**Verbal & Emotional Abuse**

**How it affects us**

**A person holding a sign

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Loss of self-worth…

Loss of self-confidence…

Loss of self-respect...

Loss of hope

**Victim Survivor Conqueror Ministry**

**A picture containing LEGO, toy, building

Description automatically generated**

**Verbal & Emotional Abuse**

“You’re worthless!”… “You’ll never amount to anything!”…”I wish you had never been born!”…Words like these in childhood can wound the heart for a lifetime. And further wounding takes place in adulthood when “control” is the name of the game. Threats like…”If you leave me, I’ll hurt the children!” or I’ve taken the keys-you’re not going anywhere!”…are both emotionally and verbally abusive and are ways of maintaining control in relationships. Abuse can also be perpetrated without a word-whether with degrading looks, obscene gestures, or threading behaviors. These actions inflict immense pain and impede emotional growth. You don’t have to allow an abuser to make you feel worthless. Jesus says that God not only knows every sparrow, but He also knows you intimately and considers you to be of great worth.

*“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.” Luke 12:6-7*

**What Is Emotional Abuse?**

Emotional abuse is the unseen fallout of all other forms of abuse: physical, mental, verbal, sexual, and even spiritual abuse. People often minimize the importance of emotions. Yet with deeply wounded people, their feelings can be the driving force behind their choices…the life-sustaining element of their very beings. Emotional abuse strikes at the very core of who we are…crushing our confidence…wearing away our sense of worth…crushing our spirit. The Bible says,

*“A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.”*

*Proverbs 17:22*

***. Emotional Abuse*** is any ongoing, negative behavior used to control or hurt another person. Emotional abuse ranges from consistent indifference to continual belittling of character.

-All forms of abuse-emotional, verbal, mental, physical, spiritual, and sexual-damage a person’s sense of dignity and Yahweh’s (God)-given worth.

-All forms of abuse wound the spirit of a person and, therefore, are emotionally abusive. Proverbs, the book of wisdom, says,

*“A crushed spirit who can bear?” Proverbs 18:14*

***. Emotional Abuse*** or “psychological mistreatment” scars the spirit of the one abused.

-The damage from emotional abuse lasts far longer than damage from any other kind of abuse. A broken arm will soon heal; a broken heart takes much longer.

*“Hope deferred makes the heart sick.” Proverbs 13:12*

***.Emotional abuse*** can be passive-aggressive.

-***Passive-aggressive abusers*** express their anger through nonassertive, covert behavior. In an attempt to gain covert control, they often use manipulation as a means of placing themselves in a position of dependence. Then, with underlying anger, they become faultfinders of the people on whom they depend.

-***Victims of passive-aggressive people*** feel perplexed and dismayed at being the target of punitive and manipulative behaviors.

-***Friends of passive-aggressive abusers*** often become enmeshed in trying to comfort or console them in response to their claims of unjust treatment and their inability to handle life on their own.

Passive-aggressive abusers need to recognize and resolve their very real anger and take to heart Yahweh’s (God’s) warning…

*“Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.” Ecclesiastes 7:9*

***.Emotional abuse*** can be either ***overt or covert rejection.***

***-Overt rejection*** conveys the message that a person is unwanted or unloved (as when one is belittled as a child).

***-Covert rejection*** takes place in subtle ways that may or may not be intended to cause harm by the perpetrator (as when one is ignored as a child).

**What is Verbal Abuse?**

Verbal abuse is a form of overt, emotional abuse. A skilled woodsman wields his weapon carefully, chopping repeatedly on a precise spot until the targeted tree falls. This lumberjack takes pride in controlling himself and his weapon, never striking a careless blow. Likewise, a verbal abuser uses his tongue as a weapon to hack away at another person. This abuser is skilled in his ability to strike a blow-wielding words that caustically cut the heart.

*“You love every harmful word, O you deceitful tongue!”*

*Psalm 52:4*

***. Verbal abuse*** is the systematic, ongoing use of harmful words or a sharp tone to control or dominate another person.

