

SESSION FIVE – Homework Assignment

Re-read the first part of Chapter 12 from page 136 through page 143. Because of the important content of those pages we strongly suggest that you re-read them.

As you read that chapter, you will be formally introduced to the Recovery Components and will read in some detail about all three, but especially about Forgiveness.

Then, with your Relationship Graph in front of you, you are going to convert the events on your relationship graph into Recovery Components. Remember the components are Apologies, Forgiveness [or Acknowledgements of painful events], and Significant Emotional Statements. Here is a reprint from the book, pages 142-143:

Now take out your Relationship Graph. Go through it one event at a time and assign a recovery category to each event. Generally, above-the-line events will be either apologies or significant emotional statements. Below-the-line events will be either forgiveness or significant emotional statements. Some events will require two categories, especially negative events. For example, “Dad, thank you for taking me to my ball game” (Significant Emotional Statement). But, “I need to forgive you for telling me that I was the worst player there” (Forgiveness).

Many events on your graph will have a corresponding entry in at least one recovery category. Don’t be overly concerned if you repeat communications that you think you may have already said to someone. Don’t worry if there’s more than one event with the same recovery communication. Later you will have an opportunity to refine everything you have done in this exercise. Don’t edit. Just get it all down on paper.

It’s sometimes confusing to figure out exactly which recovery category or component each event fits into. Some things can go one of two ways. For example: “Dad, I really appreciated all the time you spent playing baseball with me.” That would be a Significant Emotional Statement. Or, “Dad, I remember how often you played ball with me. I’m sorry I never told you how much it meant to me.” That would be an apology. And, you could actually blend the two categories, by saying, “I really appreciated the time you spent playing ball with me, and I’m sorry I never took the time to tell you.”

On the other hand, it could be a negative Significant Emotional Statement and a Forgiveness: “Dad, it upsets me that you never could find the time to play with me, and I forgive you for that.”

You may have more entries in one category than the others. That’s fine. Pay attention to the length of your lists. If they start becoming very long, you may be repeating the same thing in different ways. You will have an opportunity to condense it in the next homework assignment. You may or may not have an emotional response while doing this assignment. Either way is ok, as long as you tell the truth. You will also be saying that you “need” to forgive or apologize or make a statement – you don’t have to issue these commentaries yet.