

The Emotionally Healthy Church,

Peter Scazzero (2003, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI)

Top Quotes:

“It was demoralizing to admit, finally, that intensity of my engagement in spiritual disciplines had not worked spiritual maturity into my life. Why? I ignored the emotional components of discipleship.” (p. 23)

“It is not possible for a Christian to be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature.” (p. 50)

“God often uses pain to get us to change – unless there is sufficient discomfort and anguish, most will not do the hard work to take a deep, honest look inside...” (p. 74-5)

“The small group my wife and I have been a part of for the past four years has studied, for example, the following topics from scripture: control, handling anger constructively, forgiveness and repair, how to fight fair (conflict resolution), personality and emotional baggage, ...” (p. 100)

“Everyone is broken, damaged, cracked, and imperfect. It is a common thread of all humanity – even those who deny it’s reality in their life.” (p. 114)

“Accepting (my) “gift of a handicap” (thorn in the flesh)... Story: The Water Carrier and the Cracked Pot ‘I planted seeds on your side of the path, everyday... you watered them’.” (p. 118-9)

“I learned that leadership is not always being the strong one; instead it is being the weak one who is made strong by God alone” (by real, uninhibited looking at my own mistakes). (p. 123)

The Prodigal’s older brother – “a picture of lost-ness” because he’s ‘judging, annoyed, looking down on’ his younger brother. “I become like him when I 1) hold on to my anger rather than process it, own it, wrestle with it, and bring it humbly to my father, and 2) find myself grumbling and complaining a lot, and 3) when I have a hard time letting go of offenses.” (p. 129)

A Prayer (p. 131)

The Dilemma of the Bridge, a Fable “A man on a journey toward the opportunity of a lifetime – ‘Pardon me, would you be so kind as to hold the end of the rope for me? Thank you, two hands now and hold tight. At that point, the stranger jumped off the bridge!’” (after much struggle and perplexity)... “I will not accept the position of choice for your live, only for my own; I give back the position of choice to you.” (p. 132)

“Merely knowing them caused me to feel like the rope was in my hands.” (p.135)

“Understanding and respecting boundaries and limits is one of the most important character qualities and skill leaders need to be long-term lovers of God and people.” (p. 136)

“The essence of the (wilderness) temptation was to transgress or cross over the limits God had placed around him. This continues to be a central spiritual warfare issue for most of us who are actively seeking to do God’s work in our lives. Jesus had to learn obedience through what he suffered (Heb. 5:8). That included setting limits and watching needs that remained unmet. (p. 139)

“Maturity in life is when someone is living joyfully within their God-given limits.” (p. 144)

“Self-care is good stewardship of the gift I was put on earth to offer to others.” Parker Palmer (p.145)

Invasive people “who take up too much space at the expense of others.” (p. 146 agenda quote)

“(Catastrophic loss) will transform or destroy us, but it will never leave us the same.” Gerald Sittser, *A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows through Loss* (p.153)

Impact Idea: (What was the most significant concept or idea in the book for you?)

“It is not possible for a Christian to be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature.” (p. 50)

“Making incarnation the top priority in order to love others well is both the climax and the point of this book.” (p. 18)

Best quote:

- “It was demoralizing to admit, finally, that the intensity of my engagement in spiritual disciplines had not worked spiritual mature into my life. Why? I had **ignored the emotional components of discipleship** in my life.” (p. 23)
- Fable: The Dilemma of the Bridge: “I will not accept the position of choice for your life, only for my own; I give back the position of choice to you.” (p. 135)
- **Self-care is good stewardship** of the gift I was put on earth to offer others. **Setting limits and boundaries for ‘invasive people’ who take too much space at the expense of others is essential.**” (p. 145)

The “heresy:” (the concept or idea I disagree with, can’t buy into, or may be truly wrong)

With or without principle #2 (break the power of the past), principles 1, and 3-6 are equally valid. They are not dependent upon a dysfunctional or troubled ‘family or origin.’ There’s plenty of pain, loss, grief, and desperation ... conflict, liness, weakness and brokenness, to warrant the wisdom of those other principles.

