so important?
20. Why does traditional marriage work?

Do you believe intimacy creates permanence and permanence creates intimacy? Why or why not?

Biblical Steps to Psychological Healing

Biblical Steps to Psychological Healing

Taken from the book *The Art of Permanence: Mate Selection and Marriage in a World of Brokenness* by Tim Swick ©2017

1. Remove life commandment curses. Parents and significant people in our lives frequently speak well intentioned but very negative and limiting life commandments into our lives. In my early teens my mother told me that no woman would ever love me. This became a life commandment for me. It limited every relationship with a woman whom I desired to pursue as a mate. Some life commandments are good and should be respected in our life. My father and mother taught me to treat everyone the same. Treat children as respectfully as adults and treat the poorest person the same as the rich. These are the values we live by. However, life commandments may also serve as curses upon our life, and these should be rejected. Life commandments can be removed by:
 - a. Confessing them to God and asking Him to put them under the blood of Jesus
 - b. Rejecting them from limiting or impacting your life in the future
 - c. Forgiving the person who placed that life commandment on your life
2. Forgive the perpetrator. For whoever caused each and every tragedy or traumatic event in your life, simply forgive that person. Healing comes through forgiveness (Ephesians 4:17-24, Philippians 3:13, Romans 12:2, Matthew 6:12).

All psychological healing requires forgiveness. I have studied, and experienced, several different forms of psychotherapy. I have also seen multiple people, including myself, greatly benefit from psychotherapy. As a result, I know that all forms of psychotherapy boil down to one thing – forgiveness. In the end psychotherapy is simply forgiveness. The psychodynamic concept of reframing is a form of forgiveness.

Of the people who hurt us in life:

- i. Some hurt us intentionally – and some hurt us unintentionally.
- ii. Some are repentant -- and some are unrepentant.
- iii. Some broken people are just evil and mean.

We call the people who hurt us perpetrators. Perpetrators sometimes hurt us intentionally, and sometimes they hurt us unintentionally. Sometimes they are sorry for hurting us, and sometimes they are not. Sometimes people hurt us because they are just evil and mean. Sometimes kind and loving people hurt us. Sometimes the people who hurt us are our parents

and family members. Sometimes the people who do evil to us are strangers. I will refer to all of these people as perpetrators, regardless of who they are or what their intent or motive is.

Forgiveness frees us from control by the trauma that the perpetrator has created in our life! All perpetrators who harm us need to be forgiven. Perpetrators never deserve our forgiveness. Even when they repent and ask for our forgiveness, they still do not deserve to be forgiven. Perpetrators will never deserve our forgiveness. The more evil they are in their motives and intentions, the more they deserve punishment for what they have done to us.

When we have been hurt by perpetrators, we deserve to forgive them. We deserve the healing that forgiveness brings to our life. This is the important part: When we have been hurt by perpetrators, we deserve to forgive them. Forgiveness heals. It frees us from the control and the hurt the perpetrators have inflicted on our lives. We can only be free from what they have done to us when we forgive them. Please forgive the perpetrators of the evil and the harm they have inflicted on your life because you deserve the healing that forgiveness brings to your life. You see, God created forgiveness not so much for the perpetrators, but for us. Forgiving the perpetrator heals us deep on the inside where the pain is. God created forgiveness not so much for the perpetrators, but for us

3. Repent of your involvement in the events which have brought trauma to your life. It does not matter whether you were involved willingly or unwillingly. It only matters that you were involved. It does not matter if you sinned against God during this event or did not sin it matters that you repent because you are sorry the event ever took place and that it ever involved you. If you voluntarily participated in the event you need to seek forgiveness for your participation and the acts which you committed and which harmed another person. If you were the victim in the incident which left trauma in your life, you also need to forgive the perpetrator who harmed you. The perpetrator does not deserve forgiveness, but your forgiveness of the perpetrator(s) is a necessary key for God to be able to heal you of the events and their impact upon your life.
4. Redemption/Reframing is allowing God to redeem the tragedy and trauma of your life. This step involves two factors – repentance and redemption. The repentance aspect is a change of attitude over what took place. Here you are reframing the history of the event. Ask God to forgive you of what could have, would have and should have taken place if the event had not occurred. This reframing is not just for the time that the event took place it also is a repentance that what would have, could have, and should have happened throughout your life did not take place because the event robbed you of what God desired for your life had the event never occurred. Here you are repenting for what did not take place and that God's desire for your life did not take place. This is a very powerful healing step.

Examine each of the stages of your life. For any stage where you find weakness in your development, examine what traumatic events took place at that time of your life. Reframe these traumatic events by examining how God used these events to bring about positive situations in your life or to enable you to minister to other people in similar situations. Genesis 50:15-21.

