

# Seven Core Heart Issues

## Unlocking the Issues of the Heart

It is the application of this healing tool that will help to uncover core sin issues that we all have. They are the “Core Spiritual” issues of life. This simple and powerful self-identifying system is the key that will lead to repentance if used with true authenticity.

Mentors will use this tool during mentoring if they discern a person is struggling with core sin issues and are not taking responsibility for their actions. Observe their behavior throughout the first few weeks of mentoring. Look for any symptoms that may indicate a core issue. It is not necessary to use this tool if the person is accepting responsibility for their actions and are repentant throughout the mentoring sessions.

Wait until the third session or beyond to use this tool. Establish a relationship first. If at that time you discern core issues are present and need to be confronted, stop the mentoring process and have them fill out the Self-Assessment in their *Workbook for Couples*. If they are resistant to do this in front of their spouse, it may be necessary to separate them, man with man, woman with woman. However, doing this in the presence of their spouse is very humbling and healing.

The goal of this process is for them to humble themselves, seek God's face, turn from their sin and be healed by God. If they continue to sin, encourage them to repent and turn from their sin.

Be brave and bold as you use this tool as a road map on how to deal with core heart issues. Loving other people sometimes means confronting, warning and rebuking them. Remember to show “love and respect” while confronting, warning and rebuking. Some will be transformed by it, while others will run from it.

Follow the steps below as you lead them to identify Core Heart Issues.

### **Step One: Acknowledge and Confess**

After the third mentoring session if you discern core sin is present, stop the mentoring (for that session) and have them fill out the Self-Assessment in their workbook. After they completed the Self-Assessment, review the symptoms they identified. If you feel they failed to identify some symptoms that you have witnessed throughout the mentoring process, with love, ask them to put an “X” next to the symptoms they failed to identify. (Use your discernment).

Add up and total the symptoms in each box on the front page of the Self-Assessment.

Then on the back page of the Self-Assessment, insert the totals in the corresponding boxes to identify the *Core Issues*. Circle any *Core Issues* that totaled four or more symptoms as these represent the core heart issues that they identified from their own Self-Assessment.

### **Step Two: Repent to God**

Ask them to repent to God for their sins (out load) right then and there. Repentance is a condition of the heart that should be evident by words, attitude and a change in spirit. True healing only comes after repentance. Make sure their repentance is genuine.

If they are not a Christian, invite them to believe/receive Christ as their Savior. Refer to *Lead People to Jesus* tab in the Mentor Guide.

Encourage them by sharing the following and supporting it with the Scripture below:

"There are three steps to healing a marriage; humble yourself, seek God, turn from your ways (repent) and then God will heal your heart, your marriage, your life (land). The Lord can/will bring a 'refreshing' to your marriage".

2 Chronicles 7:14

If my people, who are called by my name, will *humble themselves and pray* and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Acts 3:19

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

**Step Three: Repent to each other**

Once they have repented to God for their core sin, ask them to repent to each other.

Encourage them by sharing the following and supporting it with the Scripture below:

"Healing always comes after confessing sins and repentance, never before".

"Our personal sin towards God often shows up in marriage as being 'unloving' towards the wife or 'disrespectful' towards the husband. Most marital strife is often a result of unloving and disrespectful behavior. Please acknowledge this truth and be freed from your past by repenting to each other. Then choose to forgive and close the door to yesterday with a new hope and a new beginning".

James 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

**Men:** Let your wife know how sorry you are for being unloving. Ask for forgiveness.

**Women:** Let your husband know how sorry you are for being disrespectful. Ask for forgiveness.

When they repent, praise them for their humility and let God work on their heart. Move forward with your mentoring agenda.

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**IF THEY WON'T REPENT, THEN WHAT? IT'S TIME TO IDENTIFY STRONGHOLDS**

We face many experiences and situations in life that can be very painful and at times fill us with fear, rejection and insecurity. In those moments we may find our God-given identity is reshaped when we listen to lies from the enemy. Unresolved pain and hurts will affect how we relate with the people in our life. These unresolved hurts can also be referred to as strongholds.