Application for local churches:

I affirm the assertion of chapter 1, **As Go the Leaders, So Goes the Church.** We must be able to IDENTIFY, not IGNORE, the emotional components of discipleship.

Application for district ministry:

Beginning with myself, “leaving former things behind” and finding enjoyment and security in the Love of God (alone); choosing not to be offended; choosing to turn potential wounds into opportunities to love ... even the one wh’s wounding me or us; choosing to “go low” and be a slave...not claiming my ‘rights.’ [I am unable to do this alone. I need others in-community, speaking truth-in-love, to do so.]

The Principles

1. Look beneath the surface.
2. Break the power of the past
3. Live in brokenness and vulnerability
4. Receive the gift of limits
5. Embrace grieving and loss
6. Make incarnation my model for loving well.

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality,

Peter Scazzero (Thomas Nelson, 2006)

Top Ten Symptoms of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality

1. Using God to run from God.
2. Ignoring the emotions of anger, sadness, and fear.
3. Dying to the wrong things.
4. Denying the past’s impact on the present.
5. Dividing our lives into “secular” and sacred compartments.
6. Doing for God instead of being with God.
7. Spiritualizing away conflict.
8. Covering our brokenness, weakness, and failure.
9. Living without limits.
10. Judging other people’s spiritual journey.

Becoming (my) authentic self

God created human beings to feel a wide range of emotions. Researchers have grouped feelings into eight main families, with hundreds of variations, blends and nuances: anger, sadness, fear, enjoyment, love, surprise, disgust, and shame. God “feels” (Gen. 1:25, 31; 6:6; 20:5; Is. 42:14; Jer. 30:24; 31:3; Hos. 11:8; Mt. 26:37-38; Mk. 3:5; Lk. 10:21, for example).

“Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, explored the difference between consolations (those interior movements and feelings that bring life, joy, peace, and the fruit of the Spirit) and desolations (that which brings us “death,” inner turmoil, disquiet, and / or “spiritual turbulence”)... do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God (1 Jn 4:1). Sometimes they are our fleshly desires or the enemy. Other times God is prodding us to a better choice. God intends that we mature in learning to recognize how he speaks and guides us through our feelings.” (p. 73)

We experience several great temptations toward a false self: I am what I do (performance), I am what I have (possessions), I am what others think (popularity). **Differentiation** involves the ability to hold on to who I am and who I am not... living faithful to (my) true self. On the lower end of the scale are those who need continual validation from others, and under stress they have little ability to distinguish between their feelings and their thought process (see Bowen’s scale, p. 83-84). **We develop our authentic self by paying attention to our interior silence and**

solitude, finding trusted companions, moving out of our comfort zone, and praying for courage (to change and grow).

Breaking the power of the past

We underestimate the deep, unconscious imprint our families of origin leave on us, as blessings and sins, that are often contrary to Christ's script for us. The Beaver System Model is one helpful, well-known way of looking at and understanding our families. Based primarily on how families understand boundaries, they're able to classify themselves along five different levels of health: the family in pain, the borderline family, the rule-bound family, the adequate family and the optimal family (see the Beaver System Model, p. 110-111).

Joseph is cited as someone who had a profound sense of the bigness of God, admitted honestly the sadness and losses of his family, rewrote the script according to Scripture, and partnered with God to be a blessing.

