

Nazarene Theological Seminary

**Trauma-Sensitive Spiritual Intervention For Abused Children And Youth:
Freedom For Spiritual Formation**

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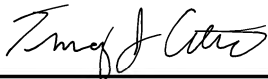
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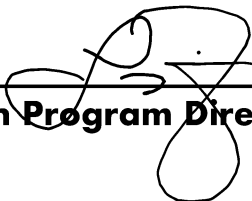
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ABSTRACT

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Trauma-Sensitive Spiritual Intervention For Abused Children And Youth: Freedom For Spiritual Formation

Childhood traumatic experiences hinder spiritual formation. The current alarming increase of trauma in the lives of children necessitates that pastors and lay youth leaders become educated about childhood trauma and learn methods of trauma-informed counseling to unlock further spiritual formation in the lives of these wounded children. Pastors and youth leaders need tools and liturgies to help identify children hindered in their spiritual growth by trauma and guide them through inner healing to identify and renounce lies they have believed. The goal is to replace those lies with God's truths in their thoughts and inner dialogue so they might be emotionally, mentally, and spiritually able to grow in their relationship with the Lord. In view of this need, this dissertation proposes the use of trauma-sensitive, cognitive-based methods to identify trauma wounding and the corresponding lies believed, coupled with prayer liturgies to guide children and youth to spiritual healing, along with a sample how-to.

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This dissertation is deeply personal to me and my family. The spiritual inner healing journey after traumatic experiences in one's childhood and youth has been a road I have walked myself and have walked with my children. Many have walked with us in this journey over the years, and I remain deeply grateful for all who have given of their time, experience, and expertise to assist us in the journey towards becoming the individuals God created each of us to be. Our family journey to healing began with Michelle Anspaugh and Carmen McHenry of *Synergy Services* who gently led us to identify the domestic abuse we had experienced and walked with us on the start of that journey. I am grateful to Stephen Beauchamp and Katie Cerny for all their foundational work regarding *Prisoners of Hope* and how both my son and I have benefitted from their ministry and instruction. I am grateful to Mike Bickle for his continual message of how the Lord doesn't just love me, He likes me, too, and enjoys me. What a healing message to one who grew up in churches where it seemed God was more mad or sad than He was glad! Jesus came that we might have life and that we might have it abundantly. As we progress through inner healing, barricades in our inner being are dismantled, opening up more of us to encounter more facets of the Lord, and as that happens, we have life more abundantly.

TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SPIRITUAL MINISTRY TO YOUTH & CHILDREN

Approved by

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

THE NEED FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES AND COUNSELING RELATED TO CHILDREN AND TEENS

John¹ and his sister obediently climbed into my friend's car. I asked my friend who they were. "My foster kids. Their parents are addicts. We hope to adopt them," he answered. Within a year, they had adopted John, but not his sister. When I asked why, I was told they had discovered that she had been abusing her brother and could not continue to stay with him in their home. I've watched John and his adoptive parents for some eighteen years now. Across the years, John struggled with reactive attachment disorder; even after fifteen years he still struggled to believe that his parents or anyone for that matter really had his best interests at heart. Every relationship he had was clothed in self-protection. This included his relationship with God, even though his new family led the entire children's ministry at our large church.

At the start and for the first five years, he always tried to manipulate to get what he thought he needed. Hyper-vigilant, he was unable to settle due to his need to be in control.² He didn't even know what he actually liked or disliked in terms of foods, colors, movies, toys. His favorites changed based on what he thought the person asking him wanted to hear. He did not know the difference between a need and a want. If he wanted something, he would obsess over it until he got it any way he could; all his wants were "needs" to him. John also struggled with cause-and-effect thinking. It wasn't until after five years in a stable, loving environment that he

¹ John (not his real name) was one of my students at IHOPU and has been my tenant for the past three years. I have known him since prior to his adoption by my friends, about eighteen years.

² Tracy L. to Kathi DeCanio, "Response to Questions Asked," Email, March 10, 2022.

began to improve, though even after ten years he still didn't know that "wants" weren't "needs." He still struggles being vulnerable, particularly about mistakes or sin.³

According to the CDC, in 2020, one in seven children experienced child abuse and/or neglect by their primary care giver (parents, grandparents, etc.).⁴ Children in healthy homes learn that their parents and other adults who care about them can be trusted and will be reliable, consistent, available to them, and protect them. However, children in unhealthy, unpredictable, or abusive homes lack that healthy foundation for interpersonal relationships and, in particular, relationships with authority figures.⁵ Meaning, these children are pre-disposed to struggle with having a relationship with God, a heavenly Father, a Sovereign Director of Human History, or other roles that God has in our lives. Pastors, youth leaders, and Sunday School teachers are likely to encounter three types of children and youth related to childhood trauma:

1. Children who have experienced significant trauma and loss (complex trauma) within the first ten years of their life, who may or may not be living with birth parents;
2. Children who have experienced on-going trauma relating to their relationship with parents or other authority figures;
3. Children who have experienced one life-altering trauma (e.g. death of a parent; family-altering circumstances like homelessness, etc.) or experience such a trauma while under one's spiritual oversight.

This dissertation will address the spiritual formation of this first group of traumatized children who are victims of complex trauma, how the consequences of their particular complex traumas

³ Ibid.

⁴ U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. "Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. Accessed March 15, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>.

⁵ Joy D. Osofsky, *Young Children and Trauma: Intervention and Treatment*. (New York: Guilford Press, 2004), 4.

may affect their spiritual growth, and why trauma-informed counseling and discipleship is necessary for their healing and spiritual growth. The author was raised in the Baptist and Evangelical Free Church tradition and graduated from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 1987 with a Master of Arts. When she was 27 years old, she became a member of a Charismatic church and has attended church in a Charismatic tradition ever since. This dissertation demonstrates a synthesized approach designed to be comfortable to those from any church tradition.

DEFINITIONS

There are some key terms used in the discussion of trauma and trauma-care, particularly with regard to children and youth. Here is a list with their definitions:

Trauma: the result of “exposure to an incident or series of events that are emotionally disturbing or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, and/or spiritual well-being.”⁶ In terms of the children addressed in this paper, the type of trauma they have experienced is complex trauma. The term refers to the pervasive impact of exposure to multiple or prolonged traumatic events.⁷ “Complex trauma impacts multiple domains including affect, attachment, behavior, biology, cognition and perception, self-image, and academic functioning in addition to standard Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms.”⁸

⁶ Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center, “What Is Trauma?” (Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2018). <https://www.traumainformedcare.chcs.org/what-is-trauma/>.

⁷ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. “TIP 57: Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services | SAMHSA Publications.” Samhsa.gov. (U.S. Department Of Health and Human Services: Washington D.C., 2014), xvi. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/TIP-57-Trauma-Informed-Care-in-Behavioral-Health-Services/SMA14-4816>.

⁸ Judith A. Cohen, Anthony P. Mannarino, Matthew Kliethermes, and Laura A. Murray. “Trauma-Focused CBT for Youth with Complex Trauma” 2012. *Child Abuse & Neglect* 36, no. 6: 528–41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2012.03.007>.

ACE: Adverse Childhood Experience; a trauma-causing experience in a child’s life. They are typically categorized into three groupings: Abuse; Neglect; Dysfunction. (See below for further explanation.)

Trauma-informed counseling: Being “trauma-informed” begins with an understanding of various trauma-causing experiences and the impact each can have on a person, as well as on their settings and relationships.⁹ To engage well in trauma-informed counseling, one must lay aside one’s own pre-conceived ideas about what the traumatic experience should or should not have caused. One must identify one’s own cultural, spiritual, emotional, and personal lenses in order to hear the heart of the traumatized individual and engage the individual where they are at, not at where the youth leader, pastor, or counselor thinks they ought to be.

Trauma-causing Experiences: sexual, physical (non-sexual actions involving the child’s body), and emotional abuse; childhood neglect; living with a family member with mental health or substance use disorders; sudden separation from a loved one, particularly unexplained; poverty; becoming homeless; racism, discrimination, and oppression; violence in the community, war, or terrorism.¹⁰

Child Abuse: the treatment of a child that results in harm, the potential for harm, or the threat of imminent harm to the child.¹¹ Types of child abuse include verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, as well as neglect or abandonment.

Verbal and Emotional Abuse: includes demeaning or belittling the child; name-calling; unreasonable criticizing; unreasonable expectations of the child; dismissing or invalidating the

⁹ SAMSA, “TIP 57,” xix.

¹⁰ Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center, <https://www.traumainformedcare.chcs.org/what-is-trauma/>.

¹¹ Sarah Sheppard, “What Are the Most Common Types of Child Abuse?” Verywell Mind. Dotdash Media, Inc. October 25, 2021. <https://www.verywellmind.com/the-most-common-types-of-child-abuse-5206304?>

child and their feelings; threatening or terrorizing the child; isolating the child; degrading or objectifying the child; ignoring appropriate boundaries; bullying or cyberbullying; regularly being emotionally absent or unavailable to a child.

Physical Abuse: includes beating or hitting a child with a fist or object without restraint or control, in anger or taunting; burning a child (with a cigarette, hot water, hot object); tying a child up; severely shaking a baby or toddler; holding a child underwater; depriving a child of air by choking; kicking a child; withholding food or starving a child as punishment.

Sexual Abuse: touching or treating a child in any sexual manner; exposing a child to sexual behavior or forcing them to watch it; an adult exposing their genitalia to a child; forcing a child to perform sex acts.

Neglect/Abandonment: not providing food, clothing, or shelter to a child; leaving a young child at home alone or with neglectful or abusive caregivers; exposing a child to domestic abuse; locking a child in a room, basement, or shed for hours on end; failing to provide needed medical care or treatment for a child; failing to enroll a child in school or denying them an education.

Household Dysfunction: Anything causing a child to feel their home environment was not safe or reliable, such as mental illness in the family; an incarcerated relative; substance abuse in the family; violent treatment of mother or sibling; divorce.

HOW TRAUMA/ACEs AFFECT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD MENTALLY, EMOTIONALLY, SOCIALLY

ALTERATIONS TO BRAIN STRUCTURE AND THINKING PATTERNS

Brain development and epidemiology studies show that exposure to childhood trauma, particularly chronic or prolonged trauma, negatively impacts a child's ability to function, affecting brain development, regulation of emotions, attachment, and cognitive and behavioral

functioning.¹² Studies of the brains of young adults who had experienced childhood abuse or neglect using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology found significant differences in nine brain regions between those who had experienced childhood trauma and those who had not. These differences lead to difficulties in balancing emotions and impulses, decreased ability in the arena of self-aware thinking, and a higher risk of anxiety disorders, reactive attachment disorder, oppositional defiance disorder, bipolar disorder, major depression, personality disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and psychosis as well as developing mental health issues later on.¹³ Issues such as difficulty with attention and focus, learning disabilities, low self-esteem, and impaired social skills can be seen in otherwise intelligent children due to trauma or abuse.

PHYSICAL IMPLICATIONS OF COMPLEX TRAUMA

Studies in neurobiology demonstrate that traumatic memories are stored as body memories in the limbic system.¹⁴ When something in one's environment or situation triggers a memory of the trauma, bodily sensations actually alert the body to respond to danger, even if the context is not threatening. Hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline are released in a fight-or-flight response. Physically speaking, the body moves to high alert.

Even when not triggered, the traumatized child may experience frequent headaches, stomachaches, or similar illnesses. They may be constantly hungry, exhausted, or unable to eat, show signs of deteriorating health, hair loss, or have untended wounds. In addition, "children who have not had their physical needs met have often not developed the correct pathways in their

¹² AOC Center for Families, Children & the Courts, "The Effects of Complex Trauma on Youth" (San Francisco, CA, 2014), 1-2.

¹³ Leonard Holmes, "Childhood Abuse and Neglect Actually Change Brain Structure," pdf, Verywell Mind. Dotdash Media, Inc. November 15, 2021, 3. <https://www.verywellmind.com/childhood-abuse-changes-the-brain-2330401?> Accessed Dec. 19, 2021.

¹⁴ Shelly Rambo, "How Christian Theology and Practice Are Being Shaped by Trauma Studies," *The Christian Century* (November 1, 2019). Pdf, 3. <https://www.christiancentury.org/article/critical-essay/how-christian-theology-and-practice-are-being-shaped-trauma-studies>. Last accessed December 19, 2021.

brain that carry signals around pain, temperature, thirst, hunger, and satiety.”¹⁵ Therefore, they may overreact to changes in their physical conditions.

SOCIAL OR BEHAVIORAL IMPLICATIONS OF COMPLEX TRAUMA¹⁶

Physical behaviors of complex trauma include: nightmares, bedwetting, eating issues, sensory issues, speech difficulties, discomfort while undressing, withdrawing when touched, mentally and emotionally disconnected at physical exams by the doctor, and excessive crying in infants.

Social behaviors include: the inability to concentrate, displaying fear around parents/caregivers, or peer group, development of phobias, inability to interact with other children (doesn't engage at all or engages disruptively), unexplained bouts of irritability or sadness, defiance, aggression (hitting, kicking, punching, biting, threatening actions/words, using objects as weapons, throwing objects, damaging objects), exaggerated or uncontrollable impulsivity, inability to understand cause-and-effect, very controlling, lack of empathy or remorse, hypervigilance, and social anxiety.

These behaviors, particularly those which are displayed in public, not only impact the spiritual formation of the child, but also the environment of the classroom, and therefore the spiritual formation of other children in the class or youth group. How a leader addresses these negative behaviors in the group setting also has an impact on the spiritual formation of the

¹⁵ Sarah Naish, *The A-Z of Therapeutic Parenting Strategies and Solutions* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2018), 27.

¹⁶ The American Bar Association's Capital Clemency Resource Initiative, "Complex Trauma | Capital Clemency Resource Initiative Clearinghouse," www.capitalclemency.org (The American Bar Association), accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.capitalclemency.org/mental-health-fact-sheets/complex-trauma/>. Joseph Spinazzola and et al., "Complex Trauma in Children & Adolescents," *National Child Traumatic Stress Network White Paper Brief* (2007): 4–8, <https://www.complextrauma.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Complex-Trauma-9-Joseph-Spinazzola.pdf>.

children in the group as the leader is representing the “God-figure” understanding of those children.

CRITICAL YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT

Between the ages of birth through age ten, there are three critical stages of brain development. More than four ACEs during this time may severely hinder the child from reaching the developmental purposes of that time. “The notion that as the brain develops physiologically, the human concept of religion and spirituality evolves accordingly, supports the intimate link between human biology and spirituality.”¹⁷ Therefore, any event that hinders healthy brain development will, of necessity, hinder spiritual development as well.

From birth, the child is beginning to establish what they believe is reality. Since the brain takes in experience and processes it by analyzing and categorizing it, ultimately the brain has faith that its conclusions are correct, and this forms the basis for that person’s reality.¹⁸

The actions during the period of infancy are critical for the child to develop trust, hope, and love. If the nurture and care are not consistent, and there are significant and numerous periods of deprivation, then neuronal complexity and interconnectedness are greatly reduced. “If there is neglect or inconsistencies in care, the infant may lock into patterns of isolation and despair and not integrate the concept of mutuality. Such isolation is arguably associated with an overall lack of connection, not only between the neurons in the individual’s brain, but between the individual and the rest of his or her environment.”¹⁹ In other words, the child does not develop a healthy ability to interact with those outside themselves, which means that developing a relationship with the God who is “other-than-us” is far more difficult.

¹⁷ Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Pamela Ebstyn King, Linda M. Wagener, and Peter L. Benson, eds. *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006), 183.

¹⁸ Ibid., 184.

¹⁹ Ibid., 188.

Between the ages of two and six, children's thought processes are rigid. They do not yet grasp cause and effect in a way that they can apply it to what they experience. This is the time of the "almighty and all-knowing" two and three-year-old when, for them, "their perspective is the only perspective, and their thinking is magical, episodic, and not constrained by stable logical operations."²⁰ Thus, trauma at the hands of the caregivers at this stage often causes a child to develop negative ideas about that which is greater than themselves. This may hinder the child from developing "a strong sense of self, independence, or autonomy that is crucial to progress to future stages. From a neurophysiological perspective, the neuronal connections associated with negative fantasies may become stronger, making such a negative perspective more pervasive during subsequent stages of development."²¹ Again, this drives the child further into internal self-isolation and further away from interacting with true reality. This is critical, for between the ages of four and nine, it is believed that the brain consolidates its experiential learning up to that point by both a reduction in the production of neuronal connections as well as removal of those the brain deems not necessary or invalid.²² This means that if the neuronal connections deemed necessary are related to deprivation, neglect, angry encounters, and other negative experiences, the brain adopts that as its "reality."

Between the ages of six and ten, "a child begins to internalize stories, beliefs, and observances that symbolize belonging to a community or group enabling the composition of a worldview and ideology. Beliefs are related to literal interpretations of religions or doctrines and are usually composed of moral rules and attitudes."²³ That is, the child is constructing their own

²⁰ Ibid., 190.

²¹ Ibid., 190.

²² Ibid., 191.

²³ Ibid., 190.

“story” of how the world works, what their correct place in the world is, and what is expected of them. In the dysfunctional home, the “story line” which the child experiences daily is damaging to the child’s development of their sense of self, as well as the connection of that self to the world.

In terms of establishing the sense of self, this [time period] also begins to provide concrete rules for determining what is and what is not the self and what is and is not “real.” These rules guide the orientation function of the brain to provide a definitive sense of self that is now more clearly separated from the fantasies and holistic world experience. However, this sense of self is still not fully matured. All of these developments, if they become too rigidly determined, can lead the person’s cognitive and emotional perspectives, as well as faith-based concepts, to become trapped in the “narrative.” Thus, if a child’s environment is constantly controlling and judging, she ultimately will have difficulty formulating her own spiritual concepts and reflecting on the value of those concepts.²⁴

Thus, multiple traumas and neglect before the age of eleven highly damage the foundation of a child’s mind and soul.

WHY A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH IS NECESSARY IN CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH MINISTRY

How does this translate into the spiritual formation of children and youth? In addition to stages of development in the neuro-physical aspect of the brain, the process of going from infancy to adulthood also involves stages.

The basic mechanisms associated with religious and spiritual experiences are correlated with essential brain functions and the development of each mirrors that of the other. The notion that as the brain develops physiologically, the human concept of religion and spirituality evolves accordingly, supports the intimate link between human biology and spirituality.²⁵

For example, in Friesen’s *The Life Model*, the first stage is the Infant stage, birth to age three. Several tasks in that stage include developing trust and learning how to receive. This happens successfully when primary caregivers (parents) build strong bonds of unconditional love

²⁴ Ibid., 191.

²⁵ Ibid., 183.

with the infant/toddler through giving care that matches the infant's needs without the infant always asking. When such care is not given, such bonds are not developed. As the child grows, their heart/soul/mind has difficulty bonding with others which often leads to a manipulative, self-centered, isolated, or discontented personality and often becomes withdrawn, disengaged, self-stimulating, or unresponsive.²⁶

The next stage is the Child stage, ages four through twelve. One personal task to accomplish in this stage is to ask for what is needed as well as express what one thinks and feels. If the child never learned to trust or how to receive in the infant stage, often the child can't ask for what is needed; they might not be able to define what they need because the disappointment of the infant stage trained the child that it is safer not to want at all.²⁷ They might classify everything that they want as a need, never having been taught by loving parents how to distinguish a need from a want.

Now translate this into spiritual formation. A teen comes to the Lord at church, but is actually stuck at the infant stage of developing trust and learning how to receive because the parents were addicts when the child was an infant/toddler or because the child was put in daily childcare from the age of six weeks, and the parents didn't interact with the child in the evenings because the parents themselves were narcissists. There was no healthy attachment formed between the toddler and parent. Studies in early 1992 demonstrated that "attachment theory can help explain religious dynamics among those who relate to a personal God and found that among those who were securely attached to their parents, there was a corresponding attachment to

²⁶ James G Friesen, *Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You: The Essentials of Christian Living*, (Pasadena, CA: Shepherd's House, 2000), 51.

²⁷ Ibid., 52.

God.”²⁸ The inability to trust directly correlates with this teen’s inability to grow in the Lord. Because they did not develop trust, this translates to their relationship with God. How can they trust Him? Because they didn’t develop a healthy ability to have needs, how can they relate to God being their Source?

This is to say that *spiritual formation is a complex, multi-layered, three-dimensional structure*, like multi-level chess. Can God break through to this teen when they are in their thirties and struggling to trust God like their friends at church do? Yes, but often this involves the inner wounds sustained in infancy being revealed and healed so that the heart/soul/mind is released to make progress from fear of needs not being met to trust in the provision of God. However, for this to happen for this teen while still a teenager, their youth pastor or youth leader must be trauma-informed. That way, when it is evident the teen is having trouble (for example, in the area of trust or manipulation), the youth leader doesn’t insist that the teen must “just have faith” and “just believe” or “just repent.” Rather, in a gentle and trauma-informed manner, the youth leader asks careful questions designed to lead the teen to share the trauma in their home.

A significant aspect of trauma is that it consists of more than bad memories. Rather, it occurs when memories of bad experiences trigger someone to re-live those experiences in the present, something we identify as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).²⁹ Once a term used to describe a soldier’s post-war condition after experiencing trauma in battle, it is now recognized that PTSD is widespread and is a typical response to unprocessed trauma of any origin. The human psyche was created by God to be greatly resilient. Practically speaking, our brains are

²⁸ Duane F. Reinert and Carla E. Edwards, “Attachment Theory and Concepts of God,” SAGE Open 4, no. 4 (December 2, 2014): 215824401456054, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014560547>.

²⁹ The National Institute of Mental Health, “NIMH: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder,” Nih.gov (U.S. Federal Government, 2020), <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd>. Last accessed March 9, 2022.

amazing at creating coping mechanisms to protect us from future harm. Sadly, these coping mechanisms build walls around our heart, soul, and mind, walls that disrupt not only our ability to relate to the people in our life, but also our ability to relate to the Lord.

Consider that the way Bible college and seminary students are taught to teach, disciple, and lead is typically a “best-case scenario” method. That is, if we were emotionally, mentally, and socially whole and if those to whom we minister were also completely whole, then what we are taught to say and do and how we are taught to say it and do it, would work perfectly every time. Yet is that true today in our experience?

When Sunday schools and youth groups were first “invented” and implemented, any positive effect was deemed a success because it was filling a void of hundreds of years. Overall success was evaluated, not success with particular individuals. Consider, too, that in the 1800s when Sunday schools began, the family unit in England and North America, both nuclear and extended, was far healthier than today. The increase in child abuse and neglect in the past forty years alone is tremendous. “The number of abused and neglected children nearly doubled from 1986-1992...Family risk factors include single-parent families and poverty.”³⁰ In 2013, NBC News reported that “physical and sexual abuse of children has gone down over the past 20 years, but reports of neglect have gone up.”³¹ It continues to rise today. In 2020, it was reported that “new federal child abuse and neglect data shows an increase in the number of victims who

³⁰ Helen M. Wallace, Gordon Green, and Kenneth J. Jaros, eds. *Health and Welfare for Families in the 21st Century*. 2nd ed. Boston: Jones And Bartlett, 2003.),463. https://books.google.com/books?id=XmSoQpKZdcC&pg=PA464&lpg=PA464&dq=has+battered+child+syndrome+increased+in+the+21st+century&source=bl&ots=XgV_AegG3T&sig=ACfU3UItcn0y5r5KjnvIPUMehDOFPJlUgQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiooNnJ8m2AhWrk4kEHSPtBxAQ6AF6BAG-EAM#v=onepage&q=has%20battered%20child%20syndrome%20increased%20in%20the%2021st%20century&f=false.

³¹ Maggie Fox, “Child Abuse down but Neglect Is Up, Report Finds; Parents Biggest Threat.” NBC News. National Broadcasting Company. September 12, 2013. <https://www.nbcnews.com/healthmain/child-abuse-down-neglect-report-finds-parents-biggest-threat-8C11140130>. Last accessed March 6, 2022

suffered maltreatment for the first time since 2015.”³² In 2022, the National Institute for Children’s Health Quality reported that “34.8 million children (ages 0-17)—nearly half of American children—are exposed to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that can severely harm their future health and well-being.”³³

In an attempt to survey current Christian college students in this area of ACEs to find a basic percentage who register 3 or more ACEs and to examine how their ACEs may have affected the construct of God and how to related to Him, I wrote a survey (see Appendix C) and attempted to administer it through the psychology department of Asbury University. However, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of AU required the NTS IRB to sign off on the project, and NTS has no IRB. After two months and many email exchanges, the AU faculty member sponsoring my project withdrew due to personal time constraints, and I was unable to survey any AU students. I also contacted Mid-America Nazarene University multiple times regarding doing the survey with their students, but never received any response from any of the faculty whom I contacted. However, a graduate from Asbury Theological Seminary, from their School of Counseling, had done an ACE survey at AU several years ago, and while she did not look for how it might have affected a young adult’s God concept or relationship with God, she established that of the 111 students who participated in the survey, 25% indicated three or more ACEs.³⁴ She noted that, “It’s also within a specific population where risk factors aren’t as

³² Administration for Children & Families. “Child Abuse, Neglect Data Released.” www.acf.hhs.gov. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. January 15, 2020. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/media/press/2020/2020/child-abuse-neglect-data-released>. Last accessed March 9, 2022.

³³ National Institute for Children’s Health Quality. “Did You Know Childhood Trauma Affects Nearly Half of American Children?” NICHQ. National Institute for Children’s Health Quality. 2022. <https://www.nichq.org/insight/bringing-trauma-forefront-early-childhood-systems>. Last accessed March 9, 2022.

³⁴ Olivia Hockett to Kathi DeCanio, “Personal Text,” Text, January 6, 2024.

prevalent.” This suggests that in our churches today we have a significant percentage of youth who could benefit from a changed approach.

Therefore, though we are still using Sunday School material and methods pioneered in the late 1800s, the emotional, mental, and spiritual health of our target audience—children and youth—has drastically altered. Methods developed for a “perfect” audience are grossly insufficient today. Organizations producing curriculums for children and teens have updated their approach to content and to the communication of that content. However, it is imperative that practitioners—youth pastors, leaders, and children’s teachers—be aware of the significant changes in the emotional, mental, and spiritual health of our children and learn how to adapt their approach to individual children.

CATEGORIES OF TRAUMA RESULTS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING IMPLICATIONS FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Traumatic neglect of a child during infancy and toddlerhood typically results in insecure attachment, which is often linked to impaired psychological, neurobiological, and social functioning throughout a lifetime.³⁵ Caregivers of insecurely attached individuals typically are inconsistent, emotionally unavailable, or erratic.³⁶ This can be caused by addiction, mental illness, or an upbringing that also included complex trauma or trauma-impaired adults.

Insecure attachment disorders may be classed into two types: attachment-related avoidance and attachment-related anxiety.³⁷ Infants, toddlers, children—and even adults—will

³⁵ Eleanor Ford Cobb, “The Relationship of Attachment to Religiosity, Spirituality, and Mindfulness in Secular and Religious Populations in Israel.” PhD dissertation, Columbia University.2017. <https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D85Q57JS/download>.

³⁶ Eleanor Ford Cobb, “The Relationship of Attachment to Religiosity, Spirituality, and Mindfulness in Secular and Religious Populations in Israel.” PhD dissertation, Columbia University.2017. <https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D85Q57JS/download>.

³⁷ Aaron D. Cherniak, Mario Mikulincer, Phillip R Shaver, and Pehr Granqvist. “Attachment Theory and Religion.” *Current Opinion in Psychology* 40, (August 2021). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2020.08.020>.

seek an attachment figure for two very basic needs: safety in times of distress or difficulty and a secure foundation from which to explore, learn, and integrate knowledge into their life. When a child distrusts the authority or primary caregiver's intentions, the child develops a defensive coping mechanism by maintaining their own independence, both emotionally and behaviorally. This effectively switches off the normal attachment mechanism and leads to attachment-related avoidance.³⁸ Alternatively, when the child responds to neglect by anxiety, fearful that others will not be responsive and supportive, and seeks the attention of the primary caregiver in an overly anxious and oversized manner, the normal attachment mechanism is hyperactivated resulting in attachment-related anxiety.³⁹ This affects the child's or teen's relationship to God by rendering them either indifferent to God and His interaction in their life, which manifests as a seeming self-sufficiency and not having a need for God, or hyper-anxious that He will not interact with them, which manifests as an inability to exercise faith.

Abuse-related trauma and traumatic neglect of a child during infancy and toddlerhood can also result in the development of a psychological disorder or psychoses, such as oppositional defiance disorder, bipolar disorder, major depression, personality disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, or ADHD. Research has shown that secure attachment is associated with significantly higher Religious and Social Well-being. Insecure attachment is not only associated with lower Religious and Social Well-being, but also corresponds with higher levels of mood pathology, particularly depression.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Michaela Hiebler-Ragger, Johanna Falthansl-Scheinecker, Gerhard Birnhuber, Andreas Fink, and Human Friedrich Unterrainer. "Facets of Spirituality Diminish the Positive Relationship between Insecure Attachment and Mood Pathology in Young Adults." Edited by Stefano Federici. *PLOS ONE* 11, no. 6: e0158069 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0158069>.

If a teen or child under one's ministry appears to have symptoms of a psychological disorder, in addition to trauma-sensitive probing of the child's upbringing, professional help in diagnosis is advised. At times parents may be opposed to seeking professional care for their child. They must be reassured that it does not imply fault on their part, but that we live in a fallen world and an evaluation of this type would be best for their child. Other parents may be relieved that someone else sees similar issues that they see and thus may be moved to action. In the case of parents who are already aware of their child's condition or disorder, one may ask how one might be a teammate in their child's treatment and healing.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS REGARDING THE NEED FOR TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SPIRITUAL COUNSELING.

Infancy through early childhood is a critical period during which the child develops "an internal working model (IWM) of self and others."⁴¹ This internal working model is generalized by the person to derive their representation of God and how God relates to them. "Positive IWMs foster corresponding representations of a benevolent God, whereas negative IWMs foster more negative God representations."⁴² Even in a family where, by the time the child is a pre-teen, their parents have divorced, for example, because the father was verbally and emotionally abusive to his wife and children and was emotionally absent from his family, that child, no matter how normal they may present at church, has experienced complex trauma that impacts their spiritual formation negatively.

How likely is this to affect children and teens under our ministry today? Seventeen years ago, sociologist Paul Amato estimated that if the United States enjoyed the same level of family

⁴¹ Aaron Cherniak et al, "Attachment Theory and Religion."

⁴² Ibid.

stability in 2005 as it did in 1960, the nation would have 750,000 fewer children repeating grades, 1.2 million fewer school suspensions, some 500,000 fewer acts of teenage delinquency, some 600,000 fewer kids receiving therapy, and some 70,000 fewer suicide attempts that year.⁴³ Sadly, family stability is not improving, meaning the possibility grows greater each year that children to whom we minister have been impacted by complex trauma in their birth family situations.

We have seen how complex trauma during childhood not only affects the child physically, but also how the trauma plays into the development of their “God concept” and therefore into their spiritual formation. It is no longer enough to be proficient at teaching the Bible to children and teens and to be familiar with teaching techniques and classroom control. Hurting children need trauma-sensitive, trauma-informed pastors, youth leaders, and teachers to meet them where their development has stalled due to trauma and gently assist them through the healing process needed for movement towards maturity and spiritual formation to occur.

⁴³ Paul R. Amato, “The Impact of Family Formation Change on the Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Well-Being of the Next Generation,” *The Future of Children* 15, no. 2 (2005): 75–96. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3556564>.

CHAPTER TWO: APPROACHES TO DEALING WITH TRAUMA IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

In the consideration of how the local church may help children and youth in their congregation deal with and heal from the emotional, psychological, and spiritual effects of childhood trauma with a view towards unhindered spiritual formation, one finds a variety of approaches both inside and outside of the Church. They might be classified into three general types: Psychotherapy, Inner Healing, and Deliverance Ministry. Some approaches take a combined strategy, utilizing more than one type.

The Psychotherapy approach is typically found outside the Church and is conducted by a trained, licensed professional. Inner Healing and Deliverance Ministry approaches are typically found inside the Church—most often the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church—and are conducted by a variety of people, from trained and licensed professionals to pastors and lay people. Depending on the particular approach taken, some Inner Healing and Deliverance Ministry programs have varying levels of training available—some more stringent, some more general.

This chapter will examine and evaluate the types and strategies with a view towards what might best be employed by the local church pastor, youth leader, or lay children's worker. It will also consider if trauma-sensitive counseling can be conducted by the local church pastor, youth leader, or lay children's worker, or if it needs to be left in the realm of the licensed professional.

THE PSYCHOTHERAPY APPROACH

Three of the most well-supported and widely disseminated psychotherapy approaches for early childhood trauma are Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, and Child-Parent Psychotherapy.⁴⁴ These are based on a form of talk-therapy and require anywhere from 12 to 26 weekly sessions. While these require a licensed

⁴⁴ Karin L. Vanderzee et al., "Treatments for Early Childhood Trauma: Decision Considerations for Clinicians," *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma* 12, no. 4 (December 15, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-018-0244-6>.

clinician, there are principles in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy which may be of use to pastors and lay people in their ministry with traumatized children.

TRAUMA-FOCUSED COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is indicated for children ages three to eighteen who demonstrate posttraumatic stress symptoms related to any type of traumatic event or events they may have experienced or witnessed, though an actual diagnosis of PTSD is not required for TF-CBT to be used with them.⁴⁵ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) was developed by Aaron Beck, and this cognitive model “hypothesizes that people’s emotions and behaviors are influenced by their perceptions of events.”⁴⁶ He theorized that if one can change the person’s interpretation of the event, how they feel about it will also change.

CBT outlines three areas of cognition: core beliefs, dysfunctional assumptions, and negative automatic thoughts. Through the use of carefully constructed questions and comments, combined with attentive listening, the counselor helps the patient understand the core belief(s) behind their pain, emotion, or action. The counselor guides them to assess the dysfunctional assumptions behind that core belief and identify the negative automatic thoughts this core belief promotes. By addressing what is wrong about that particular core belief and helping the person identify the healthy core belief to replace it with, the counselor, through a series of “homework exercises,” helps the person find positive thoughts and actions to replace the negative ones.

The therapeutic components of TF-CBT for the child include psychoeducation about trauma; developing relaxation and coping skills; identification of emotions; understanding the links among thoughts, feelings, and behaviors; narration by the child of the traumatic event(s)

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Judith S. Beck, *Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Basics and Beyond* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2011), 28.

and verbally processing associated thoughts, feelings, and behaviors with the counselor; gradual exposure to reminders of the traumatic event(s) to teach the child how to manage exposure to such reminder(s); and discussion of safety/prevention skills.⁴⁷

Alison Hendricks, Judith Cohen, Anthony Mannarino, and Esther Deblinger developed an excellent journaling workbook for use with children ages six to fourteen who have experienced one or more traumatic events. Therapists may use this as a supplemental resource as they work through each component of the TF-CBT model with their child clients. Covered are topics such as identifying our emotions, relaxation and relaxation techniques, coping with uncomfortable situations and feelings, and telling our story.⁴⁸ There is an companion journaling workbook for teens as well.⁴⁹ In addition, they have also produced another journaling workbook for teens to deal specifically with traumatic grief⁵⁰ and one for children.⁵¹ These are but a few of many workbooks and worksheets designed to be used with children and teens in processing acute and complex trauma which are very helpful and insightful for addressing the psychological and mental effects of childhood trauma.⁵² Resources abound for use with children for trauma-

⁴⁷ Vanderzee et al.

