



WHAT TO DO WHEN

PASTORAL CARE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	Getting Started
6	Depression
8	Grief
10	Painful Childhood Memories
11	Abuse-Physical/Sexual/Emotional
13	Marriage with Conflict
16	Marriage with Infidelity
19	Parenting Issues
21	Low Self-Esteem or Self-Hatred
23	Addiction to Pornography
25	Caring for Elderly Parents
27	Eating Disorders
29	Substance Abuse
31	Appendix A: Suicidal Thoughts
32	Appendix B: Duty to Report

A NOTE FROM JIMMY:

At Antioch Community Church, it is our sincere desire to see men and women set free from sin, that they might experience salvation but also that they may experience sanctification. One of the primary ways that God works in the sanctification process is through people loving one another, serving one another, and sharing God's Word with one another.

In the following pages, Vicki Smyer, former head of our counseling at Antioch has put together the resources to help you be the hands and feet of Jesus. Each topic covered gives you practical ways to address situations that will arise in your daily care of men and women in your Lifegroup.

Our prayer is that God will not only use these resources but will continue to help you grow in hearing His voice and knowing how to appropriate His grace to help and serve precious people in need of His love and compassion. Thank you for being willing to love people in the name of Jesus and I want to specifically thank Vicki for her labor of love.

In His Strength & Love,

Jimmy Seibert
Senior Pastor and Founder
Antioch Ministries International

A NOTE FROM VICKI:

Thank you for all that you do to pastor your flocks!

Each one of you has received countless phone calls from members who are hurting and asking for help. You have met with people to listen to them and to pray for them. You have held them accountable to make changes in their lives, and you have been their cheerleaders when the road got rough. You are truly our frontline pastors!

Some of you have asked for extra training to help you in this very important pastoral role. What to Do When has been completed to give you some basic help in handling the most common situations that may arise in your groups. It is NOT intended to be a set of rules followed in strict order. It is a collection of suggestions/guidelines that will enhance your own pastoral skills. Use it as a reference when a particular situation arises, but always ask God to lead. You will note that submitting to God's leading is listed as the first step on each page! After that, the suggestions are numbered randomly, not according to importance. Ask God which things to do in what order.

If and when you feel overwhelmed and stuck in a situation, please ask for help. The procedure for that would be to first ask your section leader for his/her help. If the situation continues to be intense or complicated, you and your section leader may want to bring in your zone pastor. At a later point, the zone pastor may suggest that you bring in professional counseling help.

Thank you for serving the hurting people around you!

Yours in Christ,

Vicki Smyer
Antioch Waco Staff 2001-2015
Licensed Professional Counselor

GETTING STARTED

1. PRAY!

Before meeting with anyone to discuss anything, take the situation to God. Specifically, it is important to ask Him for the Holy Spirit's gifts of wisdom, discernment, insight, and understanding, so that the time will be effective/helpful. Ask God to speak into your heart words of knowledge about the person's life/spiritual condition/needs. Ask for the power to "speak the truth in love" no matter what you hear in your time with the other person.

2. Clean house in your own heart.

Be a clean vessel which can be used by God in the pastoral counseling session. Take inventory and allow God to point out any unconfessed sins in your life. Receive His love and forgiveness so that you will be able to love and forgive one another.

3. Consider finding someone to meet with you and the other person(s).

This might be a spouse or a co-leader or a friend of the one who needs pastoral care. It is good to have someone praying during the session and listening to God while you are talking to the other individual.

4. Keep “propriety” in mind when planning the meeting.

Meet in a neutral place. Men meet with men, and women meet with women. Couples can meet with either gender, if that is agreeable to all involved. Don't give the enemy an opportunity to distract. Make the setting comfortable and safe for everyone.

5. Assess your own feelings and thoughts about the person/situation.

There is no room for judgment in pastoral care. Nor is there room for a pastor's own personal agendas for an individual. You are about God's work and seeking His agenda and His alone. Pastors, with all of their words and advice, can't change people. Only God changes people. Set your heart on this healthy goal: to direct this person to God and to God's ways. If you are having strong, negative feelings toward the person/situation, ask God to replace those feelings with love and compassion. If necessary, you can remove yourself and ask that someone else do the pastoral care.

6. Decide in advance to do more listening than talking.

Most people are hungry to be listened to. Significant healing can come as the counselee sees that you are caring enough about him/her to hear his/her story. At the same time, you can also be listening to God. He will give you insights and questions to ask. Decide before the first session that you will mostly listen, that your main goal is NOT to give advice but to hear God, hear the other person and direct him/her to God.

