

MORE Suggested Steps for Relationship Restoration

Oh, how I wish we had entire days to talk about these important principles that are helpful for relationship restoration! Alas, we do not. Two weeks ago, we laid down a biblical foundation that hopefully inspires us to care about figuring how to repair a relationship torn apart by betrayal. Last week, we covered the first three recommended steps that could begin the process of healing the wounds inflicted by love gone wrong. Today, we continue with the discussion. If you missed the prior two weeks of study, I suggest you order a cd, visit our web site, or whatever it takes to give you some context for understanding this week's message. I was particularly moved by one of the comments from the audience, lamenting the sad reality that sometimes people choose to give up on a relationship rather than repair it. If you're hoping for relationship restoration, but the other party is not, I'd suggest that you work these suggested steps solo. You can choose to change. You can acknowledge that it's tough. You can ask for feedback from others as you try to decide exactly what it is you need to change and how to do it. Although you may not be able to do this with the other participant in your own story, you can find a supportive group of people to help you learn how to apply these steps for yourself.¹

#4 – Expect resistance to change

- I don't have the right to ask for change.
- If I ask, I'll only be disappointed, so why bother?
- I shouldn't have to ask, he/she ought to know!
- It doesn't count if I had to ask.

¹ Some relationships cannot be restored to their "original" state, particularly in situations where chronic abuse has occurred. However, it is a worthy goal to work on finding resolution and healing from past betrayals.

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

- I can't trust change. It's really just another form of manipulation.
- Why should I have to change, I'm the offended party!?!)
- I'll change after he/she does.
- I'm too angry to do this. It would be dishonest to pretend to trust.

#5 – Learn constructive ways to talk about the betrayal and willingly use these techniques to talk about what happened.

- Ignoring, pretending, and hoping to just move forward without restoration of trust is unwise.
- If you're having more conversations in your head than with the other party, you may be using silence as a technique to avoid conversation.
- If you find yourself expressing your feelings without restraint, you've got some maladaptive assumptions that are allowing you to excuse your bad behaving. This is like drinking poison and expecting someone else to die. Unrestrained expression is counterproductive— so stop already!

#6 – If you find yourself unwilling or unable to talk constructively about this betrayal—

- Consider why you may not want to listen, and learn about why this is counterproductive. You may need help sorting this out. Learn how your past might affect the way you listen.