In an effort to identify and break through these strongholds refer them to *Breaking Strongholds* in their workbook. Ask them the following questions as you take them through this exercise. Instruct them to circle what applies to them. You may need to split them up to do this; man with man, woman with woman.

# Breaking Strongholds

## What negative events have you experienced?

Pain and fear are often experienced in the following situations. These events do not create the stronghold, but it can become the catalytic event that can breed a stronghold.

- Parents divorced
- Rejection from people
- Abuse
- Parent had an addiction that prevented them from being the parent that you needed.
- Death of a loved one
- Mom or dad abandoned the family
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## What lies do you believe about yourself? (Ephesians 6:12)

As a result of these hurts and pains in our life, we may begin believing lies about God, ourselves and/or others. Satan will try to interpret and deceive you to believe that your pain means the following:

- I'm incompetent
- I'm unworthy
- I'm worthless
- I'm unacceptable
- I'm unlovable
- I'm disconnected
- Must be perfect
- I'm powerless/helpless
- I'm a mistake
- God must not love me
- It's all my fault
- It's all their fault
- I can't change
- I can't love again
- My marriage will never get any better
- I am better off alone
- Divorce seems right for me
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## How do you defend or comfort yourself? (Romans 8:5-11)

Once we buy into the lies that we choose to believe we begin building up a defense or comfort in order to fulfill these lies.

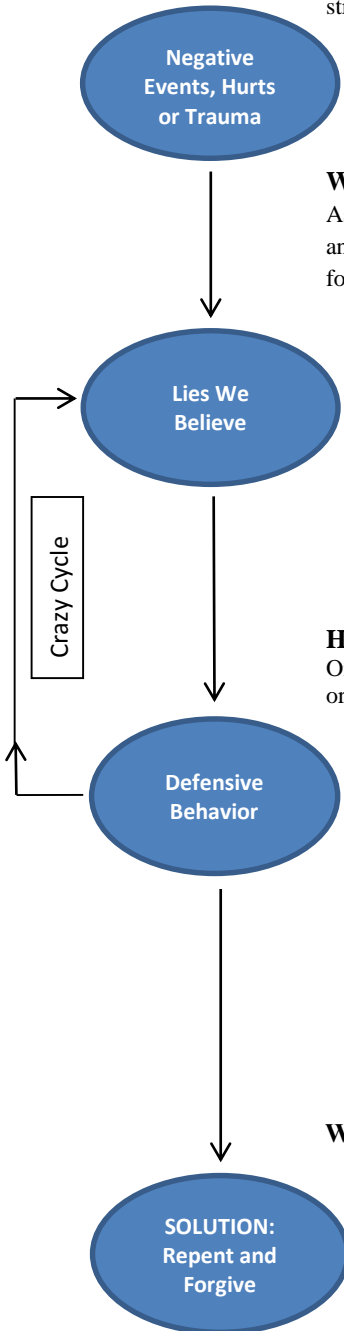
- Blame – “I’m not okay and it’s your fault”
- Control – Taking inappropriate responsibility for others: “I will fix you so I’ll be okay”
- Anger – Covering fear and pain with varying levels of anger.
- Medicate through drugs, alcohol, and pornography – Behavior designed to seek comfort and reduce pain.
- Busyness – Avoiding pain through excessive activity.
- Withholding trust – Avoiding disappointment or rejection by refusing to be vulnerable to or dependent upon someone else.
- Passive aggression – Behavior that communicates hostility through inaction.
- Emotionally insulate myself from others – Passivity to prevent emotional pain.
- Attention Seeking – A wide range of behaviors designed to seek attention/affirmation.
- Intellectualize – Excessive reasoning to avoid emotional pain.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## What’s the solution? ..... REPENTANCE and FORGIVENESS! (2 Chronicles 7:14)

- **Husbands:** What are the lies that you’ve believed in your pain and hurt and the ways you’ve been defending yourself? *Ask the Lord for forgiveness.* Take hold of His truth about who you are and that He is your defender. Acknowledge that your behavior is impacting your wife as being unloving and *ask your wife for forgiveness.*
- **Wives:** What are the lies that you’ve believed in your pain and hurt and the ways you’ve been defending yourself? *Ask the Lord for forgiveness.* Take hold of His truth about who you are and that He is your defender. Acknowledge that your behavior is impacting your husband as being disrespectful and *ask your husband for forgiveness.*

## One Step from Greatness (Psalm 51:17)

You may be doing many things right. However, God wants more than rituals and sacrifices; he wants your heart...all of it. When you truly become broken before the Lord, you have reached that final step to healing. It is your humility and brokenness that will take you to greatness. Fully repenting, brokenness and complete forgiveness is what allows you to live in the land of FREEDOM.