5. Be Grateful that God has given you the opportunity to repent and heal. Be thankful that He has redeemed a very broken part of your life. Be thankful for the good which God has brought forth out of the tragedy you have born. Be grateful for what God brings into your life and thank God for it. Also make it a point to thank God for the people he uses to bring good into your life.
6. Worship God in the midst of the difficulties of your life. The greatest demonstration of trust and intimacy in a relationship is worship. Remember Paul and Silas in jail singing and worshipping God. There are many jails in our lives. These jails can range anywhere from illness to traumatic events to physical jails. There is nothing more freeing than worshipping God in and for the jails of your life. What are the jails of your life? The jails we encounter in our lives are varied:
 - a. Unforgiveness
 - b. Psychological trauma
 - c. Physical jails
 - d. Poor health
 - e. Broken family relationships

Human psychology teaches us that “Until the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of change, people prefer to stay the same!” Until the jails of your life are so painful that you cannot stand them, you will refuse to find a way out of your jails. The Bible’s secret to overcoming the jails of our life consists of two actions: worship and forgiveness.

How do you overcome the jails of your life? You overcome the jails of your life by worshipping in the midst of those jails. Worshipping in jail is the most freeing experience there is in a person’s life and in his or her relationship with God. Paul and Silas worshiped in jail. Worship makes you holy! Holiness makes you healthy and well! Holiness heals brokenness!

Paul and Silas worshiped in jail (Acts 16:16-40). Think about it. If you are locked up in a jail or prison, could you worship God there? Would you worship or would you rail at God and blame Him for allowing you to be there? Only the person who can worship God in the jails and prisons of her or his life can really worship God. The points of greatest hurt and pain in our lives are our prisons. They are what capture and hold us. They are what lock us up on the inside and prevent us from developing into the wholesome, loving people God wants to make of us.

The greatest freedom and healing in life is when we go to the point of the greatest hurt in our life. This is the point where we were wounded and killed the most. When we get to the point of greatest pain and begin to worship God for what occurred in that event, God heals us and sets us free. When you can worship God for the greatest pain you have ever experienced in life, I will assure that you will be the freest, most beautiful person on the face of the earth. Forgiveness sometimes takes time and is very hard to do, but it is worth it. It took me years to be able to worship God in points of greatest pain, but it has been well worth it. Only through worshipping Jesus Christ in the jails and prisons of your life, can you be free as you live in the midst of the captivity of those prisons.

A few years ago my wife became a walking miracle for the second time in her life. The first time is when she died on the operating table at age 28. She died and went to heaven. I have the surgeon's verification that she died. She went through the tunnel of light, past the point where you take the path to hell if you do not know Jesus as your Lord and savior. She arrived in heaven and was told by God that she had to return to earth because I needed her and it was not her time to die. She came back to me. Then about twenty five years later she had surgery for stenosis. The surgeon did not believe she would survive the surgery. She came out of the surgery completely paralyzed. She was rushed back into surgery a couple of hours later. The surgeon could not find the problem causing the paralysis. He knew she would not survive, so he performed an experimental procedure. After the surgery she was one of only three people who have had their spinal canal drilled out and lived. She went through extensive rehabilitation, learning to walk and talk, keep her balance, and feed herself all over again. Instead of complaining about what she was going through, all the surgeries she had had, and the debilitating condition she was in, she just praised God and worshiped. She led another doctor to Jesus because he saw there was no way she could be alive with what she had been through. She prayed for her nurses and therapists and caretakers. She made her visitors read the Bible and pray with her. Today, except for constant pain and weariness, she leads a normal life. She still praises God and worships each day. She faced death and lived. She faced lifelong paralysis and won. She faced pain and bitterness and lives to praise and worship God. How do you face the jails of your life?

If you cannot worship in the prisons of your life, then you cannot worship. The only way out of the prisons and pain in our lives is to worship. I do not say that worship will instantly set you free. I do say that continuing to worship Jesus in the prisons of our lives will soon set us free. It will heal us from the inside. It will make it easier for us to forgive those who have harmed us. Also, it will put us in a place in our relationship with God where we know we can never be harmed again by that prison and pain. This is the point at which God sets us free. This is the point at which He makes us truly new creatures in Christ. This is the point where God brings forth the greatest beauty and joy in our lives.

Paul and Silas demonstrated this intimacy with God by worshiping God while they were in a very difficult situation in life. We are not to worship our mate, but we are to worship God. We are to have intimacy and trust with our mate. There is no more powerful intimacy than when we join in corporate worship of God together with our mate.

7. "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed..." (James 5:16). I believe there is a strong reason that confession and healing are placed together in this verse. For both psychological and physical healing to take place in our lives, we must confess not only our personal sins, but also our forgiveness of those who sin against us.

Many people go through great traumas and emotional pain in their lives, and they never get over them. Those traumas and pains are festering wounds that never heal. We try to forget about them, but they never go away. We bury them deep in our subconscious, too ashamed and

hurt to ever speak of them with another person. We hide them as our personal secrets.

From experience in my own life and in observation of others, I have found that the greatest healing comes not when we hide our trauma and pain but when we confess it openly and publicly.

How do you know when you are healed of the greatest emotional trauma in your life? When you can tell your story to both your best friends and to complete strangers, you are not only truly healed, you are also using your pain to heal other people's lives. I have personally witnessed physical healing miracles, as well as my wife coming back from the dead. However, it is in the stories of the people who share their deepest pain that I see what I consider to be the greatest miracles of my risen Savior.