7. Make sure this person/couple is regularly being prayed for and loved on in the Body of Christ.

Make sure this person or couple is an integral part of a Lifegroup and that she/he/they are walking in discipleship relationships in that Lifegroup. Don't be the only one who is speaking truth into their lives. (“...in a multitude of counselors there is safety” --Proverbs 24:6b).

8. If you get stuck, call for help.

Contact your section leader, zone pastor, or Antioch's counseling coordinator, preferably in that order, if you feel like the situation is too big for you. You may need prayer support from one of these people or from your Lifegroup. Or you may need someone to join in with you as you pastor through the problem. You can probably do more than you think you can.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING IS DEPRESSED

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct you both to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how familiar the person is with the Bible.

4. Depressed people need encouragement—encouragement in the Lord!

Every time you meet with this person it will be important to share that God loves him/her, He has a good plan for his/her life, and He wants him/her to walk in freedom from depression with the “joy of the Lord” as his/her strength.

5. Continue to pray in each session that God will highlight the root of the depression.

Sometimes depressed people are angry people—sometimes without being aware of that fact. Often, they are most angry at themselves. Pray for discernment about anger and any unforgiveness associated with it.

6. Go through the 7 Steps to Freedom.

Choose to do this slowly—a section per session is not unreasonable. Remember that there is a great section on unforgiveness in the 7 Steps. This section may be helpful in uncovering roots of depression that are found in unforgiveness.

7. Make sure the person is in a discipleship relationship with a Bible-knowledgeable mentor.

Depressed people can be very negative and self-condemning. Pairing them with others who are more positive in outlook and who are familiar with biblical principles can make a big difference in quality of life.

8. Assign Bible word studies.

It would be helpful for the person to know God's perspective on topics like the following: perseverance, suffering, faith, joy, strength. A study of "desert times" reveals that most of the great figures in the Bible spent time in the desert. As you know the individual's issues and needs and specific circumstances, you can be creative as you lead them to more Bible knowledge.

9. Assign other reading you think would be helpful.

Happiness is a Choice, by Minirth/Meyer, is frequently suggested to people. Many other teachers and pastors have books and tapes out on the issue of depression. Check the Focus on the Family website for other resources. Also, you can go to the Christian Book Distributors website: cbd.com.

10. Get this person involved in SERVING OTHERS.

Depression is an inward-focused problem. Many are helped when they get their focus off themselves and onto the needs of others.

11. If the person is suicidal, call in some help.

Some people who think about suicide actually do it. It is important to always take suicidal thinking seriously. Call your section leader and zone pastor immediately if the person you are working with is thinking of suicide. For off-hours, the DePaul Center does free evaluations on a 24/7 basis. Pray for this person's thinking, take authority over the enemy and his lies, don't leave the person alone, and **call for help**.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING IS GRIEVING

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct you both to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments which indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience & current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how much Bible the person knows.

4. Grief is an emotional process—don’t jump in too soon with attempts to make the person “feel better.”

There is no quick way out of the grief process. “The only way out is *through*.” The loss was real and the feelings of grief are real. The most helpful thing you can do is listen to the pain and direct the grieving person to express that pain at the throne of God. Pray that he/she will come to know Jesus as a comforting Shepherd, but don’t suggest that he/she should no longer feel the pain of loss.

5. Expect to walk with a person who is grieving for at least a year.

After losing a parent or a child or a spouse, there will be many memory-laden dates which will have to be lived through and which will cause a fresh wave of pain—events like Christmas, Thanksgiving, the person’s birthday, anniversaries, Valentine’s Day, Father’s Day and Mother’s Day. On these days, the grieving person will need extra prayer and support. Ask about upcoming dates so you can be ahead of the process.

6. How long does grief take?

It takes as long as the grieving person needs.

7. Don't be afraid to use the deceased person's name.

Part of the healing process will be the recalling of life events in which the deceased was a key player. Use his/her name. Ask questions about the deceased person's character. Encourage recollection of life with that person. Encourage discussion of both the good times and the bad times. Talking really helps.

8. Ask God to tell you when it is time to start encouraging any discussion of what the FUTURE holds for the survivor.

This is not an appropriate shift of focus for the first few months, when grief is so acute. But it is appropriate after about 6 months or so to start thinking about the future. Ask God about the timing. In reality, the grieving person will never go back to their old normal lives, but with good pastoring they can discover a *new normal*.

