

TALK ONE – The Critical Core

Addiction is seen by many schools of thought as an illness of mind, body, and soul, which implies that in healing spiritually, healing can also occur mentally, emotionally and physically.

True life is found when we live from our souls. Ecclesiastes 12:7, 1 Corinthians 15:45

We have soul thirst/hunger/longing. Psalm 38:9, Isaiah 55:1-2, Psalm 46:1

These deep desires feed soul questions.

Our inner longings were meant to drive us to God, but we instead take them elsewhere. When we do this, we will be constantly dissatisfied.

When we take this soul thirst to people, possessions, pleasures, performance, positions, productivity, pursuits, and circumstances, it will never work to bring us peace.

*Peace I leave with you; **my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. John 14:27***

True joy and peace is not dependent upon people or circumstances.

Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee. Saint Augustine

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we don't live as the souls we are.

There will ever only be one of you, designed intentionally by God Himself, which by **definition** makes you special.

This for us very practically means we are completely secure!!

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. Hebrews 6:19

It is not that you have got God, but that He has got you. Oswald Chambers

If we are insecure, it is because we have based ourselves on an insecure foundation.

Anytime our sense of self-worth or security becomes attached to something or somebody, we set ourselves up to be controlled by that thing or person. Stanley

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we don't live securely in our given value, but instead keep seeking it in the temporal.

TALK TWO – Foundation Firm or Faltering?

The common themes in addiction of low self-esteem, shame, and emotional insecurity demonstrate that a strong foundation is essential to health in all forms.

Immovable, non-negotiable, not-up-for-debate beliefs about God and yourself as His:

As God's child, He has grace for you and will never give up on you and never leave you.

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! 1 John 3:1

For it is by grace you have been saved through faith – and this not from yourselves - it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, He rises to show you compassion. Isaiah 30:18

For I am confident of this, He who began a good work in you will continue to perfect until the day of Christ Jesus' return. Philippians 1:6

I will never leave you or forsake you. Hebrews 13:5

In His immense love, He has given us complete forgiveness.

When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions. Colossians 2:13-14

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

In His utter faithfulness, God has set before us ways to live that He knows will bless us, gives us exactly what we need for every day and promises complete provision.

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Hebrews 11:6

Give us today our daily bread. Matthew 6:11

God has given us Christ's real power and presence.

In Him we live and move and have our being. Acts 17:28

Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ. Romans 8:17

All of Jesus is enough- more than enough for what we need. We have all power, all authority, all peace, all perspective, all comfort, all healing, all deliverance, all wisdom, all help.

Fruit/evidence showing I am living on an insecure foundation:

1. Constantly comparing yourself with others. 2 Corinthians 10:12
2. looking to others for approval. Galatians 1:10
3. basing your faith on your feelings. John 8:32
4. struggling with discontentment and doubt. 1 Thessalonians 5:18
5. giving way to worry. Matthew 6:34
6. being self-focused and self-indulgent, giving into temptation, little self-restraint. Luke 9:24
7. Being crippled underneath the weight of shame. Psalm 34:4-5

To keep from ourselves from being susceptible to the grip of addiction, we must have a solid understanding of God and of ourselves in God.

TALK THREE – Unseen Forces

Why, when the foundation available for our identity and value is so firm, do we struggle?

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 2 Corinthians 4:4

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:12

Every day we are in a clear and unrelenting assault concerning our faith.

There are schemes against us: 2 Corinthians 2:11, Ephesians 6:11.

We are targeted: 1 Peter 5:8.

What is this for/over? God's glory

And because of that, our relationships are targeted (since they are where God is most glorified), but according to Ephesians 6:12, our truest battle is never with humans; with each other.

People in battle get wounded.

Our hurts, insecurities, doubts, fears, and sensitivities are all part of the diabolical plan to keep us from loving and trusting God.

The main weapons against believers are accusation, lying, distortion, doubt, and confusion.

Satan is the Father of lies – John 8:44

Hurls accusation – Revelation 12:10

Examples of common lies:

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I'm not as spiritual as others, so I won't apply/try/join/reach out.

God can't use me.