-***Abuse*** means mistreatment: the destructive misuse of something or someone.

***-Verbal abuse*** is always destructive.

*“Your tongue plots destruction; it is like a sharpened razor, you who practice deceit.” Psalm 52:2*

***. Verbal abuse*** injures the feelings of others with reviling, insulting, or contemptuous words.

*“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.” Matthew 5:11*

***. Verbal abuse*** often seeks to injure the reputation of others…

-using tactics such as backbiting, barbs, or belittling talk

-using strategies such as slander, slurs, and lies

*“You love evil rather than good, falsehood rather than speaking the truth.” Psalm 52:3*

**What Is Brainwashing?**

Many prisoners of war have succumbed to brainwashing-an effective tactic used in psychological warfare. This term refers to a systematic, forcible indoctrination that puts pressure on prisoners to relinquish their beliefs and accept opposing beliefs. Unfortunately, you don’t have to be in prisoner of war camp to be brainwashed. Your captor could be a significant member of your own family or a new set of acquaintances. In whatever circumstances brainwashing occurs, the damage can be devastating…systemically wearing away your sense of self-worth and confidence…causing you to distrust yourself and even to lose touch with reality.

*“These people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may be zealous for them.” Galatians 4:17*

**Verbal and Emotional Tactics Employed by Those Who Brainwash Others**

***. Verbal Brainwashing***

-Intimidation…..Implying that your failure to comply with all

demands or to adopt all the abuser’s attitudes or

beliefs will result in severe consequences

-Indoctrination…Repeatedly implanting messages contrary to your

Presently held values or beliefs

-Discrediting…...Belittling your “outside” family and friends who

Disagree with the abuser

-Degrading……..Engaging in name-calling, insults, ridicule, and

Humiliation

-Labeling……….Claiming that your thoughts are childish, stupid,

Or crazy

*“They do not speak peaceably but devise false accusations against those who live quietly in the land.”*

*Psalm 35:20*

***. Emotional Brainwashing***

-Isolation……………. …Depriving you of all outside sources of

Emotional and social support

-Induced exhaustion……Keeping you up late, interrupting your sleep,

Causing sleep deprivation, wearing you

Down physically or emotionally

-Excessive compliance...Militantly enforcing trivial demands

-Ignoring……………....Withdrawing emotional support but later

Denying the withdrawal

-Forgetting……………..Intentionally failing to keep promises and

Agreements

-Exploiting……………..Using you or someone close to you for

Selfish interests or gain

*“The enemy pursues me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in darkness like those long dead. So, my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed.”*

*Psalm 143; 3-4*

**Characteristics of Verbal and Emotional Abuse**

Words possess immense power. Through a word, Yahweh (God) created the world. The Word, who was made flesh (John 1:14), Yahweh (God) saved the world. Words can be life-giving as well as life-threatening-life-giving by inspiring us to be all we were meant to be…life threatening by destroying our hopes and dashing our dreams. Ultimately, words move from being positive to being abusive when they hurt our hearts and harm our relationships. The Bible says,

*“The tongue has the power of life and death.”*

*Proverbs 18:21*

**Are your words Grievous or Gracious?**

Words have the ability to build others up or to tear others down.

*“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”*

*Ephesians 4:29*

**Words That Hurt Words That Heal**

**. Attacking a Person’s identity . Addressing a Person’s Action**

**-**You ***are*** inherently wrong -You ***did*** something wrong

-You ***are*** intrinsically bad -You ***did*** something bad

**. Yelling . Discussing**

-“Shut up” -“Please listen, we need to talk

-“You look awful.” About (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_).”

**. Name-calling . Casting a Vision**

**. Insulting . Complimenting**

-“You stupid idiot!” -“You are good at(\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_).”

-“You crazy fool!” -“You have positive qualities.”

**. Insulting . Complimenting**

-“You’re worthless!” -“Your life has tremendous value.”

-“You’re disgusting -“I can see areas where you have

Much appeal!”

