

EXPLAINING THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF TPM – Training Copy

1. Our present situation is rarely the true cause of our ongoing emotional pain.

Our present circumstances can stir up the painful feelings and thoughts we experienced in the past. Trying to resolve present conflicts without resolving our historical woundedness will give us only temporary relief.

Example – A man who was neglected as a child felt much pain and anger while he was growing up. As an adult, he is feeling neglected by his spouse and experiences intense anger that seems irrational and out of proportion to what the situation calls for. What is happening in his present situation is stirring up the painful emotions from the experiences of neglect that were a part of his childhood.

2. There is a "Dual Mental Process" going on in each of us.

God has designed our minds to connect current and past events almost outside of our awareness through the process of *association*. A dual mental process is at work in each of us as we associate what is happening currently with what has already occurred, while staying focused on the present moment.

Example – In the past, a woman had the painful experience of being attacked by a dog. In the present, she experiences extreme fear and anxiety when she is near animals even though she knows in the logical part of her mind that there is no reason to be afraid.

3. People can hold two or more opposing beliefs at the same time.

Our beliefs are based on what we have learned through *cognitive knowledge* acquired in the present but also on *experiential knowledge* acquired from our past experiences.

Example – A man has *cognitive knowledge* of the scriptural truth that God is his shield and protector and that he does not need to be afraid or anxious because God is in control of his life. At the same time, when he experiences financial problems, he experiences fear and anxious thoughts because he does not believe for certain that his needs will be provided for.

4. Feelings are important indicators of our true beliefs.

Our feelings are a direct response to what we believe in a particular moment. It is important to discover if the beliefs we hold are contrary to the Lord's truth, because when our beliefs are false they can cause us to feel negative emotions.

Example – In the past, a young girl was overweight and was teased often about being fat by her classmates. As an adult, she still *feels* and truly *believes* she is fat as she did when she was a child. As a result of her experiential belief, she is constantly trying to lose weight even though, in reality, she is quite thin.

5. If I believe a lie, the consequences will be much the same as if it were true.

If we believe a lie to be true, we will feel corresponding emotions and will tend to make choices based on the way we feel. Our beliefs and choices can then affect our behavior, produce negative consequences in our lives, and keep us from living in peace and freedom.

Example – In the past, a child was often locked in a closet and developed the experiential belief that small spaces should be feared. In the present, the person is fearful and anxious about going into elevators. Her experiential belief that small places cause pain affects what she can and cannot do in her adult life.

6. To be free of the lies we believe, we must own them rather than deny them.

If lies remain embedded in our minds, they will continue to cause pain every time we are in situations similar to when the lies were originally planted. Freedom requires that we acknowledge our pain, take responsibility for the corresponding beliefs, and go to the Lord for His truth.

Example – In the past, a boy was told repeatedly by his parents that he was worthless. Now that he has grown to adulthood, he frequently feels unconfident about himself and of no value to those around him. Although, in reality, he has been successful in his life, he struggles daily with negative emotions. For renewal, this man needs to become aware of and own the lies that were planted in him as a child and bring them to the Lord in order to be free of them.

7. Sinful behavior is often a vain attempt to manage our emotional pain.

We can more easily be tempted to sin if we struggle with lie-based thinking and emotional pain because we may seek to relieve our pain through sinful behaviors. When our false thinking is replaced with the Lord's truth, our painful emotions become peaceful and the temptation to sin becomes much less powerful.

Example – In the past, a child experienced verbal and physical abuse and, as a result, grew up with much inner pain and negative thinking. In the present, the person struggles with alcoholism in an attempt to relieve the emotional pain that took root in his childhood.

8. Performance-based spirituality is not true spirituality.

Performance-based spirituality occurs when we strive, through *self-effort*, to feel, act, and appear spiritual. *True spirituality* is experiencing *God's power within* which enables us to act appropriately in any present moment because of what Jesus has done for us and in us, rather than through our own efforts.

Example – A person who has a negative self-image may become an over achiever or a perfectionist in order to feel good about herself. She may become over committed in a church in order to “feel” spiritual.

9. When we receive truth from God in memories where we harbored lie-based thoughts, we can walk in effortless victory in these areas.

Being able to have victory over temptation is necessary for each of us who desire to live Godly lives. There is freedom, peace, and victory over temptation available to us when we allow the Lord to renew our lie-based thoughts in the specific areas of our lives where our negative thinking was formed because of historical pain.

Example – In the past, a child experienced abuse that produced inner thoughts of self-hatred, feelings of anger toward God, and a struggle with addictive ways of life. In the present, the adult realizes the lies she came to believe as a child, brings the lies to the Lord for His truth, and experiences transformation in her thoughts, emotions, ability to make wise choices, and behavior.

10. Only an encounter with the presence of Jesus through the Holy Spirit can free us from the lies we believe.

There is a vast difference between learning about God cognitively and encountering Him relationally. Both are important, but one without the other will fall short. Head knowledge has little or no impact unless the Holy Spirit delivers it to the heart. *John 14:6* – *Jesus answered, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”* *John 8: 32* – *“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*