Others are more valuable than me.

People are all self-centered.

God is not real.

I'm a failure.

I have struggles/sins no one else does.

There is no use trying.

The Bible is full of contradictions.

I'll never succeed.

No one will ever love me for me.

I'll never be as good as him/her.

I'm dirty.

People can't be trusted.

I don't have what it takes.

I can't be forgiven for that.

God doesn't love me like others.

God is not good if He let bad things happen.

It's not worth it.

I have nothing unique to offer.

My life is not making a difference.

God doesn't make sense.

The Bible doesn't apply to today.

We are being lied to, pummeled, and targeted at all times.

What is one lie that is coming at you right now?

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TALK FOUR – How Wounds Wound

Childhood trauma and neglect are important predisposing factors within the interplay of the various bio-psycho-social-spiritual influences leading to addiction.

Even if we know evil uses lies, we must know which ones we personally are most susceptible to.

That's why we need to understand what has happened to us; because if not, our unexamined stuff rules us.

Surely, you desire truth in the inner parts, wisdom in the inmost place. Psalm 51:6

We must be wise about how we are wounded, in order to be transformed beyond the damage. (2 Cor. 2:11) In other words:

deal with your stuff, or it will deal with you.

The damage of wounds is that they provide fertile ground for hellish schemes of doubt.

If we do not see the right battle, we will misinterpret what is going on most of our days.

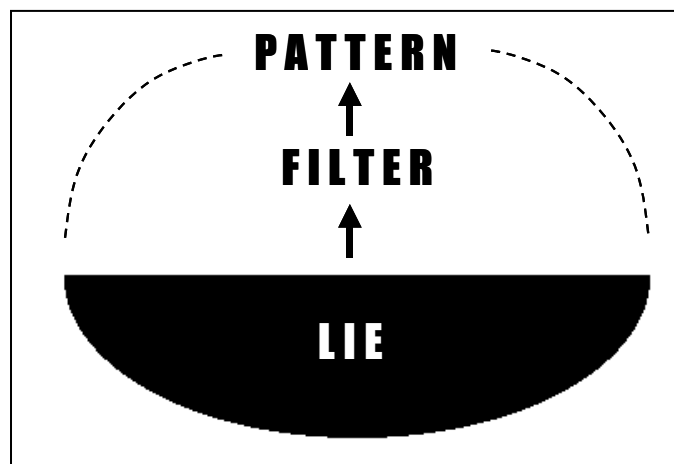
There are two types of wounds. One is a wound of commission, which was something done against us, done to us by others "on purpose." Like a divot or gouge.

In that newly opened space, evil wants to implant something untrue in there.

If a lie is implanted and untouched, it becomes a lens through which we perceive all of life

Then a pattern of living based upon the lie and the filter develops.

Here's how big the effects of the lie can become if you don't fight it with God's truth:



In that space that wasn't there before, a lie from hell will rush in if we don't stop it.

The point is that when hellish untruths inside ourselves go unchallenged for long enough, the extent of control they exert over our everyday functioning can be massive without us even realizing it.

Hell will use material from our wounds to lie to us about God, about ourselves, and about others.

<u>Examples</u>	<u>Potential Lies</u>	<u>Potential Patterns</u>
Parents get divorced.	It was my fault. People who say they'll be there won't. I can't trust authorities in my life. You weren't enough to stay for. People who love me won't really be there.	Hypersensitive to criticism Don't trust anyone Low self-worth
Being sexually abused.	You are here only for others' needs. I don't have a right to say 'no.' I am primarily a sexual being. I am here solely to meet others' needs.	Over-volunteering Never offer opinion Provocative dress
Left out by friends	You don't fit in. No one will ever want you.	Isolated & aloof No attention to appearance
Lied to by trusted person	I can't trust anyone. I can only depend on myself I am not worthy of respect	Fiercely independent, Hold cards close to chest Deep anxiety/social fear

What are our "alerts" to the fact that we are being deceived? (think of dashboard lights)

Shame	Hopelessness
Confusion	Powerlessness
Fear	Insecurity
Doubt	Condemnation

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we are not aware of how lies become embedded within from the wounds in our lives.

