

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH 101

PART I: The Foundation for True and Lasting Change

Chapter One: Remembering God *Jonah 2:5-7 – four levels of distress. II Peter 1:3-15 – nearsighted and blind, forgetting. Biblical mental and emotional health is experienced by the soul. I Kings 19:4 – Elijah’s suicide note. Luke 22:44 – the distress of Christ. John 5:2-9a – The big question; Do you want to get well?*

Chapter Two: An Honest Look at my Starting Point *Matthew 16:26 – Our unbiblical thinking has put our souls in jeopardy. An Emotional Pain Scale: Good to Mild – Enjoy it while you have it. Mild to Moderate – Find a good friend and open up. Moderate to Severe: Schedule an appointment with your family doctor or a professional counselor. Severe to Critical – Seek emergency help by reaching out to a critical care facility. Internal causes of distress: Negative self-talk, uncertainty, extreme rigidity, pessimism, resentment and bitterness, all-or-nothing thinking, need to be perfect. External causes of distress: Poor sleep patterns, poor diet, drug and alcohol abuse, physical/sexual/mental/verbal abuse, bullying, financial situation, stress, divorce/death/other family destruction, life-stage transitioning, lack of social community, concern over local/national issues, identity, responsibilities. VICTIM IDENTITY IS HARMFUL. SIN IS A WRONG ATTEMPT TO MEET A LEGITIMATE NEED. A willingness to change. Get a team!*

Chapter Three: Soul Damage *Matthew 11:28 – rest for your soul. Proverbs 17:22 – A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. SOUL CONDITION: healthy, weak, wounded, defeated, buried, crushed, murdered. Moving forward by examining thinking errors: “You are not being asked to deny your pain. You are being asked to deal with your pain within the context of teaching and instruction given to you by the Creator of the universe to help you navigate an indifferent and hostile world.” Commit to Lordship.*

PART II: Thinking Biblically

Chapter Four: A Biblical Understanding of Love *I Corinthians 13:4-8 – Love has everything to do with everything about emotional and mental health. LOVE IS MEETING NEEDS, and we all have the legitimate need to be accepted, secure, and significant. Love is an action, not a feeling. The opposite of love is not hate. The opposite of love is apathy. The opposite of hate is “likes a lot”. Needs are not wants. Not every need is yours to meet. Sin is a wrong attempt to meet a legitimate need. Our minds are at work against the interests of our souls. RELATIONSHIP MATRIX.*

Chapter Five: A Biblical Understanding of Major Concepts *Isaiah 55:8-9 – Our thoughts and ways as opposed to God’s thoughts and ways. A biblical understanding of suffering. A biblical understanding of shame. A biblical understanding of happiness/sadness, A biblical understanding of hopelessness/despair, A biblical understanding of reality/delusion, A biblical understanding of my identity (In Christ, we are accepted, secure, and significant). A biblical understanding of loneliness.*

Chapter Six: Traps that Ruin my Life *Psalms 57:6a – They set a net for my steps; my soul was bowed down. They dug a pit in my way. LIFE IS HARD. Common Mental and Emotional Traps: Temptation, Distraction, Lack of vision, Lethargy, Stagnation, Worthlessness, Common Life Traps: Financial issues, Relationships, Health. Common Spiritual Traps: Choosing unbiblical instruction, Becoming so spiritually minded that we have no earthly awareness, Spiritual victimization, Holier-than-thou, God wants me to be happy, Believing there are no evil forces at play, Defining our identity outside of scripture.*

PART III: A Plan for Moving Forward

Chapter Seven: Biblical Best Practices Based on Genesis, chapter 2. *God had a perfect plan for mankind, but we chose our own wisdom over His and walked away from that plan. The plan still functions as “best practices.”*

Rest – daily, sabbath, recovery

Good things, pleasant to the sight – nature, environment

Good things, eat good food – healthy, natural, less sugar

Purpose – a reason to be, why we do what we do

Exercise – movement, interaction with physical world

Obedience – to God’s Word and will

Synergy – cooperation, community, social

Intimacy – boundaries and borders, closeness

Healthy relationships with others – honesty

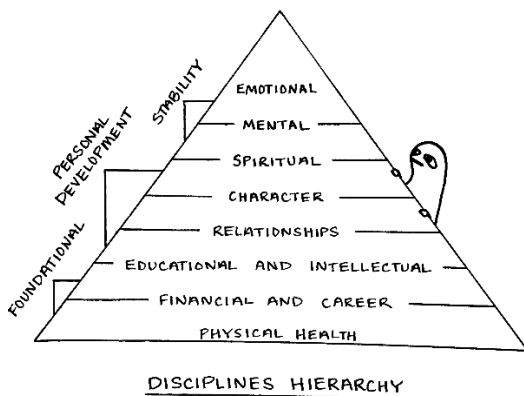
Healthy relationship with God – honesty, no secrets

Chapter Eight: Intentional Movement toward a Better Self Ephesians 4:22-24, Romans 12:1,2. **Clarity** – an inventory of where we stand in the best practices from the previous chapter, and where we desire to be in regards to these practices, and what we must do to get there. **Energy** – God’s strength. Momentum. **Vision** – goals and targets.

Determination – mindset.

Chapter Nine: Determining and Achieving Personal Outcomes Philippians 3:12. *Becoming frenemies with our pasts – overcoming, forgiving, and realizing the value we can extract from our brokenness. Vision Statement. Goal-setting: SMART goals – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-sensitive. Small bites, big appetite! Short-term and Long-term goals. FAIL FORWARD. New habits.*

Chapter Ten: A Personal Vision of God’s Plan for Me Jeremiah 29:11. *The disciplines hierarchy. The eight goal areas are hierarchical. It may seem disconcerting that spiritual goals are sandwiched between the others. This is because people who struggle with mental and emotional difficulties are often hamstrung by so many other issues that they simply cannot even begin to think biblically. I want those who are struggling to develop a framework that promotes space and freedom to develop biblically-solid understanding. People who seek to improve from the bottom up on this chart tend to solve mental and emotional difficulties naturally.*



PART IV: Integrity – The work of Becoming Whole

Chapter Eleven: The Fine Print John 1:12 – becoming children of God who look like children of God. **The Fine Print** – Saturating ourselves in God’s Word: hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, meditating, and applying it. II Timothy 2:2 – **Re-created through Scripture** as it teaches us, reproves us, corrects us, and trains us in righteousness.

Chapter Twelve: Beyond the Fine Print I Timothy 4:7-8 – training in **Godliness**. Saturating our lives in Prayer, Generosity, Fellowship, Worship, Fasting, Service, Silence, and Simplicity.

Chapter Thirteen: Becoming a Person of Value to Others II Timothy 2:2 – **Legacy**. Discipleship turns to disciple-making. Timothy/Paul/Barnabas. *Life is hard, choose your hard.*

Understanding Biblical Mental and Emotional Health 101 is available at Amazon.