**. A Negative Picture of the Past . A Positive Picture of the Past**

-“I wish you’d never been born -“I was glad the day you were born.”

-“I should have had an abortion.” -“I knew God had a special purpose

For you when you were born.”

**. A Negative Picture of the Past . A Positive Picture of the Past**

-“You can’t do anything right.” -“You do a lot of things right.”

-“Get lost!” -“You’ll always have a home in

My heart.”

**. A Negative Picture of the Past . A Positive Picture of the Future**

-“You’ll never amount to anything.” -“Yahweh (God) has a wonderful plan for

Your life.”

-You’re hopeless.” -“Yahweh (God) has a future filled with hope

For you.”

*“’I know the plans I have for you’, declares the Elohim (Lord), ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”*

*Jeremiah 29:11*

**What are the Familiar Faces of Abuse?**

Abuse wears many faces-faces as varied as the people who give it and receive it. Abuse can be subtle or blatant, quiet or loud, smooth or abusive. But with all its differences, abuse is always either verbal or nonverbal in delivery, and it always deeply impacts your *personal* and *social life.*

*“His speech is smooth as butter, yet war is in his heart; his words are more smoothing than oil, yet they are drawn swords.”*

*Psalm 55:21*

**What Characterizes Classic Passive-Aggressive Behavior?**

Passive-aggressive behavior is a form of *covert control. Overt abuse*, such as physical bashing, verbal raging, or name-calling, is easy to identify, but *covert abuse,* like shunning, slighting, ignoring, can be much more difficult to detect, though it is just as emotionally abusive. Passive-aggressive people express anger indirectly and seek to make their points in evasive, underhanded, or deceitful ways. While some people are unaware that they engage in such hurtful behavior patterns, others are quite intentional in their actions. The Bible makes it clear that…

*“No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence.”*

*Psalm 101:7*

Tactics used in this type of emotional abuse may include the following:

***.Invalidating*…**”I never said that.”…”Your recall is wrong”…”I don’t know

You are talking about.”

***.Minimizing…***”You’re just to sensitive”…”You’re exaggerating”…”You’re

Making a big deal out of nothing.”

***.Countering…***”You couldn’t possibly feel that way.”…”You’ve got it all

Wrong.”…”You don’t know what you are talking about.”

***.Trivializing…***”If you had really studied for the test, you could have made

A 100 instead of a 98.”…”Your efforts really fell short.”…

You’re giving yourself too much credit.”

**Methods of Sabotage**

To gain covert control and personal power, the passive, emotionally abusive person will use some of the following methods.

***.Fostering chaos…***Controlling others by intentionally leaving work and

Projects incomplete

***.Lying or misleading…***Controlling others with unjustified excuses for not

Fulfilling commitments

***.Procrastinating…***Controlling others by intentionally missing deadlines,

Thus, displaying no regard for the negative impact on

Others

***.Being chronically late…***Controlling others by keeping people waiting

***.Being ambiguous…***Controlling others by sending mixed messages, leaving

Others in a wake of confusion about what was said or

What was meant

***.Instructing…***Controlling others by offering unsolicited advice on a

Continual basis

***.Being passively indifferent…***Controlling others by giving the impression

That their concerns are heard and important,

But then disregarding them

***.Protecting and helping…***Controlling others by extending help with the

Intention of causing a sense of indebtedness

***.being a “quick-change artist”…***Controlling others by changing the subject

And diverting attention from

conversations that feel personally

threatening

***.Withholding affirmation…***Controlling others by failing to give deserved

Compliments and deserved credit

***.Crossing boundaries…***Controlling others by taking advantage of those

With little or no personal boundaries

When Saul’s men were sent to watch David’s house and to kill him, David prayed,

*“For the sins of their mouths, for the words of their lips, let them be caught in their pride.”*

*Psalm 59:12*

**What are Examples of Emotionally Abusive Rejection?**

Rejection is common to all of us. We have been unjustly rejected by a prospective employer, not chosen by a team captain, jilted by a suitor, or ignored by an acquaintance. Yet while we may have had our feelings hurt or our egos wounded, it didn’t last long and left no permanent scars. However, some types of rejection can cut like a knife and pierce like an arrow to the heart.