“Going back in order to go forward is something we must do in the context of community – with mature friends, a mentor, spiritual director, counselor, or therapist. We need trusted people in our lives of whom we can ask, ‘How do you experience me?’ ‘Tell me the feelings and thoughts you have when you are with me.’ ‘Please be honest with me.’ Prayerfully listening to the answers to these questions will go a long way toward healing and getting a perspective on areas of our lives that need to be addressed.” (p. 114)

Letting go of power and control; the Christian life as a journey, through the Wall

Journeys involve movement, action, stops and starts, detours, delays, and trips into the unknown. Many whom we encounter in ministry are stuck or dropped out altogether, failing to see the transforming work that God seeks to do in them at their “wall.” Throughout church history great men and women have written about the phases of our life journey, such as Augustine, Teresa of Avila, Ignatius of Loyola, Evelyn Underhill, and John Wesley. In *The Critical Journey: Stages in the Life of Faith*, Janet Hagberg and Robert Guelich share a model, including the essential place of the Wall in the seasons of our journey.

Stage 1: Life-Changing Awareness of God – aware of Christ's reality, recognize our need for mercy

Stage 2: Discipleship – learning about God and what it is to be a follower of Christ, in community

Stage 3: Active Life – getting involved, serving God and His people, using our gifts and talents

Stage 4: The Wall and the Journey Inward – God brings us to the Wall, it compels us inward

Stage 5: The Journey Outward – servant-leadership out of God's deep, accepting love

Stage 6: Transformed by Love – surrender and obedience to God's perfect will

For most of us the Wall appears through a crisis that turns our world upside down. On a certain level it is correct to say that Walls come to us in various ways throughout our lifetime. It appears to be something we return to as a part of our ongoing relationship with God. Without understanding of the Walls in our journey, however, countless sincere followers of Christ get stuck there, at what St. John of the Cross called *Dark Nights of the Soul*. Characteristics of a dark night include helplessness, weariness, a sense of failure, defeat, barrenness, emptiness,

dryness, and our feelings of God's presence evaporate. St. John of the cross listed seven deadly spiritual imperfections that the dark nights are intended by God to purify us of: pride, avarice (greed), luxury, wrath, spiritual gluttony, spiritual envy, and sloth (see p. 123 for definitions).

How long is a dark night likely to last? "It may be months. More probably, it may be a year or two... or more. Ultimately God chooses the length and level of intensity. He has a unique purpose for each of us, knowing how much there is to cleanse out of our inner being, and how much he wants to infuse of himself into us for his greater, long-term purposes. Our Father knows how much we can handle." Characteristics of life on the other side include a greater level of brokenness, a greater appreciation for holy unknowing mystery, a deeper ability to wait on God, and a greater detachment (to activities, behaviors, habits, things, and people) and greater attachment to God.

Surrender to (my) limits

Biblical grieving, such as in the story of Job, is God's path to new beginnings. **Jonathon Edwards contended that Job's experience is our experience, over a lifetime.** In order to follow Job's brilliant example, we must pay attention to God and ourselves as we enter into our dark nights of the soul and treat our emotions as an issue of discipleship.* We must also wait on God in the confusing, in-between times, resisting the quick solutions and tendencies of our western (and church) culture. We must embrace the gift of limits, evicting selfish demands and expectations from the center of our being. We are encouraged to climb the ladder of humility (see St. Benedict's Ladder of Humility, p. 150).

Stopping to breathe the air of humility - We are admonished to exercise the spiritual disciplines of a Daily Office (stopping, centering, silence, and Scripture) and Sabbath keeping (stop, rest, delight in, and contemplate).

Learning new skills to love well – practicing the presence of people with emotional maturity and true peacemaking

Loving Christ above all else – a "trellis" (rule of life) that helps us abide in Christ and become more spiritually fruitful. This can include multiple spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, Scripture, silence and solitude, Daily Office, study, Sabbath rest, simplicity, play & recreation, service, mission, care for our physical body, emotional health, family, and friends for the journey (in community).

Definitions

Emotional health: Expressing and managing our feelings, compassion for others, meaningful relationships, breaking self-destructive patterns, respecting others without having to change them, asking for our needs, wants, and preferences, capacity to resolve conflict maturely and negotiate solutions that consider the interests of others, appropriate sexuality and grieving well... live truth and acknowledge brokenness.