Healing takes time. Do not rush this process. Work your way through each one of these steps one at a time. Take a least one month for each step.

Final and complete healing for the greatest pains in our lives only comes when we worship.

If you cannot worship Jesus in the jails of your life, you cannot worship!

My Stepbrother Raped Me

My step brother was sick and asked my dad to send me to care for him and nurse him back to health. I dutifully ministered to him each day, taking care of his needs, feeding him, and treating his illness. He never seemed too sick when I saw him, but I was obedient to my dad's request.

One day he became overly forward in demanding that I do for him some things which I did not deem appropriate. He told me he loved me and wanted to marry me. He told me he knew it was wrong to want to marry a step sister, but he had to have me as his wife. One day as I nursed him and fed him, he became aggressive in wanting attention that was not appropriate between a brother and sister. I resisted but he grabbed me. He forced me into his bed and there he took advantage of me. I tried to fight him off, but he held me down on the bed and began to touch me very inappropriately. He then climbed on top of me and raped me.

I was so ashamed. I ran out of the room and hid. I could not go against my father's request to care for my brother. I cried and cried. I was so ashamed I wanted to die. I wanted to run but I was not allowed to leave his house. Finally I went back into his room to give him a meal and he told me to leave. He said he never wanted to see me again. He called me terrible names. He treated me like I was worthless and told me to leave his house and to never come back.

I left and returned to my mother's home. I was in tears and completely distraught. Mom held me and let me cry. She listened and slowly worked the story out of me. I felt so dirty and ashamed. My life was over and I wanted to die. I was of marriageable age and my life was over. I knew no man would ever seek my hand in marriage after what my step brother did to me.

I felt so dirty. It was like a covering of excrement was all over me. I could not wash it off. I washed myself, time and again but it would not leave my body. I was like a heavy blanket weighing me down and I had no way to take it off. It was an unbearable burden and it would not go away. I felt like I had died and I wished I had. Death would have been much more pleasant the ugliness and shame that covered my body and my life. For months I wanted to die.

Mom told my dad what had taken place. My dad did nothing. He never stood up for me. He never said a word to my step brother about what he did to me. Mom said he was very angry but dad never said a word to me. He did not ask what had happened. He never wanted to hear my story. He ignored me and treated me like I was worthless. My dad did not even care. It was as if nothing had ever happened. I was so afraid he would order me back to my step brother's house. I had been violated

I kept having nightmares about what had happened to me. I could not stand for any man to look at me and I could not stand for any person to touch me. The torment never went away. A few months later my real brother asked me to come live with him. He told me I would be safe with him and that he would protect me from my step brother. I lived in his home for the rest of my life. I never married and I never had children. I became the soiled woman my rapist said I would become. I was alone, unloved,

untouched, and destroyed by the shame of what my step brother did to me. I was isolated and tormented by my nightmares and memories of the event.

I hated my dad, because he did nothing. He treated me like I was worthless. I knew he did not even love me, because no real dad would have failed to stand up for me the way he did against my rapist. My dad is the greatest leader our country has ever known. He is honored and loved by the people, but I have come to be very angry with him. I cannot love a father who does not stand up for his daughter who has been raped. I cannot tolerate a dad who does not discipline and punish his son. I cannot honor a leader who does not protect his people especially his daughter. The worst part is the silence from my dad. He does not speak to me about what has taken place. I wish I had never been born.

The shame never went away. I relived it every day. How do you heal when you cannot stop hurting? There is no cure and there is no one I can talk to about my rape. I am too ashamed to talk to anyone about what happened. I am too hurt to even speak of this event. I do not want to remember it. I have done everything to keep from remembering it and it still will not go away. There is no hope for me. I can never be whole again. There is no one who can love me and I can never love myself.

Two Things were stolen from me that day: my voice and my power.

Who am I? 2 Samuel 13 ©Copywrite 2018 by Tim Swick

After a short time my brother took me into his house to live with him and his family. This was a great blessing. I knew no man would ever marry me after I was raped. I became a soiled woman of shame.

Meeting Jesus

I was raised in a Christian home, with parents who took me to church every Sunday. I have fond memories of being in church and Sunday School since I was a toddler. I remember one night when I was around nine years old that Jesus appeared to me in the middle of the night. He stood in the middle of the bedroom which my brother and I shared. I do not think my brother ever awoke that night.

All I could see was a very bright light emanating from the dark form of a person. I immediately knew I was seeing Jesus. I do not know how I knew it was Jesus, I just knew it was Him. He said to me – “You know you have to be perfect don’t you?” - and then He disappeared.

When I was in the eighth grade (around age 14), I found myself bored with church and wishing I did not have to go to church. I found the ritual of worship to have no relevance in my life. I believed in God existence, but I had no experiential concept of a God who would personally interact in my life on a regular basis. I knew God was supposed to answer prayers, but I had never seen an answer to prayer

and did not know what one could look like. In other words I was questioning God's relevance in my life and rapidly drifting away from any desire to have Him in any way involved in my life.