TALK FIVE – Deficits that Drive

A second category of wounds is wounds of omission. They are hurts we have because of negligence or ignorance or selfishness or woundedness of others in our lives.

It is something you face consequences of but was not necessarily done on purpose.

Unconditional love is the fundamental emotional human need.

Whether we felt unconditional love from our parents (“vats”) determines whether we feel like:

- we’re worthy of being loved
- we’re competent to get the love we need
- others can be trusted and are reliable
- others are willing to respond to us when we need them

Our earliest relationship experiences shape how we view ourselves and those we love the most.

Most simply, an early attachment injury results when someone we love, someone who we think should love us, like a parent, fails to provide our fundamental safety and security needs.

Unconditional love looks different at various ages and stages:

0 – 5 years: safety, protection, complete unidirectional nurturing, closeness, protection, touch, gentle communication, responsivity to cries for help, and meeting of basic needs for food and clothing

6-11 years: attention, validation of children’s uniqueness, time spent together, honest engagement with the child’s questions, engagement in creative play as they attempt many more things adults do

12-18 years: affirm the uniqueness of adolescent, consider their opinion valid, provide input and direction that invites respect rather than demands it, give respect and independence, listening, not overreacting to certain trains of thought or ways of being, offering direction and guidance as opposed to direct commanding of their behavior

19-on years: adult-like interaction, which communicates pride and joy over who the adult child has become, what his or her life path has been, and a belief he or she is supported by the parents

Research in the past decade has posited an *extended adolescence*, which would likely offer another set of vats ages 19-25, thereby making the adult child to adult parent more likely to be ages 26-on.

All through these periods, the soul of the child is asking –

Are you there for me? Can I count on you? Do you really care about me? Am I worthy of your love and protection? What do I have to do to get your attention, your affection, your heart?

These needs were created for fulfillment, and we can’t ignore or deny they exist. They will continue to drive us and influence our behavior significantly in their fulfillment or unfulfillment.

Unfulfilled longings that we were created for ache.

Others in your life with whom you have an emotional connection have their own “vat” -- opportunity for providing unconditional love.

When we look to others for things they cannot provide, we are setting them up for failure.

General truths about the vat conceptualization:

- 1) None of us have vats that are completely full.
- 2) Our present behavior will often be driven by our greatest deficit if we are unaware of it.
- 3) Vats can only be filled by a specific person during a specific season, and therefore we can't replace an empty vat with someone else or at another time (we were infants once, for example). Each vat is for one person, one time.
- 4) If we are out of touch with any deficits, we can unwittingly try to take a fuller “vat” (good relationship of love and connection) and shove/dump it into the deficient area. What we tend to do is unconsciously work to “stuff” our mostly empty vats (we do that mostly with other people; dating people like our parents, etc.) We will attempt to put others (or other things) in areas of deficit that they can never fulfill.
- 5) God does not fill all our empty vats when we become Christians. We mistakenly assume that when we receive Christ, He will fill all deficits left by humans. Jesus does not fill every need we've ever had left unmet by humans.
- 6) Christ does, however, have “his own vat” which is essentially huge and the only vat completely full and never ending – we could never look to have our needs met by Him “too much” – there is no limit on His capability to deliver unconditional love to us.

If children do not receive the love and attention they require for healthy development it often results in emotional instability and relationship difficulties. These children grow into adults with a strong sense of shame and unmet needs for love and security. They often experience a chronic feeling of emptiness and rejection, which is a setup for substance abuse.

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we don't realize how unmet needs from developmental years (that should have been met) keep driving us in adulthood.

TALK SIX – Grief is Universal

Unless we take our eyes off our deficits and turn to all His fullness, we will never experience victory. *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith Hebrews 12:2*

Whenever we cry for deliverance/healing/fixing/help **on our terms**, we miss Him.

In your life, as you choose more and more to believe the goodness of God in the face of whatever you face, then you will experience more abiding peace.

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we demand for God's help and deliverance to be what our picture of it is instead of what He promises and provides.