*“Not a word from their mouth can be trusted; their heart is filled with destruction. Their throat is an open grave; with their tongue they speak deceit.” Psalm 5:9*

**Victims of Abuse May Experience…**

Loss of self-worth…

Loss of self-confidence…

Loss of self-perception…

Loss of happiness…

Loss of freedom…

Loss of inner peace…

Loss of security…

Loss of self-assurance…

Loss of trust…

Loss of sexual identity…

Loss of a clear conscience…

Loss of friendship…

Loss of faith…

Loss of safety…

Loss of self-respect…

Loss of optimism…

Loss of pride…

Loss of hope

*“Those Yahweh (God) foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”*

*Romans 8:29*

**What is the Cost of Being Constantly Abused?**

There is always a price to be paid for pain…a loss to be incurred by the recipient of abusive words and hurtful gestures. The cost is often unseen…an extensive, inner deprivation that can continue to damage the soul for a lifetime.

*“The tongue brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.” Proverbs 15:4*

**Question: “What hope is there for someone broken by abuse?**

**Answer:** For the one who has been broken by abuse. Yahweh (God) offers great hope. That hope is in Himself. Begin to deepen your dependence on the Elohim (Lord) and seek His comfort and healing.

*“Blessed is he…whose hope is in the Elohim (Lord) his Adnoai (God)…who remains faithful forever.” Psalm 146:5-6*

*“The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” Psalm 34:18*

**Causes of Abuse**

“How can he be so cruel?” How can she be so insensitive?” “Why would he talk that way?” These are ***real questions*** that victims of abuse may wonder or ask. Understanding the ***real answers*** can give you wisdom and discernment regarding your relationships.

*“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.” Psalm 51:6*

**What Breeding Ground Brings Forth Abusers?**

Has someone implied that you are abusive? If so, and if what has been said has a kernel of truth to it, do you want to change? In order to heal from the wounds of the past, you need to face the fact that your past was painful. Then acknowledge and seek to understand the painful impact those wounds have had on your relationships, both past and present. At this point, you can courageously choose to face the areas in your life that need healing…or you can refuse to do so and remain a victim of your past…and continue to make others victim of your past as well.

*“Heal me O Elohim (Lord), and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise.”*

*Jeremiah 17:14*

**Question: “Why do people who are being abused continue to stay in abusive relationships?**

**Answer:** One major reason is fear. Isaiah 21:4 says, “*My heart falters, fear makes me tremble.”* Instilling fear is a powerful weapon used to control another person. One effective strategy that instills fear is the use of demeaning messages, such as verbal threats to inflict physical harm. Another fear tactic is to leave or to withdraw emotional support. The basic underlying fear, however, is the fear of not having the three basic needs met-the need for love, for significance, and for security. Yet the Elohim (Lord) wants us to turn from fear to faith and to trust Him to meet our deepest needs.

*“Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Elohim (Lord) is kept safe.” Proverbs 29:25*

**Wrong Belief of Victims:**

“I am responsible for the way others treat me. I deserve to be mistreated because, at my very core, I am a bad person. Therefore, bad things should happen to me. If I would just be a better person, people would treat me better. I don’t have a choice about being mistreated. I must be doing something wrong or I wouldn’t be treated this way. If I just try harder to do what is expected, I can make things better. If I can’t, maybe I deserve to be unhappy.”

**Right Belief of Victims:**

“I realize that I have been living a lie, believing that I am to blame for being mistreated and believing that my happiness will come from a human relationship. I have a choice about being around anyone who mistreats me. I don’t want to have a false loyalty to anyone who abuses me. Nor do I want to have the false expectation that if I can just change, the abuse will stop. I will no longer live for the approval of others but will rely on the Elohim (Lord) to meet my inner needs-because my value and worth come from Him, and He loves me unconditionally. Only the Elohim (Lord) can meet all my needs.”

