

The Inner-Workings of People Problems

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If you have ever wondered about the inward workings of fear and anxiety, suicidal tendencies, feeling crazy, or long-term stress, the Winter 2010 Practical Family Living newsletter (see "Newsletter" link on the home page) will give you a basic framework for understanding these conditions.

Understanding intricacies people have will not always free you, but it may help you understand your own hard-to-understand problems or perhaps the mystifying traits of people in your life.

Recently our therapists gave a complementary seminar about difficult cases to ministers and leaders. People attending gave our therapists great reviews. Situations we see every day in the therapy room are not always as complex as some you will read about in our newsletter. However, every day that goes by, the therapists at the Center for Family Healing navigate the complex and difficult world of human problems.

Before understanding complex mental health problems, I took comfort in my young personal life in finding out all I could find out (that fit my point of view of course) about another person's thinking. I now believe in one's personal life, you do not have to *fully* understand the "reason" to let someone who has hurt you off the hook. We simply are commanded to do so by God AND He will give the grace to do the forgiving. (Not necessarily forgetting, but forgiving.)

The complex problems that people deal with can play a part in the "reason" people are unkind or seemingly mindless. However, understanding will not necessarily add to one's peace of mind. As you look to relating to yourself or to complicated people around you, there is another step toward peace of mind beyond believing certain things are not personal. That is: to ask God to make you willing to forgive. Not to forget a toxic situation, but to let the difficult person (including yourself when needed) off the hook.

The following is a response to the suggestion of letting go when the situation continues to be toxic: It has been made by Flora Morris Brown, Ph.D., at the website: *thinksimplenow.com*. These two suggestions are not about forgiving, but what to do after letting people off the hook. We can categorize her two strategies as self-protection and ethics.

1. Denying toxic people access to my inner circle and picking my battles

You can't remove manipulative, negative, angry people from the world at large, but you

certainly can keep them out of your immediate world.

2. Picking my battles.

Some issues must be addressed, not to make me right, but because it's the right thing to do. But there are other issues that aren't worth the energy and time.

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