Our lives will not eventually reflect peace and joy if we do not accept that our wounds and everything that resulted from them are now our responsibility.

It is also scheme of hell to keep us stuck in our past and looking backwards instead of forward.

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we do not fully accept ownership of dealing with the hurt done to us and hurt we have done.

Founded upon truth that God is enough and accepting our wounds, then we must grieve.

If we do not grieve our losses, we will become stunted. *Psalm 31:9-10*

Grief is simply the reaction to any loss.

It is interacting with the thoughts and the feelings that come with contemplation of our losses in life, and the consequences thereof.

We won't heal if we are "stuffers."

We must refuse to be pain avoiders and instead healthily grieve losses from wounds.

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we misinterpret grief.

A suggestion for grieving: "ride the wave."

If we do not face grief, we shove it down. But we can only handle so much undealt with pain.

Not grieving always has some fruit, or symptoms: Anger, depression, addiction are evidence.

Armoire living: *Psalm 31:9-10* Why it's a problem? Galatians 5:1, 1 Corinthians 13:11, Luke 8:17

To heal, we must AGE!!! Accept Grieve Embrace

Search me, O God, and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

TALK SEVEN – Shame and Its Supporters

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we do not realize the intense power of shame in our lives. It is a common characteristic of those suffering addiction.

Every person is struggling with shame to some degree.

Feeling that haunts us, the sense that if someone really knew us, they would go away.

Shame makes us feel that we do not measure up, that we are not enough.

Shame screams at us that our weakness is unacceptable and must be hidden.

Shame is a prison.

Unequivocally, a primary reason so many Christians struggle to live a life filled with a sense of power, purpose, and peace—is because of hellish damage done in times of hurt.

Because... *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7 NKJV*

Believers must appropriate the freedom we have in Christ to be free of shame.

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1

Three common results when we live avoidant and in shame:

1. We make vows to protect ourselves from hurt.

There is no such thing as a vow apart from prayer. But these are made outside the will of God.

Examples of self-protective, inner vows:

I will never love again.

I will never let anyone have my heart again.

I'd rather die than be like my father/mother.

I will never be taken advantage of again.

I cannot let my deepest sins be known, or I'll be rejected.

I will never completely trust.

I must always be nice.

I will never allow myself to be dependent on anyone.

I will not feel pain.

I will never be poor again.

I will not allow myself to need.

I must always stay totally in control.

I will never give without getting back.

I must be strong.

I'll never be that vulnerable again.

I will never let someone control me.

I must not show weakness.

I will never hope.

A Scriptural picture of vows: *"we have made a lie our refuge and falsehood our hiding place." Is. 28:15*

Vows have to be undone by a clearcut movement of our will.

2. We keep others from seeing our deepest issues through wearing masks.

These are ways we relationally hide from others.

They are meant to protect us from the perceived danger of the world.

Masks are any device or mechanism that we use to keep people from getting close. Examples:

Humor	Have it all together	Super spiritual
I'm fine	Lone Ranger	Low self-esteem
Aloof	Rescuer	Porcupine
Chaotic	Tough guy/girl	Answer person
Party person	Martyr	Sarcasm

Donning them puts us in violation of 2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

We find ourselves set up to be in addiction when we live under the power of vows and masks.

3. Unless we face that which is inside us head-on and, we then often anesthetize ourselves.

We do this any time we don't want to face reality. *Proverbs 26:11* What do you look to for relief?

scrolling	shopping	eating
drinking	masturbating	cleaning
gaming	magazine reading	exercise
smoking	busyness	TikTok for hours

Distraction is a major blanket form of numbing. It could very well be hell's #1 trick in American society today because it keeps our minds off the truth for extended periods.

"Whenever we try to put second things into the first-place position, we lose the joy of both God and whatever we are trying to replace Him with." C.S. Lewis

Whatever we do in our lives will ALWAYS have demonstrable fruit at some point. It's the principle of roots and fruits from John 15 and see in Matthew 7:17- 18.

We can revoke vows and remove masks and change deflecting patterns of living only as we are secure in God's great love for us.

Proverbs 26:11

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we live consistently trying to anesthetize ourselves to avoid the pain of life.

