

Wounded by Shame

Healed by Grace

by Jeff VanVonderen

Self Study Guide
to accompany the Video Cassette Series

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Introduction

The purpose of the Wounded by Shame, Healed by Grace Video Series is to lead us to a healthier understanding of God, ourselves and one another. Topics include shame, abuse, addiction, co-dependency, law and grace.

The principles discussed are based on scriptural truths designed to set us free from the cycle of shame, while creating graceful church and family support systems in which people can receive healing and begin to recovery.

About Jeff VanVonderen

Jeff VanVonderen is a highly sought after speaker and consultant both nationally and internationally. For over 25 years, individuals, families, and organizations have benefited from his skills and understanding in the areas of addiction, family systems, and recovery.

Jeff is one of the featured interventionists on the Arts and Entertainment Network documentary series about Intervention. For more information about this series visit the website of the A&E Network.

He is the author of five books: *Good News for the Chemically Dependent*, *Families Where Grace is in Place* (Now in it's 14 printing!), *When God's People Let You Down*, *Tired of Trying to Measure Up*, and *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse* (Now in it's 18th printing!).

Several magazines and journals have featured Jeff's work, and he has been featured guest on radio and television shows across the country. Jeff's services as an expert witness in cases involving various abuse issues have been utilized in Minnesota, Alabama, Wyoming, Washington, and Hawaii.

His works have been published in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hungarian, Indonesian, Korean, Portuguese, Slovakian, and Spanish. And much of his material is available in audio and video.

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Wounded by Shame, Healed by Grace

Session 1: Neediness

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 2: How Families Become Dysfunctional

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 3: When Shame Is the Name of the Game (Part 1)

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 4: When Shame Is the Name of the Game (Part 2)

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 5: Stuck in Surviving

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 6: Shame Comes Full Circle (Idolatrous Relationships)

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 7: Addiction and Co-dependency

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 8: Enabling: Unhelpful Help with Good Intentions

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 9: Erasing Shame with Right Behaviors: The Wrong Fight

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 10: Exhausted by “Give Up/Try Hard” Living

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 11: Recovery: Learning to Live Like New Creations

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Session 12: The Right Fight: A Blueprint for Self and Others

The Lie I have believed: _____

The truth: _____

Scriptures supporting the truth: _____

Truth v. Lie Examples

Lie	Truth	Biblical Text
Session 1 1. I can't have needs. 2. Love given based on performance. 3. People can fill my needs.	Jesus came because we have needs. Love given while we were sinners. Only God can fill the deepest needs.	Matt. 5:3-11 Rom 5:8, Jn 3:16 Phil 4:19
Session 2 1. I have to be responsible for everyone. 2. I am a mistake. 3. I don't belong.	Sometimes I need to carry more responsibility and sometimes not. God knew me in my mother's womb. I belong and have been called by name. I have been chosen.	Gal 6:2,5 Ps 139:13-18 Is 43:1-2 1 Peter 2:9
Session 3 1. I have to be perfect to be ok.	All have sinned and fallen short. My behavior doesn't declare my value.	Rom 5:8 Ps 139
Session 4 1. I can't talk about difficult issues or mistakes. 2. Feelings are not ok to have.	We can be forgiven of mistakes if we confess them. Be angry, but don't sin. Jesus showed emotions.	1 Jn 1:9 Eph 4:26 Jn 11:35
Session 5 1. If I work hard enough I can control others and circumstances	I am accountable to God for me only and my behavior	11 Cor 5:10 Rom 6:12-15
Session 6 1. My needs can be met through another person.	Only Jesus can meet my deepest needs. Expecting others to meet my needs can become a form of idolatry.	Phil 4:19 Rom 1:25
Session 7 1. If I look good on the outside I'm ok. 2. If I can control the other person everything will be ok.	The condition of my heart is what is important. I can only control me and be responsible for my actions	Eph 4:17-22 Matt. 5:27-28 Matt 6:1-3 Matt 7:3-5
Session 8 1. I should always help someone in need. 2. Only other people's needs are important.	I should help when the help helps. My needs are important too. Both my neighbor and I have needs.	Luke 10:29/15 Matt 22:39

<p>Session 9 1. If I look good on the outside by doing everything right, then I'm ok.</p>	<p>What is going on on the inside is most important. God looks on the heart</p>	<p>1 Sam 16:6 Matt 23:25/27</p>
<p>Session 10 1. I have to try hard to look like I have it all together.</p>	<p>God came for those who don't have it all together.</p>	<p>Matt 5:3,4 Rom 5:8</p>
<p>Session 11 1. My value depends upon my performance.</p>	<p>God has decided my value by dying for me and choosing me.</p>	<p>Jn 3:16 Eph 1:4</p>
<p>Session 12 1. It's my job to protect loved ones from making mistakes. Also I must help them get free from their addictions.</p>	<p>I am the only one I can change, and God is the only one that can change my loved ones.</p>	<p>11 Cor 3:18</p>

Session 1

Neediness: The Human Condition

Session 1

Neediness: The Human Condition

What are three needs all of us have?

1.

2.

3.

Describe the problem with earned love.

What is the difference between being unworthy and being worthless?

Unworthy:

Worthless:

Take Home Questions

1. Thinking about your childhood years, was the love you received from your family conditional or based on performance? (Truth v. Lie)
 - a. Do any specific circumstances stand out in your memory?

2. Remember a person in your past who gave you messages that you were loved and accepted without strings. Write down some thoughts about that person.

3. How do you feel about that person?

4. If there was no one; how does that feel?

5. Now write down some thoughts about a relationship in which you experienced the opposite messages (not loved, worthless, never good enough).

6. Thinking about the significant relationships in your life today, do you feel loved for who you are or do you feel their love is based on your performance? Explain.

Session 2

How Family Systems Become Dysfunctional

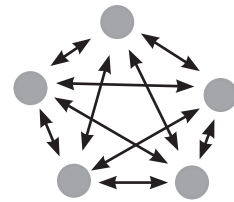
Session 2

How Family Systems Become Dysfunctional

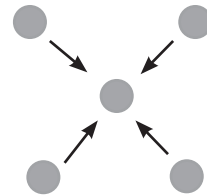
What is a “system?”

What is meant by a “systems approach”?

Describe how individuals relate in a “functional system.”



Describe how individuals relate in a “dysfunctional system.”



Take Home Questions

1. This week, write in your journal or in the space below about your understanding of how families become dysfunctional and what insight this information has provided. (Truth v. Lie)

a. In your family of origin (the family you were raised in).

b. In your present nuclear family (the family you live with now). (If you are single, the family members you relate to today.)

2. Write in your journal or in the space below about your understanding of the differences between guilt and shame.

a. Describe a time when you have experienced each:

3. Write down as many shame-based messages from your childhood as you can remember.

4. Which of these messages still affect your behavior or mind-set today?

Session 3

When Shame is the Name of the Game (Part 1)

Session 3

When Shame is the Name of the Game (Part 1)

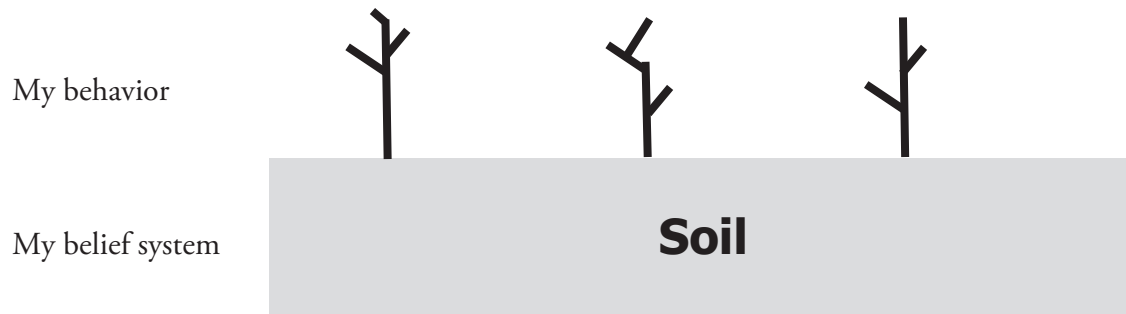
What is meant by “the soil of shame?”

