

Authentic Relationships International

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Freedom House Training

(notes taken by Derek Black from my perspective in the sessions)

Core Values are super important.

In that framework, relationships are critical

Living in the Light is foundational

Relational health is everything

So if someone says they've recovered, how their relationships are will tell how they're really doing.

(Matt. 22:37-40)

Satan will target our relationships.

Connection is life.

Disconnection is death.

We can't recover in isolation... on our own.

We recover in community.

Recovery is restoration of what you were meant to be relationally. So you can't ultimately recover apart from restoring relationships.

Walking in the Light brings genuine fellowship/connection.

1 John 1:5-10

You can heal what you hide.

We're the ones who put up walls.

Do we want to keep things in the dark and not heal or bring things into the Light to heal.

Creating safe environments to draw people out is critical for sustained ongoing recovery.

Teaching them to live for their true self... what God intended and designed.

This is a journey to teach us/them how to live out in the open.

As far as identity, looking for God in a person rather than what they do or what their struggle is because that's not true identity.

True living in the Light is sharing your garbage and doing the work, but it's also living life in the open more than just spiritual waste management. It's doing life together.

Living in the Light reveals the more and more we need God not less. We never stop healing and growing.

We need at least 1 relationship with no self protection.

We build intimacy and build this authentic life with another over time.

In these relationships, we don't swallow our voice... or we shouldn't.

There can easily be a loss of voice and authenticity.

So how do we show up in relationships and be true and authentic.

Matt. 6:22-23

We tend to blame others for our own struggles.

We are responsible for our own behaviors and actions.

It doesn't excuse others for their behavior, but it does reveal stuff in us.

When we get our feathers ruffled from someone, something is being stirred in us.

And it's not the other person's stuff, but something inside of me.

I have to know what's going on inside of me and be able to separate that from talking with whoever I'm talking with.

Learn to not take things personally. We touched something tender and tough for them. Don't take it personally. And certainly don't respond negatively because the downward spiral will continue.

Lies got planted in their head and it takes much time to overcome all those inside messages.... Those lies happened in context of relationships and they work themselves out in context of relationships.

Relationships are a Mirror.

Matt. 7:3-5

The first step in struggles or problems is to look at yourself not others or blame others.

Relationships are then a gift and not a barrier.

Categorizing all things type of thing are Fill in the blank.... Actually reveal more about a common problem or struggle in me.

Conflict is normal....you can't have relationships apart from conflict.

Conflict plus resolution equals intimacy.

So to mask my lack of wanting to be vulnerable, I go to a drug or relationship or other substance to control and meet my needs without having to risk authenticity.

We are swallowing conflict and not dealing with it.

Relationships are my mirror.

Relationships are the path to healing/recovery.

Humility works this out and models authenticity.

Relations bring life and help us actually taste God more.

1 John 3:14-16

I can't say I'm doing good with God but not in my relationships.

We are the most alive when we are living the Light as defined by being in relationships and working things out. So bumps will come in relationships. So what is God trying to teach us in those bumps?

Ephesians 1:18 that the eyes of your heart be enlightened to know the hope of His calling in the saints. God wants us to see the beauty of what He's doing in others.

1 John 2:10-11

Hate is darkness. The one who loves is brother abides in the Light.

Challenge our own judgments against others because it reveals something about us.

Doesn't mean we have to like that person/people, but we can't hold it against he/them.

When we label people by their struggle or race or etc... we misrepresent them in their identity.

Matt. 6:22-23

The eye is the lamp of the body, my perception.

The eye represents our perception or misperception... that person is a gift to me.

Recovery is recognizing your own flaws showing up in relationship and then owning those flaws.

Psalms God desires to know me in my innermost being... so I better learn me from the inside what's going on.

Prov. 18:21 - our words bring life.

We make judgments based not what we see from our past. So in the name of pursuing what is true I need to correct my judgments with what's true.

See --> Meaning --> Judgment --> Action

Our past interprets the way we see things.

le: funny elephant picture with 5 blind guys touching different parts of the animal and them saying what the elephant is like... mushy, a rope, a trunk, etc.