⁴⁸ Alison Hendricks et al., *Your Very Own TF-CBT Workbook* (Medical University of South Carolina: TFCBT, 2006), <https://tfcbt.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Your-Very-Own-TF-CBT-Workbook-Final.pdf>.

⁴⁹ Alison Hendricks et al., “Dealing with Trauma: A TF-CBT Workbook for Teens,” *Tfcbt.org* (Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy National Therapist Certification Program), accessed October 17, 2022, <https://tfcbt.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Revised-Dealing-with-Trauma-TF-CBTWorkbook-for-Teens-.pdf>.

⁵⁰ Alison Hendricks et al., “Dealing with Grief: A TF-CBT Workbook for Teens,” *Tfcbt.org* (Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy National Therapist Certification Program), accessed October 17, 2022, <https://tfcbt.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Dealing-with-Grief-A-TF-CBT-Workbook-for-Teens-Final-1.pdf>.

⁵¹ Alison Hendricks et al., “Your Very Own TF-CBT Grief Workbook,” *Tfcbt.org* (Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy National Therapist Certification Program), accessed October 17, 2022, <https://tfcbt.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Your-Very-Own-TF-CBT-Grief-Workbook-Final-2.pdf>.

⁵² Other examples include: Denise Allen, *Trauma-Saurus Rex: A Book about Trauma for Children* (Independently published, 2021).; Susan Farber Straus and Maria Bogade, *Healing Days: A Guide for Kids Who Have Experienced Trauma* (Washington, DC: Magination Press, American Psychological Association, 2013).; Lisa Weed Phifer and Laura Sibbald, *Trauma-Informed Social-Emotional Toolbox for Children and Adolescents: 116 Worksheets and Skill-Building Exercises to Support Safety, Connection and Empowerment* (Eau Claire, WI: Pesi, 2020).

sensitive counseling from a purely psychological perspective, most available for purchase with some available for free download on the internet.⁵³

Numerous studies have found TF-CBT to be highly effective in treating the residual effects of child trauma, and to be preferred over Child Centered Therapy (CCT),⁵⁴ significantly reducing PTSD, depression, shame, and even acting out. In addition, CBT has been found to be successful in treating sexually abused preschool children as well as school-aged children.⁵⁵ Studies have shown that TF-CBT produces significantly lower levels of depression, behavior problems, and PTSD symptoms as well as higher levels of interpersonal trust, perceived credibility, and lower levels of shame.⁵⁶

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is very successful overall at helping children and youth recover psychologically from traumas. However, CBT and TF-CBT do not address any spiritual damage caused by the trauma, which is very significant in the consideration of spiritual formation. While it is helpful in identifying negative core beliefs and automatic thought patterns and in suggesting new beliefs and thoughts to replace them, it does not address false spiritual beliefs or conclusions. Additionally, it ignores possible demonic incursions into the mind/soul of the child. Because it does not address beliefs concerning God (whether as Father, Son, Spirit, Lord, etc.), concerning supernatural beings, or concerning one's own

⁵³ For example, <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/All-Therapy-Resources>.

⁵⁴ "Mixed-model repeated analyses of covariance found that children treated with TF-CBT had significantly fewer symptoms of PTSD and described less shame than the children who had been treated with CCT at both 6 and 12 months." Esther Deblinger et al., "A Follow-up Study of a Multisite, Randomized, Controlled Trial for Children with Sexual Abuse-Related PTSD Symptoms," *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 45, no. 12 (December 2006): 1474–84, <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.chi.0000240839.56114.bb>.

⁵⁵ Esther Deblinger, Robert A. Steer, and Julie Lippmann, "Two-Year Follow-up Study of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Sexually Abused Children Suffering Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms," *Child Abuse & Neglect* 23, no. 12 (December 1999): 1371–78, [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0145-2134\(99\)00091-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0145-2134(99)00091-5).

⁵⁶ Shannon Dorsey, Ernestine C. Briggs, and Briana A. Woods, "Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Children and Adolescents," *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America* 20, no. 2 (April 2011): 255–69, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chc.2011.01.006>.

relationship of cause and effect with the supernatural—be it God, angels, or demons—it is incomplete. While it may improve a child’s trajectory in life in terms of education, avoidance of people and situations that lead to trauma, and overall psychological health, it does not address issues significant to spiritual formation, significant to the child having a healthy, growing relationship with the Lord.

THE INNER HEALING APPROACH

The modern inner healing movement traces its origins to the ministry of Agnes Sanford who chronicles her journey into physical and inner healing in her book, *The Healing Light*, published in 1947. From an experience when the prayer of her pastor healed her baby’s abscessed ear, she grew in understanding about the role of prayer in physical healing. Later, through a time of examining her life and repenting of all the unconfessed sin of which the Lord convicted her, she experienced the release of the freedom of the peace of God in her spirit. From this, she grew in understanding of the healing power of confession and forgiveness as well as the healing of emotions bound in memories.⁵⁷ In 1958, she and her husband Edgar founded *The Agnes Sanford School of Pastoral Care*.⁵⁸

John and Paula Sanford, having been mentored by Agnes Sanford,⁵⁹ introduced the next step in the development of the modern inner healing movement, expanding on the concept linking inner healing to the confession and forgiveness of sin. They taught on subjects like the Performance Orientation and Breaking the Cycle (of habitual sin through generations), Inner

⁵⁷ Sanford, Agnes, *The Healing Light* (Digireads.com. Kindle Edition, 2018), 133.

⁵⁸ Jerry Don King, *Regeneration, Volume Two* (Lee’s Summit, MO: Christos Publishing, 2017).

⁵⁹ John Sanford and Paula Sanford, *The Transformation of the Inner Man* (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Pub, 1982),

Vows, Bitter-Root Judgement, and examining our sins and experiences in our early life (infant-elementary school).⁶⁰ One might say that they codified inner healing ministry.

At the same time that the Sandfords were developing their contributions to the inner healing movement, Leanne Payne, on the staff and faculty of Wheaton College, was introduced to Agnes Sanford and began serving in Sanford's *School of Pastoral Care*.⁶¹ Andrew Comiskey, who founded *Desert Streams Ministries* which ministers to people struggling with homosexuality, credits Leanne Payne's teaching and writing as very influential in his own life as well as in the development of the *Living Waters* program.⁶²

By the mid 1990s, a number of inner healing programs had been developed using the basic principles taught by Agnes Sanford, the Sandfords, and Leanne Payne, such as Theophostic Prayer Ministries, Sozo , and the Immanuel Approach. All these ministries, from the time of *Sanford's School of Pastoral Care* forward, are still operating today.

WHAT INNER HEALING INVOLVES AND DOES

The term, *Inner Healing*, comes from the healing of the inner man, the healing of our interior selves from wounds that occurred across our life experiences, from roots of bitterness that have resulted from unforgiveness, from anything that keeps us from our full potential of relationship with God. Various inner healing techniques or tools help us identify what lies about God we believe, understand how we came to believe them, deal with the situation that led to the false belief by interacting with the Trinity concerning that situation, leading to our acceptance of the truth about God and ourselves in that particular arena of our life.

⁶⁰ Ibid., ix.

⁶¹ Ministries of Pastoral Care, "Ministries of Pastoral Care | Leanne Payne's Biography," Ministries of Pastoral Care, 2022, <https://ministriesofpastoralcare.com/leannes-story/>.

⁶² Andrew Comiskey, *Living Waters: Pursuing Sexual and Relational Wholeness in Christ* (Anaheim, CA: Desert Stream Press, 2000), 4.

This is similar to Cognitive Behavior Treatment (CBT) in that it identifies lies that we believe about ourselves and others as well as negative patterns of thoughts and behaviors in which we engage, giving us alternate truths and behaviors to adopt. However, there is one great difference that sets inner healing apart from CBT: the involvement of the Holy Spirit. CBT is one-sided and human-initiated. Its success depends upon the patient's ability to change their mind and their behavior, and, in the area of trauma, to redefine and reinterpret the traumatic circumstances that led to the negative behavior patterns or believing the lies. However, much inner trauma requires the healing of the Holy Spirit in our inner person for true transformation to take place. That is, CBT is, in a sense, giving the child or the adult a new "suit," while inner healing leads to putting a new person inside that new suit. This is the greatest benefit of the inner healing process for children who have experienced chronic or acute trauma. CBT hopefully results in changing a child's self-talk, so they tell themselves more positive things than negative ones. Inner healing opens the child to the whispers of the Holy Spirit who imparts positive truths into their spirit and mind to replace the negative ones. Moreover, the Holy Spirit empowers the child's spirit to adopt these changes and walk them out. CBT weeds the garden by cutting off what can be seen above the ground; inner healing pulls the weeds up by the roots.

Given the spiritual benefit of inner healing over CBT, why would children be referred to counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists, rather than ministered to by church leaders, staff, and laity? One problem lies in the area of inner healing that involves accessing the pain and wounding via memory. Some traumas are so horrific that the child buries them in their mind and doesn't remember what happened. Some traumas are inflicted by someone who was supposed to be trustworthy, yet betrayed the child's trust, leaving the child unwilling to trust anyone else with

the details of the trauma. Some pastors and lay ministers are concerned they might guide young children to “remember” false memories.⁶³

The difficulty of helping a child resurface true memories and process through them for inner healing does suggest to the Church that this is a task better left to the secular professionals. Indeed, the vast majority of inner healing ministries specifically minister only to adults. What of our traumatized children? Must they wait to become young adults before they can begin to confront the wounds, lies, and false beliefs that keep them from experiencing the shalom of God in their lives? How many more lies will they believe about themselves, God, and others before then? How ingrained will patterns of poor response to the trauma become in their minds and behaviors?

EVALUATION OF WELL-KNOWN INNER HEALING PROGRAMS

John and Paula Sanford began a ministry called Elijah House. In particular, they wanted to use inner healing practices to move beyond the healing of memories and help believers become transformed by using inner healing techniques to identify areas of their old nature where they still needed to die to themselves and to sin.⁶⁴ They identified three key areas to moving forward in spiritual formation: identifying unbelief in our heart; understanding how we see God [what we believe about His character]; and identifying our “performance motivation.”⁶⁵ The Sandfords developed a ministry practice to help people review their infancy and toddlerhood (through age five) to find where primary relationships had broken and how it had affected their

⁶³ James G Friesen, *The Truth about False Memory Syndrome* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2019), 15; Ayesh Perera, “Iconic Memory | Simply Psychology,” www.simplypsychology.org, April 7, 2021, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/false-memory.html>.

⁶⁴ Sanford, *Transformation*, 5-6.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 23-41.

outlook on God, others, and themselves.⁶⁶ From there they identified four common malformations of character: inner vows; hearts of stone; flight, control, burial, and possessiveness; and bitter-root judgment and expectancy.⁶⁷ They devised Spirit-led protocols to help individuals identify any sources or causes for this in their own life and then, through repentance and forgiveness, become free of that malformation.⁶⁸ These protocols are adaptable for use in a trauma-sensitive approach with children.

Leanne Payne took her training by Agnes Sanford and organized the process around three main topics. Payne begins by introducing the Virtue of Self-Acceptance and explains how to lead an individual to come to healthy self-acceptance through receiving the true affirmation of the Lord.⁶⁹ From there can flow receiving forgiveness and giving forgiveness as we come to understand, know, and live out of who we are in Christ.⁷⁰ Finally, Payne explores the relationship between the spirit realm and inner healing from the perspective of spiritual warfare.⁷¹ One must note, however, that throughout her books, Payne is writing for adults to minister to adults. Therefore, there are truths and principles which one might share with children in a trauma-sensitive way for identifying abuse and lies, for replacing those lies with truth, and as guidance in leading the child in prayer, but this would need to be carefully selected and adapted.

Interestingly, unrelated to the inner healing movement but at that same time (in the 1960s), Dr. Jay E. Adams, an Orthodox Presbyterian pastor began teaching pastoral counseling at Westminster Theological Seminary. However, he was trained as a biblical scholar, not as a

⁶⁶ Ibid., 143-189.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 191-266.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 95-120.

⁶⁹ Leanne Payne, *Restoring the Christian Soul through Healing Prayer: Overcoming the Three Great Barriers to Personal and Spiritual Completion in Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991), 19-55.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 67-160.

⁷¹ Ibid., 163-225.

counselor or psychologist. At that time, Christian counseling was completely secularly oriented. He was disappointed to find no biblical foundation expressed in the counseling books at all. Adams began to build a counseling paradigm based on scriptural principles.⁷² The system was developed around biblical commands, injunctions, and character traits. It involved three basic parts: confrontation, concern, and change.⁷³ It involves lovingly confronting people with the places in their thoughts and behavior that don't agree with biblical standards and inviting them into repentance and change. It was strikingly similar to where the inner healing movement was at that point, though developed on the East Coast, not West Coast, and without the element of prayer and inviting the actions of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of the counselee. While this paradigm works well for those who are emotionally healthy—meaning not victims of trauma—a straight “repentance” method does not work well for those who have been influenced by traumatic events. While a traumatized individual most likely has some lies in their thinking which they must renounce and perhaps some sinful coping mechanisms of which they must repent, beginning with confrontation, however loving, does not bring healing to the traumatic memories or relief to the somatic responses to the reminders of past trauma.

Andrew Comiskey applied Leanne Payne's methods specifically to help those who struggle with same-sex attraction. His ministry, *Desert Stream*, has been successful in helping some with same-sex attraction unpack what they missed in their early formative years, such as “mother wound” and “father wound,” providing teaching on human and family relational principles according to the Bible.⁷⁴ Through small group discussion and prayer, participants

⁷² Institute for Nouthetic Studies, “Dr. Jay E. Adams,” Institute for Nouthetic Studies | Biblical Counseling (The Institute for Nouthetic Studies, 2021), <https://nouthetic.org/about/jay-adams/>.

⁷³ Institute for Nouthetic Studies, “What Is Nouthetic Counseling?,” Institute for Nouthetic Studies | Biblical Counseling (The Institute for Nouthetic Studies, 2021), <https://nouthetic.org/about/what-is-nouthetic-counseling/>.

⁷⁴ www.desertstream.org/.

experience inner healing and even, at times, deliverance. Over time, the program was adjusted to include those with hetero-sex attraction who grew up in dysfunctional homes and situations which hinder their ability to relate to God and others in a healthy manner. Their training manual⁷⁵ is helpful in identifying what various childhood traumas produce in children, which would be beneficial in directing counseling sessions and prayer with the child. However, the program itself is designed for use with adults.

Programs such as Sozo and Theophostic Prayer Ministry build on the early foundation of the Sandfords and Leane Payne by adding illustrations, diagrams, and other tools to help people discover their particular malformations of character and faith. For example, “the Father Ladder is a tool that the Sozo ministry uses to help clarify the connections between lies that have been learned from childhood and the relationships we have formed with each member of the Godhead.”⁷⁶ This is very significant for children with chronic trauma, as lies do develop in one’s mind when family members do not meet one’s needs appropriately. This is a tool that could be adapted in a trauma-sensitive manner for use with children.

Another tool is “Closing the Four Doors” of fear,⁷⁷ hatred/bitterness,⁷⁸ sexual sin,⁷⁹ and the occult.⁸⁰ Each of these areas covers issues that one finds with victims of childhood trauma, and so the tool is helpful. However, it would need to be greatly adapted for use with children, perhaps by creating a worksheet for each door—maybe multiple worksheets for each door—and,

⁷⁵ Andrew Comiskey, *Living Waters: Pursuing Sexual and Relational Wholeness in Christ* (Anaheim, CA: Desert Stream Press, 2000).

⁷⁶ Teresa Liebscher and Dawna DeSilva, *SOZO: Saved Healed Delivered* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2016), 83.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 134.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 142.

for smaller children, designing some doll or puppet play to help them work through their various woundings. The benefit would be that they could deal with the lies and trauma baggage while still being formed so would hopefully avoid malformation that would need to be addressed later as an adult.

A third tool that could be helpfully adapted is “Displacing the Orphan Spirit.”⁸¹ Again, the topic would need to be addressed initially through some activity such as drawing, puppets, dolls, or role playing before being brought to prayer. The Sozo manual is well worth reading for the insight it provides regarding inner wounding and its results.

Theophostic Prayer Ministry, developed by Dr. Ed Smith in 1995, now known as Transformation Prayer Ministry (TPM), was a result of his work counseling people who had been sexually abused as children. He came to understand that “the emotional pain that people were experiencing was **not** coming from their past, or even their memory of it, but rather it was due to what they came to believe about themselves or God in the context of their life experiences.”⁸²

TPM has its own “process” with accompanying diagrams to lead a person through inner healing. They have produced two manuals that explain how to use the Transformation Prayer Ministry model. The first, *The Essentials of TPM*, explains eight essential paradigm shifts and the three Ps of TPM: Purpose, Principles, and Process.⁸³ The second, *The Process of TPM*, describes a ministry session using TPM and discusses seven boxes that are used in the process (emotion, memory, belief, truth, transformation, solution, and anger, used in that order), each

⁸¹ Ibid., 165.

⁸² Ed Smith and Joshua Smith, *The Process of Transformation Prayer Ministry* (Simpsonville, SC: New Creation Publishing, 2019), 45.

⁸³ Ed Smith and Joshua Smith, *The Essentials of Transformation Prayer Ministry, Second Edition* (Simpsonville, SC: New Creation Publishing, 2019).

with its own flow chart.⁸⁴ While this model would be accessible to teens, it is a bit abstract to use “as is” with children. However, both books provide an excellent background to understanding how to process trauma and contribute significantly to the conversation of trauma-sensitive counseling.

Dr. Karl Lehman, a board-certified psychiatrist, combined his psychiatric training with his Christian experience to develop a model he calls “The Immanuel Approach.”⁸⁵ As a psychiatrist, his primary objective at first was to heal psychological trauma in order to relieve suffering. After an experience related to him after praying with one of his clients, he came to understand that “the primary, most important purpose of emotional healing is to remove the blockages that hinder your heart from coming to” the Lord.⁸⁶ He began counseling in 1990 mainly using cognitive and insight-oriented therapy along with Agnes-Sanford-style healing prayer but was unsatisfied with long-term results. Adding *Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing* (EMDR) in 1995 did little to improve his results. Then in 1998, he and his wife encountered Dr. Smith and his Theophostic Prayer Ministry. He began to incorporate the Theophostic prayer model. Across the years he saw significant results, but still had a small percentage of people who could not overcome their trauma. At this point he began something he called *Immanuel Interventions* which involved guiding the client to invite the Lord to come and sit with them in the memory of the trauma and then guiding the client to interact with the Lord about the situation.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Ed Smith and Joshua Smith, *The Process of Transformation Prayer Ministry* (Simpsonville, SC: New Creation Publishing, 2019).

⁸⁵ Karl Lehman, “About Us | Immanuel Approach,” [immanuelapproach.com](https://www.immanuelapproach.com/about-us/) (Immanuel Approach, 2021), <https://www.immanuelapproach.com/about-us/>.

⁸⁶ Karl Lehman and Charlotte Lehman, *The Immanuel Approach*, 3rd. ed. (Evanston, IL: The Immanuel Approach, 2021), 6, 48-49.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 32-42.

Ultimately he realized that all his clients could benefit from these Immanuel Interventions, not only clients who failed to see improvement. At this point Lehman and his wife fully developed the *Immanuel Approach to Emotional Healing*. Each session begins with prayer methodology of the *Immanuel Intervention* and proceeds from there.⁸⁸ Many secular therapists begin with establishing a “safe place,” a mental picture the client forms of themselves in a comfortable, peaceful space. Lehman realized that inviting the client to pause to connect with Jesus at the start of the session actually created that safe place; Jesus became the safe place. Lehman gives twelve components to the Immanuel Approach process, the first seven of which are essential.⁸⁹ The eighth component is very insightful for use with older children. It involves “helping the recipient to formulate her experience into a narrative story. This Immanuel story describes what it was like before the recipient perceived the Lord’s presence in the place of pain, ...what happened when she perceived the Lord’s presence in the place of pain, and ... how things are/have been different since perceiving the Lord’s presence in the place of pain.”⁹⁰ The importance of this is replacing one’s inner narrative, moving from a story of sadness and pain to a story of hope and peace.

Lehman discusses situations when the Immanuel Approach was used successfully with children as young as four-years old. The appendices at the end of the thirty-nine-chapter book give twelve helpful worksheets which take the reader through various possible scenarios, giving excellent guidance. There is much this method has to offer. However, it seems more suited for being employed with children by their parents regarding issues other than traumatic ones, such as fears or even childhood rebelliousness, or being employed by someone in a long-term

⁸⁸ Ibid., 43-44.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 50-57.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 55.

counseling/mentoring situation with children who have experienced significant trauma. As such, it would be very suitable for parents who have adopted troubled children and teens. For youth leaders and pastors, perhaps the best element to employ in helping children process not only trauma, but any difficult or uncomfortable situation in life would be the prayer methodology of the *Immanuel Intervention*.

THE DELIVERANCE APPROACH

We see a straight-forward, “cast the demons out” deliverance approach in the ministry of Jesus and Paul. In Acts 16, Luke wrote about a servant girl in Philippi with a spirit of divination who made money for her masters by fortune telling. For many days the demon in her cried out identifying Paul and his team as servants of the Most High God proclaiming the way of salvation. Finally, Paul turned to her and cast the demon out of her by commanding it go in the name of Jesus Christ. This is Deliverance Ministry 101, plain and simple. Paul knew he had authority over demons via his relationship with Jesus and the holy way he lived his life, and so he merely commanded the demon to leave. We don’t know how she ended up demonized in the first place. Was she sexually assaulted as a child? Was she traumatized in any other chronic ways? We don’t know, and Paul didn’t stop to ask. He exercised his spiritual authority over the demon and cast it out. This is most simple, basic form of deliverance ministry.

However, in Acts 19, in Ephesus, seven sons of the local chief priest who practiced exorcism thought they could use Paul’s method after watching him. They commanded a demon to leave a man in “the name of Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” They discovered that Jesus’ name does not work magic when the demon identified that it was Paul’s relationship to Jesus that allowed Paul to command in Jesus’ name. There are some in the Church who teach that any

believer in Christ may command demons out in the name of Jesus.⁹¹ Some teach that believers mainly have authority over demons in the areas where they have victory over sin in their own life.⁹² Still others teach that only certain believers are gifted for deliverance⁹³ or even that deliverance is no longer necessary or biblical.⁹⁴

We know from the Gospels that children can be affected by a demonic presence in their life. In Matthew 15:22-28, a Canaanite woman asked Jesus to deliver her daughter from the demons who plagued her. Jesus didn't correct her. Rather, He tested her faith to see if she believed that she was also subject to the God of Israel, then sent her home to a daughter delivered of those demons. In Luke 9:37-42, we see Jesus cast a demon out of a young boy at the request of his father. In both situations, Jesus could have corrected them, telling them that their child was ill, not demonized, but in each situation, He clearly casts the demonic spirit out. However, we are not told what caused the demonic spirit to enter them in the first place. Scripture itself is not clear about what gives demonic spirits power over humankind. Often inner healing ministries have found that spiritual deliverance is another end-result of the inner healing process.

Many in deliverance ministry note three levels of demonization: oppression; torment or vexing; and domination.⁹⁵ Because Ephesians 4:25 instructs us, "Do not give place to the devil,"

⁹¹ "Deliverance is not a ministry reserved for the spiritual elite. It flows freely from the heart of God to all His children, and as we have received, we are empowered to give...Deliverance is part of the general calling of believers." Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2015), 114.

⁹² Rebecca Brown, *Becoming a Vessel of Honor* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1998), 129.

⁹³ John Pace, "Spiritual Gift: Deliverance," *Shepherds of The Lost*, March 9, 2017, <https://shepherdsinthelost.org/spiritual-gift-survey/spiritual-gift-deliverance/>.

⁹⁴ Ashley Hooker, "What Is Deliverance Ministry and Is It Biblical?," Crosswalk.com, October 23, 2022, <https://www.crosswalk.com/church/pastors-or-leadership/what-is-deliverance-ministry-and-is-it-biblical.html>. "Deliverance Ministries," AllAboutGOD.com, 2022, <https://www.allaboutgod.com/deliverance-ministries>.

⁹⁵ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual: Spiritual Deliverance Training for Personal and Team Ministry* (Kansas City: Forerunner Publishing, 2019), 6-7; Frank Hammond and Ida Mae Hammond, *A Manual for Children's Deliverance* (Kirkwood, MO: Impact Christian Books, 1996), 60.

or as some translations say, “Do not give a foothold to the devil,” it is common in deliverance ministries to speak of “footholds” in someone’s life which give the demonic access to the body and soul. Jesus did not address what gave the demons entrance to either the little girl of Matthew 15 or the boy of Luke 9. Some would explain that when a demonic spirit has the opening to consistently speak a lie and provoke a negative or sinful behavioral response in us, that demon then has a foothold in that individual’s life, including children.⁹⁶ Others would suggest that in the case of these two children, there was something in their family history that allowed the demons access to the children. They would cite Exodus 34:7, “He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.”

EVALUATION OF VARIOUS DELIVERANCE METHODS

Although the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions have produced many books about various deliverance ministries, due to the nature of this dissertation being ministry with traumatized children, this section on deliverance ministries will focus on deliverance ministries most readily adaptable to ministering to this target audience. In *A Manual for Children’s Deliverance*, Frank and Ida Mae Hammond describe their own experiences with children being freed from demonic oppression and give instructions for those who would like to engage in that type of ministry. In addition to giving overall guidance, the Hammonds focus on the specifics of several age groups: birth to two years; three to six years; seven to twelve years; and teens.⁹⁷ One significant issue they address is how various demons gain a foothold in a child’s mind/soul as a result of a traumatic event,⁹⁸ even when that event does not seem traumatic in the eyes of an adult. This gives insight into how to talk with the child about the event when their fear, guilt,

⁹⁶ Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver*, 99.

⁹⁷ Frank and Ida Mae Hammond, 42-42.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 81.

self-hatred, etc. began. They also discuss how to use deliverance ministry techniques with adopted and fostered children, abused children, even autistic children and children with Down's Syndrome. While the Hammonds believe this methodology has produced significant results, and their book has helpful insight into dealing with traumatized children, it does not seem to be very accessible for the pastor or congregant of a non-Charismatic church, as it uses terms and relies on concepts that remain squarely inside the Charismatic and Pentecostal experience. Moreover, there is no addressing of false beliefs the child may hold or dealing with other inner healing issues.

Stephen Beauchamp, in his book and its accompanying manual, gives biblical foundations and practical guidance for deliverance ministry. Of particular note are "The Sixteen Strongholds."⁹⁹ Beauchamp defines each stronghold with a list of ways that it may manifest in a person's body, thinking, or behavior, with instructions on praying over each stronghold. He includes prayers for breaking soul ties, generational assignments and curses, and the power of witchcraft, as well as a prayer of blessing to be prayed over the person at the end of each session. There is much to learn from Beauchamp's presentation. However, it would need to be reworked in terms of procedure and technique for use with children.

Prisoners of Hope (POH)¹⁰⁰ is a deliverance/inner healing program at the International House of Prayer, Kansas City. It was originally based upon many of the principles taught in Beauchamp's ministry manual. At first, POH had teams of 2-4 people who met privately with clients for sessions. At each session, the team and client would ask the Lord to highlight one person or situation in the client's life (from birth on). The session would proceed similarly to a

⁹⁹ Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 35-54.

¹⁰⁰ <https://m.facebook.com/Prisoners-of-Hope-109004677964099/>.

Sozo or Theophostic ministry session but culminated in identifying one or more strongholds that belonged to that event in the past. The client would then be taken through renouncing the manifestations of the stronghold, repenting of the lies they had believed related to that stronghold, forgiving the person involved in the original event who sinned against them or caused emotional wounding, and finally giving that pain to the Lord in exchange for what He would give to them. This ministry saw a number of people healed and delivered, including the author and her son. However, it has changed directions due to demand. Now it functions similarly to a *Living Waters* session, in terms of starting with a group teaching. Rather than break up into small groups, however, the entire group is led through a prayer addressing one or more of the strongholds in a group deliverance session. The original procedure followed by POH could be modified for use with children, and particularly with teens. However, the current model would not be conducive to ministry with children. For teens with a history of chronic trauma, it might be too public a place for them to be vulnerable about their trauma.

A HYBRID APPROACH FOR USE BY PASTORS AND LAY CHURCH LEADERS

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is effective for helping the traumatized child or teen evaluate their trauma and develop coping mechanisms, new thought patterns, and new patterns of behavior. However, it stops short of dealing with the spiritual effects of trauma on a child or teen. Inner healing, particularly when some level of deliverance is involved, is effective on the spiritual side, but often fails to address how to develop new thought and behavior patterns, though it does address some of the “inner lies” that have been adopted. Moreover, when working with young children, it may be hard to guide them into the “entrance” of an inner healing session.

It appears that what is needed is a healthy way to combine TF-CBT with inner healing and deliverance. Perhaps with children ages 3-9, the session might begin with an activity such as

drawing, role play, or work with puppets or dolls, in order to single out an issue to deal with for that session. CBT principles could be used to help the child interpret the traumatic event, see the lies they believed as a result, and understand the truths that should replace those lies. Inner healing principles of prayer and encounter with Jesus could be used to address the spiritual needs of the child, and if deliverance takes place, all the better!

Legally, is licensing required for the pastor or lay leader? While licensing offers legal protections for both the client and the counselor, it is not required. Some states do require licensing in order to advertise oneself as a counselor. However, as a pastor, youth leader, or Sunday School teacher, one may counsel without calling themselves a counselor. Moreover, one can incorporate some TF-CBT principles and worksheets into trauma-sensitive ministry with children and youth, though the pastor or youth leader needs to be aware of their own limitations in terms of knowledge and experience, hence the focus in chapter four on spiritual ministry and prayer.

Children and teens who are victims of chronic trauma and adverse childhood experiences deserve trauma-sensitive counseling from inside the local church. It should not be relegated to the secular professionals alone, as there is a significant spiritual element both to the consequences of trauma and to the fullness of recovery from trauma for a child. Mere secular treatment will not result in children's hearts being healed to advance in spiritual formation. They must be guided through encounter with the Lord to heal from the effects of the trauma. The artifact of this dissertation presents a trauma-sensitive, spiritual counseling and prayer approach that may be taken by the pastor or lay leaders with children in their church.

CHAPTER THREE: OUR NATURE REQUIRES A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO TRAUMA-SENSITIVE COUNSELING

Though from a devoutly Christian family, by the time he was 12 years old, Nathan¹⁰¹ had experienced four major Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) due to his father in the areas of physical abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, father's mental illness, and the separation of his parents (which ended in divorce by the time he was 14). It has been found that most children who experience three or more ACEs in their childhood tend to develop coping mechanisms to process and live within their traumatic or adverse experiences. Studies suggest that these coping mechanisms link negative childhood experiences with health problems, early death, educational problems, and spiritual deficits.¹⁰²

At this point, when his father left the family home, Nathan began acting out, often quite violently, towards his mother and sister. When his mother asked what had brought about this radical change in his behavior, he replied, "Before this, I hid. I hid in my room, or I hid in my computer games. Now that Dad is gone, I don't feel I need to hide any longer. And this is what is inside of me." The church pastoral staff recommended a counselor who specialized in counseling victims of abuse. After determining the extent of the previous domestic abuse, Nathan was assigned one counselor, and his mother was assigned a second.

What occurred over the next three years was trauma-sensitive cognitive behavior theory-based (CBT) counseling. At one point, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy

¹⁰¹ Not his real name, though this is a real story.

¹⁰² Katharine Bensinger, "ACE Awareness for Prevention Adverse Childhood Experiences PArEnting FundAmEntAls," *Paces Connection.com* (Chicago, IL: C4: Community Counseling Centers of Chicago, 2014), <https://www.pacesconnection.com/fileSendAction/fcType/5/fcOid/406624864726144615/fodoid/406624864726144614/C4>.

(EMDR) was used to help him recall forgotten traumatic events.¹⁰³ He was also referred to a child psychologist who put him on a mood stabilizer, oxcarbazepine. Between the medication and the counseling, Nathan slowly regained the ability to behave peaceably in his family as well as with his friends. However, by the time he was 14, he had fallen into such a deep depression that he refused to do schoolwork and spoke at times of suicide. After a 5-day-stay in the local children's psychiatric hospital and the addition of Wellbutrin, an antidepressant, he returned home to engage grudgingly with his schoolwork. That summer Nathan spent a month at a residential treatment program for boys ages 5-18 who have a high level of need due to adverse childhood experiences. By the end of the month, Nathan acknowledged that, while life seemed pointless to him, he could at least accept being happy every day with his life's experiences, even if it was ultimately pointless. Eventually, Nathan began to accept that God had a good, if not difficult, plan for his life.

When he was 18, Nathan was introduced to a local inner healing program hosted by another church. Over the course of 10 months, with the team assigned to him, Nathan processed many of his traumatic events, not from a CBT perspective, but from a spiritual perspective, identifying the particular wounds (emotional, mental, and spiritual) he had received in each particular trauma. The team help him to identify what lies about God, himself, and others he had adopted via each traumatic experience. They led him to speak, as it were, to the one who had traumatized him in that experience to tell them how their words and actions had affected him and what it had cost him in terms of mental, spiritual, and emotional health. Nathan was led through forgiving them. He was led in repenting of the lies he had believed, declaring his acceptance of

¹⁰³ EMDR, or Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy, is a mental health therapy method which treats mental health conditions that happen because of memories from traumatic events in your past. It is best known for its role in treating post-traumatic stress disorder. Cleveland Clinic, "EMDR Therapy: What It Is, Procedure & Effectiveness," Cleveland Clinic, March 29, 2022, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/22641-emdr-therapy>.

and belief in the truth about God, himself, or others. Finally, he received prayer for God's restoration in that particular circumstance.

Previous to this, Nathan was successfully living what looked to others like a healthy, normal life, with mainly healthy reactions to the circumstances of his life, engaged in his local church as an eager participant. However, internally, in his inner self-narrative and in his relationship with God, he was still very wounded, even though he had externally mastered the coping skills necessary to behave appropriately in public. Through this ten-month inner healing experience, Nathan developed peace and joy in his relationship with the Lord. He developed a deeper faith in God's love, God's goodness, even in God's power. In many ways, the external coping skills he had mastered were no longer necessary for him to cope with life. He felt alive and able to interact successfully with life. Moreover, he grew closer to the Lord and found spiritual formation during and after this time to be easier and more in depth.

