

Receiving Feedback and Relational Skills in the Bible (and learning how to be a joy filled person).

Welcome to the Course!

Books you have been asked to purchase:

Thanks for the Feedback by Stone and Heen

Relational Skills in the Bible by Brown and Coursey

Books mentioned but you are not asked to purchase: (they are mentioned for proper citation and copyright for educational purposes).

The Joy Switch by Coursey

4 Habits of Joy Filled People- Coursey and Warner

Joy starts here! Wilder, Khouri, Coursey, Sutton

You will also want a notebook or something to keep notes in as you make personal goals. Goals should be personal, observable, and measurable.

We also want to challenge you in this journal you are starting for class to begin a daily gratitude journal.

Introduction: Orientation

The “why” behind this course

Goals of this course

Exhortation and Encouragement to focus on yourself and growth (which personal growth will have a positive impact on the marriage)

Reading schedule and homework

The ‘why’:

If you have been listening to our podcast recently, you have heard that we are huge fans and believers in the LifeModel. As you may know or have experienced, very few things in the Christian marketplace for self-help or marriage apply to marriage for NeuroDiverse Christian Couples. While the books we have chosen, do not mention autism or neurodiversity they do mention neuroscience and brain circuitry and due to Dr. Holmes’ research on the AS/ND brain was able to put together information from Wilder’s work and (with permission) we have these courses for you.

Thanks for the Feedback as well as *Difficult Conversations* were introduced to me (Dr. Holmes) when I was working on my Master's Certification in Communication and Conflict Resolution.

When I went back for my doctorate, I wanted to focus on communication because this is the number 1 that leads to so many problems in our own lives and couples we work with. The wife may say, "we lack connection" but what is the basis of connection? Communication!

Thanks for the Feedback: Many studies for many years focused on how to give feedback in a way that it can be better received. However, no matter how wonderfully or well-intentioned you give feedback, there are many things going on for the receiver! This book is to help YOU manage your triggers and reactions to feedback to be a better receiver of feedback. Feedback is the most basic skill needed for relationships, receiving coaching/counseling, and the workplace. You will examine whether you have a fixed or growth mindset and your own triggers that get in the way of feedback. After this course we suggest you get the companion book, *Thank God for the Feedback* which may need a coach or counselor to help you work through.

Relational Skills in the Bible: No matter what your neurotype is, there is no exclusion clause for not growing and becoming more Christ-like. For all believers, we are commanded (not suggested) to Love God with all our heart, soul and mind AND love others sacrificially as Christ as loved us. What good is our faith/religion if we are not being transformed in the likeness of Christ and those in our inner circle should be recipients of that love and Christ-like behavior.

While our neurotypes can make learning some of these skills difficult; there is not an exclusion clause for learning to demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit in your life, build joy in your life, create appreciation, mature in your personal walk (not head knowledge) with Christ, and learn how to remain Christ-like and emotional when you have "the big 6" of negative emotions. Chapter 14 teaches us to stop the "sarx" or seeing life only from our perspective or point of view.

There will be quotes from other works by the same authors brought in for discussion and learning application.

Goals:

As you read the feedback book, you are asked to write down per chapter a goal that applies to YOU not your spouse or marriage for discussion in class.

To prepare for discussion, write down 3-4 summary sentences of the chapter, a new insight or poignant piece of information and personal action goal that may start like this:

Ex. In chapter 1, I learned about the triggers and that I am most triggered by identity triggers especially any feedback about being a spouse or parent.

By the end of the book, you will have 12-13 goals for yourself with action points to consider for your contribution to the feedback cycle you are currently in. While marriage issues are rarely 50-50, they are never 100-0 on contribution to the cycle. Even if your contribution in your mind

is 1-2%, how will you minimize your impact and contribute in a more positive way to better communication.

The relational skills will address 19 skills in the Bible and help you assess where you and your marriage is weak in these areas. Depending on if you are in crises or growth mode, we will recommend various exercises with that in mind.

You are going to hear the word Joy so much; you will probably be sick of it. We will discuss the difference between joy and happiness and how truly the Joy of the Lord (even in awful circumstances) is the source of our strength for resilience, endurance, and change.

The key steps of our methods are:

Education, Equipping, Effective Strategies and Endurance

We offer no outcome promises except that if you are willing to come to the course ready to focus on becoming more Christ-like and growth minded, this is a safe space to grow and ask questions. The rest is on you.