*“Am I trying to win the approval of men, or of Yahweh (God)? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Messiah (Christ).” Galatians 1:10*

**Question: “How can I overcome the damage that I suffered in my past? Why do I keep repeating the same unhealthy relational patterns, and how can I change these harmful behaviors?”**

**Answer:** Yahweh (God) often allows difficulties in life to wake us up to our need to understand our personal attitudes and actions, and then with the understanding we can take responsibility for them. You will be drawn to the same relational dynamics over and over until you overcome the past by allowing Yahweh (God) to train you and to produce a harvest of peace and righteousness in you.

*“Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but Yahweh (God) disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”*

*Hebrews 12:10-11*

**Can You Have Victory over Verbal Abuse?**

Is there any hope for those who have been verbally abused? Granted, no magic dust will defuse the dynamic, but with hard, consistent work, progress can be made…change can occur…and victory can be achieved. Those who seek to control or to overpower you with verbal bombardments may not be as strong and self-assured as they appear. If they express inappropriate anger toward you, realize that their assaults are not about you, but about them! The source of their insensitive attacks is a heart that suffers from emotional deficits originating in the past and from their choice to respond to those deficits by abusing others. Additionally, be aware that you yourself may have unresolved anger from abuse in your past that magnifies the abuse you are experiencing now.

*“Get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Messiah (Christ) Elohim (God) forgave you.”*

*Ephesians 4:31-32*

**How to Change the Course of an Abusive Relationship.**

You can curtail verbal and emotional abuse by developing a plan to prevent yourself from being controlled. You cannot change someone else, but you change yourself so that the abusive tactics previously used on you are no longer effective. As you determine the appropriate boundaries, realize that these boundaries are designed to protect your heart. The Bible says,

*“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.”*

*Proverbs 4:23*

**After Determining Your Plan of Action…**

**#1 State clearly, in a conversation or a letter, what you are willing to accept and not accept from the abuser.**

*“A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered.” Proverbs 17:27*

**#2 Announce the consequence you will enforce if the abuser violates your requests.**

*“A man reaps what he sows.” Galatians 6:7*

**#3 Enforce the consequence *every single time* the abuse occurs.**

“Let your ‘Yes be yes, and your ‘No,’no.” James 5:12

**#4 Absolutely do not negotiate.**

*“When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.” Proverbs 10:19*

**#5 Never “react” when your boundary is violated-only respond.**

*“The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride. Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.” Ecclesiastes 7:8-9*

**#6 Solicit the support of one or two wise, objective people the help you through this process.**

*“Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.” Proverbs 19:20*

The time that it takes to disassemble and disable an abusive relationship is limited. But during that limited, expect manipulative maneuvers and emotional ups and downs. Assume that your actions will make the abuser angry. Allow your abuser to react without in turn reacting yourself. Do not seek to placate this person-it won’t work. Think of this period as comparable to having surgery. It is painful experience, but it provides the only hope for healing and having a new, healthy relationship.

*“The tongue of the wise brings healing.”*

*Proverbs 12:18*

**How Do You Confront and Cope with Emotionally Abusive People?**

Although victims of verbal and emotional abuse generally feel inadequate and powerless to stop an abusive relationship, appropriate confrontation is often necessary to defuse emotional abuse. Ignoring it won’t make it go away. Wishful thinking won’t make it better. And believing that loyalty means remaining quiet is dangerously erroneous.

When hurtful words and actions are exposed as unacceptable and viewed as intolerable, the foundation is laid for change to occur. That change will come slowly and will be met with much resistance by the abuser. When power is the goal and control is at stake, an unrepentant abuser will repeatedly change tactics to maneuver around each boundary you set, always looking for some way to put you in a position to be manipulated. To remain silent in such a relationship is not love but fear…and is harmful rather than helpful.