9. Grief is a highly individualized process. Don't expect any two people to experience it in exactly the same way.

Each person's individual journey will be different; however, all who are grieving need loving support, patience, and prayer. To the extent that you have control, make sure that the grieving person's Lifegroup is active in the loving and supporting process. Encourage the Lifegroup to talk about the deceased person, especially if the deceased was a member. Grief needs company. Especially after the funeral and visitations are over, the grieving individual needs the Body of Christ to come alongside.

10. Reading sometimes helps.

Books you can recommend are *A Severe Mercy*, by Sheldon Vanauken; *A Grief Observed*, by C.S. Lewis; *Where is God When it Hurts*, by Philip Yancey. Harold Ivan Smith has written several books on grieving issues. Check cbd.com for titles by him. Some great Bible word studies to suggest would be "comfort" and "heaven".

11. Pair this person up with someone who has lived through the grieving process.

Experience is a great teacher. It is a comfort to know that your experience is not an isolated one—that others have been on this journey and have survived.

12. Be aware that other losses besides death can cause grieving.

A broken relationship or engagement, a divorce, loss of a job, a move from familiar surroundings, a lengthy illness. All of these things can cause a grieving experience—because all of these represent loss in a person's life.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING HAS PAINFUL CHILDHOOD ISSUES

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct you both to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience & current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how much Bible the person knows.

4. Walk him/her through the 7 Steps to Freedom.

This process will be VERY IMPORTANT to the individual’s healing journey. Particularly, take plenty of time to address the first step, because it covers so much historical ground. Pray, pray, pray at every turn where you hear about wounds, abuses and sin patterns that this person has experienced. The step on forgiveness will also be very important—one that you will not want to hurry through. Take your time—really, each step may take two sessions or so, as you talk to the individual about the incidents and as you pray over each and every one.

5. A great book to recommend!

Healing for Damaged Emotions Workbook: Recovering from the Memories that Cause Our Pain, by David Seamands, is a great resource. You can go through this workbook with the person, walking them through the exercises and praying for healing.

6. Pair this individual up with a Bible-knowledgeable mentor.

Nothing takes the place of discipleship!! We are healed as we walk in relationship with the Body of Christ.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING HAS ABUSE IN HIS/HER PAST (Sexual/Physical/Emotional)

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct you to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how much Bible the person knows.

4. Walk him/her through the 7 Steps to Freedom.

This process will be VERY IMPORTANT to the individual's healing journey. Particularly, take plenty of time to work through the first step, because it covers so much historical ground. Pray, pray, pray at every turn where you hear about wounds, abuses and sin patterns that this person has experienced. The step on forgiveness will also be very important—one that you will not want to hurry through. Take your time—really, each step may take two sessions or so, as you talk to the individual about the incidents and as you pray over each and every one.

5. Great books to recommend!

Healing for the Wounded Heart, by Dan Allender, and *Door of Hope*, by Jan Frank, are two excellent resources for people who have experienced sexual abuse in their lifetimes. *Healing for Damaged Emotions Workbook: Recovering from the Memories that Cause Our Pain*, by David Seamands, is a great resource that addresses all abuses. You can go through this workbook with the person, walking him/her through the exercises and praying for healing.

6. There is ZERO TOLERANCE for abuse to be continuing in the here and now.

Please contact your zone pastor for further help if you suspect that abuse is ongoing. Especially in the case of abuse of a minor or of an elder, we have a responsibility and a legal mandate to report it to authorities. Abuse in any form is sin, so we also have a biblical mandate to “speak the truth in love” and to protect those who may be in danger.

7. Pair this individual up with a healed and Bible-knowledgeable mentor.

And make sure that he/she is really involved in a Lifegroup. An individual who has experienced abuse often has very low-self esteem and does not consider himself/herself worthy of any healthy love and concern. Lifegroup love can help in the healing of that demonic notion.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE COUPLE YOU ARE SEEING IS IN CONFLICT

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the couple. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct all of you to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

When working with a couple, it is important to get each person’s perspective. Don’t encourage cross-talking—let each spouse talk until he/she is finished and then ask the other spouse to talk. (Couples in conflict very often don’t listen well, and each wants to defend himself/herself. Therefore, you must manage the time in order for both to talk.)