Exhortation and Encouragement:

The encouragement, based on neuroscience is brain chemistry and wiring can change. You can build joy and break fear bonds and learn new communication strategies. You can become a more Christ-like you no matter what the status of your marriage is or what the outcome for your marriage may be.

However, taking a course and reading a book do not change outcomes. Personal work means you are willing to do more than read the material, chat about the book and show up for class. This is all left-brained and logical. Logic and new learning do not change people or circumstances. It is taking the knowledge and turning it into practical application consistently that changes outcomes and relationships. Will this be hard? YES! Will this take time? Yes! Will this be uncomfortable? Yes! Will you make mistakes at first trying new things? Yes! Will some of the exercises feel weird and silly at first? Yes! But what is the definition of insanity? Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. To get new results, you must be willing to try new things. So why not things that are proven to be helpful by neuroscience AND apply biblical knowledge and principles?

Homework/Prepping for Class:

Each week come to the site to see what videos, podcasts and chapters are needed to prepare for the course this week.

You can expect chapters in each book, a teaching course from Holmes & Homes, a podcast or YouTube.

You will have questions outlined that will be discussed in your group for men and women, the course outline and homework are the same. The discussion time is what you make of it! Many

have asked for discussion questions ahead of time to formulate their questions and answers in class. Group identity and group accountability are KEY to change and spiritual formation. Showing up as passive observer has rarely helped anyone achieve change only knowledge. Until applied new information remains knowledge; application and practice change that knowledge into wisdom.

Homework assigned per session is to be read or completed BEFORE that session.

Orientation (Before Session 1)

Please watch the LifeModel video which is the foundation of Wilder and Coursey's work.

This is a 16-minute video about LifeModel Works.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOcc2QJ0tTg>

If material is in hillite, this means this comes from another source mentioned above.

Session 1: Jan 16th

Reading:

Thanks for the Feedback (FB): Introduction and Chapter 1

Relational Skills in the Bible (RS): Introduction and pages 159-161 brief introduction to the 19 skills

Podcast: Are you in your right mind?

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/mhnrnetwork/are-you-in-your-right-mind>

Video by Heen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwB8z-csSHM>

Context: In a longer video she gives an example of being on an airplane and the middle seat person leans over and adjusts the window shade and she asks what reactions may be triggered and why? While this is a silly example it is about looking at yourself and what gets tripped up for you. You may think status has nothing to do with marriage but if you have been taught headship means final authority and entitlement, then status will be a trigger for you

Video Lesson by Stephanie and Dan

Personal Study and Discussion Questions:

1. In reading chapter 1 of FB book, what is your personal action goal. Please be prepared to share it with the group. What is one thing you are convicted of or that you need to learn or apply from this chapter? What did you learn about yourself?

2. Are you in your right or left brain most of the time (podcast). What is your struggle in being right-brained or relational right now in your relationship?
3. Is there Trauma A or B in your relationship? One cannot build joy or change fear bonds if there is trauma. Let's define Trauma A and B (Wilder and Coursey). Trauma A: think "a" for absent. Trauma "b" think b for bad things or negative things in the marriage.

According to Wilder in *Joy Starts Here*, and Coursey in *4 Habits of Joy filled people*:
 Trauma A: The absence of necessary good things in life and relationships. Type A trauma looks like neglect, rejection, abdication of responsibility, disconnection, lack of intimacy, abandonment, insecure relationship bonds, and lack of love and hesed in the home. (Hesed- Hebrew for being "for" someone or believing someone is "for" you). Type B trauma are the bad things that exceed capacity and includes all form of abuse (sexual, financial control, verbal, psychological, spiritual, gaslighting etc.) Not only does abuse damage relationships but damages personal identity. What makes something trauma? The essence of trauma is that it impairs or damages the relationship or relational identity or removes an aspect of our experience from our relational reality. It means something important is missing or something is happening so often it cannot be processed or repaired before another trauma occurs.

This is often referred to in ND relationships as OTSD- ongoing traumatic stress; similar to PTSD which comes from 1 major thing; OTS is ongoing and does not appear to ever end or have resolve. Both causes trauma. (More on this later). Where are things in your relationship? Is there trauma? Safety is important to build trust, peace, hope and joy.

4. In the short video by Heen, when you have an identity trigger what do you think is triggered most?

Autonomy/Agency (competency)

Affiliation

Appreciation (I expect appreciation but get coaching or evaluation)

Role (who is supposed to do what- according to my perspective/belief)

Status (position/leadership- equal or over?)