Why wasn't cognitive behavior therapy enough? Why did spiritual intervention produce such results of freedom of faith, joy, love, and peace? Fundamentally it lies in the nature of humankind, intrinsically in the state in which we were created. Cognitive behavior therapy and other psychological therapies treat the mind, but we are more than just a mind housed in a body. Indeed, we are an embodied spirit, and as such to truly treat wounding such as trauma requires a holistic approach.

THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF HUMANITY: A BODY AND A SOUL TOGETHER AS ONE

⁷“Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” (Gen. 2:7, NIV)

We see in the account of creation that what animates the clay body is the breath of God, and thus, the first man becomes a living being. Wayne Grudem says of this, “Here Adam is a

unified person with a body and a soul living and acting together.”¹⁰⁴ While Genesis 1 speaks in general terms of the creation of birds, fish, animals, and man, in Genesis 2 we are given the account of God forming a man from the dirt of the earth. Distinctively, this man is the only one in Genesis 1 who is said to be made in the image of God (*imago Dei*), and he is only one into whom God breathed the breath of life in the creation process according to Genesis 2.

Theologians for centuries have interpreted this as the difference between human and animal: Human consciousness is more than animal consciousness; humans have the ability for advanced logic as well as the capability to communicate with God Himself.

Theologians and philosophers have debated man’s essential nature for thousands of years. For the most part, both have agreed in one form or another that “the human person is the point of convergence between the material and spiritual entities, that is between the body and the soul.”¹⁰⁵ Cortez notes that from Jesus’ example of humanity, we see that “to be a true image bearer [*imago Dei*] is to be an embodied being.”¹⁰⁶ He defines the essence of what it means to be a human by the measurement of Jesus Christ in His incarnation and, ultimately, in His resurrected body. In this understanding, Adam and Eve were created to have the potential of one day being essentially all that Jesus is in His resurrected body. Thus, we look at Jesus at His first coming, as the embodied Word of God, the Word tabernacled in a flesh body, as the paradigm to understand what a human is essentially.

¹⁰⁴ Wayne A Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, ed. Jeff Purswell (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 194.

¹⁰⁵ ICCT Colleges Foundation, “Chapter 8 Human Person as an Embodied Spirit,” Studocu, accessed March 8, 2023, <https://www.studocu.com/ph/document/icct-colleges-foundation/college-physics/chapter-8-human-person-as-an-embodied-spirit/33226410>.

¹⁰⁶ Marc Cortez, *Resourcing Theological Anthropology: A Constructive Account of Humanity in the Light of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 197.

Prior to recent, rapid advancement in the scientific study of the brain, much of the debate centered around how the body and soul relate to one another. Are they one [monist] as in inseparable, both consisting of matter? This is the view of those who do not believe there is anything past death. Are they one [monist] as in not being human when missing one of the two? For example, a corpse is no longer a human, but merely a body. Or, are the body and the soul separate entities, as it were, a body with a soul tucked inside it in some form of dualism or dichotomy? If so, how does the non-corporeal soul influence and move the corporeal body?

Leibnitz suggested that God made the body and soul parallel, so to speak, so when there was movement in the body, there was a corresponding movement in the soul and vice versa.¹⁰⁷ Berkhof suggested a “realistic dualism” where the body and the soul are distinct substances, though he admitted that how the two interact is unknown, as “some actions of the body are dependent on the *conscious* operation of the soul, while others are not.”¹⁰⁸ He preserved the distinction between body and soul (dualism) with their intrinsic relationship presenting as monism. We see a this picture of the body-soul relationship in the *Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus*, a late 2nd/early 3rd century apologetic writing, “The soul is imprisoned in the body, yet keeps together that very body; Christians are confined in the world as in a prison, and yet they keep together the world.”¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately this neither explains how soul and body actually relate to each other, nor does the “Christians in the world” analogy faithfully demonstrate the true relationship between soul and body.

¹⁰⁷ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 4th, revised and expanded (1941; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 195.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 195-196.

¹⁰⁹ Kevin Knight, “Church Fathers: On the Resurrection (Justin Martyr)” Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, www.newadvent.org, n.d., <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0131.htm>.

Throughout church history, theologians and pastors have tended to elevate the soul in importance, as Moltmann states, “From its earliest beginnings, the history of Western anthropology shows a tendency to make the soul paramount over the body, which is thus something from which the person [as soul] can detach himself.”¹¹⁰ In this, Timothy Crutcher wrote, “We often see ourselves as spiritual beings who are housed—trapped even—in a physical form.”¹¹¹ Importantly, he goes on to note, “According to the Bible, humans are physical first and spiritual second; breath is added to the dust.”¹¹² Joel B. Green concludes his book, *Body, Soul, and Human Life*, with the proposal that the ontological nature of humanity is found in the nexus of body and soul, and therefore, with the death of the physical body it is an action of God that provides the soul with the body it needs to exist, or as he terms it, “re-embodiment.”¹¹³

What is most pertinent to our question, “Why was CBT not enough for Nathan to progress towards wholeness and to make progress in spiritual formation,” is this proposal of Green:

Our identity is formed and found in self-conscious relationality with its neural correlates and embodied narrativity or formative histories. By “formative histories,” I do not mean “history” in an objective sense as “what really happened,” but the stories with and by which we come to make sense of the events of our life and world... What I want especially to underscore here is that who we are, our personhood, is inextricably bound up in our physicality...and in the sum of our life experiences and relationships.¹¹⁴

Herein, Green unites the physicality of the neural net of our brains with the non-corporeal aspects of thought, memory, and narrative. Who we are lies in the nexus of the brain cells that

¹¹⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation: a New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God* (the Gifford Lectures 1984-1985; San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 244 as quoted in Joel B Green, *Body, Soul, and Human Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Paternoster Publishing; Baker Academic, 2008), 18.

¹¹¹ Timothy J. Crutcher, *Becoming Human Again: A Biblical Primer on Entire Sanctification*, 2020, 30.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Joel B Green, *Body, Soul, and Human Life*, 179-180.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 179.

physically imprint and store our thoughts and memories along with the narrative that we tell ourselves to make sense of those memories and develop a plan for living in the world such as we have perceived it to be.

Moreover, the soul is not merely the place where we think, but it is also the place where we meet with the spirit realm. Just as there is a nexus between mind (immaterial) and body (material), there is a nexus between soul (thoughts and emotions; truth-processing) and spirit (the immaterial, supernatural realm). Trauma-sensitive cognitive behavior treatment works with the mind to replace human narrative and untruths. However, we also dwell in the immaterial realm, and as such we need to deal with that immaterial part of us that is also wounded in trauma through self-narratives to explain that trauma, resulting in our adoption of spiritual lies and connecting with demonic inclinations. In that mind-spirit nexus, we need to replace lies, renounce unsanctified survival mechanisms we have adopted, and receive God's healing peace into that very real though immaterial part within us.

THE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA ON THE BODY AND THE SOUL

All trauma, whether acute or long-term, produces harmful physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual effects. Even solely physical trauma, such as a car accident, results in trauma to the soul as one processes their experience, hence the experience of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Some trauma is not inflicted physically, but via words or indirectly via behaviors. Most Adverse Childhood Experiences combine these types of trauma. For example, when a child is traumatized by parental neglect, there can be physical trauma (lack of food and lack of hygiene leading to physical hurt) as well as mental, emotional, and spiritual trauma as the child tries to make sense of what is happening to them.

Effects of trauma seen in the realm of the soul can be evidenced in the mind, such as by developing a false narrative concerning who is responsible for the trauma, why this is happening

to them at this time, and how to survive it. Often this includes the child coming to conclusions that are not true. Emotions such as anger, depression, or fear are common expressions of trauma. Behavior is inextricably linked with thoughts and emotions. At times a child may outwardly exhibit negative or destructive behaviors even though the actual trauma behind these behaviors remains unseen to most people in the child's life.

Effects of trauma seen in the spiritual realm include false beliefs about God and His character, as well as about other spiritual issues such as prayer, faith, other Christians, the church, etc. A child may present with what appears to be a solely spiritual issue, such as lack of faith in God's provision or inability to receive God's love, when the actual trauma which resulted in these conclusions remains unseen to most people in the child's life. However, the spiritual issue cannot be resolved without addressing the trauma.

Physical effects of trauma are many and diverse. For example, as a result of a car accident, a child may be paralyzed or semi-paralyzed, which is a huge and obvious effect. In physical abuse cases, physical effects of the trauma are visible. However, emotional, verbal, and mental abuse will also result in physical effects less able to be seen. Traumatic events cause the heightened release of stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline.¹¹⁵ Studies have shown that repeated exposure to heightened amounts of these hormones can significantly affect a child's developing brain. For example, in the early years of a child's life, repeated abuse and trauma affect the hippocampus, the center of emotional control and inhibition of risky behaviors. This area is also involved with memory and language, particularly verbal and spatial memories.¹¹⁶ A

¹¹⁵ American Psychological Association, "Stress Effects on the Body," American Psychological Association, 2018, <https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/body>.

¹¹⁶ The AOC Center for Families, Children & the Courts, "The Effects Of Complex Trauma On Youth," *California Courts: The Judicial Branch of California* (San Francisco, CA: Judicial Council of California/Administrative Office of the Courts, 2014), www.courts.ca.gov/documents/effects-complex-trauma-on-youth-briefing.pdf.

school-aged child may present with difficulty regulating behavior and emotions or with struggles to communicate what they are feeling. While there is no visible physical damage, they actually have brain damage to their hippocampus, so it is not able to function as it ought. Fortunately, due to neuroplasticity, the nervous system is able to reroute and reorganize its circuitry after injury.¹¹⁷ However, malformation of the hippocampus or other areas of the brain due to non-physical trauma may not result in automatic “rerouting.” When a person has a stroke and loses the ability to walk, talk, or some other ability, it takes training to develop this new brain circuit. Even so, it takes guidance and practice to establish new circuits in the hippocampus or other areas, meaning external intervention by way of some sort of counseling is necessary.

Current studies suggest that memories are initially formed in the hippocampus and the prefrontal cortex at the same time the memory is made, then the cells and synapses in the hippocampus holding those memories weaken while those in the prefrontal cortex strengthen for long-term storage.¹¹⁸ In this sense, we might say that the memories are located in the physical body. However, a dead body does not react to stimuli the way a person with PTSD reacts, so to speak, meaning that the soul is, at the very least, required to process those memories. When Jesus told the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31), He indicated that after his death, the rich man still retained memory of his brothers, placing the location of memories also in the soul as well.

¹¹⁷ Matt Puderbaugh and Prabhu D. Emmady, “Neuroplasticity,” PubMed (Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing, 2022), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK557811/#:~:text=It%20is%20defined%20as%20the>.

¹¹⁸ Anne Trafton, “Neuroscientists Identify Brain Circuit Necessary for Memory Formation,” MIT News | Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT, April 6, 2017), <https://news.mit.edu/2017/neuroscientists-identify-brain-circuit-necessary-memory-formation-0406>.

ACCESSING TRAUMATIC MEMORIES AND WOUNDS WITH CHILDREN

Bringing any degree of healing to the wounds of traumatic memories requires some sort of remembering or connecting with the traumatic event through the memory, even when dealing with the spiritual effects of the trauma. In Christian circles, this is commonly referred to as inner healing or the healing of memories. For most methods of inner healing with adults, the individual comes to the session with a problem or memory, or the individual begins by praying with the leader and waiting in a listening posture for the Holy Spirit to bring up a memory or perhaps the name of a person. The leader explores this memory with the individual. First the individual often recounts the traumatic event or interaction. Through questions and inquiring of the Holy Spirit, the leader helps the individual identify lies they have come to believe from the trauma, as well as what they lost in the trauma, how the person wounded them, what they need to forgive the person for, spiritual strongholds related to the lies they believed, and truths they need to receive and declare. Most methods have a system for progressing from one stage to another in the process, typically ending with blessing being prayed over the individual by the team leader.

This approach, however, may not work as well with children. Some traumatic memories are hidden so deeply, a child may not be able to access it readily. Some children may not be comfortable with or accustomed to waiting on the Lord and listening for His voice. Some children may not be able to interpret their own emotions and explain what they are feeling. Some children may be resistant to examining aspects of their adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

It might be helpful, particularly with younger children, to use trauma-sensitive cognitive-theory-based worksheets and methods for identifying traumatic memories and wounds with children. Counselors and psychologists often use worksheets, art projects, or play using toys, dolls, or puppets to help a child remember and begin to process their trauma. In the spiritual

counseling setting, we are not looking to process that trauma mentally, as it were, developing coping mechanisms or narratives. Rather, we want to invite the presence of God into the trauma, into the wound, into the narrative, and into the child's beliefs so that the healing moves beyond the nexus of the body and soul into the nexus of where the thoughts meet the spiritual realm. We still need to identify the place of the wounding.

Alternatively, in situations where we know or think that there is no sexual abuse occurring, we might begin with the parent, having the parent explain the behavioral problems the child is presenting. Next, we would speak with the child, asking them why they think they are acting that way or how they are feeling when they act that way. We would seek, with an ear open to the leading of the Lord, to isolate one feeling or one behavior as the focus of the session. Each following session might begin with asking how they are doing related to that previous feeling/behavior, or perhaps asking how they are feeling that day, what they are struggling with that day, maybe even what they got in trouble for that day.

A SYNTHESIZED APPROACH

At the start of each inner healing session, we suggest affirming with the child that they are willing to talk to the Holy Spirit with us and listen to what He has to say. Then we lead them in a trinitarian opening prayer, addressing Father, Son, and Spirit.¹¹⁹ A synthesized approach to inner healing begins with identifying the type or types of trauma the child experienced, either via CBT worksheets, play or puppets, and artwork, or discussion, prayer, and listening to the Holy Spirit. From here, the damage of that trauma is explored. This may identify a particular time that stands out in the child's memory when an instance of this trauma happened, or it may just identify a particular sense of wounding in an area affected by the trauma. We would ask the child

¹¹⁹ See Appendix A.

how they feel now when they think back to what happened to them, then ask them if that is different from how they felt at the time it happened. In further discussing their feelings about the trauma or traumatic event, through carefully phrased questions and leading them to ask the Holy Spirit to give them understanding, we identify specific areas of wounding.¹²⁰

Most inner healing paradigms begin with identifying feelings, current feelings. In the Western Church, we have tended to distance ourselves from thinking that emotions or feelings can be processed rationally. Emotions are often thought to be irrational. The fact is, they are very “rational” because the emotion one feels is directly connected to the “truth” one’s rational mind believes, no matter how irrational that “truth” is. Meaning, if one has an irrational fear, it is based on an irrational “truth” one believes. Beliefs and emotions are intertwined.¹²¹ “Beliefs are not just cold mental premises, but are ‘hot stuff’ intertwined with emotions (conscious or unconscious).”¹²²

Because of this, emotions can be used to uncover what the mind believes. This relates back to the premise that humans are embodied spirits. The traditional perceived distinctions of body, soul, and spirit, mind, will, and emotions are just that—perceived. Recent improvements in medical technology show us, for example, that our emotions are not processed only in the hippocampus, amygdala, and the hypothalamus where memories are stored, but in other areas of the body such as the back side of the spinal cord.¹²³ While emotions are not confined to the

¹²⁰ For example, “Let’s ask the Spirit to show you why you feel that way about God?” So the child prays, “Holy Spirit, show me why I feel this (states how they feel or what they believe) about God.” After a pause, we ask, “Did the Holy Spirit show you anything or say anything to you?” and give them opportunity to share. See Appendix B for a sample dialogue.

¹²¹ Ed Smith and Joshua Smith, *The Essentials of Transformation Prayer Ministry: *Second Edition** (Simpsonville, SC: New Creation Publishing, 2019), 204.

¹²² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2802367/>.

¹²³ Candace B Pert, *Molecules of Emotion* (1997; repr., New York: Scribner, 2003), 141. https://www.google.com/books/edition/Molecules_of_Emotion/gPDRP9DV8twC?hl=en&gbpv=1.

physical mind, as an embodied spirit, our emotions and beliefs interact, not only with each other, but also with our memories.

Again, over the centuries those in the Western Church have struggled how to integrate emotions with the spiritual life, often falling into emotionalism where emotions direct thoughts and action or into a stoicism that suppresses all feelings.¹²⁴ In this model, we are not using emotions to guide our approach to the future, as it were. Instead, we are using emotions as a window into the past. That is, current emotions give insight into how past traumatic events have shaped the current beliefs that are foundational to shaping emotions as one interacts with daily experiences.

With adults, we can ask what that person's action cost them or resulted in for them, such as the loss of innocence, the loss of self-worth, results of feeling vulnerable, inadequate, unworthy of love, unworthy of physical care, physical ailments, feeling always at fault particularly for anything negative that happens, an inability to trust anyone other than themselves, feelings of betrayal, and so on. To assess this with children, we might use carefully worded questions to explore the depths of initially communicated surface feelings. Or, again, we might use worksheets, art, or play. Most importantly, we lead them through prayer to listen to the Holy Spirit as He is more than willing to reveal what has gone on in the soul of the child and bring healing to them.

As we identify these specific areas of wounding, we ask carefully worded questions and invite the child to ask the Holy Spirit to identify any lies and wrong beliefs/conclusions the child has adopted, taking notes for reference, as we want to replace those lies with truth. We also want to keep a list of their negative feelings and emotions because we want to use these lies and

¹²⁴ Joe Thorn, "Don't Pursue Feelings. Pursue Christ.," Ligonier.org (Ligonier Ministries, April 29, 2012), <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/dont-pursue-feelings-pursue-christ>.

negative feelings to identify any demonic influence that may have encroached on their soul, inhabiting those wounded places. This is known as a stronghold, a place where a demonic spirit has the ability to consistently speak a lie and provoke a negative or sinful behavior as a response.¹²⁵

When a lie is identified, one will want to point out the truth from the Word of God to counter that lie. Often this can be done by simply having the child pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show them the truth about this lie that they have believed. It should not surprise us that the Holy Spirit is well versed in Bible knowledge and understanding. At times it may take some discussion to ensure that the child understands why their conclusion concerning their trauma is a lie and for the child to agree to renounce the lie and replace it with the biblical truth. However, when we lead the child in asking the Holy Spirit for His understanding each step of the way, the Holy Spirit has a marvelous way of bringing light into the situation.

The next step is forgiveness as related to the particular area of the trauma that the Spirit has surfaced in the session. For example, a child might have experienced the abuse of neglect, as well as emotional, verbal, and physical abuse due to a parent or parents addicted to drugs. Typically in one session, one deals with only one aspect of that larger trauma, perhaps one incident the child remembers. In dealing with forgiveness, one does not point the child to forgive every traumatic event and grievance. Rather, stay with the narrow area defined already in the session. Remind the child that forgiveness is not saying that what the person did to you is okay or acceptable.¹²⁶ Rather, it is identifying the wrong and declaring that you have forgiven them for that wrong. Depending on the type of abuse and the length of time the child was abused, a

¹²⁵ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver*, 99.

¹²⁶ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual : Spiritual Deliverance Training for Personal and Team Ministry*, 11.

particular abuser might be forgiven multiple times over multiple sessions, each time for a different specific action or event. When we extend forgiveness, we name the person who wronged us, we tell them, as it were, what they did and how it hurt us or what it cost us, then we declare that we forgive them for doing this.

After extending forgiveness, it is time to deal with the strongholds identified in this session. Using the prayer liturgies (found in the attached artifact), lead the child through one or more of them. Like a pastor leading a couple in saying their marriage vows during the marriage ceremony, you will have the child repeat each phrase after you. Each liturgy ends with you breaking the power of that stronghold over them and you releasing the blessing of God over them to heal them, restore them, and protect them.

CONCLUSIONS

This integrated approach will allow pastors, youth leaders, and children's workers to minister to children in a complementary manner alongside psychologists and counselors, resulting in a truly holistic approach to helping children who have been victims of some sort of trauma or another. Even in the best of homes with the wisest of parents, children misunderstand events or even conversations and comments, leading to their creating unhealthy internal self-narratives and espousing lies and untruths that not only damage their souls, but open them to demonic influence. This approach can be used with all children, but especially in a trauma-sensitive approach to helping the children in our churches who have been wounded and disadvantaged through adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

CHAPTER FOUR: A HANDBOOK FOR PASTORS, YOUTH WORKERS, AND LAY LEADERS

As one considers, then, how to address the spiritual formation of traumatized children, particularly those who are victims of complex trauma in terms of mitigating the consequences of their particular complex traumas as it affects their spiritual growth, I posit that trauma-sensitive prayer ministry is necessary in addition to any secular professional counseling a child may receive. Pastors, youth pastors, and lay youth workers can be equipped to provide such prayer ministry to these children. In fact, trauma-informed counseling techniques are beneficial for pastors to have in order to better serve the children, teens, and adults in their churches who face these challenges.

In order to prepare pastors and youth workers to minister spiritually in a trauma-sensitive manner, I propose a handbook (the dissertation artifact) which is in two parts. The first part, using some of the material and facts given in this dissertation, is written on a lay-level, less academically than a dissertation, to demonstrate to the pastor the need for trauma-sensitive spiritual counseling for children and youth and to build the biblical and psychological methodology for the protocols and prayer liturgies given in the second part of the handbook. For the pastor who is stirred to go deeper, the citations and bibliography give direction concerning what to read next in their journey. The protocols and prayer liturgies of part two are written in a handbook style which can be used as a reference throughout a ministry session with a child or youth. This section also contains sample dialogues which demonstrate how to use the principles throughout a ministry session.

HANDBOOK, PART ONE

The handbook opens with the story of children's pastor's adopted son whom I have known since before the boy was adopted, over twenty years ago, when he was their foster child. This story is used to demonstrate that trauma in the toddler years has serious repercussions for

the child throughout their teen and young adult years, even when the child is adopted into a loving, Christian home, even when the adoptive parents are children's pastors and are skilled at working with children. The first chapter introduces the problem of damage wrought by various types of trauma upon a child's brain and physical development and the ensuing difficulties that present in the child spiritually. Trauma, abuse, and other terms are defined and examined to lay a foundation for chapter two which examines in detail how trauma and adverse childhood experiences affect the development of a child mentally, emotionally, and socially, demonstrating how this affects a child's behavior in church, Sunday School, and youth group, as well as how it affects and often stunts their spiritual formation.

Chapter three explains why a trauma-informed approach is necessary, as much of the Church and school culture is designed around the assumption of a child who is healthy emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Sadly, today there is a significant portion, from 10-14% of children,¹²⁷ who are not only not healthy enough to thrive in these settings, but who can be further damaged from the treatment they receive in these settings. Chapter three lays out the journey of healthy development through the infant and childhood stages and shows how trauma delays or even stops that development, leaving the person stranded, as it were, as an infant or child emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

Chapter four examines the categories of trauma results and demonstrates the damage that each category inflicts upon the child's current and future spiritual formation. Throughout the chapter, the pastor or lay leader reading the book is given signs to help them identify that a child may well have experienced significant trauma.

¹²⁷ CDC, "Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, March 15, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>.

Chapter five presents the theological framework for the necessity of spiritual intervention. It addresses the acts of trauma and their consequences seen in the life of the child with a view toward identifying lies they have adopted into their understanding of God's character as well as their understanding of how the world works (see dissertation chapter three above). It begins with a case study that demonstrates in particular the need for spiritual ministry to the abused child, not merely psychological counseling. The nature of the human as an embodied spirit is addressed in lay terms for the target audience. Spiritual effects of trauma are identified. At this point in the chapter, how to access the memories and wounds of the trauma with the child is addressed. Then it presents a spiritual approach, through prayer and dialogue, to bring the child to understand how the trauma influenced their world-view and God-concept, identify false conclusions (lies) they have believed, and replace those lies with God's truth. As part of the healing of the spiritual/emotional wound, the child is guided through appropriate forgiveness of the one who inflicted the trauma. The child receives the blessing of the Lord's grace appropriate for that particular healing. Finally, any dark spiritual strongholds are addressed. This ends Part One of the handbook.

HANDBOOK, PART TWO

Part Two is the practical portion of the handbook. Protocols, procedures, and prayer liturgies are described for ministering spiritually to victims of trauma and abuse, along with examples of how to employ those protocols in a ministry setting. Part Two is not written for the pastor or lay leader to memorize, but is intended for them to use throughout ministry sessions after familiarizing themselves with the content. In my experience, for the first few sessions, maybe even the first few dozen sessions, it will be very helpful to "go by the book" by means of paging through the book as the session progresses. At some point, one has facilitated or led these protocols enough to feel comfortable to lead without following along in the book. However, in

particular for the prayer liturgies addressing strongholds that need to be broken, it is intended that the pastor or lay leader uses the prayer liturgies written in the book to lead the child or teen through this section of prayer. There is nothing wrong with having a book marker at the start of the prayer liturgy section and taking a few minutes of silence to turn to that section and page through to the appropriate liturgy for that particular stronghold.

PROTOCOLS

Chapter 3 identified the importance of the spirit of a person encountering the Spirit of God for spiritual formation to advance. Through the prayer ministry sessions various tools and questions are used to help the child interact with Jesus about their trauma, about their wounding, and we are allowing the Spirit of God to speak to them and interact with their spirit. We are not teachers in these sessions. We are not directly advising them. We are more like a midwife, who doesn't give birth on behalf of the mother, who doesn't do the actual pushing, but who guides the mother as she gives birth. In this case we are using questions to help them ask the Lord for insight and understanding, and we are using questions to help them process and draw their own conclusions as well as develop more prayers to ask the Lord the questions they still have.

In the following protocols, we use these tools and questions given because they serve as a trauma-sensitive orderly and soothing way to help children process the spiritual implications of their trauma. First, we help them identify the wounding they have and the lies they have believed as a result. We direct them to find God's truth to replace the lie. Next, they are led to forgive the person who wounded them, leave that hurt at the foot of the cross, and ask Jesus what He will give them in exchange for leaving this burden with Him. Finally, we identify and, through prayer liturgies, break off any strongholds that have been created in their soul from the woundings, lies, and false coping mechanisms. We finish by praying the blessing of the Lord over them.

PROTOCOL FRAMEWORK

The Protocol section of the handbook begins with a brief overview of a typical session to serve as the scaffolding on which to build out the ministry sessions from the first session through ensuing ministry sessions, including additional discipleship or teaching sessions. This brief overview is named, “Protocol: Steps in a Typical Session.”

PRAYER LITURGY AT THE START OF A MINISTRY SESSION

An opening protocol for each ministry session is addressed, a protocol that is more akin to a prayer liturgy as it guides the minister and the child in praying together to open the ministry session. See appendix A for this prayer liturgy which is given line by line, sentence by sentence, in a format intended for the child to repeat each line of prayer to the Lord after the minister prays it. In particular, this prayer addresses the truth of the choice and work of God in bringing the child into existence, enforcing to the child that they are not the result of a mistake or an accident but were handcrafted by the Lord. Many abused children conclude that it is their own fault that they are being treated so poorly or that there is something wrong with them that is causing this treatment, so it is significant as we begin each session to remind them that they were handcrafted by God on purpose, as a choice made by the Lord.

In this prayer liturgy, each member of the Godhead is addressed, one at a time. It is critical to a child’s spiritual formation for them to begin to touch the “Three-in-One” nature of God and for them to begin to identify how or why they may feel more comfortable with one Person of the Trinity while feeling separated from another Person. This is important because a child can tend to lump all their conclusions about God, His character, and their response to Him under one general name: God. Because of this, they find it difficult to discern why they have a certain negative feeling about God: why they don’t trust Him, why they feel constantly judged by Him as being bad or insufficient, why they may even be angry with God. The older child or teen

may even become upset with themselves, thinking, “If Jesus died for me, why can’t I trust Him? If Jesus died for me, why am I angry with Him?”

As a child grows in understanding of the three-fold Personhood of God, they can be led to understand how their life experiences have led them to identify one Person of the Godhead with certain traumas. For example, they may find that while they fully love and trust God for salvation (because of Jesus), they still do not trust God in their daily life situations because a parent did not protect them, provide for them, intervene on their behalf, etc. Thus the parent did not represent God as Father correctly to them, so they love Jesus but can’t trust the Father. Understanding the members of the Trinity in this way helps to unpack specific lies they have believed about God due to the particular traumas they experienced at whose hands.

In the second section of the prayer, the child is led to address Jesus in a step-by-step way that helps them understand who He is and what He did and continues to do for them. It reinforces foundational truths that establish healthy self-esteem and hope when they feel hopeless.

The third section of the prayer addresses the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be with us and in us always (Jn. 14:16-17).¹²⁸ which is such a comforting truth is to the abused child. These specific phrases of prayer concerning the Holy Spirit have been chosen to remind the child that they are never alone. Each phrase reinforces foundational truths that abused children desperately need to know and believe.

The remainder of the prayer addresses issues of the mind and spirit dealing with hearing the Spirit speak in the mind and silencing the voice of the enemy to speak in their mind during this time. This type of prayer may not be familiar to some pastors. One may not feel comfortable

¹²⁸ “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” (Jn. 14:16-17).

in leading a child to pray these prayers. They may not believe that these prayers are necessary or “do” anything. They are encouraged to commit to praying these final prayers regularly in prayer ministry inner healing sessions and to observe the effect those prayers have on the children and even on their own thoughts during the session. Prayers of this sort have been prayed by priests, monks, and pastors throughout Church history and have significant impact on the embodied spirit as we discussed in chapter 3.

PROTOCOL FOR THE FIRST SESSION

The first time a pastor or lay leader meets with a child for the first of however many ministry sessions will follow, there are certain truths that need to be established in the child’s understanding to lay a foundation for the subsequent prayer ministry. This begins with discussing trauma, though the pastor or lay leader will probably not use that particular term. Instead, they may speak of painful, upsetting, or confusing experiences that change how we understand ourselves or who we think we are or how we think we affect others in our life.

This section gives a script for this teaching or explanation time. At first, the pastor or lay leader may feel more comfortable reading the appropriate part of the handbook aloud. Or, the pastor/lay leader may choose to outline the important truths and list the important statements and questions on an index card to refer to while they speak without the script after having become familiar with it. Again, this is for the first session and will not be repeated in the ensuing sessions.

During that first session, once this “introduction to trauma” is completed, the pastor/lay leader may turn back to the Weekly Protocol given earlier as a scaffolding or may continue into the Uncovering Lies Protocol.

THE UNCOVERING LIES PROTOCOL

This protocol is typically interpolated into the Weekly Protocol as part of discussing with the child the issue, traumatic event, or negative feeling highlighted by the Spirit or which arose during the initial few moments of the weekly session. This protocol gives questions to ask the child and gives sample statements to listen for as the child speaks, statements that reveal broken aspects of their belief system which reside in the nexus of body and soul of which we spoke in chapter 3. After several prayer sessions, the pastor/lay leader will begin to get a feel not only for trauma damage to listen for, but also for the lies or false statements to which the child clings. As a lie, false belief, or negative emotion is identified, we move into the responding to the fear, negative emotions, and lies protocol.

RESPONDING TO FEAR, NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, AND LIES PROTOCOL

It is important that the pastor/lay leader remain in the position of a facilitator by guiding the child via questions to pray, asking the Spirit the question, listening for the answer, then listening to the child tell what they felt the Spirit said to them. In the prayer session, we do not want to interpret things for them by telling them or by making statements of interpretation. Rather, we suggest questions for them to ask the Spirit for the Spirit to interpret to them what He is saying. There are several reasons for this. One is because the pastor or lay leader typically is not a trained, licensed counselor. Another is because one goal is to teach the child or teen how to interact with the Lord on their own, a spiritual skill they will need for their entire lifetime. Third, the Holy Spirit knows the heart and mind of the child so much better than we do. The Spirit knows exactly what words, phrases, and word pictures will touch that child at their core. See Appendix B for a lengthy example of this practice in action.

The minister or lay leader may feel uncomfortable guiding the child to pray things like, “Jesus, would You show me where You were when thus-and-such happened to me? How did

You feel about it?” Perhaps they may wonder if the child’s mind will just make up an answer or story. Some worry that Satan or a demon will answer and deceive the child. One must ask what Jesus said about the Father when we ask Him for something, “Which of you would give your child a stone when they asked you for bread?” (Mt. 7:9-11; Lk. 11:11). We believe that God’s ability to speak to us is greater than Satan’s ability to deceive us. We believe that if we approach Him for help and healing in our brokenness, He will not respond by letting us be deceived. He is the God of love who reaches out for His children.¹²⁹

As a fear, negative emotion, or a lie is identified, the pastor/lay leader ought to record it for reference later in the session. Then, once fears, negative emotions, or lies have been identified, the pastor/lay leader should discuss with the child what the perpetrator of the trauma “owes” the child, in a sense. For example, we ask, “What do you think <person> owes you? That is, how should they have treated you?” Then we follow it up by rephrasing it in the terms of “This is what you owed me.” For example, for the child whose mother was an addict and neglected them when they were in their toddler years, “My mother should have fed me when I was hungry. She owes me, or caused me to lose, being cared for lovingly and having my needs met.” For the child who experienced physical abuse at the hands of their father, “My father should not have beat me when he was drunk, high, or angry. He owes me, or caused me to lose, feeling protected and loved, feeling valued as a person.” The pastor/lay leader should take notes on these “debts.”

¹²⁹ “Therefore, a deliberately Wesleyan approach to inner healing must hold to the love of God as its central tenet.” Evan Rohrs-Dodge, “Constructing a Wesleyan Theology and Practice of Inner Healing,” Firebrand Magazine (Spirit & Truth, August 17, 2020), <https://firebrandmag.com/articles/constructing-a-wesleyan-theology-and-practice-of-inner-healing>.

SINGLE-EVENT TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE: FIRST SESSION PROTOCOL

Not every child or youth who has trauma wounds has experienced chronic trauma. As discussed in Chapter 1, some have had one acute traumatic event that deeply affected them. Perhaps they experienced a deadly car accident. Perhaps they had a parent or a sibling or a close classmate die suddenly. Some natural disasters may cause trauma, such as a tornado or flood in one's town or neighborhood. One sudden traumatic event can result in thoughts or feelings that change how the child understands themselves or the Lord, that change how they relate to the world and how they perceive the world relates to them.

This protocol is similar to the "Chronic Trauma" first session, but has been adjusted to address a single traumatic experience, rather than the effects of repeated traumatic experiences. Like the previous protocol for the first session, here the pastor/lay leader uses simple language to introduce the understanding of trauma and its effects, then moves into a discussion of triggers and avoidance responses. Again, this is written in a scripted fashion that the pastor/lay leader may read/recite or note the salient points on an index card once they feel familiar with the topic and can explain it simply.