How can the soil of shame influence our behavior?

Describe behaviors that can “grow” out of the soil of shame.



The Pattern of Healing



The plants are not the problem, the soil is. In order to fix the plants you must first renew the soil.
My behavior is not the problem, my shame-based belief system is. In order to fix my behavior, my belief system must be renewed.

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”
Romans 12:2

The world has a pattern - “Your behavior is the problem.”
Jesus has a pattern - “Transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

Transformed: not something I can do, it is the supernatural power of God’s grace.

Renewing: a process in which I make choices through the power of God’s grace.

The Pattern of Jesus:

Identify the Lie. Breaking down the wall of denial, facing the fact that I have a shame-based belief that is hurting me. Breaking down the wall that says there is something wrong with me and realizing I am valued, accepted and not alone. Breaking down the wall of false protection and allowing grace into my belief system.

Identifying the Truth. Facing the hard truths of my past and allowing God to stamp His Word of Truth over the pain. Embracing the real truth that God values me, accepts me, and never leaves me alone. Realizing that grace is God’s influence on my weakness, His grace is sufficient to set me free.

“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’”
II Cor 12:9

Declare the Word: Meditate on God’s word. Remember, God does the transforming, I just have to open my belief system up to God. God will not enter if I do not open the door.

“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in and eat with him, and he with me.”
Rev 3:20

How does “out-loud shaming” impact individuals with a family?

Describe how people from shame-based families can become “performance oriented.”

What are some “unspoken rules” which can govern shame-based families.

What is the “can’t talk” rule?

Characteristics of Shame-Based Families

Out-loud shaming

Performance-oriented

Governed by unspoken rules

Coding

Idolatrous

Have a hard time with children

Preoccupied with fault and blame

Strong on “head skills”

Weak on “heart skills”

Only look as if their needs are met.

Session 3
When Shame Is the Name of the Game (Part 1)

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Was there anything in last week's homework you would like to share?

2. Out of all the information shared in the video, which had the most significance or impact for you?

3. Do you have any of the plants talked about on the video? Which ones? A few more examples are the Perfectionism (depression) and Body Image (looks, weight).

4. What do you think is the connection between shame and your plant? (Think about the rules that govern your behavior).

5. Name any messages (hidden or overt) you received which have influenced the significance of the above issue for you.

6. What, if any, seeds from your original plant are you planting in your children, spouse or friends?

Examples:

Plant = Eating disorder

Connection

Message = in order to be a worthwhile/lovable person, I must be thin.

Overt

Message = Overweight people were made fun of in your family of origin (parents, brothers or sisters). Therefore, you grew up with the idea that weight was very important; that it says something about a person's worth.

Hidden

Message = Thin people were respected more, complimented more, given more attention than overweight people in your family of origin, therefore you grew up with. . .

New Seeds = Sharing some messages of worth (to your children) connected to weight through your negative self statements, bingeing or obsession with dieting.

Take Home Questions

1. Think of 6-8 unspoken rules which govern how you feel about yourself, family members and friends, and write them in the chart on the next page. (Truth v. Lie)

2. What effects do these unspoken rules have on your behavior? There are some examples below.

3. Spend some time each day (5-10 minutes) thinking about some of the unspoken rules in your family of origin. Write some down on the next page. You can ask God to help you remember.

4. Think about your response to question number 1 concerning unspoken rules in your present family and answer the following questions.

a. Which ones do you want to keep?

b. Which ones do you want to get rid of?

c. Write down some ways you can begin to change the rules you want to get rid of.

Examples:

Rules	Behaviors
Good dads/moms have kids who do not misbehave in public.	I criticize, ridicule and yell at my children when they misbehave in public.
Smart people can't say anything that anyone else disagrees with or thinks is stupid, offensive or wrong.	I act like I know it all so people won't challenge me.
Good employees always get their work done on time.	I work long hours (with or without pay) and neglect my family in the process.
Good husbands/wives are supposed to meet all their spouses emotional needs.	I punish my spouse when he/she hurts me by . . .

Rules	Behaviors

SHAME	GRACE
<p>Out-loud shaming The message communicated is: “Something is wrong with you. You are defective. You don’t measure up. Why can’t you be like. . .”</p>	<p>Out-loud affirming Hearing is one of the senses through which people receive information about themselves, others, and life. Ears are not equipped with tiny filters that only let in wholesome messages of support. Every message gets in. As adults, we can learn to consciously push away certain messages that shame us and tear us down. But the fact that we have to do so much work to reject those messages means we have heard them loud and clear in the first place.</p> <p>In grace-full families, members are told they are loved and accepted, capable, valuable and supported out-loud. Don’t expect people to be mind readers. It is not realistic to think that they ‘just know’ that you care. Phrases like “I love you, You are so capable, I’m here for you”, and using a person’s name when speaking to him are just some of the out-loud ways to affirm people.</p>
<p>Performance-orientation The focus is on doing certain good behaviors and avoiding others as a means of earning value. Failure to perform results in shame.</p>	<p>People-oriented David Seamands says: “We all need an environment where we feel our needs are met because of who we are and not because of what we do.” In grace-full families, love and acceptance does not fluctuate depending on how people act. People are affirmed for being who they are. In shame-based families, behavior is the most important thing. Who you are comes in last.</p>
<p>Unspoken Rules Behavior is governed by rules or standards that are seldom, if ever, spoken out-loud. In fact, sometimes the only way they are discovered is when they are broken. There is a “can’t talk about it” rule in effect—which means no one is supposed to notice or mention problems, and it forces people to keep quiet. There is also a “can’t win” rule in effect. For instance, children are taught never to lie; they are also told to never tell Grandma her meatloaf tastes bad. No matter how hard you try to keep these contradictory rules, you always fail to perform. And failure to perform results in shame. These rules tend to govern future relationships, unless they are realized and broken on purpose.</p>	<p>Out-loud rules/expectations In a grace-full family, rules are there to serve people; people are not there to serve the rules. It is not okay to hold people accountable for rules they did not verbally know were in operation.</p> <p>Some families have an unspoken rule that says: “Adults are more important than children.” If you want to have a rule that says, “Adults and children are equally important,” then neither adults nor children should be allowed to interrupt when someone else is talking.</p> <p>In shame-based families, the person who says there is a problem becomes the problem. In grace-full families, the truth spoken or revealed is never the problem, nor is the person who speaks it. The problem is dealt with as a real problem, and a solution is sought. Because people don’t lose points for failing to perform, you can even talk about it. (Suggestion: sit with the family for an hour and let everyone talk about the rules they think are in place. Then let them talk about the rules they think <i>should</i> be in place</p>

