

Becoming a Family that Heals

by Drs. Beverly and Tom Rodgers

Group Discussion Guide

The following questions can be used in small groups, book or Bible studies, Sunday school classes, or with a trusted friend, teacher, counselor, or pastor.

Chapter 1

1. In learning about the Soul-Healing Love model, can you see some wounds in your own childhood? What are they?

2. Discuss Jeremiah 30:17 and how the Lord wants to heal our soul wounds.

3. In what ways are you and your spouse opposites?

a. In the early part of your relationship (when the brain chemicals were sizzling) were these opposing areas what you were attracted to? In what way?

b. Do you fight about them today? Share how this happens.

Chapter 2

1. How is your own marriage a crucible of growth that can make you more balanced so that you can become everything you need to be for God's kingdom? (See page 19.)

2. Discuss how to effectively embrace your differences, learn to find a balance, and develop your Divine Us as a couple.

3. Write a vision statement of what you believe your Divine Us looks like. Discuss it with the other couples in your group.

Chapter 3

1. In looking at your family history, discuss how your childhood soul wounds affect your marriage and family today.

2. How does the old brain cause problems when your soul wounds are triggered?

3. Discuss the cure for reactivity that comes from triggered soul wounds. (See page 27.)

Chapter 4

1. What are some of the messages of your soul wounds (verbal and nonverbal)? How have you internalized and generalized these messages in your life?

2. Discuss how unhealthy messages can lead to unhealthy behaviors and adaptations.

3. Read Isaiah 41:9-10. How does this passage dispel the messages of soul wounds and help alleviate unhealthy adaptations?

Chapter 5

1. Discuss the generational transmission of dysfunction (the sins of the fathers) in your own family.

2. Review healing premise # 3: "To the degree that you are wounded, you can wound or be wounded by those closest to you." How do you see this premise active in your life?

3. Share about the redemptive power in Exodus 20, which tells of God's freedom from idolatry.

4. What is the difference between discipline and punishment?

Chapter 6

1. What are the two keys to stopping generational transmission of dysfunctions?

2. What are the four aspects of connection and how you can do these with your own kids?

3. Discuss the ways you as parents can negatively use your influence to provoke your children to wrath?

Chapter 7

1. Discuss the common areas for marital and family power struggles.

2. What part do brain chemicals play in a marital power struggle?

3. What part do soul wounds play in a family power struggle?

Chapter 8

1. Discuss the ways out of the power struggle (mindfulness, intentionality, sacrifice).

2. How can you explain these concepts to children?

3. How can the GIFT exercise help you become aware of the deeper emotion underneath your anger? Have someone demonstrate the GIFT exercise for your discussion group.

Chapter 9

1. Discuss how people who have suffered many soul wounds take family storms very hard.
2. Examine the story in Isaiah of the people of Judah and how they turned toward sin instead of God to deal with their “family storm.”
3. Share how in your own life you have seen that “adult children from really dysfunctional families have more depression, anxiety, lower self-esteem, and generally poorer coping mechanisms than those people who were not as wounded.”

Chapter 10

1. Discuss the Four R’s of Healing from family storms. Use the Scriptures at the end of Chapter 10 to go through each step.
2. Discuss how we can surrender our unhealthy adaptations to the Lord by reading and applying Isaiah 40:28-29, 31.
3. What are indulgences and how do they get in the way of our trusting the Lord with our lives?

Chapter 11

1. Share about the reality of the battle for the family and the things you have seen that point to this.
2. What is an “Alliance of Lies”?
3. Discuss what it means to renounce the lies of the enemy in our lives and in the lives of our families.

Chapter 12

1. What does it mean to ask the Lord to parent you?
2. Discuss why you think bad things happen to good people. You can refer to the poem on pages 121–22.
3. Share about the power of the Truster Reconstructor (page 126) in your own life. Find other passages of Scripture that you can personalize. Share these with the group.

Chapter 13

1. Describe how we commonly use criticism to share what we really need.

2. Discuss the nine basic needs listed in chapter 13 (page 133).

3. Share how requirement can equal resistance and keep us from meeting those basic needs in family members.

Chapter 14

1. How can listening with agape benefit your family?

2. Discuss the ineffective tools of family communication.

3. How is empathy—putting yourself in another's shoes—the key to unlocking love in family relationships?