Ask them if they would like to repent to God? IF YES, take them back through steps two and three. If they still refuse to repent, **rebuke them**.

If they refuse to take steps towards repentance warn them of the possibility of terminating the mentoring process. Rebuke as your final effort to lead them to repentance and take steps towards restoration. This may cause them to leave angry and bitter. Either way, you must be prepared.

Your role is to deliver the truth and let it transform lives. Mentors are not to take credit when marriages are healed and do not take the blame when people run from God and end in divorce. We are simply messengers.

Share with love: "As you can see, rejecting the truth could be costly for all of us, unfortunately because you are unwilling to take responsibility for the condition of your heart, we may have to stop the mentoring process." Share the following Scripture to support your rebuke, and then ask them, "What would you like us to do?"

If you need to terminate the mentoring process due to the hardness of their heart, contact your leader before doing so.

### **Proverbs 1:23, 29-31**

<sup>23</sup>Repent at my rebuke! Then I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings.

<sup>29</sup> Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD, <sup>30</sup> since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, <sup>31</sup> they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.

Whether they choose to repent or not, you have done your job. Only God can transform their hearts. Refer them to the following Scripture about our **identity in Christ**. This will help them to see the truth and not be swayed by the lies of the enemy.

- I have been justified (completely forgiven and made righteous). – Romans 5:1
- I died with Christ and died to the power of sin's rule on my life. – Romans 6:1-6
- I am free forever from condemnation. – Romans 8:1
- I have received the Spirit of God into my life that I might know the things freely given to me by God. – 1 Corinthians 2:12
- I have been given the mind of Christ. – 1 Corinthians 2:16
- I have been bought with a price. I am not my own. I belong to God. – 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God in Christ. – 2 Corinthians 1:21

**Additional Resources:** Foundations of Freedom DVDs from Gateway Church  
When Life Hurts by Jimmy Evans  
The Battlefield of the Mind by Joyce Meyers

## Seven Core Heart Issues Self-Assessment

Put an “X” next to the symptoms that **YOU struggle with**, in relation to your marriage.

<p>1)    ___ Abusing drugs/alcohol             ___ Lust             ___ Losing my temper             ___ Impatience/Anger             ___ Spending unwisely             ___ Stomping off             ___ Criticizing my partner             ___ Cursing/yelling             ___ Acting violent</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b>    ___</p>	<p>2)    ___ Fighting for control             ___ Demanding my way             ___ Worrying/fear             ___ Insecurity             ___ Hopelessness             ___ Not trusting God             ___ Negativity             ___ Not trusting my partner             ___ Wanting to give up</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b>    ___</p>
<p>3)    ___ Bitterness/resentment             ___ Withdrawing             ___ Withholding affection to my partner             ___ Being unloving towards my partner             ___ Retaliating             ___ Being disrespectful towards my partner             ___ A hardened heart towards my partner             ___ Difficulty forgiving others             ___ Avoiding conversation</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b>    ___</p>	<p>4)    ___ Being too passive             ___ Avoiding conflict             ___ Lack of initiative             ___ Being disorganized             ___ Lack of follow through             ___ Being unreliable             ___ Little involvement with household duties             ___ Being undisciplined             ___ Little involvement with family activities</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b>    ___</p>
<p>5)    ___ Un-repentance             ___ Inability to receive correction             ___ Criticizing my partner             ___ Being defensive             ___ Wanting to be right             ___ Not being teachable             ___ Being stubborn             ___ Not showing love and respect             ___ Being controlling</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b>    ___</p>	<p>6)    ___ Twisting the truth             ___ Hiding the truth             ___ Exaggerating             ___ Faking how I feel             ___ Withholding facts             ___ Pretending             ___ Lying             ___ Being in denial             ___ Confusion</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b>    ___</p>
<p>7)    ___ Lack of interest in others       ___ Being insensitive       ___ Being a victim             ___ Not expressing appreciation    ___ Blaming others       ___ Demanding my own way             ___ Not meeting my partners needs   ___ Envyng others       ___ Seeking attention</p> <p><b>TOTAL</b>    ___</p>	