SHAME	GRACE
<p>Communicating through “coding” Talking about feelings or needs leaves you feeling ashamed for being so “selfish.” Talking about problems breaks the “can’t-talk-about-it” rule and gets you shamed for being the problem. Therefore, family members learn to say things in code, or they send messages to each other indirectly through other people.</p>	<p>Communication is clear/straight (don’t triangle) Zechariah 8:16 says: “These are the things which you should do: Speak the truth to one another; judge with truth and . . . let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these things are what I hate”.</p> <p>Can you see what God thinks about telling the truth? If you want someone to take out the garbage, ask them to do so. Don’t say, “Sure would be nice if someone would take out the garbage.” And then complain when people ignore or miss your coded message. If you’d rather have hamburgers than hotdogs, say so. Don’t say, “I don’t care, we can have whatever you want.” And then pout when you end up with hotdogs. If you need help, ask for it. Don’t say, “No, it’s no big deal. I’ll be fine.” and then feel sorry for yourself or judge others as inconsiderate if no one helps you.</p> <p>Coding isn’t helpful for anyone—least of all for children. Kids are very literal. Alfred Adler noted that children are great observers but terrible interpreters. People receiving your messages should not have to decode them. When you want to send a message decode it first yourself, and then send it straight.</p> <p>Don’t triangle! That is, do not get in the middle of other people’s relationships and run messages. I have found that the reason people run messages for their family members is so those members will be able to get along. The irony is that by running messages you are ensuring that they never have to get along on their own. Set an internal boundary, and do not let people tell you things they need to tell someone else. If those involved end up with a poor relationship, it will be because they did not do the work it takes to have a good one. Stepping in to “fix” things and “decoding” are not your job, nor is it your job to get people to talk to each other. When you do so, you are only controlling. Your job is to support each of the quibblers in talking to each other. They control what happens after that. Their relationship is their job.</p> <p>Paul says, “Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.” (Ephesians 4:25 Do what this scripture says. Say what you have to say. Expect others to do it.</p>
<p>Idolatry Family members are taught to turn to things and people other than God’s acceptance as the measure of their value and identity. The measuring stick becomes how things look; what people think; religious behavior; acquiring possessions.</p>	<p>God is the Source As Christians, God is our Source. He is our need-meeter, our vindicator, our defender, the one who has the last word on our value and acceptance. We are not valuable and acceptable because of how much money we make, the clothes we wear, our church attendance, or because we have been faithful in our giving. Other people can think whatever they want—and they will. What they say might feel hurtful sometimes—but they do not decide the truth about us, God does.</p> <p>In grace-full families, it is okay to be concerned, for instance, about the children’s grades. But good grades do not make people more acceptable, just as poor grades do not make them less acceptable. People are acceptable and valuable because of God’s love and grace toward them. Children need help remembering that, even as you help them improve the grades.</p> <p>The reason why having faith is such a fight (1 Timothy 6:12) is because we have a source we cannot see. Right now we live among people who are surrounded by things we can see. Therefore, it is a fight to keep drawing our sense of value and acceptance from this unseen Source. All the while, most of what we see and hear demands that we measure up to someone’s external standard in order to be acceptable.</p>

SHAME	GRACE
<p>Putting kids through a hard time Kids are involved in the messy and imperfect process of finding out about life. But the family cares most about how things look and what people think. Therefore, just being a kid becomes a shaming thing. Children must learn to act like miniature adults in order to avoid shame.</p>	<p>Children are Enjoyed In shame-based families, children must act like little adults in order to keep from being shamed. In grace-full families, it's okay for them to act like kids. Normal, healthy kids are "messy" about this business of growing up. As a parent, you do not need to be threatened or take it personally when your children mess up. They aren't broken; you don't have to fix them. They are simply exploring life, constantly engrossed in the process of finding out what's real. That's why many children ask so many questions. Answer their questions</p> <p>When they were little, our kids had a children's book about a bear named Timothy. In one part of the bok, Timothy was supposed to eat his peas. He hated peas so he hid them under his plate. His mom found them and said, "Timothy, eat your peas." Then he hid them in his napkin. Again, his mother found them and said, "Timothy, eat your peas." Next, he flicked them across the room. His mother caught him and said, "Timothy, eat your peas." Finally, he resigned himself to eating them, to a rousing chorus of "Little Green Balls of Mushy Poison." To which his mother replied, "Timothy, act your age!" You had to turn the page to see Timothy's response, and a brilliant response it was. "But Mom, I'm only four," he pleaded.</p> <p>What simple wisdom! The next time you feel the urge to tell your children to act their age, pay attention. They probably are.</p> <p>Paying attention to your kids and their struggles can have an added benefit most parents miss. It will gie you a chance to rework or finish some things you may have missed out on from when you were young. This is like a lost treasure re-found. Don't miss it when God gives you this second chance.</p>
<p>Preoccupation with fault and blame Since there is such a focus on performance in this family, lack of performance must be tracked down and eradicated. Fault and blame are the order of the day. The purpose of the question, "Who is responsible?" is to find out who is to blame. That way the culprit can be shamed, humiliated, and made to feel so bad that he won't do the behavior again.</p>	<p>Responsibility and accountability Fault and blame are used in shame-based families to punish children for their lack of performance. They become tools in the process of trying to control the behavior of others. But people are responsible for their choices, and it is appropriate to hold them accountable for them. This is how we learn.</p> <p>Where do we find the balance? Let me give you an example. Let's say one of my daughters is careless and breaks something—and she's not talking. The fact that she is hiding what she did tells me that she feels guilty about it. She may even wonder if I am going to shame and criticize her if I find out. There are two reasons why I want to know the truth.</p> <p>First, so I can discipline her. This does not mean punish. It means to help her learn something from the incident. This might occur through consequences she receives, or it might happen just by talking together. The second reason I want her to confess is so that I can forgive her. In not talking about what she did, she is carrying the weight of it. If she would just tell me, I could help lift that spiritual weight of guilt from her by offering her forgiveness. I could also see this as an opportunity to remind her that I love her, even though I don't like what she did. Isn't that the purpose of confession in the New Testament? "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us" (1 John 1:9) In many families, confessing to something gets you shamed, blamed, exposed and humiliated. Not so in families where grace is in place.</p>

SHAME	GRACE
<p>Strong on “head skills” Family members become experts at defending themselves. Blaming, rationalizing, minimizing, and denial are just some of the ways people try to push away the shame message—usually in vain.</p>	<p>Head skills are used for learning The human brain is an incredible instrument. As the old adage goes, “Two heads are better than one.” How hopeful and useful it is if that awesome resource is pooled with that of family members and used to learn how to live faithfully and responsibly. In grace-full families, thinking is used for the purpose of learning. In shame-based families, it is used to defend, to blame, to make excuses, and to get out of being responsible. All of this mental-dodging to keep from being shamed. What a tragic waste.</p> <p>In shame-based families, the question “Why did you do that?” is a trap. There is no answer that is acceptable. Whatever you say will be analyzed and criticized. In grace-full families, people are pre-approved, and the question “Why did you do that?” is just a simple inquiry to understand the reason why something was done. If the reasoning is faulty and can be changed, the behavior will change as well.</p>
<p>Weak on “heart skills” “Can’t feel” is another rule governing this system. Feelings are wrong, selfish, or unnecessary. People in shame-based families don’t know how they feel or how to respond to their feelings. These are emotionally reactive places.</p>	<p>Feelings are valid and useful Feelings are not right or wrong, they simply exist. They are emotional and physiological signals that tell us that something is going on between us and the world around us. The choices we make in response to our feelings determine good or bad, right or wrong results of our feelings—that is, whether they are helpful or damaging. Grace-full families recognize that feeling and expression of emotions are opportunities for family members to connect with one another, to complete unfinished relational business, or to support one another in making wise choices in response to how we feel.</p>
<p>Needy People (empty learning to act full) Because love and acceptance was earned on the basis of behavior, but never received apart from performance, shame-based families are characterized by members who are empty on the inside, full-looking on the outside.</p>	<p>It is okay for outsides to match insides In grace-full families, what-is-real is more important than how-things-look. Having a safe, unconditionally accepting place where outsides can match insides is really the only way to find out if there are inside needs and problems that must be addressed. Life is seen with a process perspective rather than an event perspective. This means that people don’t have to react, or attempt to “cure” behavior forever. Because God is involved, you don’t have to panic, the story is not over, even if it doesn’t look too good right now. Unacceptable behaviors are about poor choices, not about our value and acceptance as people. Because that is true, grace-full family members don’t have to fix one another in order to fix themselves.</p>