A few years prior to this time there was a man in our community who had come to know Jesus and whose life had been radically changed. His name was Ronnie Johnson. (There were rumors that he had not always been a highly moral or ethical person. I do not know and would not venture to speculate on his life before Jesus.) Ronnie was soon to become my Sunday school teacher. My family was always Methodist and our pastor at the time served two small churches. Ronnie started teaching Sunday school at the other church on our charge. Instead of the normal five students in a Sunday school class, he soon had forty to fifty persons in his class. When he started teaching at my church my parents wanted us kids to give him a try. The first Sunday we had around twenty persons in the class. Soon it was forty students in the class.

He did not use any Sunday school booklets or lesson material. He used the bible only. He did not teach. He preached and he preached with an anointing. Within a couple of months members of our class were giving their lives to Jesus at the end of each class. I soon found myself wanting to go to Sunday School because Jesus was there each Sunday. I also found myself not wanting to stay in class very long each week, because I was convicted about my lack of a relationship with Jesus. I would sit in class and try to keep tears from my eyes because I knew God was real and present in this classroom and I was convicted about my lack of Jesus in my life. God was rapidly convincing me that I needed a relationship with Him instead of just a conviction that He exist.

By the early part of May I found myself agreeing to go with Ronnie to a church somewhere out in the country. IT was a tiny United Baptist church out in the country about ten miles from my home. That evening Connie, Bobbie, my brother, and myself sat in the same pew. I sat beside the window. Before the preacher was half finished with his sermon, I had tears streaming down my cheeks. I kept staring at the window, because I did not want the girls to see me cry.

During the altar call I wanted to go forward and find whatever that preacher was talking about. I also wanted to run out the door, because I was so ashamed for anyone to see me cry. Ronnie cam and asked each one of us if we would go forward to the altar. At first I said no, then I said yes. I prayed at the altar for a good while and asked Jesus to forgive me of every sin in my life I could remember and also of every sin I could not remember. When I walked away form that altar I knew I was changed and clean on the inside. I could feel the lightness on my spirit for having my sins forgiven. I had met God personally and Jesus had changed me. Whatever relationship Jesus had given me with him that night I wanted to keep forever. God was real and I finally had a personal God instead of a concept of God.

By the time we left the church that night all four of us had given our lives to Jesus. To the best of my knowledge at least three of us are still living for Jesus. I went home that and told my parents what had happened to me. They did not say much, but they were glad. When I went to bed that night I could not sleep. I tossed and turned and kept having the uncomfortable prodding that there was something else I had to do. I had no concept of God speaking to me and He did not use words. There was just the repeated thought that God wanted me to give all of my life to Him and not just part of my life. When I

finally prayed and told Jesus that I was giving him all of my life with no parts reserved, I immediately fell asleep.

I am now sixty two. I have walked with Jesus for about forty-eight years of my life. I am so thankful that Jesus brought me into a relationship with Himself as early in life as it was. I wish it had been even earlier. Because I have sought to live in relationship with Jesus, I have avoided behaviors and events which would have been very damaging to my life. I have not avoided every damaging behavior or event. Some have left scars on my life. Because I seek to walk with Jesus, even the most damaging events in my life have been healed. I live with faith and hope in life, because I have a God who walks beside me each day of my life.

The greatest and most important thing you will ever do in life is to ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins and to come into your life. When I look back over my life, the thing that scares me the most is all the damage, wounds, scars, and traumas, that would have been left raw and unhealed in my life, if I had not walked with Jesus.

Crushes

It is strange how even as an older adult I can remember all of my childhood crushes.

In first and second grade my twin brother and I had crushes on two twin sisters. I wonder what ever became of those girls. In fourth grade it was a very pretty little girl in West Virginia She was from Jane Lew. I do not even remember her name, but she sure was pretty. In fifth grade it was Bobby Gorby. She is still a true friend even though we have not seen each other in about 35 years. In sixth grade I remember a girl with the last name of Brown. I think Donna Gillette also came in there someplace briefly. I also remember a few others along the way that I thought were exceedingly cute. In High school I developed a strong crush on Beth (What was her last name?). In college it was Regina. The one I want to tell you about was never a crush. She was an older girl. I was around nine and she must have been a least twelve. Her name was Nancy Randolph. She was a neighbor. I remember my mother and her mother discussing what a polite and obedient and helpful young lady she was. I remember how she played with my other female friends even though she was solder than them. I remember her speaking kindly to us boys. I do not remember if I prayed about it, but I decided that when I got married I wanted a Nancy just like her. She had the most beautiful long brown hair, a big smile and a helpful and friendly personality. When I was nine we moved to Ohio and I never saw her again. However, I have never forgotten her. It is interesting how each crush you hold in life teaches you a little something about what you want in a mate. So at this point, I want to say thanks to all my crushes and a few other girls, who have helped shape my vision of what I wanted in a mate. God never gave me a Nancy Randolph, but he sure gave me one as good or better.

The Discussion

All couples seeking to marry need to discuss the following issues thoroughly and repeatedly prior to marriage and occasionally thereafter.

Family

Immediate and Extended Family

Family history involving social mores, culture, celebration practices, work, previous places of residence

Family history involving in-laws

Family religious history

Family divorce and abuse history

Family acceptance and approval of your mate

Family history involving ethics, morals, legal issues.