TALK EIGHT – 6 C’s for Crucial Care and Cure

Addiction is in many ways an attempt to meet needs for love and security, but as Gabor Mate explains, unfortunately, the behaviors, objects and substances they relate to in addiction are “poor substitutes for love.”

In the spiritual battle against you, evil attempts to debilitate you through lies that feel true, wanting to keep you stuck in your wounds, perhaps even incapacitated to move forward, certainly stuck in shame and unable to grieve, but God has another option!!

It is captured in **Genesis 50:20**:

Essential strategies and care for overcoming the grip of addiction:

COMBAT hellish schemes – 2 Corinthians 10:12

R _____ lies which took root and developed from there.

R _____ lies. Rebuke any active or even unwitting agreement with them.

R _____ the lies with Truth.

When you expose Satan’s lies with God’s truth, the _____ is broken. Ephesians 6:14

You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. John 8:32

Engage _____ battle as a normal, necessary, daily part of the Christian life.

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 2 Corinthians 10:3

Your continual appeal, shield, and final word: _____

You have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1 John 4:4

COGNITIVE work works – Romans 12:2

SHIFT series – neural pathways

Change Your Brain, Change Your Life, Dr. Daniel Amen

Switch Your Brain On, Dr. Caroline Leaf

COMMUNITY heals – Galatians 6:2

Johann Hari Ted Talk “Everything you think you know about addiction is wrong”

CHEMICALS assist - Matthew 9:12

CARE for yourself – Matthew 11:28-30

COUNSELING is wise – Proverbs 11:14

The Soul of Shame, Dr. Curt Thompson

A Handy Hope and Healing Help:

I’m susceptible to usage of and dependence upon addictive substances when:

I don’t attend to what is going on inside my soul.

I don’t remember who I am to God, who I am in Christ, or what God has promised me.

I doubt God’s forgiveness, provision, care, faithfulness, or limitless love.

I’m actively comparing, worrying, performing for love, self-absorbed, filled with shame, totally feelings oriented, indulging discontentment, or living for others’ approval.

I’m not dealing with my issues.

I haven’t realized the lies I’m living in based upon past wounds.

I try to use them to fill the cavernous aching of the love and care which I should have gotten and didn’t.

I want to take the edge off the deficits I feel in myself or when I bring these deficits to others to meet who cannot.

I don’t allow myself to grieve the losses in my life.

I want to anesthetize rather than feel my pain or grieve my loss.

I’m living self-protected in vows and hidden behind masks.

I have so much shame and I cannot live with that feeling so I have to dissociate myself from it.

I don’t actually contend in the spiritual realms as the soul/spirit I am.

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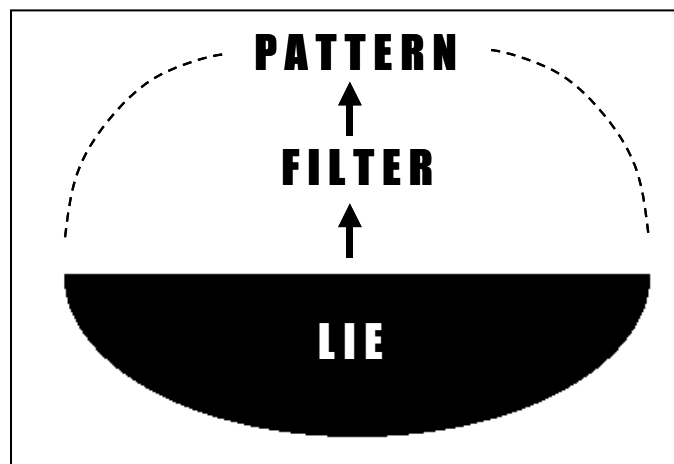
If we do not _____ the right battle, we will misinterpret what is going on most of our days.

There are two types of wounds. One is a wound of _____, which was something done against us, done to us by others "on purpose." Like a divot or gouge.

In that newly opened space, evil wants to implant something _____ in there.

If a lie is implanted and untouched, it becomes a lens through which we perceive all of life
Then a _____ of living based upon the lie and the filter develops.

