

How frightening is the past that awaits us. Polish poet Antonin Slonimski

Excavating Ancient Ruins

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right, persevering, and steadfast spirit within me. Psalm 51:10, Amplified Version

- What past patterns are undermining our current relationship issues?

Did you know that we are often attracted to people and relationships that allow us to re-experience similar emotions—positive or negative—that were comfortable for us in the past? Oddly enough, we grow comfortable with frightened, inadequate, mistrustful, lonely, jealous, bored, deprived, neglected, pressured, unloved, humiliated, criticized, and constrained. We become comfortable with a certain level of intimacy, patterns of responding to others, etc. We may even gain a mastery at manipulating others to respond to us in ways that are upsetting but familiar to us. For example, did you know you are more likely to have a partner who cheats if you come from a family that experienced infidelity? You're also more likely to have an affair if you had a parent who cheated.

- What was my part in the problem?

Check the ones that apply:

- I never feel safe or secure.*
- I am a very dependent kind of person.*
- I struggle to connect emotionally to others.*
- I do not see myself as valuable.*
- I have trouble expressing myself.*
- I don't know how to have fun.*
- I am not able to set or accept realistic limits.*

The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance. I will praise the lord, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Psalm 16:6-8 NIV

Where's the hope?

All believers, come here and listen,
let me tell you what God did for me.
I called out to him with my mouth,
my tongue shaped the sounds of music.

If I had been cozy with evil,
the Lord would never have listened.

But he most surely did listen,
he came on the double when he heard my prayer.

Blessed be God: he didn't turn a deaf ear,
he stayed with me, loyal in his love.

Psalm 66:16–20, The Message

Trust God from the bottom of your heart;
don't try to figure out everything on your own.
Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go;
he's the one who will keep you on track.

Don't assume that you know it all.

Run to God! Run from evil!

Your body will glow with health,
your very bones will vibrate with life!

Honor God with everything you own;
give him the first and the best.

Your barns will burst,
your wine vats will brim over.

But don't, dear friend, resent God's discipline;
don't sulk under his loving correction.

It's the child he loves that God corrects;
a father's delight is behind all this.

Proverbs 3:5–12, The Message