3. Ask about each person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. Equally yoked Christian partners have a high likelihood of being able to learn to die to selfish needs and to love each other sacrificially. Unbelievers cannot/will not embrace that value. 2 Cor. 6:14—“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” A primary pastoral task will be to present the Gospel to any unbelieving spouse.

4. Teach/model some basic good communication skills.

Good communication skills are:

- Listen more than you talk. *Listen to understand.*
- Turn the TV off during significant conversations.
- Don't interrupt each other.
- Keep voices **lower** than usual.
- Stay at eye level with each other—no one standing over the other person.
- Try not to use the word “you”—instead, say “I feel _____ when _____ happens.”
- Implement *quid pro quo*—this means that each spouse gets something of what he/she wants at the end of the conversation—maybe no one gets everything, but everyone gets something.
- Pray together—they may not be in agreement over the one issue, but in God they are in agreement!
- Take a “time out” if tempers are flaring—agree to cool down for one hour and then resume the conversation.

5. Ask the couple to pray over and come up with their own “fair fighting rules.”

Then, hold them accountable to abide by those rules.

You can suggest these, among others:

- Adults do not hit one another.
- Adults do not scream at one another.
- Christians are commanded to be “kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving one another”—Eph. 4:32.
- Parents do not need to have big conflicts in front of children.

6. Team this couple up with another Christian couple who have learned how to defer to one another and to love one another sacrificially.

Experience is the best teacher. And success in others' lives is motivating and inspiring. By the time a couple is deeply conflicted, they have both lost hope for change. Talking to a successful couple will build their hope level. Also, being prayed for by another couple is a powerful experience.

7. Reading a good marriage book TOGETHER is sometimes helpful.

Having the wife read the book and try to preach it to her spouse is **not** helpful!! But when they invest time in it together, spouses can learn and grow together as they read. Several great titles are in the ACC bookstore, including *Sacred Marriage*, a favorite of many who do couple counseling.

8. Help them understand God's plan and design for marriage, if they are not reading a book.

Look for tapes of Jimmy's teaching series on marriage. Assign one tape a week for them to listen to and discuss with you. If people are fairly new Christians or if they grew up in a family where marriage was abused and broken, they do not have vision for the fact that marriage is very important to God and that He has some specific purposes for marriage. This knowledge doesn't cure conflict, but it can help motivate spouses to put down the old ways and pick up God's ways.

9. Pair the husband up with another husband you know who loves his wife sacrificially. Pair the wife up with a wife who loves and submits to her husband.

These mentoring relationships, preferably within their Lifegroup, can help with accountability and they can pray for the marriage and the individual spouses.

10. Encourage the couple to search the internet for Christian marriage workshops which will be held in the area.

The *Focus on the Family* website will be a great resource for this. Also, look up *Christian Intimate Encounters*.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE COUPLE YOU ARE SEEING HAS AN INFIDELITY ISSUE

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the couple. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct all of you to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

When working with a couple, it is important to get each person’s perspective. Don’t encourage cross-talking—let each spouse talk until he/she is finished and then ask the other spouse to talk. (Couples in conflict very often don’t listen well, and each wants to defend himself/herself. Therefore, you must manage the time in order for both to talk.)

3. Ask about each person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. Equally yoked Christian partners have a high likelihood of being able to learn to die to selfish needs and to love each other sacrificially. Unbelievers cannot/will not embrace that value. 2 Cor. 6:14—“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” A primary pastoral task will be to present the Gospel to any unbelieving spouse.

4. Determine the commitment level of the couple.

This means that you ask the offending spouse if the affair is completely over and if he/she is really committed to doing the work required to regain the spouse's trust. Then, you ask the offended spouse if he/she is willing to do the work it takes to rebuild trust in his/her spouse. (One way to do that is to ask them each to write down a number between 1 and 10 to represent their level of commitment. [One means not committed at all and 10 means completely and totally committed.] Each should write down his number without the other seeing. This will give you a fair idea of whether they are at the same level or not.)

5. The affair must have ended in order for reconciliation to happen!

The offending spouse must have ended the affair and repented to both God and his/her spouse. Really, nothing in terms of reconciliation can happen unless this has occurred. If the offending spouse is not repentant, you will want to meet with him/her separately and help him/her see this behavior as sin against a spouse, but more importantly as sin against God Almighty. Does the offending spouse have a healthy fear of God? Does the offending spouse understand God's purposes for marriage? Does the offending spouse understand the consequences of sexual sin (Romans 1:24-32)?