<p><b>1) LACK OF SELF CONTROL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abusing drugs/alcohol</li> <li>Lust</li> <li>Losing my temper</li> <li>Impatience/Anger</li> <li>Spending unwisely</li> <li>Stomping off</li> <li>Criticizing my partner</li> <li>Cursing/yelling</li> <li>Acting violent</li> </ul> <p><b>TOTAL</b> ____</p> <p>Scripture: Titus 1:8, 2:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:8, 1 Peter 5:8, 2 Peter 1:6</p>	<p><b>2) LACK OF FAITH IN GOD</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fighting for control</li> <li>Demanding my way</li> <li>Worrying/fear</li> <li>Insecurity</li> <li>Hopelessness</li> <li>Not trusting God</li> <li>Negativity</li> <li>Not trusting my partner</li> <li>Wanting to give up</li> </ul> <p><b>TOTAL</b> ____</p> <p>Scripture: Malachi 2:16, Ephesians 2:8, Galatians 5:6, James 2:17, Matthew 6:25-31</p>
<p><b>3) UNFORGIVENESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bitterness/resentment</li> <li>Withdrawing</li> <li>Withholding affection to my partner</li> <li>Being unloving towards my partner</li> <li>Retaliating</li> <li>Being disrespectful towards my partner</li> <li>A hardened heart towards my partner</li> <li>Difficulty forgiving others</li> <li>Avoiding conversation</li> </ul> <p><b>TOTAL</b> ____</p> <p>Scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:5-7, John 20:23, Luke 17:3-4, Mark 11:25</p>	<p><b>4) LAZINESS (Relationally)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being too passive</li> <li>Avoiding conflict</li> <li>Lack of initiative</li> <li>Being disorganized</li> <li>Lack of follow through</li> <li>Being unreliable</li> <li>Little involvement with household duties</li> <li>Being undisciplined</li> <li>Little involvement with family activities</li> </ul> <p><b>TOTAL</b> ____</p> <p>Scripture: Hebrews 6:12, Hebrews 12:1 1 Thessalonians 3:6, 5:14</p>
<p><b>5) PRIDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Un-repentance</li> <li>Inability to receive correction</li> <li>Criticizing my partner</li> <li>Being defensive</li> <li>Wanting to be right</li> <li>Not being teachable</li> <li>Being stubborn</li> <li>Not showing love and respect</li> <li>Being controlling</li> </ul> <p><b>TOTAL</b> ____</p> <p>Scripture: Proverbs 13:10, 16:18, 22:4, 2 Chronicles 32:26, Job 33:15-18, James 4:6</p>	<p><b>6) DECEIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twisting the truth</li> <li>Hiding the truth</li> <li>Exaggerating</li> <li>Faking how I feel</li> <li>Withholding facts</li> <li>Pretending</li> <li>Lying</li> <li>Being in denial</li> <li>Confusion</li> </ul> <p><b>TOTAL</b> ____</p> <p>Scripture: John 3:18, Romans 3:13, 1 Corinthians 3:18, Revelation 3:17, 2 Peter 1:5-9</p>
<p><b>7) SELFISHNESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of interest in others</li> <li>Not expressing appreciation</li> <li>Not meeting my partners needs</li> <li>Being insensitive</li> <li>Blaming others</li> <li>Envyng others</li> <li>Being a victim</li> <li>Demanding my own way</li> <li>Seeking attention</li> </ul> <p><b>TOTAL</b> ____</p> <p>Scripture: Philippians 2:3-4, 1 John 3:17, 2 Timothy 3: 2-4, 1 Corinthians 13: 4-6</p>	