Contemplative spirituality: Surrender to God's love, practice His presence, communing with and being indwelt by His Spirit, practicing silence, solitude and unceasing prayer, a journey of transformation toward union with God, aware of the sacred, living in committed community, loving Christ above all else, slowing down, anchoring in God's love, breaking away from

illusions, breaking free of false self, smashing idols, and eternal perspectives (in short, practicing spiritual disciplines)

*Treating our emotions as an issue of discipleship... what are some of the implications of doing so?

TDM/messages 10-09 rev

I QUIT! Stop Pretending Everything is Fine and Change Your Life...

Geri Scazzero (2010). Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

When You Can't Take It Anymore:

"I failed to grasp the truth that a healthy spiritual life includes a carefree balance between serving other people's needs and desires and valuing my own desires." (p. 19)

"I put most of my efforts into caring for others at the expense of my own soul."

"The accumulated pain and resentment of this imbalance led to my first big 'quit'...I came to realize that excessive self-denial had led me to a joyless, guilt-ridden existence." (p. 19-20)

Dying to live – "Quitting is about dying to things that are **not of God**. Biblical quitting is God's path for new things to come forth in our lives, for resurrection."

Internal voices alarm us with fears of quitting:

- What will people think?
- I'm being selfish and not Christ-like.
- I will mess everything up
- People will get hurt
- Everything will fall apart around me.
- I will jeopardize my marriage.

Everything inside us resists the pain associated with dying – the non-negotiable prerequisite for resurrection. As a result, we often cave in to our fears as a short-term anxiety relief strategy. Sadly, this usually leads to painful, long-term consequences, ongoing inner turmoil, joylessness, and festering resentments. (p. 21)

Quitting has purified my heart. It has demanded I admit truths about myself that I preferred to bury and avoid. Galatians 5:22-23 "But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely." (The Message)

Quitting has taught me to be loyal to the right things...

1. **Quit Being Afraid of What Others Will Think**: For years I memorized bible studies and mediated on the righteousness of Christ as the foundation of who I am. Nonetheless, LARGE PORTIONS OF MY IDENTITY REMAINED UNTOUCHED BY THE TRUTH OF GOD'S LOVE FOR ME. (p. 29-30)

We, like biblical heroes wander off track today.

Four reasons to stop living for the approval of others:

1. You violate your own integrity.
 2. What or whom you love is at stake.
 3. The pain of your present situation is so great you (I) have to make a change.
 4. The fear that things will stay the same is greater than the fear that things will change.
- Reflect on the movements of your heart – think back on recent interactions with people – ask God to help you be aware of temptation to adjust your behavior or words for someone’s approval.
 - Spend time regularly in Scripture, in silence and solitude, receiving the love of God, allowing it to permeate and change every cell in my body.

2. Quit Lying

“Good Christian” Lying: pretending things are okay when they are not and spinning truth to keep the peace... Trying to ignore feelings of anger, sadness or disappointment... (p. 46)

Degree of Truth, Degree of Freedom: The degree to which we live in truth is the degree to which we are free. John 8:31-32 “To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (NIV)

When I quit lying, I decided I could no longer participate in the crazy façade I understood as the Christian community and church. (p. 51)

Lying to self – The day I admitted I wasn’t really a very loving person was the day I took a huge step toward becoming a loving person. A huge burden of pretense fell from my shoulders, and I could finally admit my real weakness and brokenness. I was humbled. Embracing my own flaws was what eventually enabled me to become a safer, softer and more approachable person. (p. 53)

- A quote from Virginia Satir, a renowned Family Therapist, “Most of us live inhuman lives because we live inhuman rules about ourselves.” (ex. Don’t show your feelings, always be nice, don’t fight, etc.)
- Author Sandra Wilson: “The truth sets us free, but it first makes us miserable.” (Books: Released From Shame, Moving Beyond the Pain of the Past)
- Conflict is normal, important and necessary when close relationships enter into a new cycle of growth and maturity... Speaking the truth in love involves choosing the right timing, using words respectfully, taking responsibility for our own thoughts and feelings, and speaking in the “I.” We are not born with these skills, they must be learned and practiced. (p. 58-59)
 - Respectfully: Take the other person’s feeling into account. “I’m puzzled by...”
 - Honestly: Say what you truly think or feel; don’t “fudge.”

