



## **PARTICIPANT JOURNAL**

### **LESSON 5 | WHO ARE WE? | LEARNING TO TRULY SEE**

It's one thing to be able to identify the images of God and of ourselves that we have been shaped to believe, but it's entirely another thing to compassionately help others reach the same place of self-compassion and empathy. In a world where there are an unimaginable number of causes for the fear and anger that we receive from the woman in the grocery line, the coworker on the other end of the email, or the child that we're trying to help to school on time... can we actually experience true connection? How do we learn to see beneath all that is obvious on the surface within ourselves and in others?

### **THE TAPES WE PLAY IN OUR HEAD ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS**

People usually leave  
People don't show up  
People only want to be with me if I'm happy or agreeable  
People take advantage of me  
People tune me out (still face)  
People don't really want to know me  
People wear masks  
People expect me to 'suck it up'  
People can't hold/understand my struggle  
People bail if I make a mistake

### **TRIAD SHARING - ONE**

Which emotions were accepted in your family when you were growing up? (sadness, shame, fear, disgust, joy or excitement, anger).

Which emotions were not acceptable? How did you know?

Emotion is really the music of connection (remember the still face). When certain emotions or 'bids for connection' go unacknowledged in your relationships, do you become more anxious or avoidant?

What about when others bring their emotions or needs to you?

Anxious: protest, demand, criticize, and amplify the emotion in hopes of connecting

Avoidant: turn away, withdraw, avoid, and dismiss your needs and other's needs

### **TRIAD SHARING - TWO**

What do I push BELOW the waterline (the parts I keep hidden) ?

What do I expose ABOVE the waterline (the parts people see) ?

Is there a part of you that you've had to keep below the surface that you might be able to let someone safe see and share with you?

## GROUP SHARING

Share an example of a time when someone was able to 'see beneath' in your life? Perhaps when you got a gracious response you didn't feel you deserved? How did it impact you?

If we, as a Christ-shaped people, were able to: 'see beneath' in ourselves: (confess our false-self reactions; be aware of our anxious or avoidance responses) and 'see beneath' in others: (hold the inherent value of all people as image bearers, suspend judgment, and stay engaged); how might that change our witness in the world & our discourse in society?

Brene Brown says, "*Courage starts by showing up and letting ourselves be seen.*" What feelings come up for you when you read this? How do you know or discover when someone is safe enough to share "below the water line"?

Share your 'take away' from the lesson, your journal, or the group sharing time?

Share about your practice of 'Praying Psalm 23' this past week. Did it help you enter into the abundance of God's life ....did it help you come to the table? If so, how?

## DAILY PRACTICE FOR WEEK FIVE : SEEING BENEATH

In our day to day lives, we are often triggered by the comments and behaviors of others. This week, we bring to the Table all our emotions and all that resides 'under our waterline.' We know that God already knows us completely, and is not overwhelmed or seeking condemnation, but instead is seeking to bring healing and life to us. This week, practice shifting your focus internally and externally....from what is seen to what needs to be seen. Each time you notice yourself slipping into an accusatory posture toward yourself or others, gently allow yourself to shift into a posture of kindness and curiosity. God is with you and for you.

### **PRACTICE SHIFTING FROM 'ABOVE THE WATERLINE' QUESTIONS & ACCUSATIONS:**

*What is wrong with me?*

*What was I thinking?*

*Who do they think they are?*

*What's wrong with him...in her?*

*I can't believe they said that!*

### **TO 'BELOW THE WATERLINE' QUESTIONS & CURIOSITY:**

*What's happening BENEATH in me?*

*I wonder where that reaction came from?*

*Am I feeling sad, afraid, or lonely underneath all this anger/irritability?*

*I wonder what's happening BENEATH in him...in her?*

*I wonder what the rest of the story is?*

## BENEDICTION

*"May you go in the awareness that the God who reconciled you to himself through Christ, has given you the ministry of reconciliation and love; as you practice 'seeing beneath', may you be filled with the compassion and mercy needed to live as His body."*

2 Corinthians 5:18-19