If all I do is judge based on actions, I miss who they are as a person.

See --> Meaning --> Judgment --> Action

Then when I see that person in a dark way (judgments and actions)

Then I --> Be Curious.... I go into a discovery mode to go back into their story and reset your frame or the way you see them and associate or re-associate meaning, etc...

Romans 8:31-39

Plural language... if God is for US who against US. God gave Son for US freely give all for US. Who shall separate US? Nothing will... no tribulation, anguish, etc etc...

All those challenges are super hard and involve relationships.

But in it all God for US and none of that complex stuff even involving relationships will be able to separate US.

So you can fight for that beauty in relationship.

You don't ever give up and change in the effort toward them.

But you preserve God's view of them and you and patiently wait for them to come around.

You aren't responsible for what happened to you.

But you are responsible to how you respond.

Identify what's missing and how to work through rather than blame and excuse.

Look at how it got planted and then how I've responded wrongly.

So 2 critical... their childhood and then current how they respond.

Learn to take ownership is HUGE.

What is the purpose for pursuing a heart?

Is it to expose just depravity?

Is it to reveal their dignity?

Depravity is just the first step to get to dignity

Be a gold miner... help me see them past the depravity to who they are

Goals:

- to provide safe environment for truth to be spoken
- To help them discover their true identity, breaking hold of shame

Psalms 23 walk through the valley of shadow of death, not staying there

When we walk into someone's life, we are entering a holy place.

Like in the OT God's presence dwelt in the temple.

For us today our hearts are where God dwells.

So we are on holy ground here.

Safety is the Priority.

People want and are made to be known and loved.

So recovery isn't as much exposing their junk, but finding God's dignity in them.

In - to - me - see ... help them see inside and accept who they are... fully known and accepted.

So provide safe environment for this need of acceptance and being known.

Because healing happens in the light so needs to be a safe environment.

So we work hard to provide a safe environment.

Trailblazer in setting the model as sharing your story to be able to help others.

Difference between fruits and gifting:

- Attributes given (talent)

(don't let the attributes these draw us in)

But talent doesn't tell us anything about character

- Attributes developed (grown over time... character)

(these are character... we look for these)

Building Safety

We can end up being manipulative/coercion

Can't push them past their walls.

In name of recovery or whatever, if you push past, you damage more and shut down

Honor/Value others.

See and treat them as valuable, image of God, respect/honor their boundaries

Empower them to make mistakes as they learn.
Not do the things for them, help them over time see their value

The disease is not the person.
Much More the person... humanize the person as real.

If we judge people, we have no time to love them.

Being a good listener/responder

- allow it to impact us and then respond out of that impact
- Don't make it all about you and not knowing how to respond
- Let their words impact you truly

Discipline without relationship produces rebellion.
We earn the right to speak into their life.

Empathy drives connection.
Sympathy drives disconnection.

Their perspective is their truth.
Empathy is feeling with people.
Rarely can a response make something better.
Connection makes healing possible.

Provide a place for people to be known.

Find out where you land on the healing process...

- Listening, counseling, teaching, therapy, etc..

Listening meets deepest needs:
Known, understood, respected, heard, accepted

Unhealthy responses:
Say too much, say nothing, offer trite answers, draw attention to own story, tell how they should feel, tell stop crying, give advice

- you wouldn't go to your best friend for brain surgery
- Know where your ministry begins and ends, refer

le: Shrek clip

Shame Reduction needed:

Shame is I am the behavior...

But how do we speak to the behavior then if it's tied to the shame?
In my confrontation piece, enter story and look for the dignity/gold mining piece. Highlight that dignity piece as the story is unearthed. And then from that... we've highlighted enough of the dignity to be able to speak truth enough to make them think.

Speak truth in love... Ephesians 3?

- speak BOTH depravity and the dignity
- Look at both is critical
- If we hung up on the bad alone, maybe that says more about us than them and where we need healing still

In shame reduction, always look at the beauty first before the depravity part.

Story shared:

Paxton

Britney

The beauty of story and validating what we've heard.

Gene ended on the note of hope.