WEEKLY SESSION PROTOCOL AFTER THE OPENING PRAYER

At this point in the handbook, all the introductory protocols have been covered as well as most of the introductory topics for the child's understanding. Thus, we return to the very first protocol introduced, which will be used in the ensuing sessions. It begins with a flowchart to illustrate the start of a typical session:

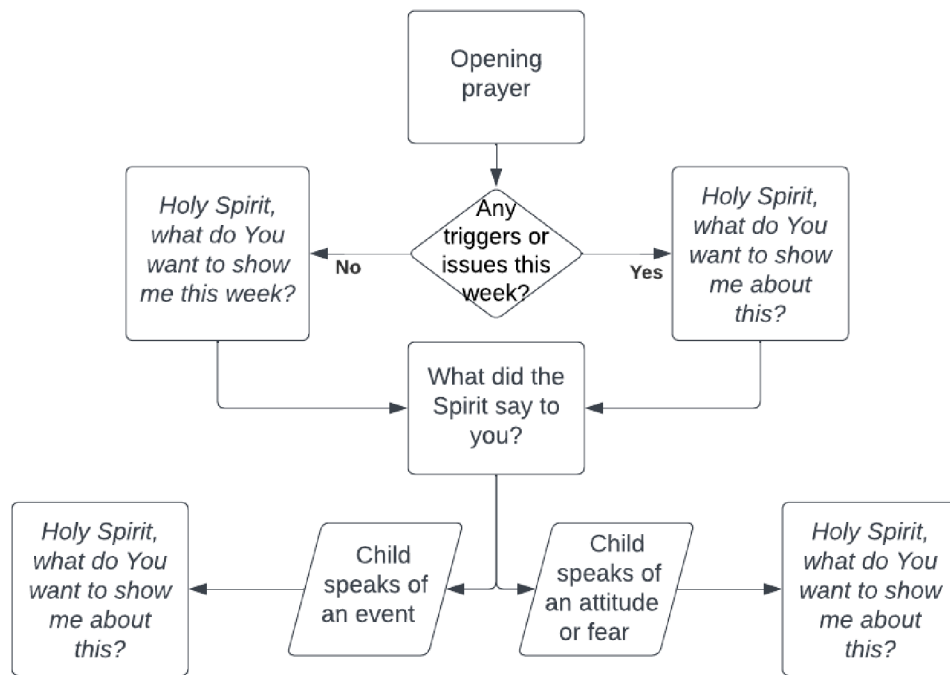


Diagram 1.1

What follows the diagram is similar to a script, but also gives sample questions and comments for the pastor/lay leader either to select from or to compose their own.

As the handbook proceeds through the protocols and prayer liturgies, it uses the < > format repeatedly for pastors/lay leaders to interpolate what fits in the context of their conversation with the child. In this protocol, often one gives prompts such as inviting the child to pray: Holy Spirit, I have been telling myself <the lie >, but I don't know if this is Your truth. Would You show me/tell me what is the truth about <You, me, my parents, the focus of the lie >. The pastor/lay leader will fill in the < > with a name, a statement, or whatever fits in the context.

Keeping with the nature of being a handbook, from time to time it not only offers prompts, but also gives suggestions of what they might do or talk about. This should be helpful for the pastor/lay leader beginning their journey with prayer for inner healing. The longer one

engages in this practice, the more familiar one becomes with what to do in various situations and less guidance will be needed.

THE FORGIVENESS PROTOCOL

Once they have identified the act of trauma or abuse and the perpetrator, they move to a fairly lengthy Forgiveness Protocol. True and healing forgiveness does not happen by merely stating that one forgives the perpetrator. Rather, one must identify the damage their words or actions did to one's body, emotions, or thoughts. Before taking the child through the Forgiveness Protocol for the first time, some instruction should be given about what forgiveness is and what it is not. In the handbook, there is a short script for this. As a secular definition of forgiveness, one might say that forgiveness is relinquishing our need for revenge and releasing negative thoughts of bitterness and resentment. That works biblically as well. However, relatively few children feel the desire for revenge on negligent parents who afflicted trauma and abuse on them. Rather, children normally assume that the trauma and abuse was their own fault and that they deserved it or that what they experienced was just normal. This is why we help the child identify the damage that the words or actions of the perpetrator did to their body, their emotions, or their thoughts.

It is important to stress that forgiveness does not give permission for the person being forgiven to hurt them again. Healthy boundaries are not erased by forgiveness. Rather, forgiveness is choosing to let go of our anger that they did this to us. We stop wishing that they will be punished for it or that something bad would happen to them. We might even ask God to show His love to them.

Various inner healing programs use an empty chair to represent the perpetrator, setting the empty chair in front of the child for them to imagine that person sitting before them so they can speak to that person. This technique was first developed by Fritz and Laura Perls, who

developed Gestalt Therapy in the 1940s. Since then it has been used by therapists from other theoretical orientations as well as by Christian therapists. It is a powerful method for helping people become more aware of and express suppressed thoughts and feelings toward others.¹³⁰

In this protocol, we lead the child through addressing the person they are imagining in the empty seat in front of them. We lead them through expressing what the person did to them, how they felt when it happened (or happened again and again), and what they thought as a result. If it resulted in believing a lie, which it often does, we lead them through communicating to the “person” in the chair what they had concluded falsely and how that lie affected and changed them. Next, we lead the child to express the debt the person owes them due to this offending or traumatic act. Again, it is helpful to have included this during the discussion in the *Responding to Fear, Negative Emotions, and Lies Protocol* and for the pastor/lay leader to have a record of it.

RESOURCES FOR TIMES WHEN THE CHILD CAN’T MAKE ANY FURTHER PROGRESS

At this point in the handbook, some strategies or protocols are suggested to follow when the child or youth feels they cannot hear anything from the Holy Spirit or cannot get any further discernment on the issue on which you are working. The blockage is often related to an as-of-yet unidentified lie they believe or sometimes an act of self-protection or even a sinful practice that needs to be identified and repented of. In this section of the handbook, various ways are given to approach the obstacle.

JESUS, WHERE ARE YOU? WHERE WERE YOU?

We have already addressed the theology of asking the Lord these types of questions and believing that by the Holy Spirit He will answer. Sometimes the child or youth receiving ministry is stuck in an old memory, as it were, and just can’t “get over it” or can’t process what

¹³⁰ Stephan A. Tobin, “The Empty Chair Dialogue in Psychotherapy,” doctortobin.com, May 28, 2012, <https://doctortobin.com/therapist-corner/2019/6/11/the-empty-chair-dialogue-in-psychotherapy>.

happened to them in that situation. At this point, we can ask them, “Would you like to ask Jesus where He was when this happened?”

In the handbook, I give a recounting of how the Lord used this strategy to help me identify why I felt He was always angry with me. It involved the Spirit bringing to my mind the memory of my mother disciplining me in anger when I was a young teen. I wasn’t sure how to interpret that memory or why the Spirit had reminded me of it. My counselor asked, “Would you like to ask Jesus where He was in that memory, at that time?”

So I prayed, “Jesus, would You show me where You were when that happened?” Instantly, in my mind’s eye, I saw Him standing in the doorway of the kitchen where it had happened. He looked very sad. He was holding His arms out to both my mother and me, offering to help reconcile us, but we didn’t see Him because we were focused on our conflict. I asked Him to show me what He saw about my mom at that time, and He showed me that she was treating me the way she had been treated in her own childhood. He showed me that she didn’t really know what was right to do because her parents hadn’t set a good example for her.

That made it easier for me to forgive her, to forgive her for still hitting me with a belt through my teen years, to forgive her for not knowing how to enforce boundaries and rules in a consistent manner. This breakthrough led to me confronting the lies I had believed about God—that I could never please Him, that I could never know when He would be angry with me, that I disappointed Him with my failures—and then I could learn the truth about His character and the truth of His unfailing love for me, His delight in offering me mercy when I repented, and the abounding grace He offered me to help me succeed. All this came from asking Him where He was in the memory. What a great breakthrough it led to in my own spiritual formation!

CONTINUING TO ASK JESUS

This leads to the next strategy. Perhaps the child reports seeing Jesus in the memory, but then asks you why He was there or why didn't He intervene. Instead of interpreting it the memory for them, the pastor/lay leader encourages the child to pray and ask Jesus why He was there, why He did what He did, or what does He want to say to them about the situation in this memory. In his book, *Christian Healing*, Mark Pearson discusses the healing of memories at length in chapter 6. For the pastor/lay leader who wants to learn more of the theology or thinking behind the healing of memories, that would be an excellent place to start.¹³¹

“Continuing to ask Jesus” or continuing to ask the Holy Spirit is a very important concept. The Lord is very willing to help us, to heal those who have experienced trauma, and by continuing to turn the child to ask Him, we don't have to be concerned about misunderstanding or misrepresenting what the Lord is doing in the child's spirit during the session. The handbook gives an illustrative dialogue of this principle employed.

Sometimes as we suggest questions for them to ask the Lord, they may say, “I can't ask God that!” Or, “I can't say that to God.” The best response here is to ask why they can't, and often their response will reveal a foundational lie they have concluded about God. Often they have come to this conclusion based on the abuse or trauma they experienced. Helping them pursue this line of thought until they can identify what it was that led them to the faulty conclusion is key to helping become free from it. Once it is identified, the pastor/lay leader can lead them in a brief prayer to forgive the abuser for having created that particular situation, then lead them in renouncing the lie.

¹³¹ Mark A Pearson, *Christian Healing: A Practical & Comprehensive Guide* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2004), 85-107.

ARE THERE ANY LIES I AM BELIEVING ABOUT MYSELF OR THE LORD?

Another good strategy when the child can't make any progress in understanding the source of their negative emotion or moving forward with other understanding or identification issues is to suggest that they pray, "Father (or Holy Spirit), are there any lies I am believing about myself or the Lord?" Regularly, as an answer to this prayer, the Spirit brings to their mind something they believe is true, but which is not scriptural or actually true. The pastor/lay leader can then pray through the *Responding to Fear, Negative Emotions, and Lies Protocol* with them.

DEALING WITH FEELINGS OF ANGER

Depending on the age and temperament of the child or youth, sometimes encountering a blockage that they can't work through raises feelings of anger in the child. The pastor/lay leader begins by helping them identify with whom they are angry: God, the abuser, themselves, or the person they believe should have intervened but didn't. Next the pastor/lay leader helps them to understand why they are angry with that person by asking some questions about it. If the child has no idea why they are angry, the pastor/lay leader would suggest, "Would you like to ask the Holy Spirit why you feel angry?" The pastor or lay leader may feel it is obvious why the child feels anger towards that person. However, only God can see what hurts and fears are in the heart of that child, and by asking the Holy Spirit, the child's heart is opened to receive understanding about the source of their anger instead of having yet another adult tell them why they are angry.

In the handbook, we take time to discuss possible responses of the child and how the pastor/lay leader might respond to each of these. Examples are given and discussed.

WHEN "ALL ELSE FAILS" AND THE WALL PERSISTS

Despite our best efforts and strategies, that blockage may persist, that hinderance might not be identified, and one might be unsure what to do next. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit has

complete understanding. In the handbook we give several prayers for either the pastor/lay leader or the child to ask the Holy Spirit.

It might not be the time to address the Holy Spirit. The pastor/lay leader must, throughout the ministry session, keep their spiritual ear open to the promptings of the Spirit who is eager to help us. If the session has gone on for some time, perhaps the child has reached their limits for the day: the limits of their attention, the limits of their emotional strength, or even the limits of their physical strength. Processing events and emotions takes a significant amount of physical energy, not merely emotional or mental energy.

However, if it is early in the session or the pastor/lay leader senses there is still progress to be made, they might ask the child, “What are you feeling right now?” If the child can express what they are feeling, the pastor/lay leader may return to the protocol at the place where they explore with the child what is causing or driving that emotion.

If the child replies, “I don’t know what I am feeling,” the pastor/lay leader could ask if they would be open to praying, “Holy Spirit, I don’t know what I am feeling right now. I just feel stuck. Would You help me understand what I am feeling and why I feel that way?” The Spirit might give insight that, again, allows them return to the protocol.

If, after praying this, the child hears nothing from the Spirit or still remains unable to move on, it might be time for the pastor/lay leader to end the session by first thanking the Lord for the healing He has brought thus far and asking Him to continue His work in their heart over the next week, asking Him to bring up situations that help them understand what this wall is, or that give them understanding of what He wants to do next.

ENDING A SESSION PROTOCOL

Although often this protocol will take place after praying through one or more of the prayer liturgies for removing spiritual stronghold which follow, this protocol is included here in

the Protocols section of the handbook. Most, if not all, inner healing ministries recommend ending by praying a blessing over the person receiving ministry. The handbook gives a closing liturgy. It begins with addressing the Triune God, gives the option of ten “blessings” for the pastor/lay leader to choose from and pray one of them over the child based on what transpired in the ministry session, and then has a final closing paragraph to end this liturgy and the session.

There are numerous ways in which the preceding protocols differ from Cognitive Behavior Theory (CBT) sessions. CBT is a psycho-social intervention which, while it also identifies fears and lies in the child’s thinking, seeks to reduce the symptoms of those fears and lies through psychoeducation and cognitive restructuring, rather than addressing the source of those fears and lies. Moreover, CBT deals with the mind and psychosomatic issues governed by the mind, ignoring the nexus of body and soul. Trauma-sensitive spiritual ministry as described above ministers to both the spirit of the child and their mind. In bringing understanding and healing to the spirit and mind not only is the body affected, but spiritual growth occurs and spiritual formation manifests.

LITURGIES TO BREAK SPIRITUAL STRONGHOLDS

The Apostle Paul addresses the nature of a spiritual stronghold in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” Whereas many commentators apply this verse in the strict context of Paul’s struggle with his detractors in Corinth, in the arena of inner healing, we are better served to look at the plain meaning of the words. Paul is speaking, not of fighting with weapons made in the natural (carnal) world, but with weapons whose strength lie in God, presumably spiritual weapons. For what does he employ these weapons? To pull down strongholds (οχυρωμάτων: fortress, castle) which action he goes on to define as

casting down arguments (λογισμοί), which are words, thoughts, ideas, and every high thing (υψωμα) that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. Paul uses υψωμα in Romans 8:38-39 in a list of entities that cannot separate us from God, along with angels, principalities, and powers. These υψωμα that exalt themselves against God, against knowing God, similar in stature to principalities and powers, are defined by Paul in Ephesians (1:21; 3:10) and Colossians (2:10, 15) as demonic beings. In other words, he is suggesting that these spiritual fortresses comprised of thoughts are inhabited by demonic powers.¹³² Stephen Beauchamp states, “A stronghold exists when a demonic spirit has the ability to consistently speak a lie and provoke a negative or sinful behavioral response in us.”¹³³ That is, we may think of a stronghold as a place of demonic incursion into the thoughts of a person, and the λογισμοί or lies as being the doorway of access into the mind. In this sense, as we assist trauma victims by the Holy Spirit to uncover lies or wrong beliefs they have adopted due to the trauma, and as these children repent of their sinful behavioral responses and replace lies with truths, the λογισμοί are cast down and the corresponding stronghold can also be pulled down.

The casting down of these strongholds is necessary for the process of spiritual formation. As Schenck wrote in his commentary on 2 Corinthians 10:5, “Through the power of the Spirit every thought should become an obedient captive to Christ, which is exactly what our holiness heritage understands entire sanctification to be.”¹³⁴ This process of identifying the foundational lies which the child has believed due to the trauma, the correcting of that lie by the Spirit

¹³² “Paul therefore has every intention of taking captive every thought for Christ. The word translated “thought” (noēma) is rendered elsewhere as “mind” and “design.” It is connected in this letter to the activities of Satan, either as part of Satan’s designs to outwit us (2:11), or as the object of Satan’s assault.” David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, vol. 29 New American Commentary (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 437-438.

¹³³ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver: A Guide to Spiritual Warfare and Freedom*, 99.

¹³⁴ Kenneth Schenck, *1 & 2 Corinthians : A Commentary for Bible Students* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Wesleyan Pub. House, 2006), 314.

speaking the truth to the child, along with repenting for believing that lie and forgiving the abuser sets the exact climate needed for tearing down that stronghold, i.e. removing the demonic access by closing that doorway of access.

The prayer liturgies address fifteen strongholds as identified by Drs. Jerry and Carol Robeson.¹³⁵ As the Robesons note, “It is possible to spend hours binding the symptoms. The mortal blow comes, however, when we sever the main root or the strongman who is energizing the activity.”¹³⁶ Each liturgy to break a spiritual stronghold begins by giving various ways to identify a stronghold, such as by examining the lie or lies they have believed and identifying which stronghold would classify that lie. A particular fear or group of fears might identify a stronghold. Finally, a sinful or inappropriate behavior or coping mechanism often reveals a stronghold.

As it can be difficult to hold the details of fifteen strongholds along with the prayer liturgy for each in one’s memory, it is explained that this handbook is intended to be used during the session for referral. Alternatively, it might be helpful to take a picture of each page or scan it to a pdf file that one may keep on their phone for access to it during sessions.

The fifteen strongholds highlighted in the handbook are: fear, lying, heaviness, infirmity, bondage, a deaf and dumb spirit, death, error, haughtiness, jealousy, stupor, perversion, antichrist, divination, harlotry. Each liturgy begins with an introductory paragraph that explains in general terms how that stronghold can manifest in one’s life. The actual prayer liturgy¹³⁷ itself begins with renouncing the stronghold, then continues to repent and renounce a list of behaviors

¹³⁵ Jerry Robeson and Carol Robeson, *Strongman’s His Name...What’s His Game?* (Whitaker House, 2000).

¹³⁶ Carol Robeson and Jerry Robeson, *Strongman’s His Name...What’s Game* (Woodburn, Oregon: Shiloh Publishing House, 1971), 7.

¹³⁷ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual: Spiritual Deliverance Training for Personal and Team Ministry*, 36-54.

along with physical and psychological symptoms that are associated with that stronghold. In the liturgy for the stronghold of perversion, it is noted which of these behaviors are to be renounced only if appropriate in the situation of that child or youth's experience. Otherwise, that particular behavior can be skipped over. For the other strongholds, pastors/lay leaders ought to go through the entire list because, while it might not seem pertinent for the child, it might easily be a sinful behavior in the child's ancestral line (parent, grandparent, great-grandparent), and as the sins of the parents can have repercussions to the third and fourth generations (Ex. 20:5; 34 6-7; Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:9), it is important to cut off that demonic access to the child. Each liturgy ends with a blessing specific to that stronghold.

Following the liturgies is a lengthy and detailed example of using Holy Spirit guidance to identify a negative emotion related to God, its associated trauma, the ensuing lies, working through the forgiveness protocol, and on into taking the teen through the liturgy to break the stronghold associated with that negative emotion and negative response. Notes directed towards the reader giving suggestions to help a session go more smoothly or comfortably follow this dialogue between the pastor and the teen.

FOLLOW UP MINISTRY & DISCIPLESHIP

It is essential to maintain the prayer ministry setting as a place where one facilitates and not a place where one teaches or lectures. At times explanation may be needed, but not corrective teaching. This does not mean that some teaching is not needed. Rather, it is quite necessary, but should be done in a separate session. The handbook suggests that the pastor/lay leader alternate types of meetings, doing prayer ministry one week and a follow up/discipleship meeting the next week.

Once a stronghold has been addressed in prayer does **not** mean that this stronghold will **never** need to be addressed in this person's life again. Strongholds, like wounding, are often

layered, like an onion. The most obvious manifestations and fruit of trauma are dealt with first, then others will “surface” and need to be dealt with in terms of identifying the lies believed, the event that led the child to conclude those lies, identifying God’s truth to replace the lie, and forgiving the person who inflicted the trauma before those next manifestations can be addressed and their power broken.

Discipleship is critical to the child or teen maintaining freedom from the strongholds of demonic assault. Jesus gave a parable about the demon who was cast out, but later returns and, finding the place swept and empty, finds seven other demons worse than himself, and they inhabit the person together (Mt. 12:43-45; Lk. 11:24-26). This informs us that we need to disciple the youth in order to fill in with truth those places that had been occupied by the lies so that there is no spiritually legal ground for the demonic stronghold to remain or return.

Referring to the lengthy example session, the handbook gives suggestions for what might be taught or explained in a follow up discipleship session in this particular case. The handbook ends with a short exhortation to the pastor or lay leader concerning the need for this type of ministry and the benefits it brings.

CHAPTER FIVE: REFLECTIONS AND LEARNINGS

The central argument of this dissertation project is to establish the need for more than psychological counseling for children and youth who are victims of chronic trauma. That is, to establish the need for spiritual ministry to address the false beliefs that victims of chronic trauma have incorporated into their mental, emotional, and spiritual belief system, as well as to establish the connection which such inner healing has to future growth potential in spiritual formation. After demonstrating this need, this dissertation has proposed an inner healing paradigm with protocols and prayer liturgies to equip the pastor, youth worker, and lay members of the congregation to walk children and youth through the traumatic woundings and memories of their life with a view to inviting the Holy Spirit to identify the lies and wounds, then walking these children through the healing process that will free them to love God more, trust Him more, and build an intimate relationship with the Lord.

The artifact in this project is a handbook which begins with the “why” of the need for such spiritual ministry and continues to the “how” of this spiritual ministry. It is the product of research into many inner healing ministries and methods along with personal experience both in receiving inner healing ministry and facilitating inner healing for others. Often inner healing ministries write their training materials using a select, particular vocabulary that may require one to attend their training sessions in order to translate that vocabulary into action. A number of inner healing ministries present inner healing from a particular angle with the particular elements that they feel should be emphasized or unique elements they believe the Lord has revealed to them. Often what they stress is very tied to their own experience.

This handbook is an attempt to put inner healing in the grasp of any pastor or lay worker by combining the unique perspectives into a general protocol that any believer may implement. Every believer, from the moment of their new birth, is sealed with the Holy Spirit and is able to

commune with the Lord through the Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14; cf. John 16:13). Therefore, ministering to others through prayer and the Holy Spirit is available to every believer. This handbook is written in simple and plain language, giving biblical basis, so that pastors, youth workers, and lay ministers may easily learn to practice the ministry of inner healing.

Most churches give direction regarding what living a “good Christian life” should look like in terms of what to do and not to do on a daily/weekly basis. Believers are told what to believe and how to act, but often a believer’s failure to believe what they ought or to behave as they ought is attributed to some sin of which they need to repent. The onus for being a good Christian is placed on the believer, with failure being attributed to the choice of the believer not to obey God or not to believe God. What many churches have failed to do is to look at other influences in a believer’s life that may predispose them to the failure they experience in their relationship with the Lord.

While there are many adults in the Church who are in need of inner healing, this project has chosen the narrow focus of children and teens because currently the Church is hemorrhaging young adults. Somehow our youth are reaching young adulthood without an adequate experience of relationship with the Triune God that convinces them of the reality of this Unseen, Invisible God. Therefore, this project highlights ministry to children and youth, in particular those who have experienced trauma and adverse childhood experiences, with the thinking that if the Church helps children and youth now to heal and to eliminate those obstacles to deep and meaningful relationship with the Triune God, to knowing Him as a healthy Father, as a godly Bridegroom, as One who is utterly trustworthy, then in the next decades our churches have the potential to be filled with believers who are able to press into the fullness of spiritual formation. It takes intentional effort now in order to change the future of the Church.

A survey of Protestant mainline churches done by the Pew Research Center in 2014 revealed that less than one-third of the congregants surveyed were parents of children aged 17 and younger.¹³⁸ This suggests that the average Protestant mainline church does not have a large number of children in Sunday School or youth group. Again, in the light of the hemorrhage of young adults from our churches, with a view to the future of the Church in America, it might behoove some ministers and some churches to launch a ministry in their parish or geographical area that targets and welcomes unchurched children via a ministry outreach that meets a felt need of their unchurched parents.

Another lack in the scope of this dissertation is ministering inner healing to the toddler. In the light of the small size of the average American church, it is likely that more babies and toddler victims of early childhood trauma would be found outside the local church. A local ministry to such children might be best formed as a collaboration of several churches and work with local Child Protection Services to offer this ministry to local foster parents. In developing such a ministry to young children, it might be helpful to recruit a child counselor or psychologist who is a believer to help develop activities such as doll-play, art, etc. to use with toddlers who may not have the verbal skills to freely communicate what happened to them. It would be quite interesting for a church to activate their retired congregants in the ministry of inner healing for babies, toddlers, and young children.

One area of childhood trauma that warrants further exploration is trauma inflicted upon neurodiverse children by neurotypical children in their schools, Sunday School classes, and

¹³⁸ Pew Research Center, "Religious Landscape Study," Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project (Pew Research Center, 2015), <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/religious-landscape-study/compare/parent-of-children-under-18/by/religious-denomination/among/religious-tradition/mainline-protestant/>.

youth groups. Neurodiversity can be a result of nature (genetic and innate) or nurture (trauma).¹³⁹ Typical presentations of neurodiversity in children and teens include ADHD, Asperger's (ASD1), Tourette's Syndrome, and a variety of chronic mental health illnesses.¹⁴⁰ As much as 15-20% of the world population demonstrates neurodivergence,¹⁴¹ meaning that as much as 80-90% of each classroom is neurotypical and finds the behaviors of the neurodivergent child socially abnormal. This results in bullying and extreme teasing which is often very traumatic for the neurodivergent child who is typically more sensitive and less able to regulate their response to teasing and bullying. Because the symptoms of Asperger's (high functioning autism/ASD1) presents much more subtly in girls than boys,¹⁴² only currently is the psychological world coming to understand how many girls are not merely quiet and withdrawn, but are actually neurodiverse in this area. Girls with Asperger's suffer silently with the trauma of not understanding the complexities of female social interactions, not only feeling constantly outside, "other-than," and broken but often experiencing severe taunting by their peers. A trauma-sensitive approach to spiritual counseling that targets neurodiverse children would require a deep exploration of neurodiversity, its traits, and its causes and would greatly benefit neurodiverse children and teens.

Teens struggling with drug and alcohol abuse would also benefit from trauma-sensitive counseling, as the abuse is typically covering up pain from childhood trauma. Research might

¹³⁹ Caroline Miller, "What Is Neurodiversity?," Child Mind Institute (Child Mind Institute, Manhattan, NY, April 21, 2023), <https://childmind.org/article/what-is-neurodiversity/>.

¹⁴⁰ Wake Forest University, "What Is Neurodiversity? Definition and Resources | Wake Forest University," WFU Online Counseling (Wake Forest University, August 7, 2020), <https://counseling.online.wfu.edu/blog/what-is-neurodiversity/#:~:text=In%20other%20words%2C%20some%20children.>

¹⁴¹ Nancy Doyle, "Neurodiversity at Work: A Biopsychosocial Model and the Impact on Working Adults," *British Medical Bulletin* 135, no. 1 (2020): 108–25, <https://doi.org/10.1093/bmb/ldaa021>.

¹⁴² Mark Hutten, "The 'Female Version' of Aspergers," [myaspergerschild.com](https://www.myaspergerschild.com), February 2010, <https://www.myaspergerschild.com/2011/02/female-version-of-aspergers.html>.

need to be done in order to develop an approach that specifically targets the needs and wounds of each teen addict, though this handbook provides a significant starting point for intervention in these teen's lives.

Not only is an inner healing ministry to children and teens warranted, but churches would benefit from an inner healing ministry for all their congregants. Imagine if every believer who felt stymied in their relationship with the Lord, struggling with fears about God's sufficiency to intervene on their behalf or whatever else was their struggle, had available to them two or three people who would sit with them to pray and wait on the Lord specifically to discern what is the issue blocking their progress. Is there a lie they have believed as true? Is there a wound and a resulting survival mechanism or behavior in their life that is the hinderance to moving forward? Many believers are silently frustrated with their current experience of and interaction with the Lord. Imagine if inner healing became common in our churches. Imagine if it were not a stigma to admit that one was not enjoying their Christian life or making progress in their relationship with the Lord. Imagine if people didn't have to put on their "Sunday" face on the way to church, but if they actually wore that "Sunday" face every day because of the peace and joy in their relationship with the Lord.

What would it take for the average local church to begin and sustain an inner healing ministry such as this? Given that some 57% of the churches in America have 100 or fewer attending their weekly worship service¹⁴³ and only 1 in 10 churches in America average 250 or more per week,¹⁴⁴ most churches would need to train only two or three people who would be willing to be available at some point to do ministry, either weekly, monthly, or on an as-needed

¹⁴³ Aaron Earls, "Small, Struggling Congregations Fill U.S. Church Landscape - Lifeway Research," [research.lifeway.com](https://research.lifeway.com/2019/03/06/small-struggling-congregations-fill-u-s-church-landscape/), March 6, 2019, <https://research.lifeway.com/2019/03/06/small-struggling-congregations-fill-u-s-church-landscape/>.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

basis. The skill of inner healing ministry is a valuable tool in the toolbox of any local church pastor, as it not only complements pastoral counseling, but also often provides a breakthrough for the congregant.

Moreover, as a minister becomes more familiar with inner healing, with the lies people adopt due to childhood negative experiences—for example, being picked on in school—then the pastor in the application portions of their sermons can address what possible lies someone in their congregation may have adopted due to whatever kind of negative experience often leads a child to that wrong assumption and in their application of the scripture they have expounded demonstrate the truth of God that contradicts that lie. Moreover, they can invite any person who finds themselves in that “truth struggle” to make an appointment with them to pray about it. In other words, this handbook about inner healing opens a doorway to ministry that can touch everyone in their congregation, not merely the troubled youth. The books referenced in the handbook give much more information for the pastor who, after implementing the model in the book, decides it would be beneficial for the congregants if that pastor went further in understanding the ways that various woundings keep people from progressing deeper in their spiritual formation. Inner healing for child victims of chronic abuse and trauma is but the start of a ministry from which every congregant may benefit.

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APPENDIX A: SAMPLE OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I thank You for making me.

(The child repeats each line.)

I thank You for forming me in my mother's womb.

I thank You for giving me life so that I might have the opportunity to know You, forever.

I thank You, Father, that You sent the Son to make a way for me to be with You, even now.

Jesus, I thank You for coming to this earth,

for living a life I could not live,

dying a death I should have died,

and taking your life back up again so that I can take my life up in You.

I thank You for making a way for me to know the Father.

Thank You for returning to Him so that You could send the Holy Spirit to me, so I would never know a moment without You.

Holy Spirit, I thank You for coming to me.

I thank You that You've never left me.

You never abandon me.

I thank You that You are always with me.

I thank You that You are my Helper, my Teacher, my Comforter, and my Guide.

I repent and renounce anything false I've turned to for Help, Teaching, Comfort, or Guidance.

I commit to come to You and You alone, Holy Spirit.

I dethrone my own mind with its thoughts;

And I enthrone the Mind of Christ so I may hear His thoughts.

I silence the voice of the Enemy, the Accuser, and the Deceiver.

I bind every spirit that exalts itself against the Testimony of Jesus.

I even silence my own thoughts and want to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

In the name and authority of Jesus, Amen.

APPENDIX B: SAMPLE USING HOLY SPIRIT GUIDANCE

Youth pastor: Nancy, on Sunday you said you were struggling to trust God, and I asked you to think about why you feel that way. Have you identified any thoughts about why you feel like that?

Nancy: Well, for one, I don't trust Him because I don't even know how He feels about me.

Youth Pastor: What do you mean?

Nancy: I feel like while God likes me sometimes, most of the time He is just watching for me to fail so He can punish me. How can I trust someone who waits for me to fail and who wants to punish me?

Youth Pastor: Let's ask the Spirit to show you why you feel that way about God.

Nancy: Holy Spirit, would You show me why I feel God is just waiting for me to fail so He can punish me.

(Both remain silent for a moment or so).

YP: Did the Holy Spirit show you anything or say anything to you?

Nancy: Well, I started thinking about how I feel this way about my dad, too. Some days, it doesn't matter so much how I behave or what I say, but other days, I can do or say the same thing that I did the day before, only this time he gets really angry with me for saying that or doing that, and if I ask him why it was okay yesterday, but not today, he yells at me for questioning him.

YP: Let's ask the Holy Spirit to show us why that is upsetting for you.

Nancy: Holy Spirit, would You show me why it bothers me when my dad treats me like this.

(Both remain silent for a moment or so).

YP: Did the Holy Spirit show you anything or say anything to you?

Nancy: I saw like puddles of quicksand throughout my house, but I don't ever know where they are and I never know when I'm going to step in one. Sometimes I'm just doing what I've been doing for days, walking where I walked before, and then, oops! I step in the quicksand and I'm in trouble again.

YP: Do you have any understanding of that picture or shall we ask the Holy Spirit to give you insight?

Nancy: I think it showed me that because I don't know what my dad will get angry about at any time, it makes it hard to walk confidently. I'm always worried that I will displease him and he will hit me or yell at me very loudly which scares me.

YP: How do you think this relates to how you feel about God and His trustworthiness? Often we do define God by how our parents treated us, since they are the first authority we experience over us.

Nancy: Yeah, I can see that. I mean, I think God is just like my dad. I think He is always watching me to catch me making a mistake even though I don't really know what He wants me to do. I think that I don't believe I can ever please God just like I feel I can never please my dad.

YP: Would you say that you do not believe God has your best interests at heart? Like He is just looking to punish you?

Nancy: Yeah, I do.

YP: Often when we experience wounding like this from a person, and then we transfer that characteristic to God, we actually have to work through the wounding and forgive that person before we can confront the lie that we have believed about God's character. Would you be willing to work through your pain with your father and ask the Lord to help you forgive your dad?

Nancy: I don't know if I can really forgive my dad, but I can try.

YP: From what you have said, it sounds like your father's inconsistency in discipline and his anger have resulted in damaging your relationship with God and keeping you from being able to feel the Father's love and complete acceptance of you. We could pray through forgiving your dad for that, unless you want to ask the Holy Spirit if there is anything else He wants to heal in you today?

Nancy: Honestly, I think that's all my heart can take working through today. Just what we have talked about so far is so surprising to me. I had no idea I felt like that!

YP: Well, the Holy Spirit wants to heal our hearts. He wants to help us find all the lies that we have concluded due to ways that others have treated us wrongly so that He can replace them with the truth so that, as Paul said in Romans 5:5, He can help us fully feel the love of God in our hearts.

We want to work through what your dad did, what you need to forgive him for, telling him the debt he has towards to you, taking those debts to the Cross and asking Jesus what He will give you in exchange for those debts as you lay them at the cross and as you forgive your dad just as you have been forgiven through the death and resurrection of Christ.

So here's what I'd like you to do, Nancy. I'm going to put this empty chair in front of you. [Move an empty chair into position.] I want you to imagine that your dad is sitting right there in front of you. You know, we tend to think that we can't forgive someone unless they apologize to us. On the cross, Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they're doing." That means Jesus was also forgiving them, even though they had not apologized. When we forgive someone, it might not change them, but it changes us. When we forgive others, God fills our heart with His peace and love. When we forgive others, then bitterness can no longer take up residence in our hearts.

So, I want you to imagine your dad is sitting right there in front of you. Can you see him there? Okay, now I want you to speak to him. Say, “Dad, your actions in this area of discipline and anger have wounded me.” Then I want you to list the consequences that his actions have had in your life.

Nancy: “Dad, I have been really hurt by the way you have treated me with such anger when I don’t even understand how I’ve broken your rules. Because your standards change from day to day, I feel like I never know if I am going to step in quicksand or not. I guess I feel a lot of fear when I am around you because I’m afraid you will get very mad at me, I’m afraid what you will do to me.

Nancy pauses.