Family history involving child rearing, patterns and practices of discipline

Family life commandments

Family secrets

Social activities

Food preferences

Home

Where to live

Children

Pregnancy prevention

Discipline

Secrets and keeping them

Anniversary dates- birthday, anniversary, etc.

Careers

Work or stay home

Career Priorities for both spouses

Conflict management

Religion

Relationship with Jesus

Prayer life

Bible study

Parents' religion

Born again, Spirit filled, spiritual gifts, prayer life

Family devotions

Church attendance and denomination selection

Relationship history

Dating history

Previous engagements

Ex's in dating, cohabitation, marriage, divorce

Abuse history

Sexual

Mental Health

Physical Health

Neglect

Abandonment

Finances

Budget

Autos

Insurance

Investments

Loans

Credit cards

Taxes

Home Expenses

Personal Expenses

Entertainment Expenses

Childcare and provision expenses

Tithes

Expense priorities

Family accountant duties - paying bills and keeping records, doing taxes

Sex History and Attitudes

Cohabitation and other relationship history

Sexual history

Sex education

Importance of sex

Expectations regarding sex, including normal and abnormal or unusual sexual practices in the marriage

Listening and Learning Skills

Psychologically speaking listening should have at least one of three goals. It should change a person's feelings, change a person's behavior, or change a person's beliefs and attitudes. Any time you change one of these basic aspects of person, you impact the other two aspects of a person's psychology. If you change two of these aspects of a person's psychology, the third aspect will also change.

Affect is a person's feelings and emotions.

Behavior is how a person acts and reacts to situations he or she encounters in life.

Cognition is a person's beliefs and attitudes.

People do not just become convinced of truth because they hear it presented. They become convinced of truth when they feel it in their emotions and in their lives. People do not change their behavior until both their understanding and their emotions change. Listening is about changing lives. Therefore, those who seek to impact others in relationships must speak to the emotions as well as to the understanding.

The first skill in listening is learning to be relational. God has designed us as tripartite beings. We need to be conscious of how our listening impacts each part of a person's being.

Our speech produces sound waves that impact our body. Science has discovered that our bodies create sound waves. Our bodies were created to produce musical sounds as a form of worship to God. We speak and produce sound. Does our speech bring worship to our hearers?

All of counseling psychology is an attempt to heal. Through our listening we also seek to heal. We present God's counsel of forgiveness as the greatest means of psychodynamic healing to the deepest recesses of a person's soul. People come to church not because they want to have their ears tickled or because they want to find hope for their lives. They come to seeking healing for their souls. That healing comes through forgiving and being forgiven.

It is only the touch from God upon our spirits that communicates His forgiveness to us and heals our souls. People want to be assured that God exists. They question God's reality and His existence until they sense God's presence and hear God speak to them with that still small voice in their spirits.

Listening that changes lives touches the emotions. Most people in the workplace live in a world of thinking and doing. When people enter into a listening situation, they want to have their emotions touched. I once read that people who do not physically touch each other within an hour of the time they first meet never develop trust for each other. If we want people to have their lives changed by our listening, we have to develop trust. To develop trust, we have to touch the person physically and emotionally. It is when a person is opened up to God by a physical touch and an emotional touch that they are most receptive to a spiritual touch from God.

The Bible frequently talks about emotions. It usually presents emotions in a negative light in speaking of non-Christians. For Christians, the Bible frequently commands us to have specific positive emotions. The Bible is clear – emotions are a key aspect of our relationships with God, with the people around us and with our own self. Touching people's emotions grants them permission to trust you and to trust God. It enables them to develop community and relationships within the body of Christ.

The advent of the social networking sites on the internet clearly demonstrates the interest in social interaction and connectedness. The proliferation of social groups within the church also clearly demonstrates this demand. How does listening facilitate the demand for social connectedness in the church? Jesus and the twelve disciples were clearly a social group with a mission of discipleship. In listening we are to be a social group with a mission of discipleship. Touching people's emotions grants to them permission to develop community and relationships within the body of Christ.

If the person performing listening does not demonstrate a comfort with relationships and emotions in his or her interactions with people, then permission is not granted to people to be relational. If the person performing listening does not demonstrate openness to emotions and relationships, then he or she displays God as non-feeling, non-caring, and non-relational. Permission for a relationship with God must be demonstrated and granted by the person performing listening.

What is the greatest skill any potential mate can ever develop? The ability to LISTEN! You do not earn the right to speak until you have demonstrated the capacity to listen!

What about prayer? The ability to pray is critical to mate selection, but the ability to listen to God is even more critical. Can you really pray if you cannot listen to God? The ability to listen to the people around us is the most important skill we can ever develop for building relationships, demonstrating the love of God, and earning the right to present the Gospel. It is also the most important skill you must possess before you ever tell a potential mate that you love him or her. You have not earned the right to say "I love you" until you have listened to your mate.

