

MAKING PEACE WITH YOUR PAST SUPPORT GROUP

Foundational Concepts

1. People from wounded or dysfunctional families feel and act in predictable patterns.
2. The damaging results of growing up in a dysfunctional family can hinder the development of a healthy Christian faith.
3. **You must face your past to overcome it.**
 - What you do not confront will not change.
 - Emotional baggage should be unpacked.
4. **Feelings can be hard to find.** This group process is about *finding and validating all feelings and discovering appropriate ways of expressing one's feelings*
 - Feedback helps people discover their feelings.
5. Group members usually feel worse **BEFORE** they feel better.
6. **Boundaries** must be established or repaired.
7. You can move beyond the pain of your past into a life of spiritual and emotional wholeness.
8. You cannot make this journey alone. (James 5:16; Galatians 6:1-6)
9. God is the ultimate source for healing on this journey. Jesus Christ is the Wounded Healer who helps us confront our past, be healed and freed from it, and move beyond the past ... but I must cooperate fully. The choice is mine. (Hebrews 4:12-16)
10. This is a Christ-centered group based on sound biblical and psychological truth.
11. Affirmation can change the way people think. You will learn eleven (11) affirmations to affirm yourself and others during this group process.

PRECEPTS FOR THE SUPPORT GROUP

1. **Spouses or close friends should not be in the same small group.** This permits each person to work on his/her own "inner stuff" without getting hooked into the other person's issues. Do not both register for the same day, time, and location.
2. **Take care of yourself.** You are encouraged to push yourself, to work hard, but you have responsibility to determine how far or what you are willing to do. You can say "No" or "Pass."
3. All group members must **sign the covenant** ... and help the group keep the covenant. This provides security and safety for the group. The Group is to be a "safe place."
4. **Confidentially must be maintained.** It's okay to talk about your own stuff to anyone outside the group you choose ... but NOT anyone else's stuff without their permission. What occurs in the group stays in the group.
5. The group is to help each other connect with the past. Pain from the past affects present behavior.
6. It is not okay to "fix" another person. It is appropriate to "fix" yourself.
7. Receive permission from a person before making a response/asking a question/giving feedback. No advice giving unless requested.
8. **Work hard** ... create value in every exercise, session and event ... even if it is uncomfortable. Take care of yourself, but work hard on your feelings and issues so that you receive what you need.
9. **Pray** for yourself and members of the group.