6. Take both spouses separately through *7 Steps to Freedom*.

Clean house so the enemy will not use the sexual sin and/or any unforgiveness as a doorway into the marriage and family.

7. Find some extra support for the offended spouse.

The spouse who has been hurt and betrayed will need extra support, whether the marriage can be rebuilt or not and whether the offending spouse repents or not. The painful rejection related to an affair will take time to work through. Pair the offended spouse with a mature, Bible-knowledgeable mentor who can help him/her in this healing process. Forgiveness will be an important issue to address in this setting.

8. Teach/model some basic good communication skills.

Good communication skills are:

- Listen more than you talk. *Listen to understand.*
- Turn the TV and the computer off during significant conversations.
- Don't interrupt each other.
- Keep voices **lower** than usual.
- Stay at eye level with each other—no one standing over the other person.
- Try not to use the word "you"—instead, say "I feel ____ when ____ happens."

- Implement *quid pro quo*—this means that each spouse gets something of what he/she wants at the end of the conversation—maybe no one gets everything, but everyone gets something.
- Pray together—they may not be in agreement over the one issue, but in God they are in agreement!
- Take a “time out” if tempers are flaring—agree to cool down for one hour and then resume the conversation.
- Adults do not scream at each other. And adults do not hit one another.

9. Coach the couple in ways they can rebuild trust and intimacy.

- Being faithful about having a weekly date night. No movies!! Go somewhere—anywhere—where they have to TALK.
- Start reading a book together about marriage or intimacy. Good choices are in our bookstore or in the Christian bookstores in town. Really, any book will do. The real goal here is for them to do something TOGETHER and to talk.
- Start a home improvement project together.
- Start exercising together.
- Do a Bible study together.
- Recall together the days of dating/courtship. Remember what they once did together and do those things again. This is biblical! See Revelation 2:4,5.
- Encourage them to join with healthy couples in social activities.
- Pair them up with a healthy couple for mentoring and instruction in how to have a healthy relationship.

10. This couple will need lots of prayer and support!

Recovery from infidelity is not impossible, but it is very difficult. There is no doubt that God has and does restore sinners. But we must want to be restored. Infidelity is such a painful and serious blow to a marriage that partners often do not want the marriage to be restored. And they don't want to do the work of rebuilding trust. Organize a concerted prayer effort in behalf of the couple you are seeing. Pray that they will be able to persevere.

11. A book suggestion.

There is a secular book which has some great guidance about reconciliation after infidelity: *After the Affair: Healing the Pain and Rebuilding Trust when a Partner Has Been Unfaithful*, by Spring and Spring. Other resources are available at Christian bookstores.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PARENT YOU ARE SEEING IS HAVING PARENTING PROBLEMS

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the couple (or parent). Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct all of you to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

When working with a couple, it is important to get each person’s perspective. Don’t encourage cross-talking—let each spouse talk until he/she is finished and then ask the other spouse to talk. (Couples very often don’t listen well to each other, and each wants to defend himself/herself. Therefore, you must manage the time in order for both to have a chance to talk.)

3. Ask about each person's salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. Equally yoked Christian partners have a high likelihood of being able to learn to die to selfish needs and to love each other sacrificially. Unbelievers cannot/will not embrace that value. 2 Cor. 6:14—"Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?" A primary pastoral task will be to present the Gospel to any unbelieving spouse.

4. Look for extreme leniency or extreme rigidity in the parent(s).

So often parents err at either of these two extremes. Also, discern if the parents are on the same page with regard to parenting styles. Is one lenient and the other strict? Children are confused by conflicting styles and they also learn to manipulate by pitting the parent with one style against the parent with the other style. Work to get the parents in agreement.

5. Discern if there are problems in the marriage.

Oftentimes, children act out when they are nervous or anxious or troubled in their hearts. Children know when their parents are having problems and they are shaken in terms of their security needs. They don't know how to express their pain, so they express it behaviorally. In other words, "parenting" problems may really be symptomatic of marriage problems.

6. Teach healthy parenting skills.

Poor parenting is often a lack of knowledge about what works, what is healthy, and what is Godly. Teach from your own experience and from the many resources that are available to parents. The ACC bookstore and local Christian bookstores carry many titles related to healthy parenting. A favorite around here is *Shepherding Your Child's Heart*.