Session 2: Feb. 6th

Reading:

FB: Chapters 2 & 3

RS: Lesson 1

YouTube: Get past the context of business, and hear the message that feedback and receiving feedback is about growth and change by author:

You are as receiver are responsible for how you receive feedback:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQNbaKkYk_Q

Podcast: Communication is Key to Connection

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/mhnrnetwork/connection-through-communication>

Lesson from Dan and Stephanie

Personal Study and Discussion Questions:

1. In reading chapter 2 and 3 of FB book, what is your personal action goal. Please be prepared to share it with the group. What is one thing from each chapter you are convicted of or that you need to learn or apply from this chapter? What did you learn about yourself? This means one for chapter 2 and one for chapter 3.
2. There are 3 main types of feedback. Where do you struggle?
3. How does the self-serving bias impact you? Self-serving bias is defined as our tendency to attribute our success to our own abilities and our failure to external factors.
4. The video speaks about not all feedback that has to be received, but the problem is we start with wrong spotting or proving it false before trying to understand- what is this like for you? Can you separate the who from the what? When you give feedback do you talk about the behavior or do you assassinate the character of the person.

For example: When you speak this way to me, it hurts me, and I need you to speak to me in a different way.

Character: You always do this, you will never change!

5. Skill 1 in RS: building joy- is your marriage high, low or no joy? Does your spouse agree or have a different view of the joy in the marriage? Joy is about being 'happy to be with someone' and is shown by eye contact, tone, body gestures, warm tones, hugs/touch.
6. Our brain needs both major relationships- joy and quieting. We need to build joy AND recover and repair from relational injury.
7. Page 24- What is your Immanuel Thought?
8. Page 27 What did you learn about yourself in Assignment 3
9. Page 28, from the 8 signs our relational circuits are off or dimmed. What are your signs that your RCs are off or dimmed. We know with neuroscience that the RCs tends to be "off" in autistic brains and must intentionally be turned on daily. (We have an entire course about this- Escaping Enemy Mode).

Lesson 3: Feb. 20th

Reading:

FB: Chapters 4 & 5

RS: Lesson 2

Lesson from Stephanie and Dan

Podcast: Sheila Heen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nK1dLlz4N9Q>

Again, while the context of the book is business oriented, the purpose of the podcast is for you how to be a better feedback receiver? Pardon the occasional use of the word ‘hell.’

Personal Study and Discussion Questions:

10. In reading chapter 4 and 5 of FB book, what is your personal action goal. Please be prepared to share it with the group. What is one thing from each chapter you are convicted of or that you need to learn or apply from this chapter? What did you learn about yourself? This means one for chapter 4 and one for chapter 5.
11. What is a take away from the podcast Heen did?
12. Chapter 4 is about blind spots. What feedback do you receive that may indicate a blind spot for you to consider?
13. Switch tracking is very common. It can be used to deflect or blame shift. The takeaway point is both people can learn to stop the switch track and treat the new information as a second topic. Goal: When person 1 (1st speaker) brings to the other, stay on that before switching topic. If speaker 2 has an issue, now is not the time to discuss it.

For example, spouse 1 comes to the other to discuss a feeling or give feedback about a chore that was done incorrectly or incomplete. A switch track would be if speaker 2 deflected, gave excuses or blame shifted to ‘so do you think you always complete the task, let me tell you about when you did...’

A simple technique, is with nice and respectful tone, when you are going off track, whoever started the conversation is the switch track spotter- ‘Hey I think we have switched track, can we finish this and then come back (at some time today) and discuss the point you have made?’

14. How do you handle the big 6? Which one is the biggest struggle for you?
15. Page 35, Assignment 1; Complete and be ready to discuss honestly the relational skills assessment for the week

16. Next week you will hear a podcast about attachment or when attachment is ruptured. How you attach with people is important to understand. Before next lesson you will have Dr. Gill's podcast to understand a little more on attachment.

Lesson 4: March 5th

Reading

FB: Chapter 6

RS: Lessons 3 & 4

Attachment Podcasts:

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/mhnrnetwork/introduction-to-attachment-and-relations>

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/mhnrnetwork/dr-gill-attachment-and-attachment-injuri>

Dan and Stephanie's Video Lesson

Personal Study and Discussion Questions:

1. In reading chapter 6 of FB book, what is your personal action goal. Please be prepared to share it with the group. What is one thing from each chapter you are convicted of or that you need to learn or apply from this chapter? What did you learn about yourself?
2. What did you learn or better understand about attachment and how your attachment in your family of origin and attachment with spouse can be connected?
3. Pg 45 discusses type of attachment with your family of origin. What was your family of origin teach or show about attachment?
4. Pg 46 Assignment 3- Fill out and discuss results with your group
5. Pg 60 Assignment 5, complete and discuss