- Directly: Don't beat around the bush or drop hints to avoid the truth.
- Clearly: Think before speaking in order to describe well what you want to say. Include details.

3. **Quit Dying to the Wrong Things**

You die to the wrong things when you set aside or devalue activities that cause your soul to feel fully alive; when you ignore important relationships; when you care for others to the detriment of yourself; and when you fail to honestly state your preferences, always deferring to others.

“I did not understand the powerful, biblical principle of limits as a gift from the hand of God.” (p. 67)

(**False**) beliefs about a “good, loving Christian”

1. They never say “no.”
2. They have an active social calendar.
3. They juggle many things without complaining.
4. They get things done.
5. They put other's needs before their own.

(Ex. Mistakenly dying to love for outdoors, need for silence and solitude, to extended family, to intentional personal growth, and a great marriage, etc.) (p. 66-69)

Discovering Your Self

- Know your heart: pay attention to the vast array of thoughts and feelings going on inside of you
- Know your story: look closely at our lives and hold on to that which was good and courageously admit and change that which was not
- Know your personality: Who are you? What gives you life? What drains you? When do you become self-protective? What tickles your fancy or drives you crazy?
Ex. The Enneagram Personality Types: The Perfectionist, The Giver, The Achiever, The Romantic, The Observer, The Dutiful, The Adventurer, The Asserter, The Peacemaker. (p. 81-87)

4. **Quit Denying Anger, Sadness and Fear**

Forbidden Emotions, Diminished People “How can the world know us, when we don't truly know ourselves or one another.”

Emotional Illiteracy

Anger: “When I finally quit the lie that good Christians don't get angry, I walked through a door that changed my life.” Anger is a vital, central discipleship issue for every Christian. It is a signal with many potential messages from God to us and a warning indicator light on life's dashboard, inviting us to stop and pay attention to our internal engine. Anger often comes bearing gifts...God may help us discover what we really want, get us to pay attention to even deeper emotions, help us identify unmet expectations, and sometimes, see the folly of our sin. (p. 97)

- Anger can be a tool for clarifying values – it helps us know when our personal boundaries are being crossed: Ask, “What is being violated that is important to me?” OR “What am I afraid of?” “Am I hurt? Sad? Disappointed?”
- Anger can be an indicator of unmet expectations: When you understand you don’t have a right to many of our expectations, because they have not been spoken or agreed upon, you will find you carry much less anger. (p. 99)
- Anger can be a sin – acknowledging anger so you can process it properly and not project it onto others is a huge step in spiritual and emotional maturity.

Sadness: If emotions can be teachers sent from God, it is perhaps the family of feeling around sadness – loneliness, hurt, discouragement, depression, gloominess – that are the greatest teachers of all. “My relationship with sadness was as inhumane and unbiblical as my relationship with anger. (p. 100-101)

God and our losses – loss is a part of life. Over the span of our lives, we will leave everything behind. We don’t know how to talk about sadness or disappointments. Yet the Bible affirms the human experience and expressions of sadness; it considers grieving losses as central to our spiritual growth. (p. 102-103)

Fear: Facing our fears – of making mistakes, of rejection, of consequences for relaxing, etc. Courage is the capacity to think and act despite our fears.