Here's how big the effects of the lie can become if you don't fight it with God's truth:



In that space that wasn't there before, a lie from hell will rush in if we don't stop it.

The point is that when hellish untruths inside ourselves go unchallenged for long enough, the extent of control they exert over our everyday functioning can be massive without us even realizing it.

Hell will use material from our wounds to lie to us about _____, about _____, and about _____.

<u>Examples</u>	<u>Potential Lies</u>	<u>Potential Patterns</u>
Parents get divorced.	It was my fault. People who say they'll be there won't. I can't trust authorities in my life. You weren't enough to stay for. People who love me won't really be there.	Hypersensitive to criticism Don't trust anyone Low self-worth
Being sexually abused.	You are here only for others' needs. I don't have a right to say 'no.' I am primarily a sexual being. I am here solely to meet others' needs.	Over-volunteering Never offer opinion Provocative dress
Left out by friends	You don't fit in. No one will ever want you.	Isolated & aloof No attention to appearance
Lied to by trusted person	I can't trust anyone. I can only depend on myself I am not worthy of respect	Fiercely independent, Hold cards close to chest Deep anxiety/social fear

What are our "alerts" to the fact that we are being deceived? (think of dashboard lights)

Shame	Hopelessness
Confusion	Powerlessness
Fear	Insecurity
Doubt	Condemnation

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we are not aware of how lies become embedded within from the wounds in our lives.

TALK FIVE – Deficits that Drive

A second category of wounds is wounds of omission. They are hurts we have because of negligence or ignorance or selfishness or woundedness of others in our lives.

It is something you face _____ of but was not necessarily done on purpose.

Unconditional love is the fundamental emotional human need.

Whether we felt unconditional love from our parents (“vats”) determines whether we feel like:

- we’re worthy of being loved
- we’re competent to get the love we need
- others can be trusted and are reliable
- others are willing to respond to us when we need them

Our earliest relationship experiences shape how we view ourselves and those we love the most.

Most simply, an early attachment injury results when someone we love, someone who we think should love us, like a parent, fails to provide our fundamental safety and security needs.

Unconditional love looks different at various ages and stages:

0 – 5 years: safety, protection, complete unidirectional nurturing, closeness, protection, touch, gentle communication, responsivity to cries for help, and meeting of basic needs for food and clothing

6-11 years: attention, validation of children’s uniqueness, time spent together, honest engagement with the child’s questions, engagement in creative play as they attempt many more things adults do

12-18 years: affirm the uniqueness of adolescent, consider their opinion valid, provide input and direction that invites respect rather than demands it, give respect and independence, listening, not overreacting to certain trains of thought or ways of being, offering direction and guidance as opposed to direct commanding of their behavior

19-on years: adult-like interaction, which communicates pride and joy over who the adult child has become, what his or her life path has been, and a belief he or she is supported by the parents

Research in the past decade has posited an *extended adolescence*, which would likely offer another set of vats ages 19-25, thereby making the adult child to adult parent more likely to be ages 26-on.

All through these periods, the soul of the child is asking –

Are you there for me? Can I count on you? Do you really care about me? Am I worthy of your love and protection? What do I have to do to get your attention, your affection, your heart?

These needs were created for fulfillment, and we can’t ignore or deny they exist. They will continue to drive us and influence our behavior significantly in their fulfillment or unfulfillment.

Unfulfilled longings that we were created for _____.

Others in your life with whom you have an emotional _____ have their own “vat” -- opportunity for providing unconditional love.

When we look to others for things they cannot provide, we are setting them up for _____.