*“Better is open rebuke than hidden love.”*

*Proverbs 27:5*

**Start Educating Yourself**

**.** Emotional abuse can be going on for years before victims realize the difficult dynamics in their relationships.

**.** Abusers can be calculating, and their behavior may be deliberate and designed to keep them in control.

**.** Once your eyes are opened to the tactical behavior of the abuser, much of your discouragement will begin to dissipate. (Only then will you be able to establish a more level playing field.)

*“Let the wise listen and add to their learning and let the discerning get guidance.” Proverbs 1:5*

**Set Boundaries**

**.** Communicate that you will not be treated with disrespect.

**.** Be specific about what behavior is unacceptable.

**.** Refuse to accept excuses and reasons for repeated inconsiderate behavior.

*“Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.” Proverbs 12:18*

**Seize the Moment**

**.** Speak up as soon as the abuser begins to change the subject or to twist your words around to mean something other than what you intended.

**.** When abusers say something absurd, repeat it back to them.

**.** Remain clam. Your abuser wants a strong reaction from you.

*“The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouts of a ruler of fools.” Ecclesiastes 9:17*

**Seek to Surface the Other Person’s Hostility**

**.** Acknowledge that you sense the anger in the other person.

**.** Confirm that being angry is permissible. (Never attempt to humor an abuser out of anger.)

**.** A person may need help recognizing the cause of the anger, but don’t try to psychoanalyze the individual.

*“The purposes of a man’s heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.” Proverbs 20:5*

**Soften the Confrontation Process**

**.** Confront the behavior, not the person.

**.** Avoid threats, sarcasm, hostility, put-downs, or judgment of the other person’s intentions.

**.** When you don’t get a clear, direct, to-the-point answer, ask again (respectfully).

*“Live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”*

*Ephesians 4:1-3*

**Stay in the Present**

**.** Focus on the issues at hand.

**.** Don’t bring up past issues.

**.** Don’t let the other person get you off track.

*“Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.”*

*Proverbs 4:25-27*

**Squelch Unrealistic Expectations**

**.** Don’t put your hope in any expectation that an abuser will change but put your confidence in Yahweh (God) and in His sufficiency.

**.** Be aware that you cannot make the abuser change no matter what you do, how much you try, or how good you are as a person.

**.** Know that change will occur only after the abuser admits to having a problem and begins to receive the help and support needed to turn from that problem.

*“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

*1 John 1:8-9*

**How Do You Build Personal Boundaries?**

All countries establish clear geographical boundaries, and some even protect these boundaries by strict control of who enters or leaves. Additionally, laws are established that apply to everyone living or traveling within those boundaries. People need to do the same! Certainly not with roadblocks, soldiers, and guns, but Yahweh (God) does want us to establish personal boundaries in our relationships to preserve our own emotional health and to protect the treasure Yahweh (God) has in us. We need to strictly guard who has access to our hearts and minds. Do you feel that someone often takes advantage of you? Are you expected to meet the needs of someone else? Do certain people expect you to help them, but then fail to help you when you need help? Does someone take advantage of you at work by piling one priority on top of another? Do you feel manipulated by someone’s lies, half-truths, procrastination, and lateness? These are all examples of a ***lack of emotional boundaries.*** When these kinds of breeches occur often, they are significant threats to your being free to serve Yahweh (God) and to become all He wants you to be. Learn to ***draw the line*** with people who would cross your boundaries and put you in bondage!”

*“It is for freedom that Messiah (Christ) has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”*

*Galatians 5:1*

**Step #1: Place boundaries around your heart.**

*“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.”*

*Proverbs 4:23*

**Step #2: Learn that it’s okay to say no.**

*“Let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’”*

*Matthew 5:37*

**Step #3: Start being assertive.**

*“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.”*

*Matthew 18:15*

**Step #4: Draw the line.**

*“Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.”*

*Proverbs 27:6*

**Step #5: Appropriate Yahweh’s (God’s) will for your life.**

*“You did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’”*

*Romans 8:15*

**Can God Heal Your Broken Heart?**

No one escapes the pain of a broken heart. In the Hebrew language, the meaning of the word translated “brokenhearted” is literally “shattered.” And no one lives very long in this fallen world without experiencing that “shattering” and the all-encompassing pain that accompanies it. Many never heal from heartbreak because they avoid dealing with their pain by blocking out, denying, or burying the memories. But the path the Lord has prepared will heal your deepest hurts if you allow Him into the innermost part of your heart where He can spread His balm throughout your entire being…spirit, soul, and body.