Session 4

When Shame is the Name of the Game (Part 2)

Session 4
When Shame is the Name of the Game (Part 2)

Describe the process of “coding” within shame-based family systems.

How does a shame-based family become “idolatrous?”

Why do people from shame-based backgrounds have a “hard time” with children?

Describe how families can become preoccupied with fault and blame.

Describe the difference between “head skills” and “heart skills.”

Head Skills:

Heart Skills:

Why do people from shame-based families “only look” as if their needs are met?

Characteristics of Shame-Based Families

Out-loud shaming

Performance-oriented

Governed by unspoken rules

Coding

Idolatrous

Have a hard time with children

Preoccupied with fault and blame

Strong on “head skills”

Weak on “heart skills”

Only look as if their needs are met.

When Shame is the Name of the Game (Part 2)

Take Home Questions

People in shame-based systems “code” when they talk. “Codes” are ways of communicating what you want or need without saying it directly. A family’s unspoken rules often indicate the kinds of coded messages they use. (Truth v. Lie)

1. Think of some of the codes used in your family of origin, and see if you can uncover the unspoken rules that govern them. You can use some of the unspoken rules you wrote down in last week’s assignment.

Examples:

Unspoken Rules	Codes
The amount of money you spend on a person is an indication of their worth to you.	When mom tells you how much your sister spent on your Christmas present, what she means is you better spend the same amount on her.
When dad is working on a home project, everybody should help or have a “good excuse” for why they can’t. You are supposed to know what “good excuses” are and you can’t ask if he needs help. Not helping, even if you ask means, “you are lazy.”	You see dad fixing the roof. You ask if he needs help. He says, “No, that’s okay.” but means you help or have a good excuse.

2. Is it easy for you to tell other people what you want, need or expect of them? Why or why not?

3. Can you think of some messages that you typically code in your relationships with your spouse, friends, or children?
 - a. How can you express your need or desire more directly?

4. Have you ever been involved in a triangle? Please explain.
 - a. What can you do in the future to avoid these kinds of relationships?

5. Is it easy for you to disagree with people? Why or why not?

6. Of the 10 characteristics of shame-based systems that Jeff talked about, which ones apply most to your family?

Session 5

Stuck in Surviving

Session 5

Stuck in Surviving

What is the “core” belief of each person in a shame-based family system?

How does a person’s core belief influence their behavior?

Describe the following roles within a shame-based family (see figures on the next page):

Person with the “problem” i.e. addiction, abuse, etc.

Rescuer

Hero

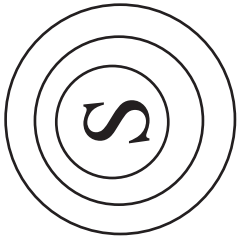
Rebel

Clown

Reliever

What can happen when an individual leaves the family and the role that individual performs is left vacant?

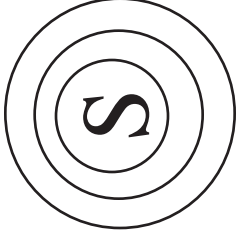
Roles Within a Shamed-Based Family



Job: _____

What is seen: _____

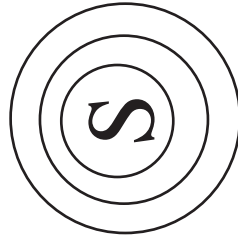
Feeling: _____



Job: _____

What is seen: _____

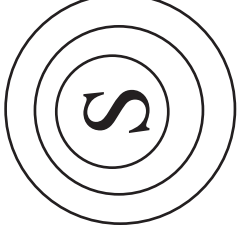
Feeling: _____



Job: _____

What is seen: _____

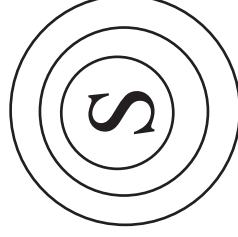
Feeling: _____



Job: _____

What is seen: _____

Feeling: _____

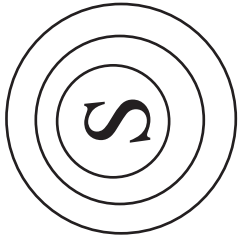


Job: _____

What is seen: _____

Feeling: _____

Roles Within a Shamed-Based Family

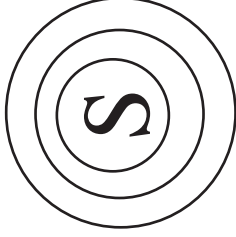


RESCUER (usually adult)

Job: Raise efficiency of family/keep peace

What is seen: Prosecutor/defender, excuses, denial & blame, over responsible

Feeling: anger, exhaustion

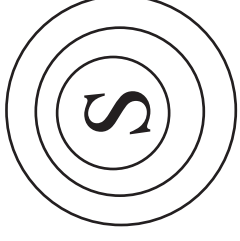


Person with Addiction

Job: Focus of the family, non-contributor

What is seen: Anger, perfectionism, blame, denial

Feeling: Anger/guilt



HERO (frequently oldest child)

Job: Raise family esteem

What is seen: Success/high achiever

Feeling: Inadequate

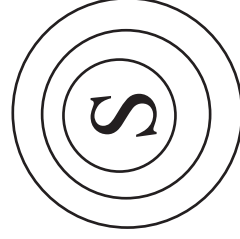


REBEL

Job: Refocus attention of family to self

What is seen: Rebellion, acts out, drugs, etc.

Feeling: Rejection

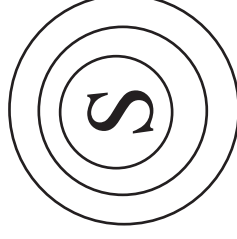


RELIEVER (usually youngest)

Job: Brings relief, no trouble

What is seen: alone stuff

Feeling: Lonely



CLOWN

Job: Lighten up situation

What is seen: clowning, immaturity

Feeling: Ffear, insecurity

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What did you learn from last week's homework that you would like to share?
2. Did you recognize anything new this week in your family, work or church about the ten characteristics of shame? Explain.
3. What was the most impacting thing you learned from the video?
4. Can you describe a recent situation in which you felt responsible for the feelings or behavior of someone else?
5. What impact does the information from this video have on your perception and understanding of your responsibility?

Take Home Questions

The “core” belief of each person in a shame-based system is that they are responsible for other’s feelings and other people are responsible for theirs. (Truth v. Lie)

1. Describe a situation when someone close to you was upset or angry and this core belief affected your behavior and feelings.

