



PAIN

GOD'S GATEWAY TO EMPATHY AND DEEPER RELATIONSHIPS

SESSION 6

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DEFINING PRIMARY EMOTION - PAIN

- Pain **warns** us that something is **threatening** damage to the body. We need the sensation of **pain** to let us know when our bodies need extra care.
- Pain can be physical, emotional or both at the same time (headache, anxiety)
- It's an important signal. When we sense pain, we pay attention to our bodies and can take steps to fix/attend to what hurts.
- **Pain** also may prevent us from injuring a body part even more.

COMMON RESPONSES TO PAIN – MEANINGLESSNESS

- “Life is difficult then you die” - Nihilism – views life as meaninglessness
- Interpret life from the darkest possible eventuality to escape the horror of hope in something they can’t control – Don’t take risks – never actually live
- Over-predict misfortune; actively produce decay by sabotaging good and twisting joy into the dramatic mask of sorrow
- Predict and then create sorrow to avoid the far more penetrating sadness of unexpected and unexplained pain
- Allender, Dan B., The Healing Path

COMMON RESPONSES TO PAIN - FATALISTIC

- Fatalistic – “roll with it baby” Que sera, sera... What will be, will be
- Suffering is inevitable, but it likely won't last, so hunker down and wait for better Karma. God is in control, so just trust him, don't worry, get on with life
- Fatalism anesthetizes desire, seeking to rise above the desire/disappointment cycle
- The fatalist distances from others, lacks empathy, trivialize their part in shaping the future, morally lazy, unimaginative, and leads to spectator approach to life
- Allender, Dan B., The Healing Path

COMMON RESPONSES TO PAIN - **HEROIC**

- **Heroic** – “What doesn’t kill me makes me stronger” Friedrich Nietzsche
- Despise weakness & hate vulnerability
- “You are the master of your own destiny”
- People that can’t run his race are second class citizens
- No place for dealing with real pain or experiencing community
- Allender, Dan B., The Healing Path

COMMON RESPONSE TO PAIN - OPTIMISTIC

- The Nihilist frowns, the fatalist grins, the heroic grits his teeth and the optimist laughs
- Like a guarded, walled off and shallow community, we lock out the undesirable and unsafe
- By avoiding pain, we might escape life's story – mental page turner
- Allender, Dan B., The Healing Path

COMMON RESPONSE TO PAIN – DISMISSING OTHERS EMOTIONALLY

- In emotional distress, they push others away by accusing and mind reading
- **Spiritualizing** - Seeing negative emotions, the ones we would describe as feeling “bad,” as signs of spiritual failure
- Negative emotions are to be squashed rather than explored
- Avoiding emotion by stonewalling