

## TOPIC 3

### Choosing Our Focus

#### Private Disciplines

1 Corinthians 13:7

Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves.

You love your child more than life itself, but how can you express a love that builds bridges to Jesus and strengthens the relationship?

In every relationship, there is a gap from time to time between what we expect and what we experience.

Sometimes, this division feels like an earthquake, splitting our lives apart and creating feelings of fear, panic, and being overwhelmed.

This can trigger a biological reaction called the Fight, Freeze, Flight survival reaction.

Fight evokes emotions of frustration, anger, and rage. Flight triggers panic, fear, and anxiety. If our response is Freeze, we experience helplessness, numbness, hopelessness, and depression.

Not to make light of this because these feelings are real and serious, the result of the trauma we go through each time we encounter a significant gap, such as a child coming out.

But whether we realize it or not, there is a choice we make every time we encounter this gap.

In the midst of these intense emotions, it may seem like we have no choice, but we always do.

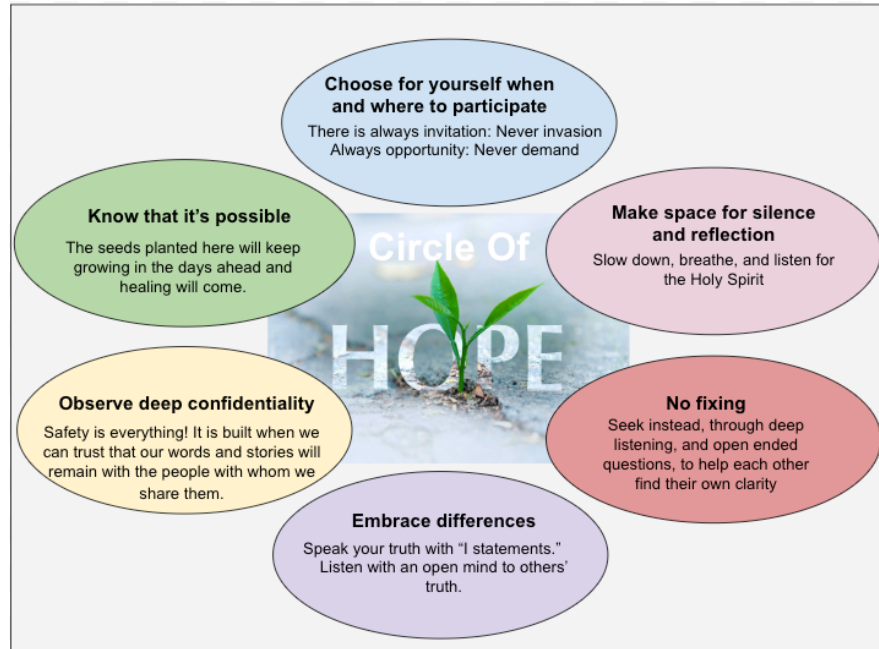
When expectations and experience don't align, we choose what to put into that gap, what we focus on.

If we can fill the gap with love, aided by the power of the Holy Spirit and the assistance of others, the reality of what Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13:7 begins to take shape.

**This love will help us build bridges to Jesus so that we do not lose or damage the relationship with our child.**

If we focus on the Fight, Freeze, Flight emotions in the gap, we will inadvertently create an environment that widens the gap even though it is the last thing we want to happen.

### Circle of Hope Boundaries



For Circles of Hope to be restorative for those struggling with spiritual trauma, there must be clearly defined boundaries, the kinds of boundaries that create a safe space for the soul.

### CIRCLE OF HOPE TOPIC

What main triggers seem to cause you to focus on the Fight, Freeze, or Flight responses, making it difficult to focus on love and trust the Holy Spirit to help build bridges to Jesus?