Lesson 5: March 19th

Reading

FB: Chapter 7

RS: Lessons 5 and 6

Wilder Podcast: Changing Fear Bonds to Love Bonds

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/mhnrnetwork/fear-bonds-love-bonds-and-q-a-with-dr-ji>

If you prefer a video- same information on YT

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=toPDYyPZVM0>

Dan and Stephanie Video

Personal Study and Discussion Questions:

6. In reading chapter 7 of FB book, what is your personal action goal. Please be prepared to share it with the group. What is one thing from each chapter you are convicted of or that you need to learn or apply from this chapter? What did you learn about yourself?
7. Attachment impacts how we hear feedback and what was modeled, but your wiring, temperament and emotions impact it as well. What did you learn about you or the differences in you and your spouse?
8. What insight did you gain or want to discuss from fear bonds to love bonds?
9. Page 66 How does Joseph handle the big 6 and remain true to who he is and respond instead of react?
10. Page 67 Acting like myself- share a low to moderate story in your group of 3 or more- this is a short discussion
11. Pg 72 Assignment 5
12. Book of Psalms contains many examples of David sharing and feeling hard or the big 6 emotions. Write out a story like a psalm in a time you felt forsaken by God and how you came to realize God was for you. Do you rehearse these times God is with and for you when you are distressed?
13. Pg 86 Assessment

Lesson 6: April 2nd

Reading

FB: Chapter 8 & 9

RS: Lessons 7 & 8

On Jan 1, 2024 the podcast for Immunity to Change

What are your blockers for change?

Dan and Stephanie Video

Personal Growth and Discussion Questions:

14. In reading chapter 8 and 9 of FB book, what is your personal action goal. Please be prepared to share it with the group. What is one thing from each chapter you are convicted of or that you need to learn or apply from this chapter? What did you learn about yourself? This means one for chapter 8 and one for chapter 9.
15. What is a growth identity? Do you have one? Where are you resistant to change? Do you think changing your behavior or doing something new changes you?
16. Stopping the Sark/sarx- the flesh. What does that mean to you about you? Where do you tend to take matters in your own hands and create your own solution (pg 90)
17. Pages 94-95 what would it mean to or look like to be seen, heard, understood, glad to be with and have validation from your spouse? What does it look like for you to do those things for your spouse?
18. Assignment 5 on 98/99
19. Page 102, How comfortable are you hearing or receiving feedback from someone with different beliefs? Are you always right?
20. Page 106, number 1, what did you see/feel?
21. Are you protector, predator or possum?
22. Review chart page 112
23. Page 113 Assignment 5
24. Additional information from Wilder on sark/sarx what is your action point from this?

Lesson 7: April 23rd

Reading

FB: Chapter 10 & 11

RS: Lessons 9 & 10

Podcast on Boundaries and Change and Sorrow

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/mhnrnetwork/boundaries-vs-codependency-godly-sorrow->

Dan and Stephanie Video

Personal Growth and Discussion Questions:

25. In reading chapter 10 and 11 of FB book, what is your personal action goal. Please be prepared to share it with the group. What is one thing from each chapter you are convicted of or that you need to learn or apply from this chapter? What did you learn about yourself? This means one for chapter 10 and one for chapter 11.
26. How do you know when to set a boundary about feedback or when someone's feedback is putting a boundary on you?
27. Page 118 Think about you and your spouse in step 2 on high and low energy responders
28. Discuss step 2 page 120 about Peter and his emotions
29. Review pg. 122 step 2 Level 1-5 where are you struggling or growing?
30. Page 125 assignment 5 (goes on to next page)
31. Page 131, what are heart values you want to be seen in you, are they being displayed in a way that is meaningful to those you say are important to you? Does your family know what you value in them?
32. Page 133 Assignment 5

Lesson 8: May 7th

Reading

FB: Chapter 12; Skim 13

RS: Lessons 11 & 12

Podcast Our Interview with Coursey, author of book

Dan and Stephanie Video

Personal Growth and Discussion Questions:

33. In reading chapters 12 and 13 of FB book, what is your personal action goal. Please be prepared to share it with the group. What is one thing from each chapter you are convicted of or that you need to learn or apply from this chapter? What did you learn about yourself? Chapter 13 mostly business related so chapter 12 goal only.
34. What key points did you get from Coursey's interview?