2. Think about the core belief; were/are there one or two people in particular with whom you have this kind of relationship? (i.e. you feel okay by how he/she is feeling, or he/she feels okay by how you are feeling?)

3. Thinking about the various roles within shame-based family systems described in the video, list one or two roles that you identify with.

a. What was your job/role in your family of origin? In your family today?

b. What did people on the outside see?

c. How did you feel?

d. Describe how you have gotten stuck in that role (or another) today.

4. Think this week about the behavior of your siblings growing up. How has this information about roles challenged your perspective about any of your brothers or sisters?

5. How has this insight impacted you this week?

Session 6

Shame Comes Full Circle: Idolatrous Relationships

Session 6

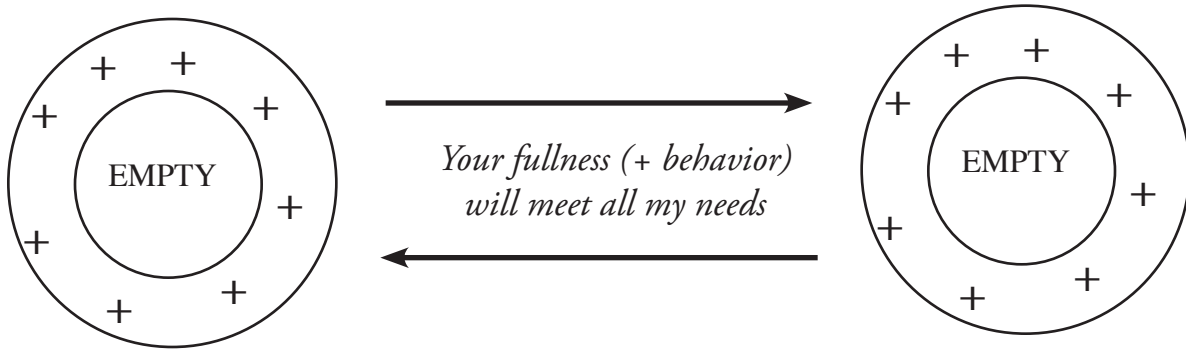
Shame Comes Full Circle: Idolatrous Relationships

What is meant by relationships becoming “idolatrous?”

What impact does idolatrous relationships have on the individuals within the family?

Describe how relationships can become idolatrous.

Session 6
Shame Comes Full Circle: Idolatrous Relationships



Idolatry = You're big enough (a god) to meet my need

If "+behavior" is not consistent with internal values,
 then behavior will stop once **approval** (vs. acceptance) is gained;

OR

Behavior will continue to achieve ongoing **approval**.

The above will result in the following sequence:

1. Denial. There is no problem and our behavior proves it.



2. Focus on you. I'm so sad and needy because of you. If you increase "+behavior," I'll be okay.



3. Focus on me. You're so sad because of me. If I fix me, than you'll be okay.

Inadequate God → Why can't you make me happy?

Broken God → You have bad behavior which makes me unhappy.

Outward behavior consistent with internal values = _____

Take Home Questions

1. What in particular did you identify with from Session 6 this week? (Truth v. Lie)

2. What have you learned about yourself and your relationships from this information?

3. Jeff talked this week about trying to get okay by how someone looks or behaves. How have you been affected by this behavior?
 - a. How have your feelings of being or not being okay been reinforced by others, the church, your family?

4. Can you think of any of your current relationships which involve what Jeff calls idolatry?
 - a. Describe the ways in which this relationship is idolatrous.

 - b. What attempts have you made to try to “fix” this person?

 - c. What attempts have you made to control the relationship by fixing yourself?

5. Describe a relationship in which you (or your spouse, friend etc.) both stayed and left.

6. Tell how the video’s information on this topic has challenged you in this area.

Session 7

Addiction and Co-dependency

Session 7

Addiction and Co-dependency

Define “equity rescuing.”

How does “doing the activity” mood alter the person up (see figure on next page)?

How does the “event” mood alter the person down (see figure on next page)?

Describe “light” and “heavy” emotions.

Light:

Heavy:

Emotional Continuum

Light



Abstinence

Addiction

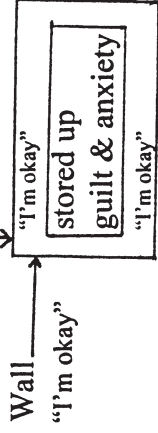
Heavy

ADDICTION

Emotional Continuum

Denial - I know I'm lying & blaming
Delusion - I'm convinced of the answer.

Light (Happy, excited
 Love - easy to carry
 easy to give away)



① Experimental behavior

② Goes against values

③ Continue behavior

Abstinence

No chemical dependence
 Appropriate eating
 Appropriate sex

Addiction

Chemical dependence
 sexual & eating
 dependence, etc.