YP: Would you like to tell your dad the consequences his behavior has had upon your relationship with God the Father and what it has cost you?

Nancy: Dad, you have been a really bad example to me of God the Father. I can’t see His true character because I think He is just like you. I can’t trust Him because I don’t find you trustworthy. You have cost me an intimate relationship with God.

YP: What about your feelings that you can’t please God or your dad?

Nancy: Dad, I don’t believe that I can ever please God because you are rarely pleased with me and find fault with me so often. You have cost me the ability to feel really loved by God.

YP: Repeat after me a few things. First, “Dad, I forgive you for this.”

Nancy: “Dad, I forgive you for this.”

YP: Tell your dad, “Jesus paid this debt you owe me when He died on the cross, so the debt can be cancelled.

Nancy: Dad, Jesus paid this debt you owe me when He died on the cross, so this debt can be cancelled.

YP: Tell your dad, “You don’t owe me anything for this now. I forgive you.”

Nancy: Dad, you don’t owe me anything for this now. I forgive you.

YP: Tell your dad, “I release you from further payment for these injuries you cause me.”

Nancy: Dad, I release you from further payment for these injuries you cause me.”

YP: Now we want to bless your dad in the name of Jesus. Maybe you want to imagine a gift you are giving him. Maybe you want to bless him with a loving relationship with Jesus. Maybe you want to bless him with healing for the painful experiences in his childhood. You say what you want: “Dad, I bless you with...”

Nancy: Dad, I want to bless you with healing for the way your parents treated you when you were a child. I want to bless you with peace for your anger. I want to bless with you with a closer relationship with the Lord.

YL: Sometimes when a person hurts us, we make a judgment against them, like we decide they are a bad dad or that they failed as a parent or some other thoughts about their

character. I'd like you to pray this after me: "Holy Spirit, if I have made a false judgment against my dad, please show me."

Nancy: Holy Spirit, if I have made a false judgment against my dad, please show me.
It is silent 30 seconds or so as Nancy listen to see if the Holy Spirit has anything to show her..

YL: Did the Lord speak anything to you? If so, what did He say?

Nancy: He said that I have judged my dad to always be mean and unfair.

YL: So now I'd like you to pray, "Lord, I see how I have made this judgment against my dad that he is mean, and unfair, and can't really love me."

Nancy: God, I see how I have made this judgment against my dad that he is mean, and unfair, and can't really love me."

YL: Say, "I repent for having judged him instead of leaving judgment to You."

Nancy: I repent for having judged him instead of leaving judgment to You.

YL: Say, "Please remove that judgment off my dad and off me, too. I don't want to be mean and unfair."

Nancy: God, please remove that judgment off my dad and off me, too. I don't want to be mean and unfair."

YL: say, "I break agreement with the lie that You, Heavenly Father, will treat me like my earthly father."

Nancy: I break agreement with the lie that You, Heavenly Father, will treat me like my earthly father.

YL: say, "I break agreement with the lie that You are angry."

Nancy: I break agreement with the lie that You are angry.

YL: say, "I receive the truth that you are kind, patient, slow to anger and quick to love. You are full of love for me."

Nancy: I receive the truth that you are kind, patient, slow to anger and quick to love. You are full of love for me.

APPENDIX C: ACE SURVEY

My Home Life & Faith

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aoMVDmmov7apnUtPcmGR_4GX...

My Home Life & Faith

This survey is an anonymous look at your home life during the years you were growing up, so prior to your 18th birthday, particularly looking at negative situations or events (often called Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACE's) that may have shaped your construct of God and how to relate to Him.

Note: some of these questions may trigger negative emotions, particularly if you are recalling traumatic events in your childhood. If that may be too overwhelming for you, please exit the survey now.

Remember, this is anonymous, so to be most helpful to the doctoral student doing this research, please answer accurately, from your own truth as you remember your childhood to be.

In order to participate in this research study, it is necessary that you give your informed consent. Please consider the following points before indicating your consent below with your signature:

- I understand that I am participating in psychological research.
- I understand that all of my answers will be kept anonymous and that they will not be linked in any way to my identity.
- I understand that participation in research is not required, that it is voluntary, and that, after any individual research project has begun, I may refuse to participate further without penalty.
- I understand that I will NOT receive any course credit or extra credit for my participation in this study.
- I understand that there are no likely risks associated with this study. However, this research does require a small time commitment (15 minutes). It is unlikely that I will experience any discomfort or distress as I participate; however, if I should happen to have such an experience, I can contact Dr. Marcus Kilian, (859) 858-3511, a licensed psychologist and professor at AU.

* Indicates required question

ACE Questions

1. Before your 18th birthday, did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... *

swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you?

or

act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?

Check all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Before your 18th birthday, did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... *

push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or

ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

Check all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Before your 18th birthday, did an adult or person at least five years older than you ever... *

touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?

or

attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?

Check all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. Before your eighteenth birthday, did you often or very often feel that... *

no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?

or

your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?

Check all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Before your 18th birthday, did you often or very often feel that... ★

you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?

or

your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?

Check all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. Before your 18th birthday, was a biological parent ever lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason? ★

Check all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. Before your 18th birthday, was your mother or stepmother: ★

often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her?

or

sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?

or

ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?

Check all that apply.

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Before your 18th birthday, did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs? *

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

9. Before your 18th birthday, was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide? *

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

10. Before your 18th birthday, did a household member go to prison? *

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Home Environment Questions

11. In your home, did you experience either of your parents: *

Check all that apply.

	at least once daily	at least once weekly	at least once monthly	at least once yearly	Rarely	Never
tearing you down	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
setting unreasonable expectations for you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
threatening or terrorizing you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
demeaning or belittling you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
bullying you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
dismissing or invalidating you and your feelings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
degrading or objectifying you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolating you from family and friends?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
shaking you for an extended time when	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**you were
little?**

**hitting or
beating you
with a fist or
an object in
anger?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**burning you
with hot
water, a
cigarette, or
an iron?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

kicking you?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

tying you up?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**depriving you
of air or
holding you
underwater?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**failing to give
you medical
care or
treatment
when
needed?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**denying you
food,
clothing, or
shelter?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**abandoning
or locking
you in a room
for hours on
end?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**leaving you
at home**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

alone without
a caregiver
or with
neglectful
caregivers?

making you
believe you
were
responsible
for their
abusive
behavior or
that you
brought the
verbal or
physical
abuse upon
yourself?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

making you
believe you
were
responsible
for the
family's
problem or
problems?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

belittling you
or
demeaning
you, but with
humor or
sarcasm so
they could
deny they
were being
negative?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

made you
question
your

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

**experience of
reality?**

**humiliating
you publicly
or in front of
your friends?**

☐☐☐☐☐☐

**using words
to
manipulate
you, such as
"If you really
loved me,
you wouldn't
x, y, z"?**

☐☐☐☐☐☐

**giving you
the silent
treatment for
no reason?**

☐☐☐☐☐☐

12. Do you struggle with feelings of *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not really	A little	Often	A lot
Anxiety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Depression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doubts about God	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doubts about living	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nihilism (concluding life is meaningless)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regret	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sadness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aggression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Apathy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being neglected	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being unworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being vulnerable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Self-doubt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Alienation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Being Numb	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doubting anyone's authenticity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"No one is safe or trustworthy"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"No one really looks out for me but me"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hyper- vigilance/PTSD /constantly assessing threats in your environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Who Am I?

These questions are optional but will help evaluation of statistics.

13. Gender assigned at birth

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ male
- ☐ female

14. Gender with which I identify

Mark only one oval.

☐ male

☐ female

☐ non-binary

☐ pangender

☐ gender neutral

☐ Other: _____

15. My age range

Mark only one oval.

☐ 18-22

☐ 23-27

☐ 28-35

ARTIFACT: TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SPIRITUAL MINISTRY TO YOUTH & CHILDREN

(See accompanying file.)

TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SPIRITUAL MINISTRY TO YOUTH & CHILDREN

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PREFACE

This is an area of ministry that is very dear to my heart and experience. My mother was raised in the traumatic atmosphere of an alcoholic father and highly co-dependent mother who, for all intents and purposes, enabled him during my mother's childhood. She, in turn, as an "Adult Child of an Alcoholic (ACA) raised me with randomly-enforced boundaries and discipline, and she imparted to me many of her co-dependent behaviors. My own healing journey began when I was the mother of two small children and realized I needed to begin to deal with my "mother wound" issues if I were to have any hope of implementing the godly parenting style I had seen modeled in my pastor's family and other Christian families.

My first experience of inner healing was in the context of the Elijah House ministry model. Over the next few decades I benefitted from Living Waters ministry teaching and their model, from the Sozo model, and from the Prisoners of Hope (POH) first model. Due to mental health issues with my husband, in our home the children and I experienced domestic abuse traumas. We benefitted greatly from two years of counseling in a cognitive-based therapy model at Synergy Services (synergyservices.org).

Thus I have experienced firsthand trauma-sensitive counseling, both secular and spiritual. I have seen the benefits to both approaches and have been firmly convinced that both are needed. What I have also experienced is the lack of trauma-sensitive spiritual ministry in the evangelical and mainline denominations and churches. Moreover, I have encountered a number of people who engage in spiritual prayer ministry in the charismatic church who treat these truths as if one has to be a specially and highly trained believer in a spiritual sense in

order to be effective in this ministry, requiring people to train extensively through their particular ministry program.

My hope with this project is to see trauma-sensitive prayer ministry opened to the Body of Christ at large. Every believer is filled with the Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14) and can walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16). May the Lord use many of us, yea, each of us to minister to children who struggle to come near Him in an intimate relationship due to childhood trauma and abuse.

Kathi DeCanio

PART ONE: A CASE FOR TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SPIRITUAL MINISTRY

CHAPTER ONE: THE NEED FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED DISCIPLESHIP PRACTICES AND COUNSELING RELATED TO CHILDREN AND TEENS

John¹ and his sister obediently climbed into my friend's car. I asked my friend who they were. "My foster kids. Their parents are addicts. We hope to adopt them," he answered. Within a year, they had adopted John, but not his sister. When I asked why, I was told they had discovered that she had been abusing her brother and so could not continue to stay with him in their home. I've watched John and his adoptive parents for some eighteen years now. Across the years, John struggled with reactive attachment disorder; even after fifteen years he still struggled to believe that his parents or anyone for that matter really had his best interests at heart. Every relationship he had was clothed in self-protection. This included his relationship with God, even though his new family led the entire children's ministry at a large church.

At the start and for the first five years, he always tried to manipulate to get what he thought he needed. Hyper-vigilant, he was unable to settle due to his need to be in control. He didn't even know what he actually liked or disliked in terms of foods, colors, movies, toys. His

¹ I have known John (not his real name) since prior to his adoption by my friends, about eighteen years.

² U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. "Preventing Child Abuse & Neglect." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. U.S. Department of

favorites changed based on what he thought the person asking him wanted to hear. He did not know the difference between a need and a want. If he wanted something, he would obsess over it until he got it any way he could; all his wants were “needs” to him. John also struggled with cause and effect thinking. It wasn’t until after five years in a stable, loving environment that he began to improve, though after ten years he still didn’t know that “wants” weren’t “needs.” He still struggled being vulnerable, particularly about mistakes or sin.

According to the CDC, in 2020, one in seven children experienced child abuse and/or neglect by their primary care giver (parents, grandparents, etc.).² Children in healthy homes learn that their parents and other adults who care about them can be trusted and will be reliable, consistent, available to them, and will protect them. Children in unhealthy, unpredictable, or abusive homes sadly lack that healthy foundation for interpersonal relationships and, in particular, relationships with authority figures.³ These children are pre-disposed to struggle with having a relationship with God as a heavenly Father, the Sovereign Director of Human History, or other roles that God has in our lives. As a pastor, youth leader, or Sunday School teacher, you are likely to encounter three types of children and youth related to childhood trauma:

- Children who have experienced significant trauma and loss (complex trauma) within the first ten years

Health & Human Services. Accessed March 15, 2021.
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>.

³ Joy D. Osofsky, *Young Children and Trauma : Intervention and Treatment*. (New York: Guilford Press, 2004), 4.

of their life, who may or may not be living with birth parents;

- Children who have experienced on-going trauma relating to their relationship with parents or other authority figures;
- Children who have experienced one life-altering trauma (e.g. death of a parent; family-altering circumstances like homelessness, etc.) or experience such a trauma while under one's spiritual oversight.

This book addresses the spiritual formation of traumatized children who are victims of complex trauma, how the consequences of their particular complex traumas may affect their spiritual growth, why trauma-informed counseling and discipleship is necessary for their healing and spiritual growth, as well as provide a possible framework for assisting children and youth in the spiritual arena of their recovery.

Children who have experienced what you might feel is mild trauma in their home, such as having a parent who doesn't maintain healthy boundaries, who is extremely inconsistent with discipline [i.e.. what the child did yesterday with no discipline consequence may be done today only to have the parent respond rapidly with great anger, loud shouts, and perhaps even physical discipline]

⁴ Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center, "What Is Trauma?" (Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2018).
<https://www.traumainformedcare.chcs.org/what-is-trauma/>.

⁵ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. "TIP 57: Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services | SAMHSA Publications." Samhsa.gov.(U.S. Department Of Health and Human Services:

may also benefit by working through some of the prayer liturgies in the second half of this book.

DEFINITIONS

We need to begin with definitions for key terms used in the discussion of trauma and trauma-care, particularly with regard to children and youth so that we are all on the same page.

In the context of this book, *trauma* may be defined as the result of “exposure to an incident or series of events that are emotionally disturbing or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual’s functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, and/or spiritual well-being.”⁴ These are children who have experienced complex trauma which is the pervasive impact of exposure to multiple or prolonged traumatic events.⁵ “Complex trauma impacts multiple domains including affect, attachment, behavior, biology, cognition and perception, self-image, and academic functioning in addition to standard Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms.”⁶ Again, PTSD can be considered a spectrum. A child who has a parent with great anger issues, poor consistency in discipline, and poor boundaries can develop a form of PTSD, though not as severe as the child exposed to worse trauma.

Washington D.C., 2014), xvi. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/TIP-57-Trauma-Informed-Care-in-Behavioral-Health-Services/SMA14-4816>.

⁶ Judith A. Cohen, Anthony P. Mannarino, Matthew Kliethermes, and Laura A. Murray. 2012. “Trauma-Focused CBT for Youth with Complex Trauma.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 36, no. 6: 528–41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2012.03.007>.

Another term used when speaking of childhood trauma is an Adverse Childhood Experience or an *ACE*. They are categorized in three major groupings: Abuse, Neglect, Dysfunction, particularly the dysfunction of the child's primary care-takers and dysfunction in the home environment. While dysfunction in the home typically results in neglect and abuse, the experience of dysfunction results in a particular type of wounding in the spirit of the child, the feeling of a particular type of betrayal, and often different, though wrong, conclusions drawn by the child.

Today, we hear the term, *trauma-informed counseling* or *trauma-informed health care*. Being "trauma-informed" begins with an understanding of various trauma-causing experiences and the impact each can have on a person, as well as on their settings and relationships.⁷ To engage well in trauma-informed counseling, we must lay aside our own pre-conceived ideas about what the traumatic experience should or should not have caused. We must identify our own cultural, spiritual, emotional, and personal lenses in order to hear the heart of the traumatized individual so that we may engage the individual where they are at, not at we think they ought to be.

What are *trauma-causing experiences*? They are many: physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; childhood neglect; living with a family member with mental health or substance use disorders; sudden separation from a loved one, such as by death, divorce, illness, or incarceration, particularly when the circumstances are not fully explained to the child; poverty; becoming homeless; racism,

⁷ SAMSA, "TIP 57," xix.

⁸ Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center, <https://www.traumainformedcare.chcs.org/what-is-trauma/>.

discrimination, and oppression; violence in the community, war, or terrorism.⁸

The treatment of a child that results in harm, the potential for harm, or the threat of imminent harm is labeled ***child abuse***.⁹ Types of child abuse include: verbal, emotional, physical, sexual abuse, as well as neglect or abandonment.

Often we are unaware of ***verbal and emotional abuse***, particularly as generations of humans have both been verbally and emotionally abused by their parents as well as verbally and emotionally abusing their own children, simply because it is an accepted part of the society's culture. Today we deem it as abuse if an 8-year-old child is denied education and is sent to work full-time with the parents collecting the child's wages. However, just 200 years ago, for the majority of households in the United States and Europe, that was simply survival. Every able-bodied member in the family contributed towards the income and viability of the family, no matter their age.

Verbal and emotional abuse includes demeaning or belittling the child; name-calling; criticizing beyond what is reasonable; unrealistic expectations of the child; dismissing or invalidating the child and their feelings; threatening or terrorizing the child; isolating the child; degrading or objectifying the child; ignoring appropriate boundaries; bullying or cyberbullying; regularly being emotionally absent or unavailable to a child.

Again, a parent with great anger issues, poor consistency in discipline, and poor boundaries can inflict

⁹ Sarah Sheppard, "What Are the Most Common Types of Child Abuse?" Verywell Mind. Dotdash Media, Inc. October 25, 2021. <https://www.verywellmind.com/the-most-common-types-of-child-abuse-5206304?>

spiritually-debilitating verbal and emotional abuse upon their child. This often plays into the child's "God-concept," resulting in the child internalizing God as angry and having very strict rules that one never knows if and when they have broken those rules.

Physical abuse is more clear in our thinking. It includes beating or hitting a child with a fist or object without restraint or control and in anger or with taunting; burning a child (with a cigarette, hot water, hot object); tying a child up; severely shaking a baby or toddler; holding a child underwater; depriving a child of air by choking; kicking a child, withholding food or starving a child as punishment.

Sexual Abuse is something we often do not want to consider. However, it is all too prevalent in many homes. It includes touching or treating a child in any sexual manner; exposing a child to sexual behavior or forcing them to watch it; an adult exposing their genitalia to a child; forcing a child to perform sex acts.

Neglect/Abandonment is also quite clear in our thinking. It includes not providing food, clothing, or shelter to a child; leaving a young child at home alone or with neglectful or abusive caregivers; exposing a child to domestic abuse; locking a child in a room, basement, or shed for hours on end; failing to provide needed medical care or treatment for a child; failing to enroll a child in school or denying them an education.

We wrote earlier about dysfunction. Categories of ***household dysfunction*** include mental illness in the family; incarcerated relative; substance abuse in the family; misogyny or violent treatment of mother or sibling; divorce.

CHAPTER TWO:
TRAUMA/ACEs AFFECT A CHILD’S DEVELOPMENT
MENTALLY, EMOTIONALLY, AND SOCIALLY

Brain Structure and Thinking Patterns Alterations

Exposure to childhood trauma, particularly chronic or prolonged trauma, impairs a child’s ability to function, particularly in the areas of brain development, regulation of emotions, attachment, and cognitive and behavioral functioning.¹⁰ More specifically, traumatized children and youth have difficulties in balancing emotions and impulses, decreased ability in the arena of self-aware thinking, and a higher risk of anxiety disorders, reactive attachment disorder, oppositional defiance disorder, bipolar disorder, major depression, personality disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and psychosis, as well as developing mental health issues later on.¹¹ Issues such as difficulty with attention and focus, learning disabilities, low self-esteem, and impaired social skills can be seen in otherwise intelligent children due to trauma or abuse.

Note that some children are born genetically speaking, with altered brain structures that present as ADHD or mild Autism-scale disorders (previously called Asperger’s Syndrome). This is not a result of trauma in their early years. Moreover, they can’t be “fixed” or healed through inner healing or deliverance, though prayers and

¹⁰ AOC Center for Families, Children & the Courts, “The Effects of Complex Trauma on Youth” (San Francisco, CA, 2014), 1-2.

¹¹ Leonard Holmes, “Childhood Abuse and Neglect Actually Change Brain Structure,” pdf, Verywell Mind. Dotdash Media, Inc. November 15, 2021, 3. <https://www.verywellmind.com/childhood-abuse-changes-the-brain-2330401?>. Accessed Dec. 19, 2021.

¹² Shelly Rambo, “How Christian Theology and Practice Are Being Shaped by Trauma Studies,” The Christian Century, November 1, 2019. Pdf, 3.

the process of inner healing may heal wounds they have sustained merely because they are different from most or all of their peers.

Physical Implications of Complex Trauma

Traumatic memories are stored as body memories in the limbic system,¹² which is the system of nerves and networks in the brain that regulate one's instincts and mood, controlling the basic emotions of fear, pleasure, and anger as well as the basic drives of hunger, sex, dominance, and care for others. When something in one's environment or situation triggers a memory of the trauma, bodily sensations actually alert the body to respond to danger, even if the current context is not threatening to them. Hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline are released as in a fight-or-flight response. Physically speaking, the body moves to high alert.

Even when not triggered, the traumatized child may experience frequent headaches, stomachaches, or similar illness. They may be constantly hungry, exhausted, or be unable to eat, show signs of deteriorating health, hair loss, or have untended wounds. In addition, "children who have not had their physical needs met have often not developed the correct pathways in their brain that carry signals around pain, temperature, thirst, hunger, and satiety."¹³ Therefore, they may over-react to changes in their physical conditions.

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/critical-essay/how-christian-theology-and-practice-are-being-shaped-trauma-studies>. Last accessed December 19, 2021.

¹³ Sarah Naish, *The A-Z of Therapeutic Parenting Strategies and Solutions* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 2018), 27.

Social or Behavioral Implications of Complex Trauma^{14,15}

Physical behaviors of complex trauma include: nightmares, bedwetting, eating issues, sensory issues, speech difficulties, discomfort while undressing, withdrawing when touched, mentally and emotionally disconnected at physical exams by the doctor, and excessive crying in infants.

Social behaviors include: inability to concentrate, displaying fear around parents/caregivers, or peer group, development of phobias, inability to interact with other children (doesn't engage at all or engages disruptively), unexplained bouts of irritability or sadness, defiance, aggression (hitting, kicking, punching, biting, threatening actions/words, using objects as weapons, throwing objects, damaging objects), exaggerated or uncontrollable impulsivity, inability to understand cause-and-effect, very controlling, lack of empathy or remorse, hypervigilance, and social anxiety.

These behaviors, particularly those which are displayed in public, not only impact the spiritual formation of the child but also the environment and therefore spiritual formation of other children in the class or youth group. How a leader addresses these negative behaviors in the group setting also has an impact on the spiritual formation of the children in the group as the leader is actually

¹⁴ The American Bar Association's Capital Clemency Resource Initiative, "Complex Trauma | Capital Clemency Resource Initiative Clearinghouse," www.capitalemency.org (The American Bar Association), accessed October 17, 2023, <https://www.capitalemency.org/mental-health-fact-sheets/complex-trauma/>.

¹⁵ Joseph Spinazzola and et al., "Complex Trauma in Children & Adolescents," *National Child Traumatic Stress Network White Paper Brief*

representing the “God-figure” understanding of those children.

CRITICAL YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT

Between the ages of birth through age ten, there are three critical stages of brain development. More than four ACEs during this time may severely hinder the child from reaching the developmental purposes of that time.¹⁶ Any event that hinders healthy brain development will hinder spiritual development as well.

From birth, the child is beginning to establish what they believe is reality. Since the brain takes in experience and processes it by analyzing and categorizing it, ultimately the brain has faith that its conclusions are correct, and this forms the basis for that person’s reality.

The actions during the period of infancy are critical for the child to develop trust, hope, and love. If the nurture and care are not consistent, and there are significant and numerous periods of deprivation, then neuronal complexity and interconnectedness are greatly reduced.¹⁷ In other words, the child does not develop a healthy ability to interact with those outside themselves, meaning developing a relationship with the God who is “other-than-us” becomes far more difficult.

Between the ages of two and six, children’s thought processes are rigid. They do not yet grasp cause and effect

(2007): 4–8, <https://www.complextrauma.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Complex-Trauma-9-Joseph-Spinazzola.pdf>.

¹⁶ Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Pamela Ebstyn King, Linda M. Wagener, and Peter L. Benson, eds. *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2006), 183.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 188.

in a way that they can apply it to what they experience. This is the time of the “almighty and all-knowing” two and three-year-old when, for them, “their perspective is the only perspective, and their thinking is magical, episodic, and not constrained by stable logical operations.”¹⁸ Thus, trauma at the hands of the caregivers at this stage often causes a child to develop negative ideas about that which is greater than themselves. This may hinder the child from developing “a strong sense of self, independence, or autonomy that is crucial to progress to future stages. From a neurophysiological perspective, the neuronal connections associated with negative fantasies may become stronger, making such a negative perspective more pervasive during subsequent stages of development.”¹⁹ This drives the child further into internal self-isolation and further away from interacting with true reality. This is a critical time. Between the ages of four and nine, the brain consolidates its experiential learning up to that point by both a reduction in the production of neuronal connections as well as removal of those the brain deems not necessary or invalid.²⁰ Meaning that if the neuronal connections deemed necessary are related to deprivation, neglect, angry encounters, and other negative experiences, the brain adopts that as its “reality.”

Between the ages of six and ten, “a child begins to internalize stories, beliefs, and observances that symbolize belonging to a community or group enabling the composition of a worldview and ideology. Beliefs are related to literal interpretations of religions or doctrines and are usually composed of moral rules and attitudes.”²¹ That is, the child is constructing their own “story” of how the world works, what their correct place in the world is, and

¹⁸ Ibid., 190.

¹⁹ Ibid., 190.

²⁰ Ibid., 191.

what is expected of them. In the dysfunctional home, the “storyline” which the child experiences daily is damaging to the child’s development of their sense of self as well as the connection of that self to the world. If a child’s environment involves them being constantly controlled and being judged, they ultimately will have difficulty formulating their own spiritual concepts and reflecting on the value of those concepts.²² So it is that multiple traumas and neglect before the age of eleven highly damage the foundation of a child’s mind and soul.

²¹ Ibid., 190.

²² Ibid., 191.

CHAPTER THREE: A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH IS NECESSARY TODAY IN CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH MINISTRY

How does this translate into the spiritual formation of children and youth? In addition to stages of development in the neuro-physical aspect of the brain, the process of going from infancy to adulthood also involves stages.

For example, in Friesen’s *The Life Model*, the first stage is the Infant stage, birth to age three. Several tasks in that stage include: developing trust; and learning how to receive. This happens successfully when primary caregivers (parents) build strong bonds of unconditional love with the infant/toddler through giving care that matches the infant’s needs without the infant always asking. When such care is not given, such bonds are not developed. As the child grows, their heart/soul/mind has difficulty bonding with others which often leads to a manipulative, self-centered, isolated, or discontented personality and often becomes withdrawn, disengaged, self-stimulating, or unresponsive.²³

The next stage is the Child stage, ages four through twelve. One personal task to accomplish in this stage is to ask for what is needed as well as express what one thinks and feels. If the child never learned to trust or how to receive in the infant stage, often the child can’t ask for what is needed; they might not be able to define what they need because the disappointment of the infant stage trained the child that it is safer not to want at all.²⁴ They might classify everything that they want as a need, never having been

²³ James G Friesen, *Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You: The Essentials of Christian Living*, (Pasadena, CA: Shepherd’s House, 2000), 51.

²⁴ Friesen, 52.

taught by loving parents how to distinguish a need from a want.

Now let's translate this into spiritual formation. A teen comes to the Lord at church, but is actually stuck at the infant stage of developing trust and learning how to receive because the parents were addicts when the child was an infant/toddler or because the child was put in daily childcare from the age of six weeks, and the parents didn't interact with the child in the evenings because the parents themselves were narcissists. There was no healthy attachment formed between the toddler and parent. Studies have demonstrated that "attachment theory can help explain religious dynamics among those who relate to a personal God and found that among those who were securely attached to their parents, there was a corresponding attachment to God."²⁵ The inability to trust directly correlates with this teen's inability to grow in the Lord. Because they did not develop trust, this translates to their relationship with God. How can they trust Him? Because they didn't develop a healthy ability to have needs, how can they relate to God being their Source?

This is to say that *spiritual formation is actually a complex, multi-layered, three-dimensional structure*, like multi-level chess. Can God break through to this teen when they are in their thirties and struggling to trust God like their friends at church do? Yes, but often this involves the inner wounds sustained in infancy being revealed and healed so that the heart/soul/mind is released to make progress from fear of needs not being met to trust in the provision of God.

²⁵ Duane F. Reinert and Carla E. Edwards, "Attachment Theory and Concepts of God," SAGE Open 4, no. 4 (December 2, 2014): 215824401456054, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244014560547>.

For this to happen for this teen while still a teenager, their youth pastor or leader must be trauma-informed, so when it is evident the teen is having trouble, for example, in the area of trust or manipulation, the youth leader doesn't insist that the teen must "just have faith" and "just believe" or "just repent." The Church often takes this approach to dealing with spiritual hang-ups that hinder spiritual growth. Blanket solutions or platitudes are offered to those struggling such as just forgive and forget, let go and let God, just read the Bible and pray. Others preach that Jesus dealt with all things regarding sin at the cross, so if we just deposit at the cross the pain we feel caused by those who sinned against us, then we can move on, as if that removes both the pain and the lies the child adopted as a result of processing the pain on their own.

To escape these "kiss the boo-boo and put a band-aid on it" approaches, it is critical that the youth leader, in a gentle and trauma-informed manner, asks careful questions designed to lead the teen to share the trauma in their home.

A significant aspect of trauma is that it is more than bad memories. Rather, it is memories of bad experiences that a person is triggered to re-live in the present, something we identify as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).²⁶ It is now recognized that PTSD is widespread and is a typical response to any unprocessed trauma. The human psyche was created by God to be greatly resilient. Practically speaking, our brains are amazing at creating

²⁶ The National Institute of Mental Health, "NIMH: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," Nih.gov (U.S. Federal Government, 2020), <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd>. Last accessed March 9, 2022.

²⁷ "The number of abused and neglected children nearly doubled from 1986-1992...Family risk factors include single-parent families and poverty." [Helen M. Wallace, Gordon Green, and Kenneth J. Jaros, eds. 2003. *Health and*

coping mechanisms to protect us from future harm. Sadly, these coping mechanisms build walls around our heart, soul, and mind, walls that disrupt not only our ability to relate to the people in our life, but also our ability to relate to the Lord.

Now let's consider the way many Bible college and seminary students are taught to teach, disciple, and lead. As many of us experienced, it is typically a "best-case scenario" method. That is, if we were emotionally, mentally, and socially whole, and if those to whom we minister were also completely whole, then what we are taught to say and do, how we are taught to say it and do it, would work perfectly every time. Yet, is that true today in our experience? How many of us are emotionally and socially healed and whole? If we are honest, we are all wounded to some degree or another. Many children to whom we minister today are further from whole than ever before.

When Sunday schools and youth groups were first "invented" and implemented, any positive effect was deemed a success because it was filling a void of hundreds of years. Overall success was evaluated, not success with particular individuals. Moreover, in the 1800s when Sunday schools began, the family unit in England and North America, both nuclear and extended, was far more healthy than it is today. The increase of child abuse and neglect in the past forty years alone is tremendous.²⁷

Welfare for Families in the 21st Century. 2nd ed. Boston: Jones And Bartlett, 2003),463.] In 2013, NBC News reported that "physical and sexual abuse of children has gone down over the past 20 years, but reports of neglect have gone up." [Maggie Fox, "Child Abuse down but Neglect Is Up, Report Finds; Parents Biggest Threat." NBC News. National Broadcasting Company. September 12, 2013.] It continues to rise today. In 2020, it was reported that "new federal child abuse and neglect data shows an increase in the number of

Sadly, we are still using Sunday School material and methods pioneered in the late 1800s, while the emotional, mental, and spiritual health of our target audience—children and youth—has drastically altered. Methods developed for a “perfect” audience are grossly insufficient today. Organizations producing curriculums for children and teens have updated their approach to content and to the communication of that content. However, it is more than content and delivery changes that is needed. Youth pastors, leaders, and children’s teachers today must be aware of the significant changes in the emotional, mental, and spiritual health of our children and learn how to adapt their approach to individual children.

victims who suffered maltreatment for the first time since 2015.” [Administration for Children & Families. 2020. “Child Abuse, Neglect Data Released.” www.acf.hhs.gov. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. January 15, 2020.] In 2022, the National Institute for Children’s Health Quality reported that “34.8 million children (ages 0-17)—nearly half of American children—are exposed to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that can

severely harm their future health and well-being.” National Institute for Children's Health Quality. 2022. [“Did You Know Childhood Trauma Affects Nearly Half of American Children?” NICHQ. National Institute for Children’s Health Quality. 2022.]

CHAPTER FOUR: CATEGORIES OF TRAUMA RESULTS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING IMPLICATIONS FOR SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Traumatic neglect during infancy and toddlerhood typically results in insecure attachment, often linked to impaired psychological, neurobiological, and social functioning throughout a lifetime.²⁸ Who are their caregivers in infancy and toddlerhood? Typically they are inconsistent, emotionally unavailable, or erratic.²⁹ This can be caused by addiction, mental illness, or simply having themselves been raised with complex trauma or by trauma-impaired adults. Sadly this last category is on the rise today.

There are two types of insecure attachment disorders: attachment-related avoidance and attachment-related anxiety.³⁰ Infants, toddlers, children, and even adults seek an attachment figure for two very basic needs: a safe haven in time of distress or difficulty; and a secure foundation from which to explore, learn, and integrate knowledge into their life. When a child distrusts the authority or primary caregiver's intentions, the child develops a defensive coping mechanism by maintaining their own independence, both emotionally and behaviorally. This effectively switches off the normal

²⁸ Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Schore, 2001; Siegel & Hartzell, 2003; Sroufe, 1988, as referenced in Eleanor Ford Cobb, "The Relationship of Attachment to Religiosity, Spirituality, and Mindfulness in Secular and Religious Populations in Israel." PhD dissertation, Columbia University. 2017. <https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D85Q57JS/download>.

²⁹ Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Pepping, Davis, & O'Donovan, 2013 as referenced in Eleanor Ford Cobb, "The Relationship of Attachment to Religiosity, Spirituality, and Mindfulness in Secular and Religious Populations in Israel." PhD dissertation, Columbia University. 2017. <https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/doi/10.7916/D85Q57JS/download>.

attachment-mechanism and leads to attachment-related avoidance.³¹ Alternatively, when the child responds to neglect by anxiety, fearful that others will not be responsive and supportive, and seeks the attention of the primary caregiver in an overly anxious and oversized manner, the normal attachment mechanism is hyperactivated resulting in attachment-related anxiety.³²

This affects the child's or teen's relationship to God by rendering them either indifferent to God and His interaction in their life, which manifests as a seeming self-sufficiency and not having a need for God, or hyper-anxious that He will not interact with them which manifests as an inability to exercise faith.