35. Who is a person in your life that you feel demonstrates and role models maturity well according to Lesson 11?
36. Do you operate more in love or fear?
37. Have you been doing the gratitudes? Have you grown in appreciation?
38. Are you giving gratitude and coaching or still only wrong spotting? Can you learned to difference or right spot?
39. Page 143 where do you want to grow?
40. Discuss step 2 with your group from page 151.
41. How hard as it been to invite Immanuel in and relate to Him and with Him versus learn about Him?
42. Page 157 Relational Skills for the week chart

After the class, to continue your learning or as you build safety with each other:

Beginner skill: Emotionally healthy relationships by Scazzero

Community Temperature Reading

Small communication to do 2-3 times a week. Can be done over phone or zoom if you are in separate spaces.

This should take 10-12 minutes tops.

Start with: Appreciation or something joyful from your week to share

Worry or concern: I am worried about or I am puzzled by or help me understand why

Complaints and Solutions: I notice and I prefer

My new information: Sharing something simple about you, your day, changed appointments, exchanging information

Hope values: I hope or wish for- anticipating joy

Giving and Receiving Feedback: Skilled Dr. Holmes created from the book:

Feedback Order:

Feedback 5-7 min Man

Take a short bio break 3-5 min.

Feedback 5-7 min Woman

Break (bio break or quick break) or Pray or Read something together- repair.

Feedforward 2-3 min Man

Feedforward 2-3 min Woman

Man always goes first so that there is no rebuttal to the woman's feedback.

Definitions:

Feedback can only be from the past week (nothing further back than that)

It is not meant to catch every wrongdoing a person has done

One of the keys is succinctness and brevity

It is focused on things that fall Within the love busters that have caused pain/harm/hurt

This should be succinct in the 5 min time frame

So, keep it short

When you said or did or did not do----- I felt----- and that hurt or caused harm or disappointed me because----- what I would have liked or wished is.....

Feedforward is a reminder of what one likes and a specific ask

So next week if we disagree I would prefer a gentler tone when we argue

I would really like you to follow through on agreements

I really need to

I would like.....

It would make me feel special/valued/loved/heard

These can't be big asks or sexual in nature. It can be for nonsexual touch- handholding or hugs etc

Then the next time

We start with the positive

Hopefully, each person did what the other asked for and it changes slightly in order

Recognition

Him- I appreciate or recognize or notice you..... and that makes me feel or why I appreciate it

Her- same thing

Then

Feed Back

FeedForward

As we did before

We said once a week is best to practice. If you get off track, I recommend recording it to learn from later or share with a coach.

Another way to give feedback is the Ladder of integrity – Scazzero

You write it down and prepare before you give it- read it- stay on track

Each line has 1-2 sentences max

The tool I created from Scazzero's ladder looks like this

1. Right now the issue on my mind is...
2. I'm anxious or worried or concerned (whichever word you like) in bringing this up to you because...
3. My part in this is-
4. My need in this issue
5. My feelings about this are.....
6. What my reaction tells me about me is...
7. This issue is important to me because....
8. What I am willing to do, or not willing to do per our previous agreement is...
9. One thing I can do to improve communication on this issue is...
10. The most important thing I want you to know is
11. I think me being honest about my thoughts and feelings will help our relationship by
12. I hope and look forward to

After the speaker says all 12 things- keep each line 2 sentences or less

The listener says and repeats

1. To clarify, what you want me to know is
2. You are feeling
3. And you are willing or not willing to
4. And you hope this helps our relationship by
5. Is that correct

Other listening responses: to continue the conversation

You can add, tell me more about how this made you feel

You can add to help me understand how this impacted you

I want to know what I can do to help our relationship in this matter

If there is a need for repair or an apology?

The listener may ask something like what do you need from or what I can do to repair this.

The person can give some ideas

The listener can say I need to think about these and get back to you so I make an honest commitment or agree on the spot

Repeat back the agreement.

First time we will do all 12 before listener responds if that is too much we can retool next time line by line but we will discuss the process after we do it the first time.

Goals

Keep it under 30 min

Do not be defensive and explaining

Ladies, keep to the script!

Finally, we recommend our other study you can do as a self-study,
Escaping Enemy Mode

In the scheme of things, does your marriage glorify God?

We end with our podcast on that topic:

<https://www.spreaker.com/user/mhnrnetwork/does-your-marriage-glorify-god>

To continue your learning:

Our podcast has a new edition every Monday!

We have other courses coming up!

Are you stuck and need some 1 on 1 coaching?