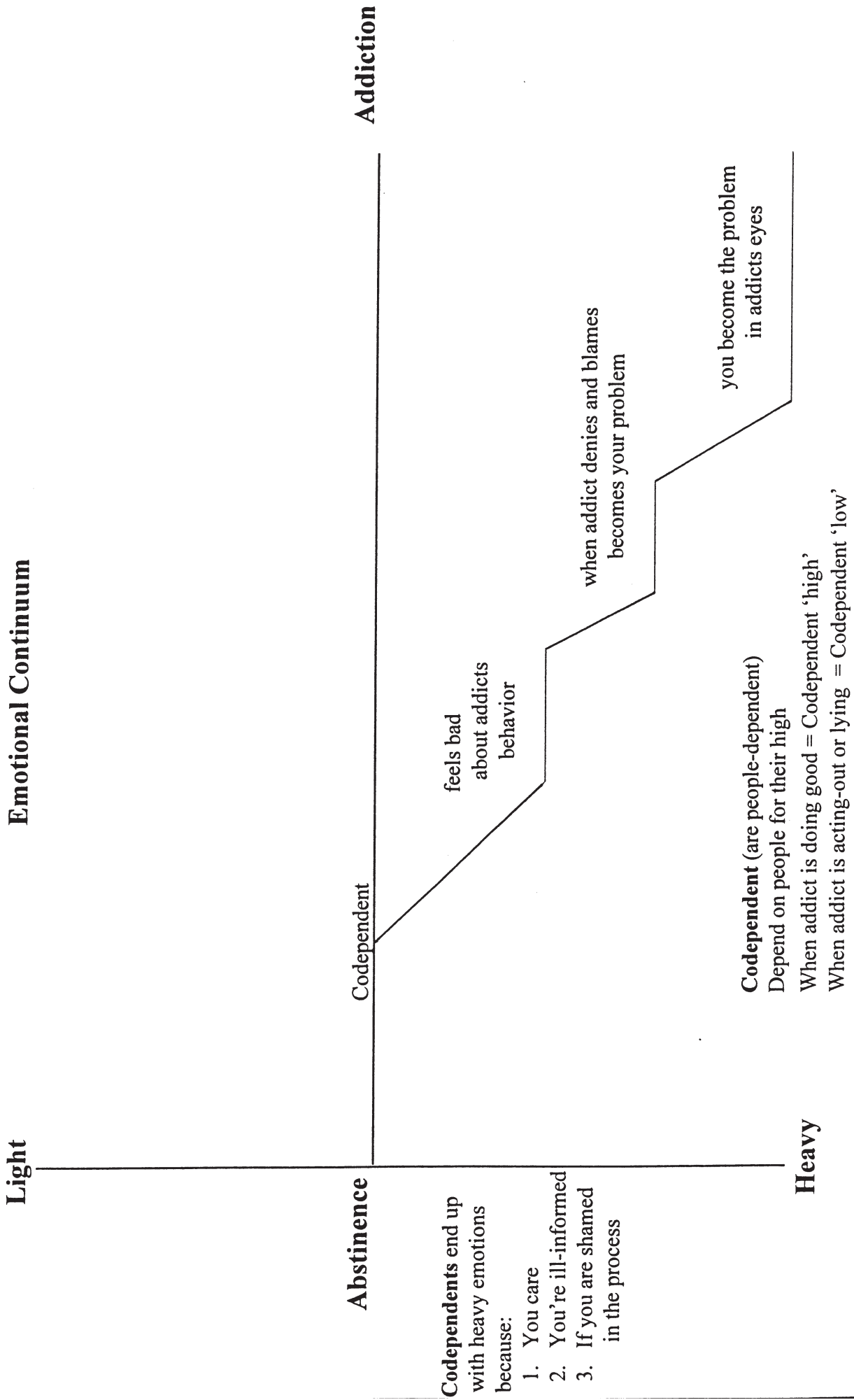
Guilt

- ◆ Change can take place at the line of "normal" if there is repentance and a turning around.
- ◆ New starting point because of the heaviness of the guilt.

Heavy

(Embarrassed Hard to carry,
 guilty, sad, Hard to give away
 jealous, scared, hurt)
 Too heavy = Depression

CODEPENDENCY Emotional Continuum



Take Home Questions

1. Can you think of some things in your life that you would now consider addictions? List as many as you can.
(Truth v. Lie)

2. How does the concept of “equity rescuing” (review your notes) fit into maintaining your addictions?

3. Pick one of the addictions you’ve listed above and describe your process of gradual deterioration (or mood altering down)?

4. Have you ever felt dependent on another person for your source of “okayness, wellness or success”?

Who was the person?

5. Thinking about the person in question 4, write out some statements which describe how you feel when that person engages in behaviors you find hurtful, unhealthy or wrong.
 - a. What did/do you do in response to the unwanted behavior, or how did you try to get them to stop it?

6. If that person never changes what are you going to do to be healthy?

Session 8

Enabling: Unhelpful Help with Good Intentions

Session 8
Enabling: Unhelpful Help with Good Intentions

When is helping a person harmful?

What are some ways family members enable a person to continue in their destructive behavior?

What questions should you ask yourself when attempting to help an individual who is involved in a mood altering behavior pattern?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Has anything new happened (changed) in your life this week as a result of the information you have learned from the video series? Explain.

2. How does the information on “enabling” in the video relate to your life?
 - a. Please give some specific examples, trying to think of something recent.

3. If you are in a relationship right now that is in really bad shape, are you doing anything to “clean up its image”?

4. Will you share with the group a situation you are going along with on the outside (showing support for), but you really disagree with on the inside?

5. Is there anyone in your life you believe is enabling an unhealthy pattern in you? Explain.

Take Home Questions

1. Using the passages of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37) and the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), write how the teaching on enabling applies to each of these parables. (Truth v. Lie)

2. “A person cannot continue to live in a destructive way unless someone is shielding him from the consequences he should be experiencing.” Taking this quote from the video into consideration, think of someone you know who is living a destructive lifestyle.

Who is helping that person continue in his/her destructive behavior (by attempting to help)?

How are they helping to maintain the destructive behavior (or what is the result of their “helping”)?

3. Can you think of a situation in your life right now in which you are helping someone who: a) doesn't know they need help, or b) is not getting better with your help (your help is not working)?

4. Thinking about the person in question 3, write honestly about your motivation or reason for helping him/her.

a. What do you think his/her behavior (situation) says about you?

b. How might your help be preventing the person in question 3 from fully experiencing the consequences of their behavior?

5. Are you in a relationship right now that is really in bad shape? Explain.

Example: My marriage is really in bad shape. My husband and I fight all the time. There is no love in our relationship (no tenderness, sex, trust or care). Things are so bad that my husband has punched me a few times (leaving large bruises) and yesterday threw me across the room, while our four children watched. Both my husband and I are depressed and angry most of the time. I feel guilty when I think of what all the yelling, quarreling and iciness is doing to our children.

6. What are some of the consequences (present or future) of continuing to pretend and/or clean up?

Examples of consequences:

a. Other people would be shocked to know how bad things are. We are both Christians and he is a leader in the church. I clean up the image by:

- 1) pretending all is well to others; if I'm asked how things are going, I reply "good" or "fine"
- 2) I haven't gone to the doctor or told anyone about my bruises and I've instructed the children not to talk about the "family affairs" to others.
- 3) I confront my husband with his behavior, but rarely bring the subject up again: issues stay pretty much unresolved.

b. If I told others about the bruising they would lose respect for me and think I was a weak Christian or unsubmitive wife. People might interfere in our relationship or my husband might lose his position in the church and that would only make him angrier.

c. I could report the abuse to the police, tell other people, suggest counseling to my husband and go to counseling even if he refuses, or give my husband an ultimatum that if he ever hits me again I will get a restraining order and report the abuse to the police. If I do any of that, it might result in a divorce which would brand me as a weak Christian. I would lose God's favor. An unhappy, dysfunctional, abusive marriage is better than no marriage at all.

d. If I don't change the way I respond, the abuse will continue (probably escalate). The effects on my children of living with this anger, yelling and abuse will increase the likelihood that violence, anger and rage will repeat itself in their adult lives and future relationships. (They may abuse or marry an abuser).

7. Are the consequences in 6d more painful, damaging or unhealthy than the fears in 6c or vice versa?

8. Can you think of a situation in which you are going along with (showing support for) things on the outside that you really disagree with on the inside? Explain.

Session 9

Erasing Shame With the Right Behavior: The Wrong Fight

Session 9
Erasing Shame With the Right Behavior: The Wrong Fight

Why does a person attempt to overcome shame with doing “right” behaviors?

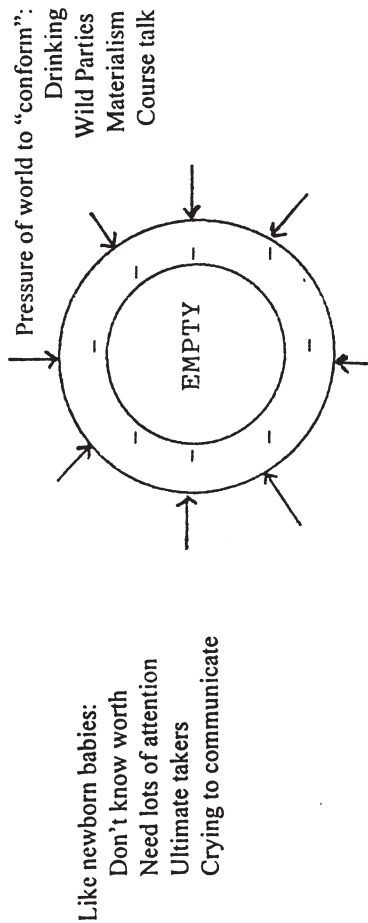
Why doesn't good performance overcome shame?

Why is focusing on doing good behaviors the wrong emphasis for Christians?

How do some churches use legalism to perpetuate people's attempt to earn approval through performance?

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world,.....”