7. Teach CONSISTENCY in parenting.

Many parents know what to do, but they are not consistent in doing it.

8. Pair this parent (couple) up with another couple who are older parents and who practice Godly parenting principles.

Spending time with a more mature couple will provide much helpful information, as well as a prayer covering for parents who want to grow in this important role.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING EXPRESSES LOW SELF-ESTEEM OR SELF-HATE

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct you to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how familiar the person is with the Bible.

4. Walk him/her through the 7 Steps to Freedom.

This process will be VERY IMPORTANT to the individual's healing journey. Particularly, take plenty of time to work through the first step, because it covers so much historical ground. Pray, pray, pray at every turn where you hear about wounds, abuses and sin patterns that this person has experienced.

5. Teach "Who I am in Christ".

This list of Scripture verses which tell about our identity in Christ is available in the ACC bookstore and in every copy of "7 Steps to Freedom." You can ask the person to take one character quality each week and meditate on the accompanying scripture, then journal about that quality and ask the Holy Spirit for a revelation of that character quality in himself/herself. You can pray also that the eyes of his/her heart will be opened to the truth.

6. Warfare against powers and principalities for this person.

The "accuser of the brethren" lies to us not only about God's character but about our own characters. An individual who falls into self-contempt is often listening to those lies. Warfare over him/her and teach him/her how to put on spiritual armor on a daily basis.

7. Help this individual get involved in a Bible study.

God's word is the gold standard for truth. This individual must be grounded in the Bible so he/she can discern the difference between truth and a belief that "feels right".

8. Pair this individual up with a healed and Bible-knowledgeable mentor.

And make sure that he/she is really involved in a Lifegroup. This individual does not consider himself/herself worthy of any healthy love and concern. Lifegroup love can help in the healing of that demonic notion. A great book about God's healing love is *Ragamuffin Gospel*, by Brennan Manning.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING IS ADDICTED TO PORNOGRAPHY

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct you to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how much Bible the person knows.

4. Walk him/her through the 7 Steps to Freedom.

This process will be VERY IMPORTANT to the individual's healing journey. Particularly, take plenty of time to work through the first step, because it covers so much historical ground. Pray, pray, pray at every turn where you hear about wounds, abuses and sin patterns that this person has experienced.

5. Help develop a “plan for purity” and a system for accountability.

This step requires toughness on the part of the pastor. There can be absolutely no “appearance of evil.” All materials must be destroyed and the pastor should oversee this process. Some people need to unplug their computers or get rid of the internet or go on a full-scale media fast. Real repentance will motivate the person to be “ruthless” in his/her pursuit of purity. Accountability must be frequent and quite intense at first. *Game Plan*, by Joe Dallas, is a good resource for this step.

6. If there is a spouse, he/she will need extra support.

Make sure the spouse is getting pastoral care. He/she is experiencing a wide range of painful feelings such as rejection, betrayal, fear and shame. If the spouse is a woman, you can recommend that she read *An Affair of the Mind: One Woman's Courageous Battle to Salvage her Family from the Devastation of Pornography*.

7. A book to recommend to the offending spouse.

If the offending spouse is a man, you can recommend that he read *Every Man's Battle*, by Steve Arterburn. This author also has written books on this topic for spouses and for teenagers.

8. This person MUST walk in accountability and discipleship with a mature Christian man.

“Lone Rangers” don't get victory in this sin pattern. It comes only with accountability, absolute honesty, real repentance, and prayer.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING IS CARING FOR ELDERLY PARENTS

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how much Bible the person knows.

4. Ask about what kind of support system this person has for himself/herself.

Caregivers are traditionally not very good at caring for themselves. They need to have supportive people around them—to encourage, helping with practicals of caregiving, to give him/her a break from the routine of caregiving, and to pray. This is an individual who really NEEDS the body of Christ to come around and provide support! The season of caring for an elderly parent is NOT a season for “taking a break” from Lifegroup. Indeed, Lifegroup members can step in to help so that the caregiver never misses an opportunity to worship or to be with believers.

5. This person needs a non-judgmental listener.

Caregivers can experience great guilt over the exhaustion/weariness of caring for an elderly parent. “My mother took care of me when I was helpless; I SHOULD be happy to take care of her. I shouldn’t be complaining about being tired.” This is not an uncommon remark from a caregiver. Caregivers need to be given permission to feel tired and frustrated and overwhelmed by the job. You can provide a non-judgmental place for them to express their feelings while helping them roll that weariness over onto the One who always gives comfort and rest (Matthew 11:28).