Abuse-related and neglect-related trauma of an infant or toddler can also result in the development of a psychological disorder or psychoses, such as oppositional defiance disorder, bipolar disorder, major depression, personality disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, or ADHD (though, again, most ADHD is biological). Secure attachment has been associated with significantly higher Religious and Social Well-being. Insecure attachment is not only associated with lower Religious and Social Well-being, but also corresponds with higher levels of mood pathology, particularly depression.³³

³⁰ Aaron D. Cherniak, Mario Mikulincer, Phillip R Shaver, and Pehr Granqvist. "Attachment Theory and Religion." *Current Opinion in Psychology* 40, August 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2020.08.020>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Michaela Hiebler-Ragge, Johanna Falthansl-Scheinecker, Gerhard Birnhuber, Andreas Fink, and Human Friedrich Unterrainer. 2016. "Facets of Spirituality Diminish the Positive Relationship between Insecure Attachment

If a teen or child under your ministry appears to have symptoms of a psychological disorder, in addition to a trauma-sensitive probing of the child's upbringing, professional help in diagnosis is advised. At times parents may be opposed to seeking professional care for their child. They must be reassured that it does not imply fault on their part, but that we live in a fallen world and an evaluation of this type would be best for their child. Other parents may be relieved that someone else sees similar issues that they see and thus may be moved to action. In the case of parents who are already aware of their child's condition or disorder, you may ask how you might be a teammate in their child's treatment and healing.

Infancy through early childhood is a critical period during which the child develops "an internal working model (IWM) of self and others."³⁴ A person derives their representation of God and how God relates to them from this internal working model. Positive internal working models lead to corresponding representations of a benevolent God, whereas negative internal working models can result in interpreting God as being negative, harsh, or against them.³⁵ Even in a family where there was no neglect in infancy, but by the time the child is a pre-teen, their parents have divorced, for example, because the father was verbally and emotionally abusive to his wife and children and was emotionally absent from his family, that child, no matter how normal they may present at church, has experienced complex trauma that impinges upon their spiritual formation.

and Mood Pathology in Young Adults." Edited by Stefano Federici. *PLOS ONE* 11, no. 6: e0158069. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0158069>.

³⁴ Aaron Cherniak et al, "Attachment Theory and Religion."

³⁵ Ibid.

How likely is this to affect children and teens under our ministry today? In 2005, sociologist Paul Amato estimated that if the United States enjoyed the same level of family stability then as it did in 1960, the nation would have had 750,000 fewer children repeating grades, 1.2 million fewer school suspensions, some 500,000 fewer acts of teenage delinquency, some 600,000 fewer kids receiving therapy, and some 70,000 fewer suicide attempts that year.³⁶ Sadly, family stability is not improving and the statistics are worsening, meaning the possibility grows greater each year that children to whom we minister have been impacted by complex trauma in their birth family situations.

³⁶ Paul R. Amato, "The Impact of Family Formation Change on the Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Well-Being of the Next Generation," *The Future of Children* 15, no. 2 (2005): 75–96.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3556564>.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE NATURE OF MAN REQUIRES A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO TRAUMA-SENSITIVE COUNSELING

Though from a devoutly Christian family, by the time he was 12 years old, Nathan³⁷ had experienced four major Adverse Childhood experiences (ACEs) due to his father in the areas of physical abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, father's mental illness, and the separation of his parents (which ended in divorce by the time he was 14). It has been found that most children who experience three or more ACEs in their childhood tend to develop coping mechanisms to process and live within their traumatic or adverse experiences. Studies suggest that these coping mechanisms link negative childhood experiences with health problems, early death, educational problems, and spiritual deficits.³⁸

At the point when his father left the family home, Nathan began acting out, often quite violently, towards his mother and sister. When his mother asked what had brought about this radical change in his behavior, he replied, "Before this, I hid. I hid in my room, or I hid in my computer games. Now that Dad is gone, I don't feel I need to hide any longer. And this is what is inside of me." The church pastoral staff recommended a counselor who specialized in counseling victims of abuse. After determining the extent of the previous domestic abuse,

³⁷ Not his real name, though this is a true story.

³⁸ Katharine Bensinger, "ACE Awareness for Prevention Adverse Childhood Experiences PArEnting FundAmEntAls," Paces Connection.com (Chicago, IL: C4: Community Counseling Centers of Chicago, 2014), <https://www.pacesconnection.com/fileSendAction/fcType/5/fcOid/406624864726144615/fodoid/406624864726144614/C4>.

³⁹ EMDR, or Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy, is a mental health therapy method which treats mental health conditions that happen

Nathan was assigned one counselor, and his mother a second.

What occurred over the next three years was trauma-sensitive cognitive behavior theory-based (CBT) counseling. At one point, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy (EMDR) was used to help him recall forgotten traumatic events.³⁹ He was also referred to a child psychologist who put him on a mood stabilizer, Trileptal. Between the medication and the counseling, Nathan slowly regained the ability to behave peaceably in his home as well as with his friends. However, by the time he was 14, he had fallen into such a deep depression that he refused to do schoolwork and spoke at times of suicide. After a 5-day-stay in the local children's psychiatric hospital and the addition of Wellbutrin, an antidepressant, he returned home to engage grudgingly with his schoolwork. That summer Nathan spent a month at a residential treatment program for boys ages 5-18 who have a high level of need due to adverse childhood experiences. By the end of the month, Nathan acknowledged that, while life seemed pointless to him, he could at least accept being happy every day with his life's experiences, even if it was ultimately pointless. Eventually, Nathan began to accept that God had a good, if not difficult, plan for his life.

When he was 18, Nathan was introduced to a local inner healing⁴⁰ program hosted by another church. Over the

because of memories from traumatic events in your past. It is best known for its role in treating post-traumatic stress disorder. Cleveland Clinic, "EMDR Therapy: What It Is, Procedure & Effectiveness," Cleveland Clinic, March 29, 2022, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/22641-emdr-therapy>.

⁴⁰ Inner healing deals with our responses to hurts, wounds, and abuse in our past with the goal of bringing godly resolution to the situation so that our future thoughts and actions are not predicated upon our wounds.

course of 10 months, with the team assigned to him, Nathan processed many of his traumatic events, not from a CBT perspective, but from a spiritual perspective. In prayer and listening to the Holy Spirit, they helped him identify the particular wounds (emotional, mental, and spiritual) he had received in each particular trauma. They identified what lies about God, himself, and others he had adopted via each traumatic experience. They led him to speak as it were, to the one who had traumatized him, telling that person how their words and actions had affected him and what it had cost him in terms of mental, spiritual, and emotional health. Then they guided him in forgiving that person. Finally, he repented of the lies he had believed, declared his acceptance of and belief in the truth about God, himself, or others, and received prayer for God's restoration in that particular circumstance.

Previous to this, Nathan was successfully living what looked to others like a healthy, normal life, with mainly healthy reactions to the circumstances of his life, engaged in his local church as an eager participant. However, internally, in his inner self-narrative and in his relationship with God, he was still very wounded, even though he had externally mastered the coping skills necessary to behave appropriately in public. Through this ten-month inner healing experience, Nathan developed peace and joy in his relationship with the Lord. He developed a deeper faith in God's love, God's goodness, even in God's power. In many ways, the external coping skills he had mastered were no longer necessary for him to cope with life. He felt alive and able to interact successfully with life. Moreover, he grew closer to the Lord and found

⁴¹ Wayne A Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, ed. Jeff Purswell (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 194.

spiritual formation during and after this time to be easier and more in depth.

Why wasn't cognitive behavior therapy enough? Why did spiritual intervention produce such results of freedom of faith, joy, love, and peace? Fundamentally it lies in the nature of humankind, intrinsically in the state in which we were created. Cognitive behavior therapy and other psychological therapies treat the mind, but we are more than just a mind housed in a body. Indeed, we are an embodied spirit, and as such to truly treat wounding such as trauma requires a holistic approach.

THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF HUMANITY: A BODY AND A SOUL TOGETHER AS ONE

7 "Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." (Gen. 2:7, NIV)

We see in the account of creation it is the breath of God that animates the clay body, and thus, man becomes a living being. In other words, "Adam is a unified person with a body and a soul living and acting together."⁴¹ While Genesis 1 speaks in general terms of the creation of birds, fish, animals, and man, in Genesis 2 we are given the account of God forming man from the dirt of the earth. Distinctively, man is the only one in Genesis 1 who is said to be made in the image of God (*imago Dei*), and he is the only one into whom God breathed the breath of life in the creation process according to Genesis 2. Theologians for centuries have interpreted this as the difference between

man and animal: Man's consciousness is more than animal consciousness; man has the ability for advanced logic as well as the capability to communicate with God Himself.

Theologians and philosophers have debated man's essential nature for thousands of years. For the most part, both have agreed in one form or another that "the human person is the point of convergence between the material and spiritual entities, that is between the body and the soul."⁴² From Jesus' example of humanity, we see that "to be a true image bearer [*imago Dei*] is to be an embodied being."⁴³ We may define the essence of what it means to be a human by the observation and measurement of Jesus Christ in His incarnation and, ultimately, in His resurrected body. We see that Adam and Eve were created to have the potential of one day being essentially all that Jesus is in His resurrected body. Thus, we look at Jesus—at His first coming—as the embodied Word of God, the Word tabernacled in a flesh body, as the paradigm to understand what man is essentially.

Prior to recent, rapid advancement in the scientific study of the brain, much of the debate centered around how the body and soul relate to one another. Are they one [monist] as in inseparable, both consisting of matter? This is the view of those who do not believe there is anything past death. Are they one [monist] as in not being human when missing one of the two? For example, a corpse is no longer a human, but merely a body. Or, are the body and

⁴² ICCT Colleges Foundation, "Chapter 8 Human Person as an Embodied Spirit," Studocu, accessed March 8, 2023, <https://www.studocu.com/ph/document/icct-colleges-foundation/college-physics/chapter-8-human-person-as-an-embodied-spirit/33226410>.

⁴³ Marc Cortez, *Resourcing Theological Anthropology: A Constructive Account of Humanity in the Light of Christ* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017), 197.

the soul separate entities, as it were, a body with a soul tucked inside it in some form of dualism or dichotomy? If so, how does the non-corporeal soul influence and move the corporeal body?

While the tripartite theory of body, soul, and spirit prevailed for many years due the use of these three terms in Scripture, modern scholarship has demonstrated how spirit and soul are often used interchangeably, while other terms like mind and heart are used in parallel structure to spirit and soul.⁴⁴ Currently, general thinking about the nature of man leans toward man being an embodied spirit. In this, Timothy Crutcher wrote, “We often see ourselves as spiritual beings who are housed—trapped even—in a physical form.”⁴⁵ Importantly, he goes on to note, “According to the Bible, humans are physical first and spiritual second; breath is added to the dust.”⁴⁶

What is most pertinent to our question, “Why was CBT not enough for Nathan to progress towards wholeness and to make progress in spiritual formation,” is this proposal of Green:

Our identity is formed and found in self-conscious relationality with its neural correlates and embodied narrativity or formative histories. By “formative histories,” I do not mean “history” in an objective sense as “what really happened,” but the stories with and by which we come

⁴⁴ Deut. 6:5; Mt. 22:37; Mk. 12:30.

⁴⁵ Timothy J. Crutcher, *Becoming Human Again: A Biblical Primer on Entire Sanctification*, 2020, 30.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

to make sense of the events of our life and world...What I want especially to underscore here is that who we are, our personhood, is inextricably bound up in our physicality...and in the sum of our life experiences and relationships.⁴⁷

Herein, Green unites the physicality of the neural net of our brains with the non-corporeal aspects of thought, memory, and narrative. Who we are lies in the nexus of the brain cells that physically imprint and store our thoughts and memories along with the narrative that we tell ourselves to make sense of those memories and develop a plan for living in the world such as we have perceived it to be.

Moreover, the soul is not merely the place where we think, but it is also the place where we meet with the spirit realm. Just as there is a nexus between mind (immaterial) and body (material), there is a nexus between soul (thoughts and emotions; truth-processing) and spirit (the immaterial, supernatural realm). Trauma-sensitive cognitive behavior treatment works with the mind to replace human narrative and untruths. However, we also dwell in the immaterial realm, and as such we need to deal with that immaterial part of us that is also wounded in trauma through self-narratives to explain that trauma, resulting in our adopting spiritual lies and connecting with demonic inclinations. In that mind-spirit nexus, we need to replace lies, renounce unsanctified survival mechanisms we have adopted, and receive God's healing peace into that very real though immaterial part within us.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 179.

THE EFFECTS OF TRAUMA ON THE BODY AND THE SOUL

All trauma, whether acute or long-term, produces harmful physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual effects. Even solely physical trauma, such as a car accident, results in trauma to the soul as one processes the experience, hence the experience of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Some trauma is not inflicted physically, but via words or indirectly via behaviors. Most Adverse Childhood Experiences combine these types of trauma. For example, when a child is traumatized by parental neglect, there can be physical trauma (lack of food and lack of hygiene leading to physical hurt) as well as mental, emotional, and spiritual trauma as the child tries to make sense of what is happening to them.

Effects of trauma seen in the realm of the soul can be evidenced in the mind, such as by developing a false narrative concerning who is responsible for the trauma, why this is happening to them at this time, and how to survive it. Often this includes the child coming to conclusions that are not true. Emotions such as anger, depression, or fear are common expressions of trauma. Behavior is inextricably linked with thoughts and emotions. At times, a child may outwardly exhibit negative or destructive behaviors even though the actual trauma behind these behaviors remains unseen to most people in the child's life.

Effects of trauma seen in the spiritual realm include false beliefs about God and His character, as well as about other spiritual issues such as prayer, faith, other Christians, the church, etc. A child may present with what appears to be a solely spiritual issue, such as lack of faith in God's

provision or inability to receive God's love, when the actual trauma which resulted in these conclusions remains unseen to most people in the child's life, and the spiritual issue cannot be resolved without addressing the trauma.

Physical effects of trauma are many and diverse. For example, as a result of a car accident, a child may be paralyzed or semi-paralyzed, which is a huge and obvious effect. In physical abuse cases, physical effects of the trauma are visible. However, emotional, verbal, and mental abuse will also result in physical effects less able to be seen. Traumatic events cause the heightened release of stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline.⁴⁸ Repeated exposure to heightened amounts of these hormones can significantly affect a child's developing brain. For example, in the early years of a child's life, repeated abuse and trauma affect the hippocampus, the center of emotional control and inhibition of risky behaviors. This area is also involved with memory and language, particularly verbal and spatial memories.⁴⁹

A school-aged child may be having difficulty regulating behavior and emotions or struggle to communicate what they are feeling. While there is no visible physical damage, they actually have brain damage to their hippocampus, so it is not able to function as it ought. Fortunately, due to neuroplasticity, the nervous system is able to reroute and reorganize its circuitry after injury.⁵⁰ However, malformation of the hippocampus or

⁴⁸ American Psychological Association, "Stress Effects on the Body," American Psychological Association, 2018, <https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/body>.

⁴⁹ The AOC Center for Families, Children & the Courts, "The Effects Of Complex Trauma On Youth," *California Courts: The Judicial Branch of California* (San Francisco, CA: Judicial Council of California/Administrative Office of the Courts, 2014), www.courts.ca.gov/documents/effects-complex-trauma-on-youth-briefing.pdf.

other areas of the brain due to non-physical trauma may not result in automatic “rerouting.” When a person has a stroke and loses the ability to walk, talk, or some other ability, it takes training to develop this new brain circuit. Even so, it takes guidance and practice to establish new circuits in the hippocampus or other areas, meaning external intervention by way of some sort of counseling is necessary.

Current studies suggest that memories are initially formed in the hippocampus and the prefrontal cortex at the same time the memory is made, then the cells and synapses in the hippocampus holding those memories weaken while those in the prefrontal cortex strengthen for long-term storage.⁵¹ In this sense, we might say that the memories are located in the physical body. However, a dead body does not react to stimuli the way a person with PTSD reacts, so to speak, meaning that the soul is, at the very least, required to process those memories. When Jesus told the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31), He indicated that after his death, the rich man still retained memory of his brothers, placing the location of memories also in the soul as well.

ACCESSING TRAUMATIC MEMORIES AND WOUNDS WITH CHILDREN

Bringing any degree of healing to the wounds of traumatic memories requires some sort of remembering or connecting with the traumatic event through the memory,

⁵⁰ Matt Puderbaugh and Prabhu D. Emmady, “Neuroplasticity,” PubMed (Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing, 2022), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK557811/#:~:text=It%20is%20defined%20as%20the>.

⁵¹ Anne Trafton, “Neuroscientists Identify Brain Circuit Necessary for Memory Formation,” MIT News | Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT, April 6, 2017), <https://news.mit.edu/2017/neuroscientists-identify-brain-circuit-necessary-memory-formation-0406>.

even when dealing with the spiritual effects of the trauma. This is commonly referred to as inner healing or the healing of memories. For most methods of inner healing with adults, the individual comes to the session with a problem or memory, or the individual begins by praying with the leader and waiting in a listening posture for the Holy Spirit to bring up a memory or perhaps the name of a person. The leader explores this memory with the individual. First the individual often recounts the traumatic event or interaction. Through questions and inquiring of the Holy Spirit, the leader helps the individual identify lies they have come to believe from the trauma, as well as what they lost in the trauma, how the person wounded them, what they need to forgive the person for, spiritual strongholds related to the lies they believed, and truths they need to receive and declare. Most methods have a system for progressing from one stage to another in the process, typically ending with blessing being prayed over the individual by the team leader.

This approach, however, may not work as well with children. Some traumatic memories are hidden so deeply, a child may not be able to access it readily. Some children may not be comfortable with or accustomed to waiting on the Lord and listening for His voice. Some children may not be able to interpret their own emotions and explain what they are feeling. Some children may be resistant to examining aspects of their adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

It might be helpful, particularly with younger children, to use trauma-sensitive cognitive-theory-based worksheets and methods to identify traumatic memories and wounds with children. Counselors and psychologists

⁵² See page 25 (50).

often use worksheets, art projects, or play using toys, dolls, or puppets to help a young child remember and begin to process their trauma. In the spiritual counseling setting, we are not looking to process that trauma mentally, as it were, developing coping mechanisms or narratives. Rather, we want to invite the presence of God into the trauma, into the wound, into the narrative, and into the child's beliefs so that the healing moves beyond the nexus of the body and soul into the nexus of where the thoughts meet the spiritual realm. We still need to identify the place of the wounding.

Alternatively, in situations where we know or think that there is no sexual abuse occurring, we might begin with the parent, having the parent explain the behavioral problems the child is presenting. Next, we would speak with the child, asking them why they think they are acting that way or how they are feeling when they act that way. We would seek, with an ear open to the leading of the Lord, to isolate one feeling or one behavior as the focus of the session. Each following session might begin with asking how they are doing related to that previous feeling/behavior, or perhaps asking how they are feeling that day, what they are struggling with that day, maybe even what they got in trouble for that day.

A SYNTHESIZED APPROACH

At the start of each inner healing session, we suggest affirming with the child that they are willing to talk to the Holy Spirit with us and listen to what He has to say. Then we lead them in a trinitarian opening prayer, addressing Father, Son, and Spirit.⁵² A synthesized approach to inner healing begins with identifying the type or types of trauma the child experienced, either via CBT

worksheets, play or puppets, artwork, or discussion, prayer, and listening to the Holy Spirit. From here, the damage of that trauma is explored. This may identify a particular time that stands out in the child's memory when an instance of this trauma happened, or it may just identify a particular sense of wounding in an area affected by the trauma. We would ask the child how they feel now when they think back to what happened to them, then ask them if that is different from how they felt at the time it happened. In further discussing their feelings about the trauma or traumatic event, through carefully phrased questions and leading them to ask the Holy Spirit to give them understanding, we identify specific areas of wounding.⁵³

With adults, we can ask what that person's action cost them or resulted in for them, such as the loss of innocence, the loss of self-worth, results of feeling vulnerable, inadequate, unworthy of love, unworthy of physical care, physical ailments, feeling always at fault particularly for anything negative that happens, an inability to trust anyone other than themselves, feelings of betrayal, and so on. To assess this with children, we might use carefully worded questions to explore the depths of initially communicated surface feelings. Or, again, we might use worksheets, art, or play, particularly for ages three to six. Most importantly, we lead them through prayer to listen to the Holy Spirit as He is more than willing to reveal what has gone on in the soul of the child and bring healing to them.

⁵³ For example, "Let's ask the Spirit to show you why you feel that way about God?" So the child prays, "Holy Spirit, show me why I feel this (states how they feel or what they believe) about God." After a pause, we ask, "Did the Holy Spirit show you anything or say anything to you?" and give them opportunity to share. A further example is given beginning on page 53 (106).

As we identify these specific areas of wounding, we ask carefully worded questions and invite the child to ask the Holy Spirit to identify any lies and wrong beliefs/conclusions the child has adopted. We take notes for reference, as we want to replace those lies with truth. We also want to keep a list of their negative feelings and emotions because we want to use these lies and negative feelings to identify any demonic influence that may have encroached on their soul, inhabiting those wounded places. This is known as a stronghold, a place where a demonic spirit has the ability to consistently speak a lie and provoke a negative or sinful behavior as a response.⁵⁴

When you identify a lie, you will want to point out the truth from the Word of God to counter that lie. Often this can be done by simply having the child pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show them the truth about this lie that they have believed. It should not surprise us that the Holy Spirit is well versed in Bible knowledge and understanding. At times it may take some discussion to ensure that the child understands why their conclusion concerning their trauma is a lie and for the child to agree to renounce the lie and replace it with the biblical truth. However, when we lead the child in asking the Holy Spirit for His understanding each step of the way, the Holy Spirit has a marvelous way of bringing light into the situation.

The next step is forgiveness as related to the particular area of the trauma that the Spirit has surfaced in the session. For example, a child might have experienced

⁵⁴ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishers, 2015), 99.

the abuse of neglect, and emotional, verbal, and physical abuse due to a parent's or parents' addiction to drugs. Typically in one session, you will deal with only one aspect of that larger trauma, perhaps one incident the child remembers. In dealing with forgiveness, we do not point the child to forgive every traumatic event and grievance. Rather, we stay with the narrow area defined already in the session. Remind the child that forgiveness is not saying that what the person did to you is okay or acceptable.⁵⁵ Rather, it is identifying the wrong and declaring that you have forgiven them for that wrong. Depending on the type of abuse and the length of time the child was abused, a particular abuser might be forgiven multiple times over multiple sessions, each time for a specific action or event. When we extend forgiveness, we name the person who wronged us, we tell them, as it were, what they did and how it hurt us or what it cost us, then we declare that we forgive them for doing this.

After extending forgiveness, it is time to deal with the strongholds identified in this session. Using the prayer liturgies (found in part 2), lead the child through one or more of them. Like a pastor leading a couple in saying their marriage vows during the marriage ceremony, you will have the child repeat each phrase after you. Each liturgy ends with you breaking the power of that stronghold over them and you releasing the blessing of God over them to heal them, restore them, and protect them.

This integrated approach allows pastors, youth leaders, and children's workers to minister to children in a complementary manner alongside psychologists and

⁵⁵ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual : Spiritual Deliverance Training for Personal and Team Ministry* (Kansas City: Forerunner Publishing, 2019), 11.

counselors, resulting in a truly holistic approach to helping children who have been victims of some sort of trauma or another. Even in the best of homes with the wisest of parents, children misunderstand events or even conversations and comments, leading to their creating unhealthy internal self-narratives and espousing lies and untruths that not only damage their souls, but open them to demonic influence. This approach can be used with all children, but especially in a trauma-sensitive approach to helping the children in our churches who have been wounded and disadvantaged through adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

PART TWO: A HANDBOOK FOR TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SPIRITUAL MINISTRY

We will be using the word, *Protocol*, in terms of defining a process that is repeatable and reproducible. These protocols involve prayers, questions, answers, and reflection on answers.

Through these protocols, we are using various tools and questions to help the child interact with Jesus about their trauma, about their wounding, and we are allowing the Spirit of God to speak to them. We are not teachers. We are not directly advising them. We are more like a midwife, who doesn't give birth on behalf of the mother, who doesn't do the actual pushing, but who guides the mother as she gives birth. In this case we are using questions to help them ask the Lord for insight and understanding, and we are using questions to help them process and draw their own conclusions, and develop more prayers to ask the Lord the questions they still have.

Our goal is to use these tools and questions to help them identify the wounding they have and the lies they have believed, find God's truth to replace the lie, forgive the person who wounded them, leave that hurt at the foot of the cross, ask Jesus what He will give them in exchange for leaving this burden with Him, and finally identifying and breaking off any strongholds that have been created in their soul from the woundings, the lies, and the false coping mechanisms. We finish with praying the blessing of the Lord over them.

I will begin with the general protocol that you will use in a typical follow-up session. It describes the overall pattern of ministry found in most of the protocols. Later I will go on to address protocols for specific situations such as a first

session with a child or a child coming from a specific type of abuse.

PROTOCOL: STEPS IN A TYPICAL SESSION

1. Greeting and check in: questions such as
 - a. How did your week go?
 - b. Were there any negative emotions that were troubling you this week? What were they?
 - c. Did you have any significant conflicts this week? (Let the child briefly describe it, but not in depth. You will explore it later in the session.)
2. Opening prayer (See the section on “At the start of each session protocol below.”)
3. Identifying the issue you will address in this session:
 - a. It may be identified through the check-in, if they report something in particular they are struggling to overcome or something for which they are regularly getting in trouble at home or in school.
 - b. It may be identified by asking the child how they are feeling right now or how have they been feeling throughout the week, then inviting the child to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show them why they are feeling this.
 - c. It may be identified by inviting the child to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to identify an issue, memory, situation, or attitude.
 - d. It may be identified through previous conversation with their parent.

4. Discuss the issue, traumatic event, or feeling with the child, looking to identify the child's narrative for why this happened to them as well as identifying any lies they have adopted/believed about themselves, God, their parents, family life, relationships with people, etc.
5. Discuss the balancing spiritual truth. We don't want to gaslight the child or dismiss their reality by way of explaining away their interpretation of the event. Rather, through questions we help them see the truth about who God is, who they are, what God intends a father or mother to be, how God intends for people to relate to each other in a healthy way, etc.
6. Lead the child in a prayer liturgy renouncing the lie and declaring their belief in God's corresponding truth.
7. Lead the child through the forgiveness protocol:
 - a. Have the child imagine the person whom they need to forgive as though they were sitting in the chair across from them. It will help if you put an empty chair across from them to anchor their imagination.
 - b. Have the child tell the person what they did that wounded the child.
 - c. Have the child tell the person
 - i. what the effects were upon the child: such as the false conclusions it let them to or the lies they believed, as well as any physical damage.

- ii. what the person's actions/words cost the child: such as losing relationship with the Lord or some other person, self-esteem, etc.
 - d. Have the child declare that they choose to lay all their losses at the cross of Christ.
 - e. Have the child declare that because Christ has forgiven them through the cross, they forgive <the name of the person they are imagining speaking to> for their sins against the child.
 - f. Lead the child in a prayer of blessing for that person.
 - g. Optional step: for older children, you may lead them in a prayer asking Jesus what He would like to give them in exchange for the losses they have laid at His cross, then give time for silence, for the child to listen for the inner voice of the Spirit.
8. Now it is time to address any strongholds you have identified through the notes you have been taking about their false beliefs, feelings of fear or anger or worry, etc.
- a. Use one or more of the stronghold prayer liturgies to lead the child through renouncing and denouncing the stronghold or strongholds, one stronghold at a time.
 - b. Have the child declare their faith in the power of Christ over that false belief, fear, point of anger, worry, stronghold, whatever issue it was.
9. End with a prayer of blessing over the child.
10. Just as you began with a "check-in," finish with a "check-out"

- a. Ask the child if there is anything they want to say about what they just experienced with the Lord.
- b. For pre-teens and teens, you might give them a scripture passage to meditate on during the week.
- c. A journaling prompt would be good for a young person who likes to journal.
- d. Remind them to be listening to the quiet voice of the Spirit through the week.

Again, this is just a protocol model to give you a sense of where to go. The more experienced you become in doing this type of ministry, the more you will feel free to adjust it to fit each child, each situation.

OPENING PROTOCOL FOR THE START OF EACH TRAUMA-SENSITIVE COUNSELING SESSION:

This next protocol is like a prayer liturgy which you will use at the start of each counseling session after the very first one. Again, this is a model liturgy which you can modify to fit each child and each situation. We do advise that your opening prayer include a section of addressing prayer directly to each member of the Trinity. This helps establish the child's theology of the Trinity and also grows the child's relationship with each member of the Trinity. This is particularly important because the child may have experienced some trauma that has closed their heart to one member of the Trinity or other, such as God as Father.

OPENING PRAYER PROTOCOL

Let's start our conversation today by reminding ourselves that God is present here with us right now. And, let's invite Him to speak with us while we speak together. As I pray, you pray each line after me.

Heavenly Father, I thank You for making me.

I thank You for forming me in my mother's womb.

I thank You for giving me life so that I might have the opportunity to know You, forever.

I thank You, Father, that You sent the Son to make a way for me to be with You, even now.

Jesus, I thank You for coming to this earth.

Thank You for living a life I could not live,

And dying a death I should have died,

and taking Your life back up again so that I can take my life up in You.

I thank You for making a way for me to know the Father.

Thank You for returning to Him so that You could send the Holy Spirit to me, so I would never know a moment without You.

Holy Spirit, I thank You for coming to me.

I thank You that You've never left me.

You never abandon me.

I thank You that You are always with me.

I thank You that You are my Helper, my Teacher, my Comforter, and my Guide.

I repent and renounce anything false I've turned to for Help, Teaching, Comfort, or Guidance.

I commit to come to You and You alone, Holy Spirit.

I dethrone my own mind with its thoughts,

And I enthrone the Mind of Christ so I may hear His thoughts.

I silence voice of the Enemy, the Accuser, and the Deceiver.

I bind every spirit that exalts itself against the Testimony of Jesus.

I even silence my own thoughts and want to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

In the name and authority of Jesus, Amen.

PROTOCOL FOR THE FIRST WEEK/FIRST SESSION:

At the start of the trauma-sensitive counseling sessions, for children ages 6 and older, you will want to begin with this in order to give understanding for what you will be doing and why in terms of understanding trauma, the role of the Holy Spirit, etc. You will want to modify this for children ages 3-5, depending on their ability to communicate and understand.

Understanding Trauma (painful experiences)

Teach the child about trauma:

We can have painful, upsetting, or confusing experiences that change how we understand ourselves or who we think we are or how we think we affect the other people in our life. Sometimes these experiences break our confidence that anyone loves us or is looking out for us, so our heart responds by taking actions and making comments that protect us from any future pain or harm.

Some children or teens try not to talk about, think about, or have feelings about their painful experiences. It is normal to want to forget about traumatic memories or to pretend like the painful experiences never happened. Sadly, we can't make the pain, memory, or effects of the painful experience go away. There are triggers—situations that stir your memory of the painful experience or its consequences—that bring the memory back. Sometimes, it's not the memory that comes to your thoughts. Your subconscious (your heart) simply thinks the new experience reminds it of what happened before, and your heart wants to protect you from more hurt, so you behave or respond in

a way that your heart thinks will protect you because your heart feels like no one else will protect you.

Often we don't want to think about how our heart feels about the painful/upsetting/confusing experiences. That's what we call, "avoidance"—we avoid the previous pain. However, our heart tends to identify new experiences as similar to or as helpless as our painful experiences, and then our heart's response gets in the way of how we can live our life until we deal with them directly.

Something we will do over the next weeks in our meetings together is ask the Lord to bring a trigger to your mind or bring a negative heart response to your mind or even remind you of a painful experience that He wants to touch and heal.

This week we want to start considering what kinds of things remind you of painful experiences you have had.

Things that remind you about the painful experiences you have had are called trauma reminders, or triggers.

It might be certain places, situations, people, words, sounds, smells, sensations, or days of the year that remind you of the painful experiences, even though your present situation is not actually dangerous for you.

When you experience these reminders, you may feel unsafe or as if you were living through the painful experiences over again.

You may find yourself behaving in a manner or doing things that don't fit the situation or that get you in trouble with others.

You might also avoid anything associated with the trauma reminder. This can get in the way of your life and the things you like to do.

What kinds of things remind you of painful experiences in your life? Maybe think about the past week or past month or few months. What happened to you that reminded you about painful experiences you have had?

Invite the child to ask the Holy Spirit which one of these painful experiences He wants to heal or give insight into today.

After going through this, you can move into the *Uncovering Lies* Protocol or the *Weekly* Protocol that follow this which you will use each week after the opening prayer as presented above. Because trauma has caused us to assume certain “truths” that are really lies, to address fears, attitudes, or coping strategies, we have to begin with finding the lie that underpins the fear, attitude, or behavior.

UNCOVERING LIES PROTOCOL

Perhaps the child does not recall any painful experiences OR perhaps at the start of your counseling relationship with this child, you feel it is better to begin by simply asking the child to talk about themselves OR this could be used if you feel you are starting a session at a dead end/brick wall:

Ask: Tell me about yourself.

[Leave space for the child to reply. Perhaps pursue the expression of significant activities, why they do it, how they feel doing it, etc.]

Ask: How do you feel about yourself? What do you tell yourself about yourself, about your life?

[Leave space for the child to reply.]

Listen for statements that may reveal a lie they have incorporated into their belief system. Here's a list of statements to listen for:

- I am all alone.
- No one sees me.
- They don't need me/No one needs me.
- I don't matter.
- No one ever cares.
- They are not coming back.
- God has forsaken me too.
- There is no one to protect me.
- No one believes me.
- I can't trust anyone.
- I am afraid they won't come back.
- It was my fault.
- I deserved it.
- I'm afraid I'm going to die.
- I am worthless and have no value.
- I am unimportant.
- I was a mistake.
- I should have never been born.
- I was never liked by them, because I was...
- I am in the way/ I am a burden.
- I'm not acceptable.
- It's never going to get any better.
- There's no way out.
- It will just happen again and again.
- There's no good thing for me.
- I have no reason to live.
- There are no options for me.
- I just want to die.
- Nothing good will ever come of this.
- I don't know what is happening to me.
- Everything is confusing.
- This does not make any sense.

- Why would they do this to me?

THESE STATEMENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE VOICED BY A TEEN, PARTICULARLY ONE WHO WAS SEXUALLY ABUSED:

- I am so stupid OR ignorant OR an idiot.
- I allowed it.
- I should have known better.
- I should have done something to have stopped it from happening.
- I knew what was going to happen yet I stayed away from <safe place> OR I went there anyway.
- I should have told someone.
- I felt pleasure so I must have wanted it.
- I was a participant.
- It happened because of my looks, my gender, my body, etc.
- I should have stopped them.
- I did not try to run away.

RESPONDING TO FEAR, NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, AND LIES PROTOCOL

If a negative emotion or fear is exposed, guide the child to pray about what the Lord wants to say to them about it. Often you can follow this to find a lie or lies in which this emotion or fear is grounded.

Once a lie is exposed, pray with the child for the Holy Spirit to show us God's truth, perhaps in the Bible. In addition, as a fear, negative emotion, or a lie is identified, the pastor/lay leader ought to jot it down for reference later in the session.

Invite them to pray by praying this after you: Holy Spirit, I have been telling myself <the lie >, but I don't know if this is Your truth. Would You show me/tell me what is the truth about <You, me, my parents, the focus of the lie >.