Three Guidelines to Quit Denying Anger, Sadness and Fear:

- Feel our feelings – Neither neglect them or let them rule our lives.
- Think through our feelings: Henry Nouwen once remarked that we ought to spend 50% of our time living our lives and the other 50% reflecting on what is being lived. “What are the reasons?”
- Take appropriate action: Sometimes clear in other situations, discerning the appropriate action step takes considerable time...gathering info, consulting (a) trusted friend, extended time alone with God, and learning new skills (p. 113)

5. **Quit Blaming** – Blaming statements can give the illusion of helplessness. We mistakenly believe we don’t have choices. Yet blaming undermines the blamer in insidious ways. When blamers play the victim, they often retain a sense of moral superiority over others. In doing so, they disown responsibility...Blamers are typically angry and preoccupied with what others “should be doing rather than facing their own discomfort.

Take responsibility for your life – Personal Freedom Tool Kit

- **The Fence of Separateness:** Practice Boundaries – The word existence comes from a word meaning to “stand apart.” If people cross our boundaries, it is because we allow it. No one but you (me) is responsible to ensure your (my own) boundaries are respected. (p. 122-124)
- **The Voice of Declaration:** Speak up – No one else but you (me) can articulate your wants and needs or speak your truth...when you speak on your own behalf, your not speaking against others but for yourself. Our daily lives are filled with opportunities and challenges to declare ourselves – or to shrink back out of fear or guilt. (p. 124-127)

- The Yes/No Medallion: Say yes or no – Many of us feel guilty saying “no.” We want to be liked and do not want to disappoint people, and perhaps we imagine that saying no is somehow less than Christ-like. But consider Jesus’ example and whether or not he disappointed people (to fulfill his mission). (p. 127-129)
- The Heart of Feelings: Pay attention to feelings – Take regular time to pay attention to the feelings going on inside of you. The events, people and things that excite emotion in you are the part of what makes you a unique human being. “When I am aware, for example, of what gives my soul joy and life, I am more apt to assert myself and pursue those things that bring pleasure and joy.” (p. 129)
- The Oxygen Mask of Self-Care: Take care of yourself – Think of the emergency instructions given pre-flight that he/she that is not breathing cannot help anyone else! We must first take care of ourselves if we want to provide care for others. Author Parker Palmer asks, “Is the life that I am living the same as the life that God wants me to live?”
(Weekly one day Sabbath, one month each summer, 3-4 months every seven years during which we pursue the things that give life.) (p. 130-132)
- The Mirror of Self-Confrontation: Confront yourself – means humbly acknowledging our shortcomings and the ways in which we are responsible for our own failures and disappointments. Pope John Paul II said, “Truth and freedom either go hand and hand or together they perish in misery. (p. 132-134)
- The Key of Hope: Remain hopeful – The golden key of hope unlocks this truth and releases us from the prison of living in the past...focusing too much on the past prevents us from looking ahead to the future. This frees us to take responsibility for a better future that, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit we can create for ourselves. Learn how to express difficult emotions, build trust with people, use your voice to assert yourself in an honest and respectful way. (pg 134-136)
- The Hat of Wisdom: Think carefully – The wisdom of anticipating consequences requires careful thinking about short and long-range decisions. Proverbs 14:15 “The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps.” The right and responsibility to pause, gather info and then evaluate **decisions**. (p. 136-138)
- The Badge of Courage: Be courageous – Enables us to take healthy risks because we don’t have to prove our worth to earn God’s love. Taking hold of personal freedom requires courage and faith. There are no guarantees that things will not get harder before they get better. You can expect resistance when you begin to challenge unhealthy patterns and shed your false self. You are entering a fiery furnace that will burn out of you all that is inauthentic, illusionary and pretentious. Choosing an authentic life does not mean choosing an easy life; these decisions are difficult and involve pain. The question is whether the pain you choose will be redemptive or destructive. Redemptive pain demands that you die to the right things so you can move closer to your destiny. Destructive pain never leads to anything but more pain; it simply recycles the same problems over and over. (See questions on p. 139-140)

6. Quit Overfunctioning – When we do for others what they can and should do for themselves. Overfunctioning prevents people, including themselves, from growing up. Overfunctioning dangerously imperils friendships, marriages, churches, workplaces, and families. Overfunctioners shield underfunctioners from the consequences of

underfunctioning. “Pete was an underfunctioner at home because he was overfunctioning at work.” (p. 144)

Overfunctioning exists on a continuum ranging from mild to severe.