6. Ask if this person has any “unfinished business” with the elderly parent.

Caring for a parent can bring up unresolved childhood issues. Ask the caregiver if he/she is experiencing anger, resentment, or hate. Ask also if he/she is aware of any unforgiveness toward the parent. The *7 Steps to Freedom* contains a helpful section on unforgiveness vs. bitterness.

7. Help the caregiver look at his/her parent’s life from a perspective of gratitude.

Help the caregiver reflect back on the positive things that transpired over his/her parent’s lifetime. Assist the caregiver in examining his/her parent’s character for Godly qualities.

8. Encourage use of community resources for the aging.

Some helpful websites: familycaregiversonline.com; asaging.org; caregiving.com; elderhope.com; elderweb.com; eldercare.gov; carepathways.com; and theseniornewssource.com.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING IS STRUGGLING WITH AN EATING DISORDER

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct you to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question to address in your time together.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how much Bible the person knows.

4. Walk him/her through the *7 Steps to Freedom*.

This process will be VERY IMPORTANT to the individual’s healing journey. Particularly, take plenty of time to work through the first step, because it covers so much historical ground. Pray, pray, pray at every turn where you hear about wounds, abuses and sin patterns that this person has experienced. Inquire about control and manipulation in the childhood family. Inquire about childhood sexual abuse. Inquire about perfectionism in parents or in the person himself/herself. Ask about the history of the eating disorder (Step 6) and devote considerable time to praying over that sin pattern. Many people with eating disorders do not consider their behaviors (binging, purging, starving themselves) to be sin. When you can help him/her agree with God that the behaviors are sin, then it is possible for the “fear of the Lord” to become an internal motivation for change.

5. Enlist the help of the Body of Christ.

Try to find someone who has been freed from an eating disorder to walk with the person. Ask your zone pastors if they know of healed individuals. Also, suggest that the individual call the church office to ask for counseling. The more people who are speaking truth into this person's life, the better the chances are for change. Create numerous opportunities for groups of people to pray over this individual—to join with him/her in asking for freedom from the bondage. Encourage vulnerability in Lifegroup. Eating disorders flourish in secret—part of the healing process will be to bring it out of the darkness and into the light for prayer and accountability.

6. Suggested books.

One root of eating disorders is associated with skewed body image. Two books to recommend (by Christian authors) are: *Do You Think I'm Beautiful?*, by Angela Thomas, and *Loving Your Body*, by Dr. Deborah Newman. A secular book which will help YOU THE PASTOR more clearly understand eating disorders is *Hunger Pains—The Modern Woman's Tragic Quest for Thinness*, by Mary Pipher Ph.D.

7. Teach “Who I Am in Christ”.

A person struggling with an eating disorder “lives below the grace.” He/she never feels adequate for the love of God or for the love of people. One function of eating disorder behaviors is to make oneself better/prettier/thinner in order to gain the acceptance, approval and love of people.

The “Who I Am in Christ” Scripture verses tell about our identity in Christ and are available in the ACC bookstore and in every copy of *7 Steps to Freedom*. You can ask the person to take one character quality each week and meditate on the accompanying scripture, then journal about that quality and ask the Holy Spirit for a revelation of that character quality in himself/herself. You can pray also that the eyes of his/her heart will be opened to the truth.

8. Warfare against powers and principalities for this person.

The “accuser of the brethren” lies to us not only about God's character but about our own characters. An individual with an eating disorder is often listening to those lies. Warfare over him/her and teach him/her how to put on spiritual armor on a daily basis.

WHAT TO DO WHEN: THE PERSON YOU ARE SEEING IS ADDICTED TO A SUBSTANCE

1. PRAY!!

Pray in the session with the person. Ask God to set the course of your time together. Ask Him to direct you to the roots of the current problem. Wait on Him for a few minutes to see if anyone gets a specific word or picture or question to address in the session.

2. Listen to the story.

Ask questions to keep the story going—be listening for God to give you questions you never would have thought of yourself. Give good eye contact—lean forward in your chair to show interest. Make appropriate comments that indicate that you are listening and compassionate: “Tell me more about that;” “I know that was painful;” “I can imagine how serious that was;” “That must have hurt.”