**What are the Steps to Recovery for Victims of Abuse?**

Recovery-healing-is a process that occurs over time and is a result of hard, but productive work. Rarely is it accomplished in a moment or in a single experience. All the practical insights and suggested solutions for recovery can be summed up in nine steps that are illustrated in the following confessions.

**Step one:**

“I recognize that I am powerless to heal the damaged emotions resulting from abuse, and I look to Yahweh (God) for the power to make me whole.”

**Step Two:**

“I acknowledge that Yahweh’s (God’s) plan for my life includes victory over the experience of abuse.”

**Step Three:**

“The person who abused me is responsible for the acts committed against me and for the words spoken to me. I will not accept the guilt and the shame resulting from those acts or words.”

**Step Four:**

“I am looking to Yahweh (God) and His Word to find my identity as a worthwhile and loved human being.”

**Step Five:**

“I am honestly sharing my feelings with Yahweh (God) and with at least one other person as I try to identify those areas needing cleansing and healing.”

**Step Six:**

“I am accepting responsibility for my response to being abused.”

**Step Seven:**

“I am willing to accept Yahweh’s (God’s) help in the decision to forgive myself and those who have offended me and to trust Him in the process of doing so.”

**Step Eight:**

“I am willing to mature in my relationship with Yahweh (God) and with others.”

**Step Nine:**

“I am willing to be used by Yahweh (God) as an instrument of His healing and restoration in the lives of others.”

*“You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to you and not be silent. O Elohim (Lord) my Yahweh (God), I will give you thanks forever.”*

*Romans 7:24-25*

Material taken from: Verbal & Emotional Abuse, Victory over Verbal and Emotional Abuse by June Hunt Hope for the Heart

**Verbal & Emotional Abuse Workbook**

1. **What Is Emotional Abuse? Have you experienced emotional abuse in the past? If, so how?**
2. ***What is Overt rejection?***
3. ***What is Covert rejection?***
4. **What is Verbal Abuse? Have you experienced verbal abuse?**
5. **What Is Brainwashing?**
6. **Is brainwashing a form of verbal & emotional abuse?**
7. **Name five ways to verbal brainwash.**
8. **Name six ways to emotionally brainwash.**
9. **Are your words Grievous or Gracious? Name some Grievous words. Name some Gracious words.**
10. **What are the Familiar Faces of Abuse?**
11. **What does Psalm 55:21 say about an abuser?**
12. **Passive-Aggressive Behavior is a form of what type control? Are you Passive-Aggressive?**
13. **Name four types of behavior patterns of a passive-aggressive person, and name two ways the tactics are used.**
14. **Is sabotage a form of covert control?**
15. **Name as many methods of sabotage that you can & how they have been used on you.**
16. **Can rejection be an example of emotional abuse? If yes then how?**
17. **What is the Cost of Being Constantly Abused?**
18. **“What hope is there for someone broken by abuse?**
19. **“Why do people who are being abused continue to stay in abusive relationships? Did you stay? Why?**
20. **What is the wrong belief 0f Victims?**
21. **What is the right belief of Victims?**
22. **Does Galatians 1:10 relate to these belief systems?**
23. **“How can I overcome the damage that I suffered in my past? Why do I keep repeating the same unhealthy relational patterns, and how can I change these harmful behaviors?”**
24. **Can I Have Victory over Verbal Abuse?**
25. **What are the 6 steps you can use to change the course of an abusive relationship?**
26. **There are 7 S’s to confronting & coping with emotionally abusive people, name them.**
27. **How Do I Build Personal Boundaries?**
28. **What are the Steps to Recovery for Victims of Abuse?**