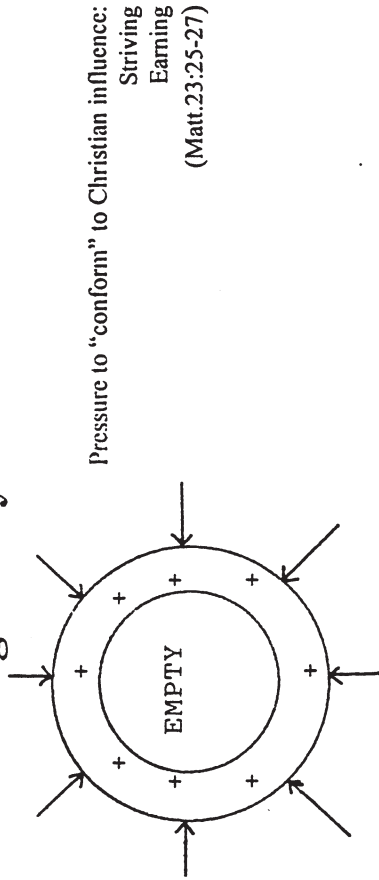
World System....to conform



Empty on the inside and empty on the outside (congruent)

1. Easy to spot
2. Bad public relations
3. Tired - can't do enough to make self good on outside

Religious System...to conform



Empty on inside and full on the outside (incongruent)

1. Hard to spot
2. Good public relations
3. Tired - can't do enough positive things on the outside to be full on the inside

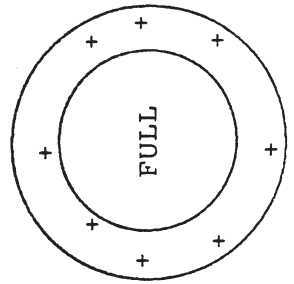
“...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

Romans 12:2

God's Transformation

No one can be full on the inside with either the *World System* or the *Religious System*

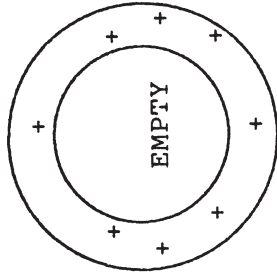
God has created a system where nobody has the edge...we all need mercy.
Romans 11:30-32



GOAL.....To be full on the outside because of what God is doing on the inside (congruent) *Acts 15:8-9*

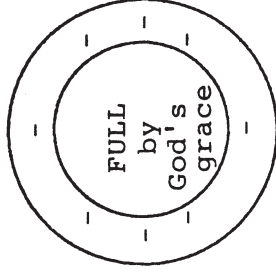
Paul's Life

Philippians 3:4-7
(confidence in flesh)



- ▶ Circumcised
- ▶ Tribe of Benjamin
- ▶ Hebrew of Hebrews
- ▶ Zeal
- ▶ Persecutor of the Church
- ▶ Found blameless according to law

I Corinthians 15:3-10
(man's assessment from the outside)



- ▶ Untimely birth
- ▶ Least of apostles
- ▶ Persecuted the church

Galatians 3:1-5

Truth - Righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.
Philippians 3:3-9

- ▶ Knew his calling
- ▶ Was looking to God for his identity

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How did last week's video provoke you to make changes in any present relationships?
 - a. What truth are you aware of that allowed you to make changes?

2. What things or behaviors have you tried in an effort to make yourself feel complete?

3. How does "fighting the good fight" differ from the "try-hard cycle"?
 - a. Do you see this circle in your life? Explain.

4. How do you "get found" by God when you wander off or are lost?

5. What does it mean to you that God has chosen you?

6. Did any of the scriptures Jeff read have a special impact on you?

7. How can we enter into God's rest?
 - a. Is there anything you can do this next week to help you enter further into God's rest?

5. After watching the video, write why you think rest is so important to God.

6. Using your concordance and/or margin notes, read two or three Bible passages every day this week on rest and write in your journal how they impact you.

7. Have you ever tried to compensate for your shame (emptiness, sense of not being okay) by engaging in “right” or “wrong” behaviors? Describe.

a. What are some of the areas in your life where you are still doing this?

8. If a part of “resting” means being honest with God and with others about where you are and what you are feeling, what are some specific ways that you can rest this week?

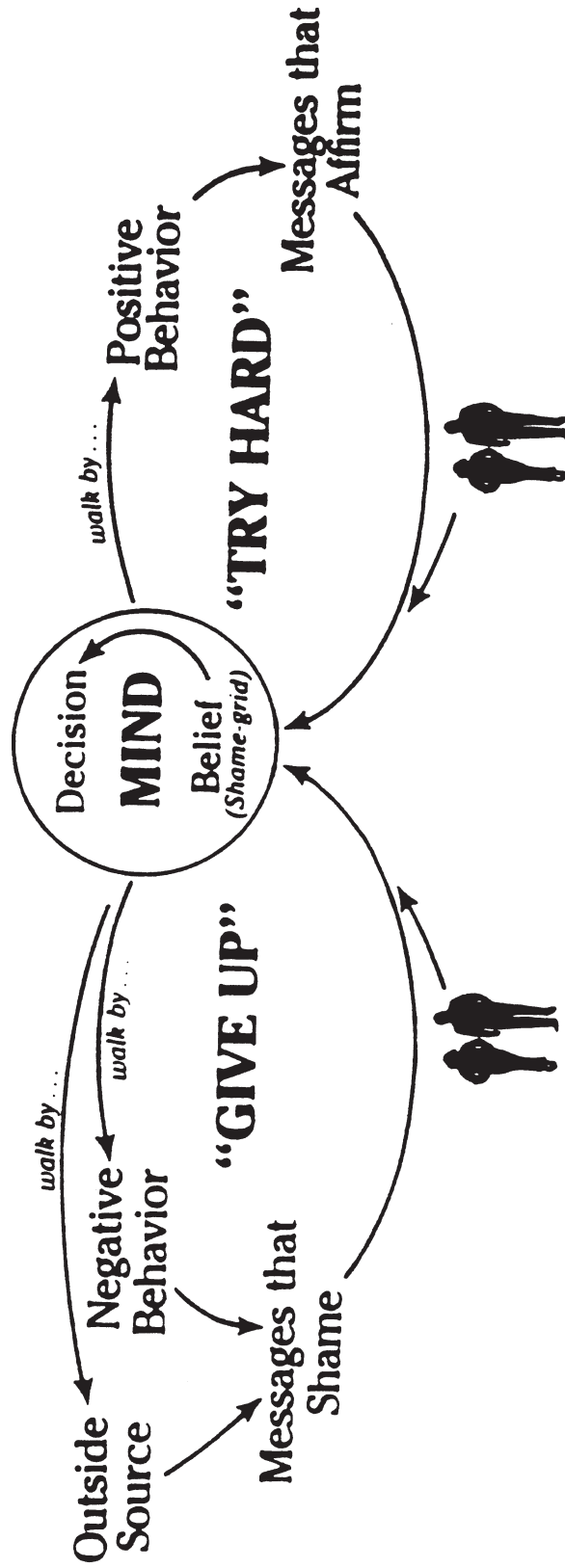
Session 10

Exhausted by “Give Up/Try Harder” Living

Session 10
Exhausted by “Give Up/Try Harder” Living

Describe the “Give up” cycle (see figure on next page).

Describe the “Try hard” cycle (see figure on next page).