After being quiet to listen, ask, "Did the Lord show you anything?"

Discuss it. You might bring in a scripture verse that supports what is true.

Let me give an example:

The child says, "No one ever cares."

You respond by asking why they believe that. Look for the lie they are believing about God, others, or themselves that leads them to conclude no one ever cares. As you locate that lie, you repeat it back to them by saying something like, "So you don't believe anyone ever cares about what happens to you because <the lie>."

Would you be willing to ask the Lord what He believes about <the lie>?

So you invite the child to pray by praying this after you: Holy Spirit, I have been telling myself <the lie>, but I don't know if this is Your truth. Would You show me/tell me what is the truth about <You, me, my parents, the focus of the lie>.

After being quiet to listen, you ask, "Did the Lord show you anything?"

Perhaps the child will say something like

When I was little, I remember feeling hungry a lot of the time, but my mother didn't give me food very often because she...

OR

My dad hits me a lot. He hits my mom, too. But when he hits me, she doesn't stop him. If she really wanted to take care of me, wouldn't she stop him from hurting me?

OR

The Lord told me that even when my parents don't take care of me, He will take care of me.

If the response is them having insight into why they believe this lie, have them ask the Lord about it. For example, "Jesus, would You show me where You were when my mother wasn't giving me the food I needed? How did You feel about it?"

OR "Jesus, would You show me where You were when my father was beating me? How did You feel about it?"

You want to pursue the topic of the lie through leading them to pray and to listen for the Lord until they reach the place where the Lord is speaking to their wound or need.

Then you might discuss it with them. For example, you might bring in a scripture verse that supports what is true.

At this point, this is a good time to discuss what the perpetrator of the trauma owes the child, in a sense. For example, we ask, "What do you think <person> owes you? That is, how should they have treated you?" We follow that up by rephrasing it in the terms of "This is what you owed me." For example, using the above examples, "My mother should have fed me when I was hungry. She owes me, or caused me to lose, being cared for lovingly and having my needs met." Or, "My father should not have beat me when he was drunk, high, or angry. He owes me, or caused me to lose, feeling protected and loved, feeling valued as a person."

ALTERNATE FIRST SESSION PROTOCOL: UNDERSTANDING GRIEF FROM A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE

Not every child or youth who has trauma wounds has experienced chronic trauma. Some have had one acute traumatic event that deeply affected them. Perhaps they experienced a deadly car accident, or had a parent or sibling die. It might even be the divorce of their parents, though that would normally involve some chronic trauma in the home situation.

In the case of acute trauma, begin the first session teaching this:

Sometimes we can have a very painful experience that changes how we understand ourselves or who we think we are or how we think we affect the other people in our life. The experience may leave us wondering why God didn't do something to stop it. These experiences may be a car accident you were in and someone was severely hurt or died. Sometimes it is the sudden death of a family member or a close friend. Maybe they didn't die, but they suddenly left your life and you don't know why. Some people experience a natural disaster, like a tornado or flood, that completely changes their life circumstances.

The emotion we feel afterwards is grief. It may be a strong sadness that this happened to you. It might be feeling absolutely nothing, like nothing happened at all. It might be anger, anger at God for letting it happen, anger at the adults who didn't stop it, anger at the person we lost for going away. It could even be anger at ourselves. Grief is how we label the feelings we experience when we have had a loss in our life.

Ask: Have you experienced any painful experiences that have caused you grief recently?

If the answer is “No,” ask this:

Ask: Have you *ever* experienced any painful experiences that have caused you grief?

Sometimes painful experiences break our confidence that anyone loves us or is looking out for us, so our heart responds by taking actions or believing certain things that protect us from any future pain or harm.

Some children or teens try not to talk about, think about, or have feelings about their painful experiences. It is normal to want to forget about traumatic memories or to pretend like the painful experiences never happened. Sadly, we can’t make the pain, memory, or effects of the painful experience go away. There are triggers—situations that stir your memory of the painful experience or its consequences—that bring the memory and bad emotions back.

Sometimes, it’s not the memory that comes to your thoughts. Your sub-conscious (your heart) simply thinks the new experience reminds it of what happened before, and your heart wants to protect you from more hurt, so you behave or respond in a way that your heart thinks will protect you because your heart feels like no one else will protect you.

Often we don’t want to think about how our heart feels about the painful experiences. That’s what we call, “avoidance”—we avoid the previous pain. However, our heart tends to identify new experiences as similar to or as helpless as our painful experiences, and then our heart’s

response gets in the way of how we can live our life until we deal with them directly.

Something we will do over the next weeks in our meetings together is ask the Lord to bring a trigger to your mind or bring a negative heart response to your mind or even remind you of a painful experience that He wants to touch and heal.

This week we want to start considering what kinds of experiences trigger you.

Before we begin, could we pray a prayer together to invite the Lord to meet with us in the places where we feel pain? [Go to the Opening Prayer Protocol.]

So trauma reminders, or triggers, are things that remind you about the painful experience you have had.

It might be certain places, situations, people, words, sounds, smells, sensations, or days of the year that remind you of the painful experience, even though your present situation is not actually dangerous for you.

When you experience these reminders, you may feel unsafe or as if you were living through that painful experience again.

You may find yourself behaving in a manner or doing things that don't fit the situation or that get you in trouble with others.

You might also avoid anything associated with anything that reminds you of the traumatic event. This can really get in the way of living your life and the things you like to do.

What kinds of things remind you of that painful experience or cause you to feel more grief or anger? Maybe think

about the past week or past month or few months. What happened to you that reminded you about that painful experience you have had?

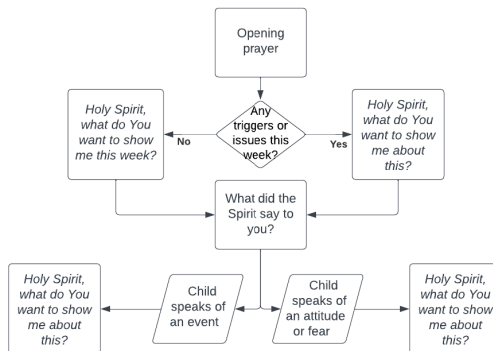
Here we have considered various ways to begin the very **first session**, in a trauma-sensitive way, with a child or teen who has experienced chronic or acute trauma. Next we will look at some protocols that you will use in almost every session.

This first one is the standard one that you will use from session 2 and onward. Again, we would begin with the opening prayer protocol, then move on to this weekly protocol. The more you become familiar with it, the easier you find it to adjust to various situations, trauma memories, and children.

WEEKLY SESSION PROTOCOL AFTER THE OPENING PRAYER:

Ask: Did you experience any triggers this week?

Ask: Would you like to pray about it/any of them? [See the flow chart below for how to proceed according to the child's response.]



Invite the child to pray: Holy Spirit, is there anything You would like to show me about what happened about this/ this week?

The child repeats the prayer. Take 30 seconds to a minute to listen quietly for whatever God might want to speak to the child's spirit.

Ask: What did God say to you? You might want to phrase it like this: Did anything at all come into your mind while we were silent?

Sometimes the Lord will speak to them about a particular event or experience. Guide the child to pray into this: Holy Spirit, what do You want to show me about this?

After being quiet to listen, ask, "Did the Lord show you anything?"

At this point, you could talk with the child about what the Spirit is pointing to by asking questions like:

- How did you feel when this happened?
- How do you feel about having that particular feeling?
- Why do you think you were feeling that?
- What was your mind telling you about this? OR
What is your mind telling you about this?

Pursue this line of questions for a bit, looking for

- a negative emotion or an over-sized/exaggerated emotion
- a fear of some sort
- a lie about God
- a lie about themselves
- a lie about their parental figure/authority figure/teacher

If a negative emotion or fear is exposed, guide the child to pray about what the Lord wants to say to them about it. Often you can follow this to find a lie or lies in which this emotion or fear is grounded.

Once a lie is exposed, pray with the child for the Holy Spirit to show us God's truth, perhaps in the Bible.

Invite the child to pray: Holy Spirit, I have been telling myself <the lie >, but I don't know if this is Your truth. Would You show me/tell me what is the truth about <You, me, my parents, the focus of the lie >.

After being quiet to listen, ask, "Did the Lord show you anything?"

Discuss it. You might bring in a scripture verse that supports what is true.

THE *FORGIVENESS* PROTOCOL

The next protocol we will examine is the *forgiveness* protocol and is typically used *inside* the weekly session protocol. Once the Holy Spirit has identified the trauma that became the source of the lie, typically we also discover a person responsible for that trauma. It may be a parent, a sibling, a teacher, another person of authority, a friend, a bully or enemy who needs to be forgiven. It may even be the child themselves. Yes, at times we hold ourselves at fault unjustly and need to forgive ourselves.

FOR THE FIRST TIME YOU INTRODUCE THE ACTION OF FORGIVENESS:

Teach the child about forgiveness:

When someone has hurt us deeply, treated us unfairly, or done something that was wrong, even if it was by accident, we may feel angry at them. Often we don't want to forgive

them. Maybe we even hope that something bad happens to them or that they are punished for what they did to us.

The Bible tells us that we need to forgive each other just as He forgives us. (Mt. 18:34-35; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13) If someone has done something sinful or damaging to you, forgiveness does NOT mean you give them freedom to do that again to you.

When we forgive someone, we choose to let go of our anger that they did this thing to us. We stop wishing that they will be punished for it or that something bad would happen to them (Eph. 4:31). We might even ask God to show His love to them.

For you to really forgive, you need to identify what damage their words or actions did to you, maybe to your body, maybe to your heart, maybe to your thoughts.

A good way to do this is to put an empty chair in front of us and imagine that this person is sitting in front of us, listening to us. So we are going to do this today about the person and the experience that the Holy Spirit identified to us today. Let me put an empty chair in front of you.

THE *FORGIVENESS* PROTOCOL

Say: I want you to use the imagination that God has given to you to imagine that they are in the chair now. I want you to speak to them by their name and tell them what they did to hurt you. I'm going to start, and you repeat after me, as though they were here and you were speaking to them.

Say: I want to speak to you today, <person's name, Mom, Dad, whoever >.

Child repeats.

Say: I want to tell you how you hurt me when you <have the child fill in what the offense was—if the child struggles

to elucidate the action/words clearly, you might prompt them a bit. >

Child speaks to the “person.”

Say: <person’s name >, when you did this.../said this...here is how I felt...

Child speaks to the “person,” filling in their feelings.

Say: <person’s name >, when you did this.../said this...here is what I thought...

Child speaks to the “person,” filling in their thoughts.

Say: <person’s name >, when you did this.../said this...here is the lie that I believed about <you, me, God...>.

Child speaks to the “person,” filling in the lie/or lies they believed.

Say: <person’s name >, when you did this.../said this...here is how it affected me and changed me...

Child speaks to the “person,” filling in the effects
<example: I didn’t believe anyone would really take care of me the way I needed; I stopped trusting other people, even if they were trustworthy; I didn’t believe God loved me or cared about me... >

Say: Here is the debt I feel you owe me...” <sample: using phrases such as, “You should have been there for me rather than abandoning me as a child,” or, “You owed me your word when you promised me you would come for my birthday, but instead you forgot.” The first few times you work through this step with a child, you might have to ask them some questions to identify the “debts.” NOTE: It can be helpful to work through a listing of the debts or

consequences of the trauma *before* beginning the forgiveness protocol.

Say: <person's name >, I forgive you for this.

Child speaks to the "person."

Say: Jesus paid this debt you owe me when He died on the cross, so the debt can be cancelled.

Child speaks to the "person."

Say: <person's name >, you don't owe me anything for this now. I forgive you.

Child speaks to the "person."

Say: <person's name >, I release you from further payment for these injuries you caused me.

Child speaks to the "person."

Say: Now we want to bless them in the name of Jesus. Maybe you want to imagine a gift you are giving them. Maybe you want to bless them with a loving relationship with Jesus. Maybe you want to bless them with healing for the painful experiences in their childhood. You say what you want: <person's name >, I bless you with...

Child speaks to the "person."

Say: Sometimes when a person hurts us, we make a judgment against them, like we decide they are a bad dad or that they failed as a parent or some other thoughts about their character.

Lead them in prayer: Holy Spirit, if I have made a false judgment against <person's name >, please show me.

Child repeats. Take 30 seconds or so to be quiet and listen.

Ask: Did the Lord speak anything to you? If so, what did He say?

After the child speaks, if they have identified a false judgment against the other person, lead them in prayer: Lord, I see how I have made this judgment...against <person's name >.

Child repeats.

Say: I repent for having judged them instead of leaving judgment to You.

Child repeats.

Say: Please remove that judgment off <person's name > and off me, too.

Child repeats.

NOTE: The first time you introduce the concept of false judgment, you might want to explain that false judgment is more than being honest about how the person treated you. It is more like a label that we have put on them. Even if it is true, we continue to accuse them of this in our heart and thoughts and so we are not releasing God's blessing to them. For a preteen or older, you might even explain that this ungodly judgment can act like a curse against them.

Once you have led the child through the *forgiveness* protocol, you will want to look over the notes that you have taken through the session to identify any strongholds that have been revealed. We will address this further on in the section on prayer liturgies to break spiritual strongholds.

RESOURCES FOR WHEN THE CHILD CAN'T MAKE ANY FURTHER PROGRESS

Sometimes, even though the Holy Spirit is always willing to help us, a victim of trauma hits a wall, as it were, a blockage that is often related to an as-of-yet unidentified lie they believe or sometimes even a sinful practice or act of self-protection that needs to be identified and repented of. There are various practices or protocols you may use to find what is causing the blockage.

Jesus, Where are You? Where Were You?

A number of inner healing ministries, such as Elijah House, Sozo, and Prisoners of Hope, use a technique that many non-Charismatics do not find comfortable. That is, when the person receiving ministry is stuck in an old memory, as it were, and just can't "get over it" or can't process what happened to them in that situation, we ask them, "Would you like to ask Jesus where He was when this happened?"

I first encountered this method when my children were toddlers and I realized that I had some "mother wound" to process so that I could be a better mother to my children. The memory that the Holy Spirit brought to my mind was when I was maybe 12 or 13 years old, and my mother had blown up at me for something, and she had me by the arm with her one hand and was beating the back of my knees with a belt with her other hand as I ran in circles around her. I remembered being confused because I didn't understand at what point I had crossed the line into doing what had displeased her. The Lord was showing me how I had equated this type of discipline with His discipline, how I was always worried about "getting in trouble" with Him because my mother had been raised in a home without clear boundaries and so she had raised me without clear

boundaries. Thus, I thought God was always angry with me because I had so often not known at what point my mother would become angry. Wow! How do you get over that?

My counselor said, “Would you like to ask Jesus where He was in that memory, at that time?”

So I prayed, “Jesus, would You show me where You were when that happened?” Instantly, in my mind’s eye, I saw Him standing in the doorway of the kitchen where it had happened. He looked very sad. He was holding His arms out to both my mother and me, offering to help reconcile us, but we didn’t see Him because we were focused on our conflict. I asked Him to show me what He saw about my mom at that time, and He showed me that she was treating me the way she had been treated in her own childhood. He showed me that she didn’t really know what was right to do because her parents hadn’t set a good example for her. Wow! That actually made it easier for me to forgive her, to forgive her for still hitting me with a belt through my teen years, to forgive her for not knowing how to enforce boundaries and rules in a consistent manner. This breakthrough led to me confronting the lies I had believed about God—that I could never please Him, that I could never know when He would be angry with me, that I disappointed Him with my failures—and then I could learn the truth about His character and the truth of His unfailing love for me, His delight in offering me mercy when I repented, and the abounding grace He offered me to help me succeed.

This also led to a breakthrough for me in disciplining my own children. I learned about enforcing a boundary at the moment my child crossed it and not waiting until I was so annoyed with them that I became angry. I learned how to have patience with them as they learned obedience and how

to show mercy and love with consistent discipline without anger.

See, when I was feeling angry with my toddlers because they disobeyed, and when I became angry more easily on some days than on others, I knew I was not disciplining them in love. However, I couldn't change how I acted until the Lord healed this memory, and it included seeing where He was in the memory.

Many pastors aren't comfortable with asking, "Jesus, show me where You were at this time." What if we imagine something that isn't true? What if our emotions are making this up? What if Satan puts a picture in my mind instead? How can I trust that this is really the work of the Holy Spirit?

These are all great questions, and I honestly do not have a Bible verse to answer them. I can only say that Jesus promised to give us His Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, who would guide us into all truth. I can only remind you that Jesus said, "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (Mt. 7:9-11) If we ask Jesus to show us where He was in the situation in our memory, do we expect Him to give us a stone or a snake? That is not how Jesus described God's character. We believe that God's ability to speak to us is greater than Satan's ability to deceive us. We believe that if we approach Him for help and healing in our brokenness,

⁵⁶ "Therefore, a deliberately Wesleyan approach to inner healing must hold to the love of God as its central tenet." Evan Rohrs-Dodge, "Constructing a Wesleyan Theology and Practice of Inner Healing," Firebrand Magazine (Spirit & Truth, August 17, 2020),

He will not respond by letting us be deceived. He is the God of love who reaches out for His children.⁵⁶

Therefore, I encourage you to try this method when a child you are counseling gets stuck in a memory they can't make sense of or they can't process. Trust in the goodness of God, that He will not act in a way to bring further damage. He cares more about this child than we do!

Continuing to Ask Jesus

Sometimes the first time we encourage the person receiving ministry to interact with Jesus, the interaction leaves them with questions. For example, "I saw Jesus there, but He was standing next to the person who hurt me. Why would He stand there?" So we suggest they ask Jesus why He was standing there OR ask Him what is He saying to them in this picture OR what does Jesus think about this situation, and we have them pray again, then we wait.

Each time we want to help *them* process what *they* are receiving from God. We ask questions like, "What did you see, hear, or feel?" and, "How did that make you feel?" Each time they raise another question, we do not answer it, but encourage them to take the question to the Father, to Jesus, to the Spirit, to the Lord and wait on Him for an answer.

What is unique about this approach is that we are not giving any answers. We may explain terms if they don't understand what the word means, but we don't answer any of their "Why" questions. When we encounter a lie they

have believed, we have them take it to the Lord, repent for believing it, and ask Him for His truth that counters that lie. If they ask for advice, we turn them to the Lord to ask Him. We are relying on His goodness and wisdom to advise them and comfort them Himself. We must believe that He really wants to do this!

Sometime, though, when we encourage them to ask the Lord another question, they may respond that they don't want to, that they are done for the day, that they feel they have received enough already. We may see that the Lord has more truth, grace, and freedom to give them, but we must respect their choice at the time. So we respond by praying for them until we meet with them again, praying for the Spirit to prepare their heart to go further.

Identifying a Foundational Lie Inherent in Their Response

As you are asking them questions and directing them to direct their own questions to the Lord, a person may say, "I can't ask God that," or, "I can't say that to God." So we ask them why they can't say that to God or ask Him about that, and the response indicates that their current perception of God—as the Father or as Jesus or as the Spirit or as the Lord—has incorporated a lie. We invite them to pray after us, as we lead them in a prayer repenting of that particular lie, perhaps identified with the person who wounded them which led to that lie, and accepting the truth about that aspect of God's character.

For example, let's consider the example of Nancy, a teen who is struggling to trust God and can't seem to overcome her anxiety, fears, and doubt. So the youth pastor suggests, "Let's ask the Spirit to show you why you feel that way about God."

Suppose Nancy replies, "I can't ask God that."

So the youth pastor would ask, “Why don’t you feel you can ask God that?”

Nancy responds, “How can I ask God why I can’t trust Him? He will be so angry with me for not just trusting Him!”

The youth pastor may respond, “Nancy, would you pray this after me? ‘I forgive my earthly father for being angry with my inadequacies and my failures, and for not creating an atmosphere for me to feel safe and accepted just as I am. I renounce the lie that God is angry with my immaturities and failures.’”

So Nancy prays this, and the youth pastor asks, “Do you feel you can ask God to show you why you feel that you can’t trust Him?” Hopefully, Nancy prays, asking the Lord, and the session continues as we imagined it before. If she still cannot, we continue with other protocols such as the following.

Are There Any Lies I am Believing About Myself or the Lord?

Sometime when we hit a wall, this can be a helpful prayer to have the child or teen pray. We ask them to pray after us, “Father, are there any lies I am believing about myself?”

After interaction on the Spirit’s response to that question, if the wall persists, we ask them to pray, “God, are there any lies I am believing about You?” Again, we interact with the Spirit’s response to that question. Remember we do not want to give answers ourselves, but use questions to help them process what they are seeing or hearing, and whenever they feel lack of clarity or don’t understand what they saw or heard, we guide them to ask the Holy Spirit to show them why they heard that, why they saw that, what God is wanting to reveal to them, etc. Remember once again that we are the midwife here.

Dealing With Feelings of Anger

Sometimes when we are dealing with hitting a wall, the child or teen may express feelings of anger, perhaps anger at God or anger with the abuser or anger with the person they believe should have intervened with the abuser. Other times, the youth may merely identify feeling angry. What are steps we can take with the child at this point?⁵⁷

If the child has merely expressed feeling angry, we might ask if they are feeling angry towards God, themselves, or some other person, or perhaps they are angry with a situation. If the child has no answer, we might suggest, “Would you like to ask the Holy Spirit why you feel angry?”

If, ultimately, the answer is that they are angry with God, we ask, “Why are you angry with God?” Often the response will be in regards to something God did or didn’t do (such as intervening in the traumatic event). If it is not clear, we might further ask, “Why does that make you feel angry with God?” At this point, you may turn to the place in the protocols where we help them pray through to find the lie underlying the anger, and continue that protocol through to the balancing truth, repentance for believing the lie, forgiveness of the person who created the trauma or situation that birthed the lie, blessing that person, receiving the blessing of the Lord.

If the anger is towards a person, we might ask, “Why are you angry with that person?” In working through the

⁵⁷ Ed Smith and Joshua Smith, *The Essentials of Transformation Prayer Ministry: *Second Edition** (Simpsonville, SC: New Creation Publishing, 2019), 279-284.

⁵⁸ This is especially critical when dealing with sexual abuse. Many victims of sexual abuse struggle with feelings of personal guilt and shame, thinking they should have done something to stop it. No matter

answer to this, we return to the place in the protocols as we noted just above, to pray through the entire emotion/event/cause/effect, etc.

Sometimes a child or youth will express anger at themselves for letting this traumatic event happen to them. This needs to be addressed very carefully, lovingly, and patiently. Were we to respond, “No! Of course this was not your fault!” the child may actually feel that we have not really heard them or acknowledged their pain, but that we have “gaslit” them.⁵⁸ Rather, we suggest the child pray, “Holy Spirit, was this my fault?” and allow the Holy Spirit to bring truth to that lie. After this, we may proceed by helping them receive the freedom from the Lord to forgive themselves and release themselves from guilt and condemnation. This may take the form of leading them to declare, “God, I trust Your leadership in my life, and I believe that this was not my fault.” Depending on the age of the youth, you might also lead them to forgive themselves, as it were, “I repent for having accused myself of being at fault. I forgive myself. Holy Spirit, please remove the feelings of false guilt and condemnation and help me truly forgive myself and receive Your peace.”

When “All Else Fails” and the Wall Persists

There are sessions when these various protocols to dislodge the hinderance seems to have no effect. At this point, we can stop and ask the Holy Spirit what He is doing. You might pray something like, “Holy Spirit, we are unclear

how close a relationship you have with the child, no matter how much they trust your authority, the truth is that your authority is not high enough for them to forgive themselves. It takes the authority of God to break the condemnation they feel. See *The Essentials of Transformation Prayer Ministry*, pages 190-194, for further insight.

about this obstacle keeping <name> from more freedom/forgiveness/truth/hope in You. Please give us direction.” OR, you might ask the child to pray, “Holy Spirit, what are You doing right now?”

Perhaps it’s not the Holy Spirit you need to address. It might be the child themselves. You might want to ask, “What is going on right now in your mind?” or a similar question.⁵⁹ Perhaps the child has just become tired or distracted. It might be time to end your session. However, if the session has only recently begun, or if you sense there is progress yet to be made, you might ask, “What are you feeling right now? or “What emotion are you feeling right now?” If the child can express what they are feeling, you can return to the protocol at the place where you begin to explore what is causing or driving a particular emotion.

If the child replies, “I don’t know what I am feeling,” you might ask if they would be open to praying, “Holy Spirit, I don’t know what I am feeling right now. I just feel stuck. Would You help me understand what I am feeling and why I feel that way?”

If, after praying this, the child hears nothing from the Spirit or still remains unable to move on, it might be time to end the session by first thanking the Lord for the healing He has brought thus far and asking Him to continue His work in their heart over the next week. Ask Him to bring up situations that help them understand what this wall is, or that give them understanding of what He wants to do next.

⁵⁹ Ed Smith and Joshua Smith, *The Essentials of Transformation Prayer Ministry: *Second Edition** (Simpsonville, SC: New Creation Publishing, 2019), 269.

PROTOCOL FOR *ENDING A SESSION*

I am including this in the “protocol” area, though this really follows praying any liturgies (given in the next segment of the handbook) to break any spiritual strongholds.

At the end of a session, we want to close by praying blessing over the young person or child. Here is a sample prayer, followed by blessings you might include or substitute in depending on what issues the Lord brought up during the session.⁶⁰

Start of the prayer: In the Name of Jesus Christ, I bless you <name> with the promises of God, which are yes and amen. I pray the Holy Spirit make you healthy and strong in body, mind and spirit, and that you move in faith and expectancy.

- May God’s angels be with you to protect and keep you.
- God bless you with ability, with abundance and with an assurance of His love & grace.
- God bless you with clear direction, with a controlled and disciplined life. God bless you with courage and creativity.
- God bless you with spiritual perception of His truth.
- God bless you with great faith, and with favor with God and man.
- God bless you with good health and a good ____ (wife or husband). God bless your hands to bless others.

⁶⁰ Katy Cerny, “Prisoners of Hope Training Manual,” Unpublished (used in-house) (Kansas City, MO: International House of Prayer of Kansas City, 2016), 71.

- God bless you with happiness, fulfillment, contentment, hope and a good outlook on life.
- God bless you with a listening ear and with a long life and an obedient heart to the Spirit of God.
- God bless you with His peace, with pleasant speech, a pleasant personality, with promotion, protection, provision, safety and strength.
- God bless you with success, trust and wisdom.

End of the prayer: God bless you with goodness and mercy following you all the days of your life that you might dwell in the house of the Lord forever. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and give you peace, the peace of God that surpasses all understanding. I bless you, <name>, in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

LITURGIES TO BREAK SPIRITUAL STRONGHOLDS

Strongholds are not demons themselves. Rather, strongholds are believed lies and sinful actions, even if they are motivated by self-protection and are coping mechanisms. These strongholds give the demonic realm access to torment and tempt us.⁶¹

One way to identify a stronghold in a child's life is to examine the lie or lies that they are believing about the Lord, themselves, parents, authorities, and others in their life and to identify which stronghold would classify that lie. You might examine a particular fear or group of fears to identify a stronghold. A sinful or inappropriate coping mechanism or behavior might also reveal a stronghold.

⁶¹ 2 Cor. 10:4; Eph. 6:12.

After we have identified a lie, fear, or traumatic event and taken the child through identifying the balancing scriptural truth and replacing that lie, fear, anger, other emotion with the truth, and forgiving the person who wounded them, next we identify the stronghold or strongholds related and lead the child through the appropriate liturgy to break the power of that stronghold in their life, in their mind, in their spirit. As we go through the list of “repent and renounce,” do not feel pressed to lead the child through each and every one on the list. Rather, ***choose those behaviors or manifestations that are most pertinent to what you discussed with them during that session and maybe a few others that are related in subject or type.***

It is perfectly acceptable to have this book with you and to read through the following liturgies from the book itself. You don’t need to memorize it. Some people keep this as a pdf or picture on their phone so that if they find themselves in a situation to pray through this model and any of the strongholds with someone, they can pull it up on their phone.

However, it is preferable to have read through all the strongholds enough to become very familiar with each stronghold and how it presents as this will facilitate your identifying which stronghold or strongholds to pray through at this point in the session.

Each stronghold liturgy contains a list of ways that this stronghold may manifest in a person’s life. You may wonder sometimes why some of these behaviors or manifestations are classified under certain strongholds or even under several strongholds. Let us keep in mind that this is not an exact science. Consider that when Jesus healed the two blind men in Matthew 20, He merely

touched their eyes and they could see. In John 9, He made mud from dirt and His spit, then sent the man, with mud-covered eyes to the pool of Siloam, and the man did not see until he had washed the mud off. In Mark 8, Jesus spit directly on the man's eyes and touched them. However, this only partially restored the man's sight. After checking on the progress of the healing, Jesus laid His hands on the man's eyes again. It makes no logical sense to us why Jesus opened blind eyes in so many different ways. We can merely observe that it worked. Even so, the lists of manifestations under each stronghold were compiled across years of ministry and observation.

Again, when praying through a stronghold to break its power over a child's life, not every manifestation must be prayed and renounced. For teens and particularly for children, you will want to be selective concerning which behaviors or manifestations are most appropriate to renounce at this time. Not every behavior or manifestation is appropriate in each and every situation. Use discernment and wisdom as you choose which manifestations to list as you pray through a stronghold.

Remember that once a stronghold has been addressed in prayer does **not** mean that this stronghold will **never** need to be addressed in this person's life again. Strongholds, like wounding, are often layered, like an onion. The most obvious manifestations and fruit of trauma are dealt with first, then others will "surface" and need to be dealt with in terms of identifying the lies believed, the event that led the child to conclude those lies, identifying God's truth to replace the lie, and forgiving the person who inflicted the

⁶² Mt. 12:43-45; Lk. 11:24-26.

trauma before those next manifestations can be addressed and their power broken.

Moreover, the work of establishing thoughts and a narrative that incorporates the truth in the mind of the child needs to be done. In Matthew 12 and Luke 11, Jesus describes the situation where a demonic spirit has been cast out of a person, but the person has not done the work of co-laboring with the Spirit to fill that vacuum with godly truths, a godly narrative, and the fruit of the Spirit, then the demon can return to that empty place and even bring other demonic spirits with it.⁶² We may think of it as building a “heavenly” or “godly” spiritual stronghold to take the place of the demonic stronghold.

Stronghold of Fear Liturgy⁶³

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of Fear which shows itself by creating fear in a person because they believe someone or something is dangerous or is likely to hurt them. Remind them that not all fear is bad. For example, if you are in the presence of someone who is abusive or threatening to hurt you or others, then it is natural to feel fear. God put that sense in us so that we can be careful to find protection in dangerous situations. Another example: if you are in a car accident or watch a car accident in front of you, it can be natural to feel fear. When we have a stronghold of fear in us, then we find ourselves unable to trust God to help us, unable to trust God with the outcome of the situation. Sometime what began as a natural fear becomes a stronghold if we don't allow the Father, who is the God of all comfort, to help us with our fear by the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus told us was

⁶³ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual: Spiritual Deliverance Training for Personal and Team Ministry* (Kansas City: Forerunner Publishing, 2019), 43.

the other Comforter whom He would send when He returned to the throne of God.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of fear and the manifestations and fruit of fear in my life.

I repent and renounce:⁶⁴

- A spirit of fear
- A critical spirit
- Not trusting
- Doubt
- Worry
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Panic attacks
- Migraines
- Torment
- Horror
- Terror
- Nightmares
- Fear of the dark
- Fear of death
- Being a loner and feeling I can't trust anyone
- Feeling alone
- Fear of man
- Fear of relationships

⁶⁴ We encourage you to go through the entire list (except where noted in the stronghold of perversion, because, while it might not seem pertinent for the child, it might easily be a sinful behavior in the child's ancestral line (parent, grandparent, great-grandparent), and as the sins

- Fear of someone touching me where they should not touch me
- Fear of rejection
- Fear of being abandoned
- Panic that I feel in my physical heart
- Fear of Authority
- Fear of being able to say No
- Fear of failure
- Perfectionism
- Thinking I am not good enough
- Fear of food
- Unhealthy fear of God
- All phobias: heights, animals, insects like spiders, water, etc.
- Fear from anything horrible that I had to watch
- Familiar spirit of fear

Say: I break the stronghold of fear and command all the spirits related to fear to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with love, power, and a sound mind, because the Bible tells us that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.⁶⁵

Stronghold of Lying Liturgy⁶⁶

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of Lying which means being dishonest or saying things that are untrue or false. If we continue to tell lies, even little lies that we don't think will hurt anyone, we can open ourselves up to a stronghold of lying. Some families have a family culture of lying to other families and other

of the parents can have repercussions to the third and fourth generations, and we want to cut off that demonic access to the child.

⁶⁵ 2 Tim. 1:7.

⁶⁶ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 49.

people. That opens everyone in that family up to a stronghold of lying.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of lying and the manifestations and fruit of lying in my life.

I repent and renounce:

- Self-deception
- Strong deception
- Words spoken over me that have cursed me
- False prophecies⁶⁷
- Gossip
- Flattery
- Exaggeration
- False memories
- Lies from false teachers
- All lies, big or small
- Slander
- Accusations
- Religious bondages
- Superstitions
- Profanity
- Guilt, shame, and condemnation
- Depression
- False burdens
- Breaking promises or covenants
- A familiar spirit of lying

⁶⁷ Such as, “You will never amount to anything,” or other “You will never...” or “You will always...” negative statements.

Say: I break the stronghold of lying and command all the spirits related to lying and lies to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Spirit of Truth. Jesus promised that He would send the Spirit of truth to live in our spirit and guide us into all truth.⁶⁸

Stronghold of Heaviness Liturgy⁶⁹

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of Heaviness which shows in feeling weary all the time, weary of everything you are responsible to do, or feeling a lack of interest in life, a lack of interest in what you are responsible to do or just feeling restless all the time, like nothing you do is satisfying to you. It is also seen in lingering sadness that you can't seem to get rid of.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of heaviness and the manifestations and fruit of heaviness in my life.

I repent and renounce:

- Self-pity
- A broken heart
- False responsibility
- Suicidal thoughts
- Gluttony
- Loneliness
- Heaviness and depression
- Excessive sorrow, mourning, and grief
- Discouragement and despair
- Dejection and hopelessness

⁶⁸ Jn. 16:13.

⁶⁹ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 46.

- Rejection, insecurity, and abandonment
- Inferiority and low self-esteem
- Self-hate
- Self-mutilation
- The results of sexual abuse
- The results of the lack of praise and acceptance
- Suppressed emotions like fear, anger, rage, violence, and hatred
- Insomnia
- Chemical imbalance
- Familiar spirit of heaviness

Say: I break the stronghold of heaviness and command all the spirits related to heaviness to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to us to be our Comforter.⁷⁰ I bless <child's name> with the garment of praise and the oil of joy.⁷¹

Stronghold of Infirmary Liturgy⁷²

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of Infirmary which means things like physical or mental weakness, illness, sickness, disease or disorders. You might want to explain that due to the sin of Adam death and decay entered the world (Rom. 5:17), and so often sickness is merely a consequence of being human. However, we see places such as in Luke 13 where we are told that the crippled woman had been plagued by a spirit of infirmity that caused her to be bent over.⁷³ In this prayer session we will address any spirits of infirmity that have

⁷⁰ John 15:26.