General truths about the vat conceptualization:

- 7) None of us have vats that are completely full.
- 8) Our present behavior will often be driven by our _____ deficit if we are unaware of it.
- 9) Vats can only be filled by a specific person during a specific season, and therefore we can't replace an empty vat with someone else or at another time (we were infants once, for example). Each vat is for _____ person, one time.
- 10) If we are out of touch with any deficits, we can unwittingly try to take a fuller “vat” (good relationship of love and connection) and shove/dump it into the deficient area. What we tend to do is unconsciously work to “stuff” our mostly empty vats (we do that mostly with other people; dating people like our parents, etc.) We will attempt to put others (or other things) in areas of deficit that they can never fulfill.
- 11) God does not fill all our empty vats when we become Christians. We mistakenly assume that when we receive Christ, He will fill all deficits left by humans. Jesus does not fill every need we've ever had left u_____ by humans.
- 12) Christ does, however, have “his own vat” which is essentially huge and the only vat completely full and never ending – we could never look to have our needs met by Him “too much” – there is no limit on His capability to deliver unconditional love to us.

If children do not receive the love and attention they require for healthy development it often results in emotional instability and relationship difficulties. These children grow into adults with a strong sense of shame and unmet needs for love and security. They often experience a chronic feeling of emptiness and rejection, which is a setup for substance abuse.

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we don't realize how unmet needs from developmental years (that should have been met) keep driving us in adulthood.

TALK SIX – Grief is Universal

Unless we take our eyes off our deficits and _____ to all His fullness, we will never experience victory. *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith Hebrews 12:2*

Whenever we cry for deliverance/healing/fixing/help **on our terms**, we _____ Him.

In your life, as you choose more and more to believe the goodness of God in the face of whatever you face, then you will experience more abiding peace.

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we demand for God's help and deliverance to be what our picture of it is instead of what He promises and provides.

Our lives will not eventually reflect peace and joy if we do not _____ that our wounds and everything that resulted from them are now _____ responsibility.

It is also scheme of hell to keep us stuck in our past and looking _____ instead of forward.

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we do not fully accept ownership of dealing with the hurt done to us and hurt we have done.

Founded upon truth that God is enough and accepting our wounds, then we must _____.

If we do not grieve our losses, we will become stunted. *Psalm 31:9-10*

Grief is simply the reaction to any _____.

It is interacting with the thoughts and the feelings that come with contemplation of our losses in life, and the consequences thereof.

We won't heal if we are "stuffers."

We must refuse to be pain avoiders and instead healthily grieve losses from wounds.

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we misinterpret grief.

A suggestion for grieving: "ride the _____."

If we do not face grief, we _____. But we can only handle so much undealt with pain.

Not grieving always has some fruit, or symptoms: _____, depression, addiction are evidence.

Armoire living: *Psalm 31:9-10* Why it's a problem? Galatians 5:1, 1 Corinthians 13:11, Luke 8:17

To heal, we must AGE!!! A _____ G _____ E _____

Search me, O God, and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

TALK SEVEN – Shame and Its Supporters

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we do not realize the intense power of shame in our lives. It is a common characteristic of those suffering addiction.

Every person is struggling with _____ to some degree.

Feeling that haunts us, the sense that if someone really knew us, they would go away.

Shame makes us feel that we do not measure up, that we are not enough.

Shame screams at us that our weakness is unacceptable and must be hidden.

Shame is a prison.

Unequivocally, a primary reason so many Christians struggle to live a life filled with a sense of power, purpose, and peace—is because of hellish damage done in times of hurt.

Because... *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7 NKJV*

Believers must appropriate the freedom we have in Christ to be free of shame.

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Galatians 5:1

Three common results when we live avoidant and in shame:

1. We make _____ to protect ourselves from hurt.

There is no such thing as a vow apart from prayer. But these are made outside the will of God.

Examples of self-protective, inner vows:

I will never love again.

I will never let anyone have my heart again.

I'd rather die than be like my father/mother.

I will never be taken advantage of again.

I cannot let my deepest sins be known, or I'll be rejected.

I will never completely trust.

I must always be nice.

I will never allow myself to be dependent on anyone.

I will not feel pain.

I will never be poor again.

I will not allow myself to need.

I must always stay totally in control.

I will never give without getting back.

I must be strong.

I'll never be that vulnerable again.

I will never let someone control me.

I must not show weakness.

I will never hope.

A Scriptural picture of vows: *“we have made a lie our refuge and falsehood our hiding place.” Is. 28:15*

Vows have to be undone by a clearcut movement of our will.

2. We keep others from seeing our deepest issues through wearing masks.

These are ways we relationally _____ from others.