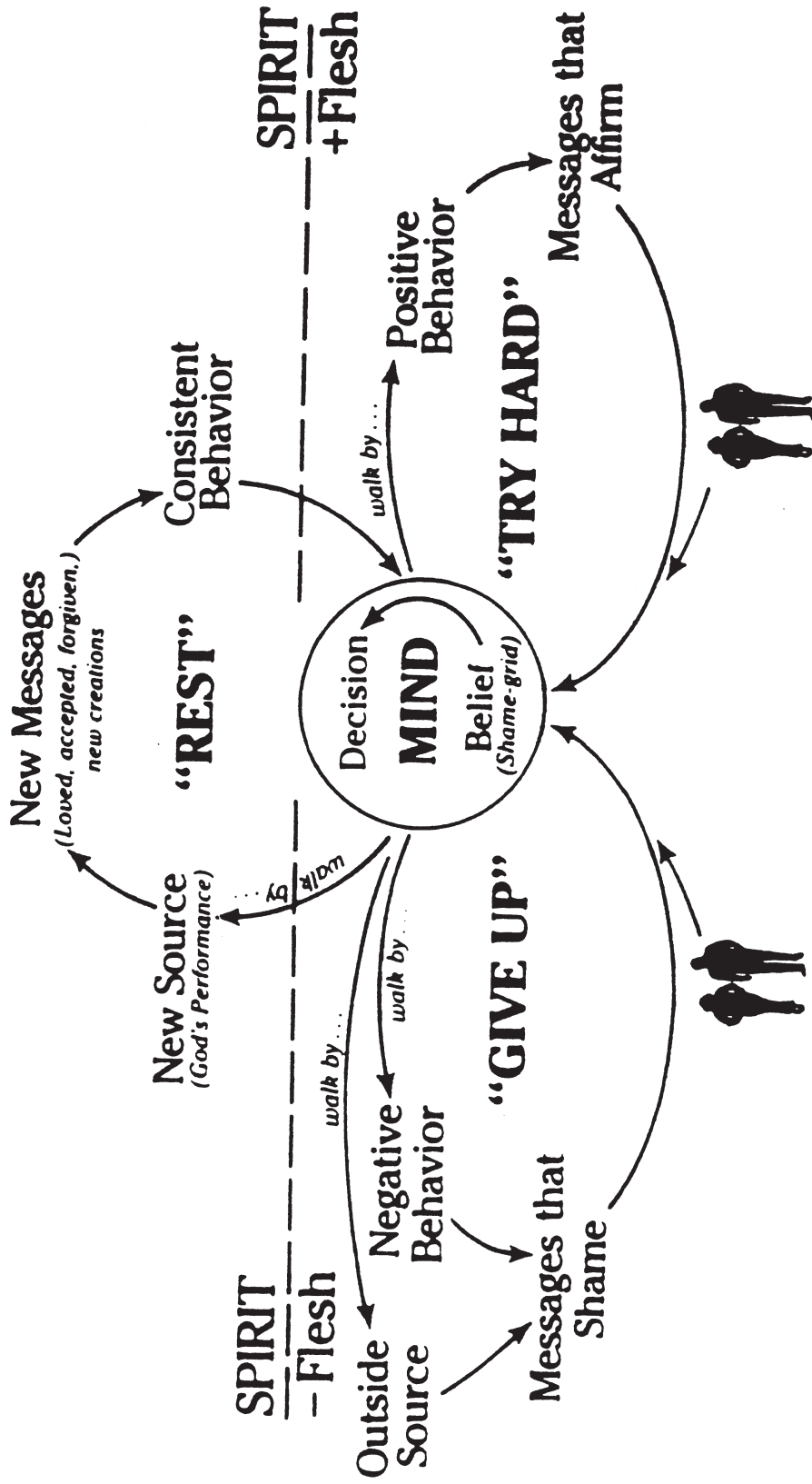
Session 11

Recovery: Learning to Live Like New Creations

Session 11
Recovery: Learning to Live Like New Creations

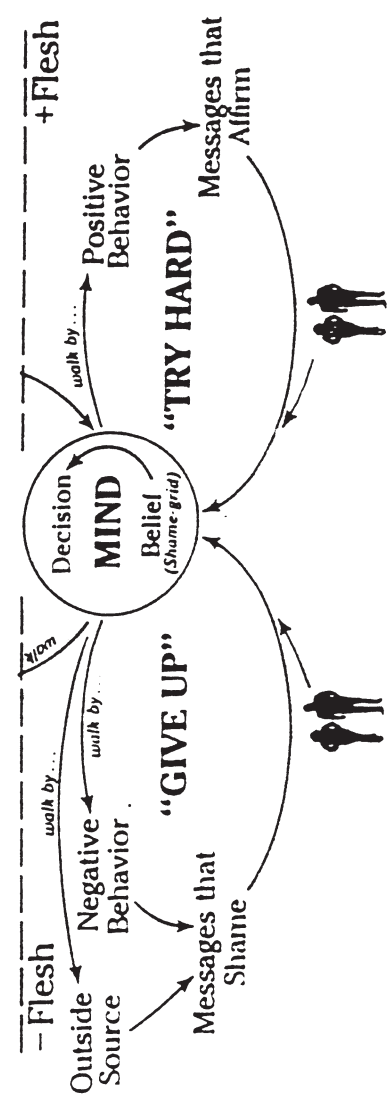
What does it mean to be a “New Creation”?

What are some of the messages we receive from God regarding being a New Creation?





Rest Fight	Faith Fight
Spiritual Battle (Hebrews 4:11 "...be diligent to enter that rest")	I Timothy 6:12 "...fight the good fight of faith"(AGON)
God's Performance	I Corinthians 1:31 Ephesians 6:10 I Timothy 6:17 Matthew 7:24
God the Father	bore us adopted chose us on purpose we are loved unconditionally
God the Son	Jesus saves completely Lives to make intercession Is our defense attorney - pleads our case
God the Spirit	Galatians 3:27 I Corinthians 13:16 Ephesians 1:13



True About All Believers Because of What God Has Done

Romans 8:16	children of God
Romans 14:3	accepted
1 Cor 1:5	enriched in speech and knowledge
1 Cor 6:11	washed/cleaned
II Cor 2:15	fragrant smell
II Cor 5:17	new creation
Galatians 3:26	sons of God
Ephesians 1:3	blessed with spiritual blessing
Ephesians 1:4	His choosing
Ephesians 1:5	adopted
Ephesians 1:7	redeemed and forgiven
Ephesians 1:11	obtained an inheritance
Hebrews 9:16	God's will - left all condition - heir/death
Ephesians 3:6	fellow heirs
Ephesians 2:5	dead - now alive
Ephesians 2:6	seated with Him in heavenly places
Ephesians 2:10	His workmanship
Ephesians 2:13	brought near
Ephesians 2:19	fellow citizens
Ephesians 3:6	fellow heirs
Philippians 1:11	filled with fruit of righteousness
Philippians 2:15	God's light in a dark world
Colossians 2:10	made complete in Him
1 Peter 2:9	a chosen race/royal priesthood
Hebrews 3:1	a holy bretheran

Session 12

The Right Fight: A Blueprint for Self and Others

Session 12
The Right Fight: A Blueprint for Self and Others

What do we need to remember in our “fight?”

What things do we need to remember regarding other people’s “fights?”

Suggestions for Further Reading

When God's People Let You Down by Jeff VanVonderen

Good News for the Chemically Dependent by Jeff VanVonderen

The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse by Dave Johnson and Jeff VanVonderen

Families Where Grace Is In Place by Jeff VanVonderen

Birthright by David Needham

Healing for Damaged Emotions by David Seamonds

Healing Grace by David Seamonds

Secrets of the Family Tree by Earl Henslin, et. al.

I'll Quit Tomorrow by Verne Johnson

When Helping You Is Hurting Me by Carmen Renee Berry