⁷¹ Isa. 61:3.

⁷² Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 47.

found access to your body due to the traumatic things you have experienced.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of infirmity and the manifestations and fruit of infirmity in my life. I break every assignment of infirmity against me in the past, present, and future.

I repent of allowing and agreeing with the assignment of, and I renounce:

- Hypochondria/being afraid that I am sick
- Chemical imbalance
- Pain and affliction
- Being frail or lame or not having the strength to do my responsibilities
- A root of bitterness
- All oppression
- Asthma
- Allergies and hay fever
- Any bone disorders, such as scoliosis
- High fevers
- Bipolar disorder
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- All lingering disorders
- Lung disease
- Cancer
- Tumors and cysts

⁷³ “And a woman was there who had been crippled by a spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not straighten up at all. When Jesus saw her, he called her forward and said to her, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity.” (Lk. 13:11-12).

- Weakness and fatigue
- All infections, whether viral, bacterial, or fungal
- Epilepsy and seizures
- Fear of sickness and disease
- A familiar spirit of infirmity, sickness, and disease

Say: I break the stronghold of infirmity and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Spirit of life⁷⁴ and with healing and gifts of healing.

Stronghold of Bondage Liturgy⁷⁵

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of Bondage which shows up as feeling there are certain sinful acts or thoughts you cannot get rid of. For teens, you might also explain that sometimes we can feel that there are certain religious practices we must do or God will be angry with us.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of bondage and the manifestations and fruit of bondage in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

- Bondage to fear
- Bondage to addictions
- Bondage to sin
- Bondage to bitterness
- Bondage to oppression
- A mind-binding spirit or attitude that keeps me from believing God's truths.

⁷⁴ Rom. 8:2; I Cor. 12:9.

⁷⁵ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 37.

- Compulsive behaviors
- Spiritual blindness
- Fear of death
- Spiritual death
- An unhealthy need for control
- A familiar spirit of bondage

For teens you might include:

- Bondage to addictions like drugs, sex, computer time, alcohol, food, shopping, etc.
- Bondage to lust
- Captivity to Satan
- Religious bondage

Say: I break the stronghold of bondage and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Spirit of adoption and liberty.⁷⁶

Stronghold of a Deaf and Dumb Spirit Liturgy⁷⁷

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of a deaf and dumb spirit which shows up as having an inability to hear or speak spiritual truths, or even some things in the natural, like feeling there are things you can't talk about even though they hurt you so much.

[You may wonder why some of these behaviors are listed under a deaf and dumb spirit. It's not the name that we give to the stronghold that is most important. Rather, it is renouncing the behaviors and its fruit in our lives that closes the stronghold's "door of access." The theme of the manifestations and behaviors in this particular stronghold

⁷⁶ Rom. 8:15.

⁷⁷ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 38.

focuses on hindering one's ability to hear, understand, and speak truth as well as hindering one from proper and reasonable personal restraint.]

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of a deaf and dumb spirit and its manifestations and fruit in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

- Spiritual deafness
- Spiritual blindness
- Inability to speak clearly or speak at all about certain things.
- Compulsive behaviors
- Being unable to stop crying
- Ear problems
- Teeth grinding
- Overwhelming sadness
- Overwhelming exhaustion
- A familiar spirit of deaf and dumb.

For teens you might include:

- Mental illness
- Insanity
- Retardation
- Senility
- Alzheimer's
- Schizophrenia
- Paranoia
- Hearing voices

⁷⁸ Rom. 8:11.

⁷⁹ I Cor. 12:9.

- Hallucinations
- Involuntary tremors or paralysis
- Dissociative identity disorder
- Crippling fears
- Burning myself
- Cutting myself
- Suicidal thoughts
- Chemical imbalances
- Seizures and epilepsy
- Self-hatred
- Eating disorders

Say: I break the stronghold of a deaf and dumb spirit and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with resurrection life⁷⁸ and gifts of healing.⁷⁹

Stronghold of Death Liturgy⁸⁰

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of death which can affect you spiritually and emotionally as well as bringing lasting physical sickness.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of death and the curse of premature death.

I break all plans of the enemy, and I break every assignment against my life due to:

- Accidents
- Assault

⁸⁰ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 39.

- Abduction
- Injury
- Illness
- Random acts of violence
- Disease
- Cancer
- Suicide

I break every assignment of:

- Abortion
- Miscarriages
- Death
- Destruction
- A familiar spirit of death

For teens you might include:

I break every assignment of death to:

- My relationships
- My friendships
- My emotions
- My finances
- The call of God on my life

Say: I break the stronghold of Death and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with life⁸¹ and resurrection life.⁸²

⁸¹ Deut. 10:19.

⁸² Rom. 8:11.

Stronghold of Error Liturgy⁸³

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of error which shows up as fighting against or resisting God's truth in various ways in your life.

Lead the child in praying the following:

I renounce the stronghold of Error and its manifestations and fruit in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

- A spirit of error
- False predictions or word spoken against me by anyone, including myself.
- Not being submissive to those who have authority over my life
- An unteachable spirit
- False teaching about the Bible
- Sympathy for the devil
- Mental confusion and fears
- Depression
- Physical illness and pain
- Dullness of comprehension
- Spiritual hinderances to prayer, reading the Bible, listening to sermons, paying attention at youth group
- Arguing against God's truths
- A familiar spirit of error

Say: I break the stronghold of error and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Spirit of Truth.⁸⁴

⁸³ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 42.

⁸⁴ I Jn. 4:6; Ps. 51:10.

Stronghold of Haughtiness Liturgy⁸⁵

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of haughtiness. What is haughtiness or what does having haughty eyes mean? It is feeling that you are not only superior to others, but you also don't respect other people, not who they are or how they think or what they say.

The Bible talks about it like this:

“You save the humble but bring low those whose eyes are haughty.” (Ps. 18:27, NIV)

“Whoever slanders their neighbor in secret, I will put to silence; whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart, I will not tolerate.” (Ps. 101:5, NIV)

“My heart is not proud, LORD, my eyes are not haughty.” (Ps. 131:1, NIV)

“Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor.” (Pr. 18:12, NIV)

A spirit of haughtiness often shows up when we insist that we know better than anyone else.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of Haughtiness and its manifestations and fruit in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

- Arrogance
- Vanity
- Pride, bragging, and boasting
- Being scornful of others

⁸⁵ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 45.

- Obstinate refusing to change my opinion even when the facts show that I may not be right.
- Self-righteousness
- Wanting to always be in control and say what must happen
- Demanding my will without thinking what is best for everyone
- Manipulation and control
- Rejection of authority (parents, teachers, God)
- Rebellion
- Having a “better-than-others” attitude
- Gossip
- Causing division
- Contentiousness/liking to argue and quarrel all the time
- Strife
- Self-deception
- Idleness
- Feeling like I need to do everything better than everyone else
- Wanting to be the center of attention all the time
- Always being right
- Criticism and fault-finding
- Haughtiness that came through abuse and hurt
- A familiar spirit of haughtiness

Say: I break the stronghold of haughtiness and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with humble and contrite spirit.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Pr. 16:19.

Stronghold of Jealousy Liturgy⁸⁷

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of jealousy which shows up as being envious of what others have or can do and being unwilling to share your friends or possessions with others.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of jealousy and the manifestations and fruit of jealousy in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

- Envy
- Jealousy
- Revenge and spite
- Murder
- Extreme competition
- Causing divisions
- Coveting
- Selfishness
- Strife
- Desiring to be in heated disagreements with people
- Hatred
- Anger and rage
- Violence
- Racism and Bigotry (Bigotry is being intolerant towards those who have different opinions than we do or who are of a different social or economic level than we are.)
- Familiar spirit of jealousy

⁸⁷ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 48.

⁸⁸ Eph. 5:2.

⁸⁹ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 53.

Say: I break the stronghold of jealousy and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the love of God.⁸⁸

Stronghold of Stupor Liturgy⁸⁹

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of stupor which means being dull or insensitive to the truths of God and to righteousness.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of stupor and its manifestations and fruit in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

- Unbelief
- Complacency/ not caring about what is important
- Stubbornness/hardness of heart
- Lethargy
- Dullness of understanding
- Religious legalism
- Spiritual blindness
- Spiritual deafness
- Religious pride

Say: I break the stronghold of stupor and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Holy Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit,⁹⁰ and the gifts of the Spirit.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Gal. 5:22-23.

⁹¹ I Cor. 12:7-12.

FOR USE WITH TEENS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ABUSE:

Stronghold of Perversion Liturgy⁹²

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of perversion.

If you have already talked with them about any sexual abuse they have experienced, explain that you will pray through the stronghold of perversion with them because what was done to them might allow evil spirits to their mind or spirit.

If the youth has been willfully involved in sexual activity, NOT as a result of sexual abuse, then you might want to explain that engaging in sexual activity outside of marriage opens an entrance for evil spirits to harass and inflict them.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of perversion and the manifestations and fruit of perversion in my life. I break every assignment of perversion against me in the past, present, and future.

I repent of allowing and agreeing with the assignment of, and I renounce:

- Lying
- A broken spirit
- Uncleanliness and lewdness
- Evil actions
- Abortion [use this only if appropriate, that is if the youth has had an abortion or if their mother did.]
- Child abuse and molestation

⁹² Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 47.

- Incest—physical and emotional [use this only if appropriate]
- Prostitution [use this only if appropriate]
- Masturbation and self-gratification [use this only if appropriate]
- Exposure and voyeurism [use this only if appropriate]
- Atheism
- Filthy mindedness
- Sex perversions
- Doctrinal error
- Twisting the Word
- Satanic ritual abuse [use this only if appropriate]
- Ritual molestation and rape [use this only if appropriate]
- Satanic dedications and marriage ceremonies [use this only if appropriate]
- Rape [use this only if appropriate]
- Sodomy [use this only if appropriate]
- Pornography [use this only if appropriate]
- Chronic worry
- Selfishness
- Egocentric thinking
- Contentiousness and foolishness
- Lust
- Homosexuality and lesbianism [use this only if appropriate]
- Bisexuality [use this only if appropriate]
- Bestiality [use this only if appropriate]
- S&M—sodomasochism [use this only if appropriate]
- Vain imagination and fantasy lust

- Fornication and adultery [use this only if appropriate; use if either of the parents has been or is involved in adultery]
- A frigid spirit both sexually and emotionally [use this only if appropriate]
- Effeminate spirit (for boys)/ Masculine spirit (for girls) [use this only if appropriate]
- All sexual demons
- A familiar spirit of perversion

Say: I break the stronghold of perversion and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with God's Spirit, with purity, and holiness.⁹³

FOR USE WITH TEENS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO HAVE COME OUT OF A CULT OR OUT OF EXPERIENCE WITH WICCA, WITCHCRAFT, NEW AGE RELIGIONS, DRUID SPIRITUALITY:

Stronghold of Antichrist Liturgy⁹⁴

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of Antichrist which shows itself in denying Christ or opposing His ways.⁹⁵ If you have people in authority over you who deny that Jesus is God, the Son of God, and say that he is just a man, this can allow the spirit of Antichrist into your life.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

⁹³ I Thess. 5:23.

⁹⁴ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 52.

⁹⁵ "...whoever denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a person is the antichrist—denying the Father and the Son" (I John 2:22).

⁹⁶ This is not denying that there are true born-again believers in the Catholic Church. This is addressing the form of Catholicism that exalts

I renounce the stronghold of Antichrist, every spirit of Antichrist, and its manifestations and fruits of infirmity in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

- Any spirit that denies the deity of Christ
- Any spirit that denies that the death of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection have reconciled us to God.
- Any spirit that comes against Christ and His teaching
- Secular humanism
- A Jezebel spirit
- Causing division or trying to control all situations
- Worldly speech and actions
- Profanity
- Lawlessness and rebellion against God's will
- The Accuser and the Deceiver
- Any evil and ungodly spirits of any kind
- Any ungodly music
- Legalism, ritualism, or religious formalism
- All false doctrines within [here you would select which if any they have been taught or exposed to; if they have not, then skip this renunciation]:
Mormonism, Unitarianism, Jehovah's Witness, Catholicism,⁹⁶ Pharisaism,⁹⁷ Nazism, Buddhism, Hinduism, New Age.

Mary and even some saints over and above Jesus by praying to them and worshipping them instead of the Lord only.

⁹⁷ This speaks of a church that has an elitist attitude and teaches that following certain laws and rituals is what "makes" you a Christian.

Say: I break the stronghold of Antichrist and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Spirit of truth.⁹⁸

Stronghold of Divination Liturgy⁹⁹

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of Divination which seeks to foresee or foretell future events or discover hidden knowledge by the aid of demonic powers, by interpreting omens, stars (horoscopes), or tarot cards, or any kind of witchcraft. If you have people in authority over you who practice divination, this can allow the spirit of divination into your life. A stronghold of Divination can also manifest as a drive to manipulate situations to get what one desires, often using hidden or secret manipulation tactics.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of Divination and Witchcraft and its manifestations and fruits of Divination in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

- Lust for power and control
- All involvement with
 - Psychics, fortune-tellers, and soothsayers
 - Horoscopes and zodiac or star divination
 - False prophets
 - Witches, warlocks, wizards, and sorcerers
 - Hypnotists and enchanter
- All spirit guides
- All animal guides
- All indigenous witchcraft

⁹⁸ I Jn. 4:6.

⁹⁹ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 40-41.

- Druid, Celtic and Wiccan witchcraft
- Occultism
- Astral Projection (Some believe their human spirit can leave their body and travel to other places separate from their physical body. This is more pertinent to some ethnic groups than others.)
- Rebellion
- Drug abuse
- Birth charts
- All magic, black or white
- Spiritism (the belief that the dead can communicate with the living; sometimes teens are entranced with the idea of holding a séance with their friends or use a Ouija board to get guidance from spirits)
- Water witching
- Being divisive, controlling, or seducing
- Selfishness
- Mind control (trying to go in and out of consciousness to communicate with spirits or to influence events and people)
- Manipulation
- Automatic handwriting and handwriting analysis using familiar spirits
- Familiar spirit of divination and witchcraft

Say: I break the stronghold of Divination and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ I Cor. 12:9-12; Gal. 5:22-23.

Stronghold of Harlotry Liturgy¹⁰¹

NOTE: According to the Old Testament definition of how Israel “played the harlot” by worshipping tribal deities of the nations around them instead of worshipping Him alone and trusting Him alone to protect them and provide for them, we are defining harlotry as selling ourselves or our integrity in exchange for protect or food or provisions. For example, when a man (like an uncle) molests or rapes a child and says, “Don’t tell anyone or I will hurt you,” or “Don’t tell anyone. This will be our special secret,” even though the child is uncomfortable with this “secret,” they don’t tell anyone out of fear for what the abuser will do, and that allows a stronghold of harlotry to form.

Explain that together you are going to pray about the stronghold of Harlotry which can show itself in a variety of ways, like doing whatever is necessary to survive trauma and being sinned against or by lewdness in acting out what was done to them. It can involve prostitution, not necessarily sexually, but giving out certain favors or doing certain things for someone in exchange for something like protecting or “feeling loved” or something they cannot obtain for themselves legally or not. Again, if you have people in authority over you who practice lewdness or adultery or prostitution or manipulation for personal gain, this can allow the spirit of harlotry into your life.

Lead the child in praying the following by repeating after you:

I renounce the stronghold of Harlotry and its manifestations and fruits of infirmity in my life.

I repent of and renounce:

¹⁰¹ Stephen Beauchamp, *Power to Deliver Ministry Manual*, 44.

- Love of control
- Love of power
- Love of self
- Self-reward
- Materialism
- Excessive desire for what brings pleasure
- Worldly speech and actions
- Chronic dissatisfaction
- All unfaithfulness
- Fornication and adultery [use this only if appropriate]
- Prostitution of spirit, mind, soul, and body [using my gifts or my body just to get what I want]
- Love of money
- Familial spirit of harlotry

Say: I break the stronghold of harlotry and command all spirits to leave now.

Say: I bless <child's name> with the Spirit of God and a pure spirit¹⁰²

PUTTING THIS INTO PRACTICE

I want to emphasize that we are not the counselor. The Holy Spirit is the counselor. We are not trying to figure out what to tell the child to think, to feel, or to do. We are helping the child interact relationally with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and hear from the Lord what to think, how to feel, what to do. Here is an example of what this might look like during a session. In this case, we have a youth pastor ministering to a teen from the youth group.

Note: While this example records the conversation of the youth pastor and the teen, we recommend that you

¹⁰² Eph. 3:16; Phil. 1:10, 2:25, 4:8; I Tim. 1:5.

have at least one other person present. Their role is to be a witness and to pray for both the pastor and the teen during the session according to what is happening at the time. You might also want to provide a small notebook or some paper for this second person to record things that the teen/child reports concerning what the Lord has said to them or done for them during the session.

Remember, too, that during this session, the youth pastor is also taking notes to give further direction for the session.

EXAMPLE USING HOLY SPIRIT GUIDANCE

Youth Pastor: Nancy, on Sunday you said you were struggling to trust God, and I asked you to think about why you feel that way. Have you identified any thoughts about why you feel like that?

Nancy: Well, for one, I don't trust Him because I don't even know how He feels about me.

Youth Pastor: What do you mean?

Nancy: I feel like while God likes me sometimes, but most of the time He is just watching for me to fail so He can punish me. How can I trust someone who waits for me to fail and who wants to punish me?

Youth Pastor: Let's ask the Spirit to show you why you feel that way about God.

Nancy: Holy Spirit, would You show me why I feel God is just waiting for me to fail so He can punish me.

(Both remain silent for a moment or so).

YP: Did the Holy Spirit show you anything or say anything to you?

Nancy: Well, I started thinking about how I feel this way about my dad, too. Some days, it doesn't matter so much how I behave or what I say, but other days, I can do or say the same thing that I did the day before, only this time he gets really angry with me for saying that or doing that, and if I ask him why it was okay yesterday, but not today, he yells at me for questioning him. *[YP writes: her father; later the YP will add notes about her father issues to assist in the Forgiveness protocol section.]*

YP: Let's ask the Holy Spirit to show us why that is upsetting for you.

Nancy: Holy Spirit, would You show me why it bothers me when my dad treats me like this.

(Both remain silent for a moment or so).

YP: Did the Holy Spirit show you anything or say anything to you?

Nancy: I saw like puddles of quicksand throughout my house, but I don't ever know where they are and I never know when I'm going to step in one. Sometimes I'm just doing what I've been doing for days, walking where I walked before, and then, oops! I step in the quicksand and I'm in trouble again.

YP: Do you have any understanding of that picture or shall we ask the Holy Spirit to give you insight?

Nancy: I think it showed me that because I don't know what my dad will get angry about at any time, it makes it hard to walk confidently. I'm always worried that I will displease him and he will hit me or yell at me very loudly which scares me.

YP: How do you think this relates to how you feel about God and His trustworthiness? Often we do define

God by how our parents treated us, since they are the first authority we experience over us.

Nancy: Yeah, I can see that. I mean, I think God is just like my dad. I think He is always watching me to catch me making a mistake even though I don't really know what He wants me to do. I think that I don't believe I can ever please God just like I feel I can never please my dad.

YP: Would you say that you do not believe God has your best interests at heart? Like He is just looking to punish you?

Nancy: Yeah, I do.

YP: Often when we experience wounding like this from a person, and then we transfer that characteristic to God, we actually have to work through the wounding and forgive that person before we can confront the lie that we have believed about God's character. Would you be willing to work through your pain with your father and ask the Lord to help you forgive your dad?

Nancy: I don't know if I can really forgive my dad, but I can try.

YP: From what you have said, it sounds like your father's inconsistency in discipline and his anger have resulted in damaging your relationship with God and keeping you from being able to feel the Father's love and complete acceptance of you. We could pray through forgiving your dad for that, unless you want to ask the Holy Spirit if there is anything else He wants to heal in you today?

Nancy: Honestly, I think that's all my heart can take working through today. Just what we have talked about so far is so surprising to me. I had no idea I felt like that!

YP: Well, the Holy Spirit wants to heal our hearts. He wants to help us find all the lies that we have concluded due to ways that others have treated us wrongly so that He can replace them with the truth so that, as Paul said in Romans 5:5, He can help us fully feel the love of God in our hearts.

We want to work through what your dad did and what you need to forgive him for, telling him the debt he has towards to you. Then you take those debts to the Cross and ask Jesus what He will give you in exchange for those debts as you lay them at the cross and as you forgive your dad just as you have been forgiven through the death and resurrection of Christ.

So here's what I'd like you to do, Nancy. I'm going to put this empty chair in front of you. [Move an empty chair into position.] I want you to imagine that your dad is sitting right there in front of you. You know, we tend to think that we can't forgive someone unless they apologize to us. On the cross, Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they're doing." That means Jesus was also forgiving them, even though they had not apologized. When we forgive someone, it might not change them, but it changes us. When we forgive others, God fills our heart with His peace and love. When we forgive others, then bitterness can no longer take up residence in our hearts.

So, I want you to imagine your dad is sitting right there in front of you. Can you see him there? Okay, now I want you to speak to him. Say, "Dad, your actions in this area of discipline and anger have wounded me." Then I want you to list the consequences that his actions have had in your life.

Nancy: “Dad, I have been really hurt by the way you have treated me with such anger when I don’t even understand how I’ve broken your rules. Because your standards change from day to day, I feel like I never know if I am going to step in quicksand or not. I guess I feel a lot of fear when I am around you because I’m afraid you will get very mad at me, I’m afraid what you will do to me.

Nancy pauses.

YP: Would you like to tell your dad the consequences his behavior has had upon your relationship with God the Father and what it has cost you?

Nancy: Dad, you have been a really bad example to me of God the Father. I can’t see His true character because I think He is just like you. I can’t trust Him because I don’t find you trustworthy. You have cost me an intimate relationship with God.

YP: What about your feelings that you can’t please God or your dad?

Nancy: Dad, I don’t believe that I can ever please God because you are rarely pleased with me and find fault with me so often. You have cost me the ability to feel really loved by God.

YP: Repeat after me a few things. First, “Dad, I forgive you for this.”

Nancy: “Dad, I forgive you for this.”

YP: Tell your dad, “Jesus paid this debt you owe me when He died on the cross, so the debt can be cancelled.

Nancy: Dad, Jesus paid this debt you owe me when He died on the cross, so this debt can be cancelled.

YP: Tell your dad, “You don’t owe me anything for this now. I forgive you.”

Nancy: Dad, you don’t owe me anything for this now. I forgive you.

YP: Tell your dad, “I release you from further payment for these injuries you cause me.”

Nancy: Dad, I release you from further payment for these injuries you cause me.”

YP: Now we want to bless your dad in the name of Jesus. Maybe you want to imagine a gift you are giving him. Maybe you want to bless him with a loving relationship with Jesus. Maybe you want to bless him with healing for the painful experiences in his childhood. You say what you want: “Dad, I bless you with...”

Nancy: Dad, I want to bless you with healing for the way your parents treated you when you were a child. I want to bless you with peace for your anger. I want to bless with you with a closer relationship with the Lord.

YL: Sometimes when a person hurts us, we make a judgment against them, like we decide they are a bad dad or that they failed as a parent or some other thoughts about their character. I’d like you to pray this after me: “Holy Spirit, if I have made a false judgment against my dad, please show me.”

Nancy: Holy Spirit, if I have made a false judgment against my dad, please show me.

Silence for 30 seconds or so as Nancy listen to see if the Holy Spirit has anything to show her.

YL: Did the Lord speak anything to you? If so, what did He say?

Nancy: He said that I have judged my dad to always be mean and unfair.

YL: So now I'd like you to pray, "Lord, I see how I have made this judgment against my dad that he is mean, and unfair, and can't really love me."

Nancy: God, I see how I have made this judgment against my dad that he is mean, and unfair, and can't really love me.

YL: Say, "I repent for having judged him instead of leaving judgment to You."

Nancy: I repent for having judged him instead of leaving judgment to You.

YL: Say, "Please remove that judgment off my dad and off me, too. I don't want to be mean and unfair."

Nancy: God, please remove that judgment off my dad and off me, too. I don't want to be mean and unfair.

YL: Say, "I break agreement with the lie that You, Heavenly Father, will treat me like my earthly father does."

Nancy: I break agreement with the lie that You, Heavenly Father, will treat me like my earthly father does.

YL: Say, "I break agreement with the lie that You are angry."

Nancy: I break agreement with the lie that You are angry.

YL: Say, "I receive the truth that You are kind, patient, slow to anger and quick to love. You are full of love for me."

Nancy: I receive the truth that You are kind, patient, slow to anger and quick to love. You are full of love for me.

YL: Now we are going to pray about the stronghold of Fear which shows itself by creating fear in a person because they believe someone or something is dangerous or is likely to hurt them. A stronghold is not a demon itself. Rather, when we believe a lie or if we try to protect ourself without God's help, this area in our mind become a stronghold. That is, strongholds are believed lies and sinful actions, even if it is motivated by self-protection and are coping mechanisms. These strongholds give the demonic realm access to torment and tempt us. So we want to address any strongholds that have been established in your mind from the way your dad has treated you.

We are going to start off with the stronghold of fear. Remember, not all fear is bad. For example, if you are in the presence of someone who is abusive or threatening to hurt you or others, then it is natural to feel fear. God put that sense in us so that we can be careful to find protection in dangerous situations. Suppose you are in a car accident or watch a car accident happen in front of you, it can be natural to feel fear. When we have a stronghold of fear in us, then we find ourselves unable to trust God to help us, unable to trust God with the outcome of the situation. Sometime what began as a natural fear becomes a stronghold if we don't allow the Father, who is the God of all comfort, to help us with our fear by the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus told us was the other Comforter whom He would send when He returned to the throne of God.

I'm going to lead you in prayer and faith declarations that I would like you to pray after me, "I renounce the stronghold of fear and the manifestations and fruit of fear in my life."

Nancy: I renounce the stronghold of fear and the manifestations and fruit of fear in my life.

YL: I repent and renounce:

Nancy: I repent and renounce:

YL: A spirit of fear

Nancy: A spirit of fear [Nancy yawns.]

YL: A critical spirit [Nancy coughs.]

Nancy: A critical spirit

YL: Not trusting

Nancy: Not trusting [Nancy yawns again.]

YL: Doubt

Nancy: Doubt [Nancy yawns again.]

YL: Worry

Nancy: Worry

YL: anxiety

Nancy: Anxiety [Nancy yawns again.]

YL: Stress

Nancy: Stress

YL: Panic attacks

Nancy: Panic attacks

YL: Migraines

Nancy: Migraines

YL: Torment

Nancy: Torment

YL: Horror

Nancy: Horror

YL: Terror

Nancy: Terror

YL: Nightmares

Nancy: Nightmares

YL: Fear of the dark

Nancy: Fear of the dark

YL: Fear of death

Nancy: Fear of death

YL: Being a loner and feeling I can't trust anyone

Nancy: Being a loner and feeling I can't trust
anyone [Again Nancy coughs]

YL: Feeling alone

Nancy: Feeling alone [Nancy yawns again.]

YL: Fear of man

Nancy: Fear of man

YL: Fear of relationships

Nancy: Fear of relationships

YL: Fear of rejection

Nancy: Fear of rejection

YL: Fear of being abandoned

Nancy: Fear of being abandoned [Nancy yawns
again.]

YL: Panic that I feel in my physical heart

Nancy: Panic that I feel in my physical heart

YL: Fear of authority

Nancy: Fear of authority [Nancy coughs again.]

YL: Fear of failure

Nancy: Fear of failure [Nancy yawns again.]

YL: Perfectionism

Nancy: Perfectionism [Nancy yawns again.]

YL: Thinking I am not good enough

Nancy: Thinking I am not good enough [Nancy yawns again.]

YL: Unhealthy fear of God

Nancy: Unhealthy fear of God [Nancy coughs again.]

YL: All phobias, heights, animals, insects like spiders, water, all phobias

Nancy: All phobias: heights, animals, insects like spiders, water, all phobias

YL: Fear from anything horrible I had to watch

Nancy: Fear from anything horrible that I had to watch

YL: Familiar spirit of fear

Nancy: Familiar spirit of fear [Nancy yawns again.]

YL: I break the stronghold of fear and command all the spirits related to fear to leave now. [Nancy coughs again.]

YL: I bless Nancy with love, power, and a sound mind, because the Bible tells us that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.

So, Nancy, I'm wondering if we should pray through the stronghold of heaviness. Are you feeling weary all the time, weary of everything you are responsible to do, or feeling a lack of interest in life, a lack of interest in what you are responsible to do or just feeling restless all the time, like nothing you do is satisfying to you or do you feel a lingering sadness that you can't seem to get rid of.

Nancy: I do feel sad all the time. And thinking about all I have to do for school and at home feels very heavy on me, like I'm not sure I can really do it and like I can't do it successfully.

YL: Would you like to pray through that stronghold or would you like to meet another time to pray through that?

Nancy: I like the idea of meeting again to pray though more. I already feel peace in my heart that I have never felt before. I'm starting to think that God really is trustworthy. I'd like to sit with these new feelings for a while before we pray about others.

YL: Perfect. Let's make another appointment to get together. Remember, since you have prayed through forgiving your dad, you will need to walk in that forgiveness. It would not be appropriate to tell him all the ways that he has hurt you and expect him to ask for your forgiveness. Rather, you live as having already forgiven him, which you have. If he continues in the behaviors that are wounding to you, calmly speak with him. You might apologize for your behavior that triggered him ("Dad, I'm sorry that I did this. Please forgive me.") Then ask for permission to go to your room or to another room. It is not your place to inform him of what he is doing wrong. Rather, your job is to pray for him, to pray that the Spirit of God would reveal to him his inappropriate behaviors and

also reveal the wounding in his life that has prompted those behaviors.

Let me pray and bless you before you go.

YL prays: In the Name of Jesus Christ, I bless you, Nancy, with the promises of God, which are yes and amen. I pray the Holy Spirit make you healthy and strong in body, mind and spirit, and that you move in faith and expectancy.

God bless you with the assurance of His love and grace.
May He bless you with spiritual perception of His truth.

God bless you with goodness and mercy following you all the days of your life that you might dwell in the house of the Lord forever. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and give you peace, the peace of God that surpasses all understanding. I bless you, Nancy, in the Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Note: As you work through renouncing various manifestations of a stronghold, the youth may or may not cough, yawn, or sneeze. Don't worry if they do. Sometimes that can be a manifestation of the stronghold being broken specifically in that area and any demonic influence in that area being cast off. In extreme cases, people receiving prayer and praying to renounce strongholds may even vomit, particularly when the physical or sexual abuse has been extreme.

It's good to have a tissue box available next to the person to whom you are ministering, and a small trash can is not only a great place for them to put used tissues, it is also helpful in the rare case that vomiting occurs.

If vomiting does occur, the person to whom you are ministering may be very embarrassed or confused, particularly if this is the first time it has ever happened

¹⁰³ Mt. 12:43-45; Lk. 11:24-26.

to them. You might assure them that this can happen when breaking strongholds and not to feel embarrassed or concerned, before you continue through the stronghold liturgy.

FOLLOW UP MINISTRY/DISCIPLESHIP

We want to maintain the prayer ministry setting as a place where we facilitate, not as a place where we teach or lecture. This does not mean that some teaching is not needed. Rather, it is quite necessary, but should be done in a separate session. In fact, you might want to alternate, doing prayer ministry one week and doing a follow up/discipleship meeting the next week.

Remember Jesus' parable about the demon who was cast out, but later returns and, finding the place swept and empty, finds seven other demons worse than himself, and they inhabit the person together.¹⁰³ In other words, we need to disciple the youth in order to fill in, as it were, with truth, the places that had been occupied by the lies so that there is no spiritually legal ground for the demonic stronghold to remain or return.

- In the case of Nancy above, the youth pastor in the next session, would ask Nancy about how she has been feeling about trusting God and about receiving His love for her and acceptance of her, before going on to the stronghold of heaviness. This would be an appropriate time to:
- Give some Bible verses about God's love for Nancy to memorize, coaching her that when her internal voice is doubting God's love for her or thinking about God's disappointment in her, that is the time to quote these

verses to herself and to “encourage herself in her God.”¹⁰⁴

- Show her some examples of God’s extraordinary love and patience towards Israel, even when they kept sinning against Him.¹⁰⁵
- Coach her in ways to respond when her father is not modeling God accurately, explaining phrases she might tell herself or ways of re-framing her inner narrative of her experiences.
- Explain that forgiveness and restoration are two separate actions. She has done the hard work of choosing to forgive her father. That does not guarantee her father’s relationship with her will be changed. He may very well not change in how he treats her or their family. However, she can choose to take future wounding from him to the Father, forgive her dad, and ask the God of all comfort to comfort her.¹⁰⁶
- Explain that in the process between initiating forgiveness and even partial restoration it is good and important to maintain healthy boundaries.¹⁰⁷ This might be a good time to begin a conversation with Nancy about healthy boundaries: what they are, how to respect her dad and still keep healthy boundaries, etc. Here you could reinforce what you said previously about how to respond to her dad when he responds in a way that could wound her again.

¹⁰⁴ I Sam. 30:6-8.

¹⁰⁵ Neh. 9:30-31; Isa. 14; Jer. 31; Hos. 11; Mic. 7:8-20.

¹⁰⁶ 2 Cor. 1:3-4.

¹⁰⁷ For more about what healthy boundaries are, read Dr. Henry Cloud’s various books on boundaries, boundaries with children, boundaries with teens, etc.

We talked about being midwives, in a sense, assisting the interaction between the Lord and the child/youth to whom we are ministering. After the breaking of a stronghold, we might think of them as a baby or toddler who needs to learn truth and be taught how to walk in it. It's not enough to pray with them for inner healing and deliverance. We must teach them how to walk as healed people becoming whole.

Again, we are not talking about taking the role of the licensed counselor, treating mental, behavioral, and emotional problems and disorders, providing psychoeducational techniques.¹⁰⁸ We are talking about biblical discipleship that doesn't merely explain Bible passages and stories, but provides insight into how to live out biblical truths.

Our churches, even our society, is full of young people who have experienced abuse and trauma that keeps them from entering into an intimate, fully trusting, wholehearted relationship with God the Father, with God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It is not enough to expound the scriptures from the pulpit or in a youth group Bible study as if merely hearing our interpretation and application of Scripture will heal all their wounds. We can look back into history and see the record of wounded youth who grew into wounded adults who went on to wound still others. God has opened up both secular and spiritual insight into trauma and its results. We do not need to repeat the actions and behaviors of our forefathers. We can see God's

¹⁰⁸ American Counseling Association, "Who Are Licensed Professional Counselors?," Counseling.org (American Counseling Association, 2011), <http://www.counseling.org/>.

intervention through His Spirit by inner healing so that rather than “visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, to the third and the fourth generation,” He can show His favor and mercy to thousands.

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