They are meant to _____ us from the perceived danger of the world.

Masks are any device or mechanism that we use to keep people from getting close. Examples:

Humor	Have it all together	Super spiritual
I'm fine	Lone Ranger	Low self-esteem
Aloof	Rescuer	Porcupine
Chaotic	Tough guy/girl	Answer person
Party person	Martyr	Sarcasm

Donning them puts us in violation of 2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

We find ourselves set up to be in addiction when we live under the power of vows and masks.

3. Unless we face that which is inside us head-on and, we then often _____ ourselves.

We do this any time we don't want to face reality. *Proverbs 26:11* What do you look to for relief?

scrolling	shopping	eating
drinking	masturbating	cleaning
gaming	magazine reading	exercise
smoking	busyness	TikTok for hours

_____ is a major blanket form of numbing. It could very well be hell's #1 trick in American society today because it keeps our minds off the truth for extended periods.

"Whenever we try to put second things into the first-place position, we lose the joy of both God and whatever we are trying to replace Him with." C.S. Lewis

Whatever we do in our lives will ALWAYS have demonstrable fruit at some point. It's the principle of roots and fruits from John 15 and see in Matthew 7:17- 18.

We can revoke vows and remove masks and change deflecting patterns of living only as we are secure in God's great love for us.

Proverbs 26:11

We find ourselves set up to be in the grip of addiction when we live consistently trying to anesthetize ourselves to avoid the pain of life.

TALK EIGHT – 6 C’s for Crucial Care and Cure

Addiction is in many ways an attempt to meet needs for love and security, but as Gabor Mate explains, unfortunately, the behaviors, objects and substances they relate to in addiction are “poor substitutes for love.”

In the spiritual battle against you, evil attempts to debilitate you through lies that feel true, wanting to keep you stuck in your wounds, perhaps even incapacitated to move forward, certainly stuck in shame and unable to grieve, but God has another option!!

It is captured in **Genesis 50:20**:

Essential strategies and care for overcoming the grip of addiction:

COMBAT hellish schemes – 2 Corinthians 10:12

R _____ lies which took root and developed from there.

R _____ lies. Rebuke any active or even unwitting agreement with them.

R _____ the lies with Truth.

When you expose Satan’s lies with God’s truth, the _____ is broken. Ephesians 6:14

You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. John 8:32

Engage _____ battle as a normal, necessary, daily part of the Christian life.

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 2 Corinthians 10:3

Your continual appeal, shield, and final word: _____

You have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 1 John 4:4

COGNITIVE work works – Romans 12:2

SHIFT series – neural pathways

Change Your Brain, Change Your Life, Dr. Daniel Amen

Switch Your Brain On, Dr. Caroline Leaf

COMMUNITY heals – Galatians 6:2

Johann Hari Ted Talk “Everything you think you know about addiction is wrong”

CHEMICALS assist - Matthew 9:12

CARE for yourself – Matthew 11:28-30

COUNSELING is wise – Proverbs 11:14

The Soul of Shame, Dr. Curt Thompson

A Handy Hope and Healing Help:

I’m susceptible to usage of and dependence upon addictive substances when:

I don’t attend to what is going on inside my soul.

I don’t remember who I am to God, who I am in Christ, or what God has promised me.

I doubt God’s forgiveness, provision, care, faithfulness, or limitless love.

I’m actively comparing, worrying, performing for love, self-absorbed, filled with shame, totally feelings oriented, indulging discontentment, or living for others’ approval.

I’m not dealing with my issues.

I haven’t realized the lies I’m living in based upon past wounds.

I try to use them to fill the cavernous aching of the love and care which I should have gotten and didn’t.

I want to take the edge off the deficits I feel in myself or when I bring these deficits to others to meet who cannot.

I don’t allow myself to grieve the losses in my life.

I want to anesthetize rather than feel my pain or grieve my loss.

I’m living self-protected in vows and hidden behind masks.

I have so much shame and I cannot live with that feeling so I have to dissociate myself from it.

I don’t actually contend in the spiritual realms as the soul/spirit I am.