3. Ask about the person’s salvation experience and current relationship with God.

This is so important for you to know. It determines how you will work with him/her in the future. Remember, your goal is to point him/her to God and God’s ways. It will be helpful also to determine how much Bible the person knows.

4. Walk him/her through the *7 Steps to Freedom*.

This process will be VERY IMPORTANT to the individual’s healing journey. Particularly, take plenty of time to work through the first step, because it covers so much historical ground. Pray, pray, pray at every turn where you hear about wounds, abuses and sin patterns that this person has experienced. Inquire about substance addictions in family members—ask if his/her mother or

father was addicted to a substance. In Step 6, help lead him/her in an understanding of the addictive behaviors being sin. Encourage prayers of repentance over addiction to any substance-- alcohol, tobacco, food, prescription or street drugs.

5. Refer to Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous.

AA and NA are very good resources for Christians. The 12 Steps used in these programs have proven over time to be helpful for many addicts. (These programs are free. Call DePaul, 254-776-5970, to get meeting times for the city of Waco.) The overriding principle of AA/NA is that we “turn our lives over to a Higher Power” for healing and restoration. For the Christian, that obviously means we turn our lives over to JESUS for healing and freedom from bondages. Support groups for recovering addicts meet weekly at Antioch. You can obtain details about these services by calling the church office.

6. Make certain the Body of Christ comes alongside this person.

Like all sins, the sin of substance abuse thrives in secret and in the dark. Provide opportunities for groups of people to gather around this person for prayer and accountability. Encourage vulnerability—sharing the struggle in Lifegroup and finding accountability partners to walk with.

APPENDIX A: SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Suicidal thoughts must be taken seriously. Some people who have these thoughts actually act on them. Some do not act on them. It is wisdom to assume that each one requires action and that a person's very life is at stake. The following are some guidelines to follow in this situation:

1. If the person you are walking with reports that he/she has ***made an attempt*** on his/her life (like taking a bunch of pills), immediately call 911. If you are on the Baylor campus, the 911 call will reach Baylor DPS, just as if you had dialed 710-2222, their direct number. Stay with the person until the authorities arrive.
2. If the person you are walking with reports suicidal ***thinking***, immediately notify your section leader or zone pastor and do not leave that person alone. Get one to three people to be with that person to talk with him/her and to pray. If you are suspicious of suicidal thinking, do not be afraid to look him/her in the eye and ask the direct question, "Are you thinking of committing suicide?"
3. If you believe the person has shifted from ***thinking*** about suicide to actually ***planning*** a suicide attempt, get professional help ASAP. See steps below:
 - (a) Baylor Students: Get the student to the Campus Counseling Center for an immediate assessment.
If after hours, call the center at 254-710-2467 to reach an on-call therapist.
 - (b) For anyone: Take him/her to the DePaul Center for an evaluation. If after hours, you can take him/her to the Providence Emergency Room for evaluation.
 - (c) If the individual refuses to go with you for evaluation, you can call 911 or the Baylor DPS, 254-710-2222.
 - (d) Don't worry that your actions will "hurt the feelings" of the individual. You are acting to save his/her life!

APPENDIX B: “DUTY TO REPORT”

Texas State Law requires that any person who suspects abuse or neglect of a **child** or an **elderly** or a **disabled** person must report that information to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS). As a pastor of many, you may come across a situation that requires a report to be made. According to the Texas Family Code, abuse generally falls into four categories—physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. If you are unsure whether the situation you suspect is truly abuse, you can call the **HOTLINE** (1-800-252-5400) and the intake staff can tell you whether the circumstances you describe are indicative of abuse or neglect.

Failure to report suspected abuse is a Class B misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$1,500 and/or imprisonment up to 180 days.

The following are some general guidelines concerning duty to report:

- Please discuss your suspicions immediately with your section leader or zone pastor. The decision to report then can be made prayerfully and under authority.
- Report quickly—48 hours is a good rule of thumb, although the law allows a week for non-professionals.
- Reports of abuse/neglect made in “good faith” are confidential and immune from civil liability.
- BELIEVE the child/elderly/disabled who tell you of abuses. Rarely does a person (even a child) make up these stories.
- If you report, you are not expected to PROVE that the abuse or neglect has occurred—that is the job of TDPRS. Delaying a report over an extended time to gather more information may result in more serious harm to the child/person.
- Relevant information which is helpful to TDPRS includes names, date of birth, description of the person/child, address, and the person/child’s physical condition. **Hotline: 1-800-252-5400**