



MY RELATIONAL HEALTH

“Facing Fears That
Ruin Relationships”

Genesis 3:6-19

February 18, 2024

HOW OUR FEARS RUIN RELATIONSHIPS

1. The fear of exposure makes me distant.

“God called to Adam, ‘Why are you hiding?’ Adam said, ‘I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.’” Genesis 3:9-10 (LB/TEV)

“They suddenly felt shame at their nakedness” Vs. 7a (NLT)

“...so they sewed fig leaves to cover up themselves.” Vs. 7b (NIV)

“Then they hid from God among the trees.” Vs. 8 (NIV)

2. My fear of disapproval makes me defensive

“God asked, ‘Did you eat ... what I told you not to eat?’ Adam answered, ‘YOU gave me this woman and SHE gave me the fruit!’” Gen. 3:12 (NIV)

“Then Eve said, ‘The SNAKE tricked me into eating!’” Gen. 3:13 (TEV)

3. My fear of losing control makes me demanding

“... You’ll have yearning for your husband, but he will lord it over you...” vs. 16 (NJB)

“... he will dominate you ...” (Berkley Version)

THE ANTIDOTE: Learn to live in God’s love

“Wherever God's love is, there is no fear, because God's perfect love drives out all fear.” 1 John 4:18a (NCV)

“It is the thought of punishment that makes a person fearful.”
John 4:18b (NCV)

1. EVERYDAY Surrender my heart to God

“Surrender your heart to God, turn to him in prayer, & give up your sins - even those you do in secret. Then you won't be ashamed; you will be confident & fearless. Your troubles will go away like water beneath a bridge, & your darkest night will be brighter than noon. Then you'll rest safe & secure, filled with hope and emptied of worry!” Job 11:13-18 CEV

2. EVERYDAY remember the way God loves me

✓ I'm completely accepted

“Jesus made us acceptable to God.” Titus 3:7 (CEV)

✓ I'm unconditionally loved

“My love for you will never end says the Lord.” Isaiah 54:10 (NIV)

✓ I'm totally forgiven

“There is NO condemnation for those in Christ Jesus!” Rom 8:1 (NIV)

✓ I'm **considered extremely valuable to God**

“You've been bought and paid for by Christ's death.” 1 Cor.7:23 (NIV)

3. EVERYDAY offer that same love to others

“Accept one another just as Christ accepted you.”
Romans 15:7 (NIV)

“Love never stops being patient, Love never stops believing, Love never stops hoping, Love never gives up!” 1 Corinthians 13:7 (GW)

RESPONSE QUESTIONS:

1. Facing what we really are can be very fearful because doing so reveals our weaknesses. In the process of building relationships, what kinds of past life situations can make us feel shameful?
2. Like Adam and Eve, when we don't follow God's instructions, we often find ourselves hiding from God and feeling far from him. What do you think are reasons for our hiding and feeling distant from God?
3. What does it look like to offer the type of love described in 1 Corinthians 13:7 to people who are often demanding or difficult, and with whom we interact frequently?
4. Imagine that you accept others as Christ has accepted you. How can offering this kind of love to others change our perspective when dealing with relationships we struggle with?
5. Look back at Job 11:13-18 & describe a time when surrendering your heart to God helped you alleviate fear & replace it with confidence. How could sharing this victory with others encourage them to surrender their fears to God?