SOLER

- S – Face the person Squarely
- O – Adopt an Open posture
- L – Lean toward the person
- E – Make Eye contact
- R – Be Relaxed

SOLER is the most basic form of listening for which we need to develop skills. There is nothing that expresses love and compassion to a person more than the feeling they have been listened to. Practice this skill with someone and see how you feel. Do not take any shortcuts. Be careful to do this exercise correctly! If you want to improve your marriage or your relationship with someone important to you, use SOLER and just listen to them. If you want an opening to witness to a person, use SOLER and listen to them. Using SOLER will make more difference in any relationship than almost anything else you can do. (Egan, 1994).

There are several forms of listening that people use to avoid relationships. In and of themselves these forms of listening may be good. However, when they are used for selfish purposes they become negative forms of listening or pseudo-listening. God commands you to love other people. If you use any of these forms of pseudo-listening, then you are not loving the other person enough to listen to him or her.

1. passive/inattentive listening – pretending to listen while you pay attention to something else.
2. pretend - also called 'responsive listening' - using stock nods and smiles and "uh hum," "yes," "of course," etc.
3. biased/projective – "selective listening" and intentionally disregarding/dismissing the other person's views.
4. misunderstood - unconsciously overlaying your own interpretations and making things fit when they don't fit.
5. attentive - fact gathering and analysis often while attempting manipulation of the other person.
6. active - understanding feelings and gathering facts for largely selfish purposes.
7. empathic - understanding and checking facts and feelings, usually in relation to listener's personal agenda.
8. facilitative - understanding fully, and helping with the other person's needs for our own agenda.

Non Verbals

1. Body behavior - posture, movement, gestures
2. Facial expressions - smiles, frowns, biting lips
3. Voice related behavior – tone, pitch, intensity, intonation, rate, emphasis, pauses, fluency, silence
4. Observable autonomic physiological responses - breathing, rash, blushing, paleness, pupil dilation
5. Physical characteristics - fitness, height, weight, complexion
6. General appearance - grooming, dress

Listening involves both verbal and non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication passes along much more information than verbal communication. Pay attention to the non-verbal clues which you present in communication.

Skills from LEAD LAB

1. Paraphrase – What I hear you saying is... Say the message they are conveying without parroting them.
2. Perception check – I think you are saying this... I perceive that you are feeling this...
3. Behavior description – Your words are saying this...but your behavior is saying this...
 One of the most non-judgmental ways to communicate a behavior description is to phrase your communication in this manner.
 When you - describe the behavior,
 I feel - name the feeling,
 Because - explain why their behavior makes you feel that way.
4. Creative questions – When the person you are interacting with makes a statement, start asking questions about the information they have provided in that statement.
5. Story Listening - This is perhaps the greatest of all skills because it works on the psychodynamic level of the subconscious. As you talk with a person, listen to the free information they provide. Listen to the stories they tell you, no matter how brief those stories are. A story can be as brief as a single sentence. When a person has told you three stories, determine the common denominator in the three stories. It does not matter how unrelated the stories are, they will have a common denominator. I was teaching this skill one time and asked a woman in the class to tell me three stories. She gave me three one sentence stories. The first story was about her children. The second story was about her garden. The third story was about her aloneness. There was no common denominator. I realized that she had told me two stories about what gives her great joy. The third story was about her loneliness, and yet there was a lot of joy for God's divine grace in the loneliness. The stories express what is transpiring in the person's subconscious. If you listen the common denominator of the stories will provide you with the area of greatest need for which the person desires healing in his or her life.
6. Direct expression of feeling – When , seek to determine the emotion that the person is expressing in their words. They may even directly name that emotion. Also freely express and name your own feelings in communicating back to the person.

7. Neuro-Linguistics – Match the person’s speech patterns - tone, cadence, vocabulary. Also match the person’s non-verbals, body language, sitting position, etc. in responding to the person. In other words mimic the person.
8. Fogging – This is a mechanism for getting around the resistance and obstructions a person raises when you seek to minister to him or her. In fogging you agree with the part of a person’s statement which you consider to be true and ignore that which may be blatantly false. For example: If the person starts complaining about fat people, just tell the person, “Some people think I am fat. I agree that I weigh more than I desire. I can see where you might even think that I am fat.” Then change the subject and discuss what you want to discuss.
9. Negative inquiry – If a person criticizes you, or another person, or some event, ask the person to explicitly describe and express what they dislike about the person or thing they are criticizing.
10. Polarities – listen for contradictions and opposites in a person’s discourse. Do they talk about being lonely and then change the subject to a new relationship with a new friend? Do they tell you the world is round and then tell you the world is flat?
11. Life commandments – listen for the moral values and ethics which guide a person’s life. Life commandments are mostly handed down from parents. My parents taught me to treat every person the same, no matter how young or old, pretty or ugly, rich or poor, educated or ignorant, talented or un-talented. You can learn something from everyone. Take advantage of what each person can teach you. I once led a youth group of four kids. Some of the kids had genius IQ’s, while the pastor’s daughter had an extremely low IQ. The pastor told me his daughter had taught his family to love and love unconditionally. Within a few months I knew that in spite of the daughter’s limitation, she was indeed a person who spread and taught love. She had a real God given gift of love.