Five deadly consequences of overfunctioning: (p. 147)

- Overfunctioning breeds resentment
- Overfunctioning perpetuates immaturity
- Overfunctioning prevents you from focusing on your life’s calling
- Overfunctioning erodes your spiritual life
- Overfunctioning destroys community

If someone dear to us is underfunctioning and I am overfunctioning to maintain the relationship, my actions distort God’s original intention for community. When overfunctioning and underfunctioning are present, relationships are marked instead by dissension, conflict, blaming, helplessness, anger and despair. Author Ed Freidman describes the negative relational impact of overfunctioning this way: “When one overfunctions in another’s space it can cause disintegration* of the other’s being.” (*Refers to inhibiting the growth and maturity of a person’s God-given sense of self.) Overfunctioners actually believe they know what is best for everyone. In doing so, they invade and limit the development of others.

As an Overfunctioner, I may not be able to make the underfunctioners more responsible, but I can make myself less responsible. Break free!!

7. **Quit Faulty Thinking** – It can mire you in powerlessness, paralyze you in hopelessness, fill you with false guilt, cut you off from joyful living, obscure your hope for the future, diminish your capacity for genuine relationships, lock you up in unnecessary pain, and limit your God-given potential in Christ.

We didn’t know how to respect each-others differences. Not only did we not understand healthy separation and togetherness, we did not have room for complexity, ambiguity and questions. The belief that intimate relationships/friendships not only could but should always be with people in our church. Church provides a lovely context for close relationships...but may not always equal close friendships.

Three types of faulty thinking: (from book Hand-Me-Down-Blues by psychologist Michaela Yapko)

- All-or-Nothing Thinking – Globalizes one aspect of life not going well so it (seems to) characterizes everything in our lives.
- Taking Things Personally – We are prone to ignore the ambiguity of most situations and rush too quickly to a negative interpretation of events.
- Thinking Things Will Never Change – Too tied to the past instead of learning skills needed, approaching others in different ways or getting help.

Busting Through the Wall of Faulty Thinking: (p. 182-189)

- Know when NOT to Feel Your Feelings
- Stop Mind Reading – check out assumptions in person!
- Do Something Different – The definition of insanity is “Doing the same thing over and over again expecting different results” Albert Einstein. What will you regret 20 years from now if you don’t do something to change your situation?

If at first you don't succeed, do something different!

8. **Quit Living Someone Else's Life** – God invites you and me to ignore the distracting voices around us regardless of their source and to pursue wholeheartedly our God-given life. When we do, we, and ultimately everyone around us, experience a newfound freedom.

Discovering Yourself – A Life's Work

- Discover your Integrity – Integrity is always aligned with God's values. It takes less energy to live from a place where we are actively identifying what is important to us than to live in continuous reaction to the expectations and demands of others.
- Listen to Your Inner Rhythm – Knowing when to be with people and when to be alone; knowing when to work or play; knowing when to wait on something and when to move on; what to do to establish an enjoyable routine and healthy balance in this season of life.
- Set Your Boundaries – With everyone! Emotional fusion happens when we lose our distinctiveness and lose ourselves in someone else's life.
- Let Go of Others – Without resentment or judgmentalism.
- Write Your Own Manifesto – Begin to see the larger Picture. Express my beliefs and values through paraphrase of scripture. (For an example see Geri's on p. 207-208)
- Choose to Live Divided No More – it's never too late to start quitting!