Practice listening to another person. Use these forms of communication in your practice. Learn to use these communication skills so effectively that they become innate behavior for you when you listen to other people (LEAD Lab pp. 92-99).

Practice! Practice! Practice! It makes all the difference.

You will not learn to listen unless you practice.

Types of Difficult People

There are three main types of difficult people which we will encounter in our relationships.

Turtles hide in their shell when you try to talk with them. You must pry these people out of their shell. They frequently hide and do the “poor me” routine. They will reject you in order to end the relationship with you before they get hurt. Counter their perception of themselves with your perception of them. Show them your view of the reality in which they live. Do not accept what they present to you as their view of reality. Whatever you do, do not let them drive you away and destroy the relationship you have with them.

Skunks spray all over you when you try to talk with them. They will try to drive you away by sabotaging the relationship between you. They will be spiteful, hateful, and mean. They will also reject you in order to end the relationship with you before they get hurt. Whatever you do, do not let them drive you away and destroy the relationship you have with them. Ignore the spray and enjoy the stink.

Posers wear a mask of a persona which they wish to project. They will not take off the mask for anyone including themselves. They will not let you inside of their defenses. It is not uncommon for them to put up a pseudo wall that holds you at arm's length and prevents you from entering their world. All they give you is a fake persona, and they never let you see the real person.

To minister to these people you must ignore the fake persona and walk through their wall. Call them out and tell them you want to see the real person. Do not accept the fake person that they present to you (LEAD Lab pp. 92-99).

Learning Skills

Learning Styles

Before you can communicate with people it is important to understand how they learn. Now we will begin to look at how different learning styles provide you challenges and opportunities for more effective relationships.

There are a variety of learning styles. Most people use a blend of styles. One style may be more dominant within the blend used by each person. The more learning styles you develop proficiency in using, the better you become at learning. Because of the differences in learning styles, we need to learn to perceive the dominant learning style of the person to whom we are ministering and work with that person in his or her dominant learning style.

Sensory Based Learning Styles

Much of our learning ability is based on an orientation to our senses. Whichever of our senses is strongest determines what our learning style is. These senses may also blend together to form our unique learning style.

1. Visual learners - these learners remember pictures and graphical representations of data and information.
2. Auditory learners – remember what they hear. They remember sounds and conversations.
3. Kinesthetic learners – deals with bodily movement. They remember what they touch and manipulate. They need to form or trace objects with their hands.
4. They learn best through interaction with their physical world.
5. They are very sensitive to movement.
6. They readily pick up on non-verbal gestures.

7. Olfactory Learners – need to smell. They remember fragrances and aromas.

Each of us has a different learning style. It is important to know what our learning style is. It is also important to learn about all of the other learning styles. We each will have a strong tendency to minister in our own personal learning style. This frequently leads us to ignore the dominant learning styles of the person to whom we are seeking to teach or to minister. This results in some of our attempts at listening being misunderstood or rejected. This is not because our person did not listen. It is because we minister in a learning style from which the other person has difficulty learning.

I once had a boss who was an auditory learner. He had the ability to recall entire verbal conversations from years ago. He would frequently give long verbal sets of instructions about troubleshooting very complex problems. He would give the instructions so fast there was no way to remember them, or to write them down. All of the people he supervised were visual or kinesthetic learners. It was almost impossible to complete his instructions. At best we would remember three of four things he said and try to complete them. Then we would go back and ask what else he wanted done. If he would have explained things in our personal learning style, he would have had much happier employees. We would have been more productive. He would not have needed to teach us the same things over and over again.

The best learning can occur when we attempt to appeal to the different sensory levels of learning. One of the reasons Louis L'Amour was such a great western writer was his descriptions of his characters' surroundings. He described the dirt, flowers, trees, train, geography, mountains, streams, horses, and towns. When he gave a description you could see it, hear it, touch it, smell it, and taste it.

We should do the same in our discussions. Describe the places, events, characters and ideas in the Bible; make people see, hear, taste, touch, and smell all the aspects about which you teach.

Whole Learners – These are those who must understand the whole picture before they know how all the parts fit together. It is critical that they be given a framework from which to explore the parts that are presented.

How would you like to be a person who is a whole learner trying to understand the Bible for the very first time? The Bible has a lot of books and a lot of chapters. It has a lot of different accounts of different people's lives. It has historical accounts of events in the epochs of human history. How do you fit them all together? How do you understand them as a whole?

In teaching you only give bits and pieces of the Bible at a time. You will need to present to your audience that the Bible may be many books, but it is only one message. It may give many stories, but those stories are accounts of human lives and human history that fit somewhere on the timeline from the beginning to the end of the account of mankind upon this earth.

To really help whole learners you need to present to them the whole picture. Demonstrate to them that the Bible encompasses the whole timeline of human history. It starts with the creation of the world

before the existence of mankind. It climaxes with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for our sins. It ends with the return of Christ to rule the earth in the millennial kingdom and with God creating the new heavens and the new earth. The Bible not only fits on the timeline of history; each of its books fits into different segments of that timeline. Also the Bible may be sub-sectioned into units. The Pentateuch, historical books, poetry, wisdom and prophets comprise the Old Testament. The gospels, acts, epistles, and apocryphal revelation comprise the New Testament. Help your whole learners to understand that what you preach is a part of the whole message of salvation. For global learners you will also need to explain why the Bible is structured the way it is. Help them to understand that the book of Genesis is about God selecting one man and wife from who to develop his chosen people as a nation. Help them to see that the book of Leviticus is about health. It covers physical, social, relational, and spiritual health. It teaches that if you let God make you holy, He will give you health in all aspects of your life. Help them to see that the reason Jesus died on the cross was part of a plan so that you could have a relationship with God and live a holy life. Show them that God has a plan for the end of this world. In that plan God is never defeated and God is clearly victorious in the end. As a part of that plan God protects his people the church, and he brings his people the Jews to recognize their Messiah.

If you cannot explain the whys of the Bible, you can never expect your audience to understand the Bible as a whole.

Whole or Global learners are also referred to as Macro learners. To determine whether a person is a Macro learner or a Micro learner, ask this question. When they put a puzzle together do they assemble the border first or the inner pieces first? If they assemble the border first, they are seeking a structure to understand the whole. They are Macro Learners. If they put the pieces together first, they are micro learners. They will understand the whole when everything is completed.

Types of Learners:

1. **Sensory Learners:** If you rely too much on sensing, you can tend to prefer what is familiar, and concentrate on facts you know instead of being innovative and adapting to new situations. Seek out opportunities to learn theoretical information, and then bring in facts to support or negate these theories.
2. **Intuitive Learners:** If you rely too much on intuition, you risk missing important details which can lead to poor decision-making and problem solving. Force yourself to learn facts or memorize data that will help you defend or criticize a theory or procedure you are working with. You may need to slow down and look at detail you would otherwise typically skim.
3. **Visual Learners:** If you concentrate more on pictorial or graphical information than on words, you put yourself at a distinct disadvantage because verbal and written information is still the main preferred choice for delivery of information. Practice your note taking and seek out opportunities to explain information to others using words.
4. **Verbal Learners:** When information is presented in diagrams, sketches, flow charts, and so on, it is designed to be understood quickly. If you can develop your skills in this area, you can significantly reduce time spent learning and absorbing information. Look for opportunities to learn through audio-visual presentations (such as CD-ROM and Webcasts). When making notes, group information according to concepts and then create visual links with arrows going to and from them. Take every opportunity you can to create charts, tables, and diagrams.

5. Active Learners: If you act before you think, you are apt to make hasty and potentially ill-informed judgments. You need to concentrate on summarizing situations, and take time to sit by yourself to digest information you have been given before jumping in and discussing it with others.
6. Reflective Learners: If you think too much you risk doing nothing. Ever. There comes a time when a decision has to be made or an action taken. Involve yourself in group decision-making whenever possible and try to apply the information you have in as practical a manner as possible.
7. Sequential Learners: When you break things down into small components, you are often able to dive right into problem solving. This seems to be advantageous but can often be unproductive. Force yourself to slow down and understand why you are doing something and how it is connected to the overall purpose or objective. Ask yourself how your actions are going to help you in the long run. If you can't think of a practical application for what you are doing, then stop and do some more "big picture" thinking.
8. Global Learners: If grasping the big picture is easy for you, then you can be at risk of wanting to run before you can walk. You see what is needed but may not take the time to learn how best to accomplish it. Take the time to ask for explanations, and force yourself to complete all problem-solving steps before coming to a conclusion or making a decision. If you can't explain what you have done and why, then you may have missed critical details.

Teaching

As a part of relationships we also seek to teach our prospective mate about ourselves. We do this both by listening and teaching. Most listening and teaching today focuses on the cognitive and behavioral levels. Teaching by nature is cognitive. It seeks to bring about changes in people's lives by teaching people new concepts or reinforcing old concepts. Cognitive teaching is good. People have to understand that there is something better for their lives before they can aspire to change their lives. Cognitive therapy is shown to produce little to no results by itself in changing people's lives. If the cognitive approach by itself was sufficient, reading the Bible or a self-help book would be sufficient to bring about great changes in people's lives.

Some teaching may also be behavioral in nature. Behavior is teaching by presenting "ought to's with how to's." In other words this form of teaching tells people of the changes they need to make in their lives and also tells them how to make those changes. In the psychological world, behavior therapy is known to get excellent short term results. Long lasting results, however, are much less substantiated. As soon as people face another traumatic time in their life, they may lose all of the gains they have achieved through behavior therapy. I consider this to be equally true of behavior teaching.

Affective teaching deals with people's emotions and attitudes. This level of teaching is also ineffective in and of itself. Affective teaching, however, is the gateway to the psychodynamic aspects of the human soul. It is when people are healed on the psychodynamic level that long term results are truly achieved in therapy. I believe this is also true of teaching. I believe this is why Jesus taught in parables. The parables formed metaphors which touched people on a psychodynamic level.

It is when we begin to put all three levels of teaching together in our presentation of ourselves to our prospective mate we are able to present the clearest expression of who we are.