

Matters of the Heart: A Journey of Transformation

Proverbs 4:23

Sept 29, 2024

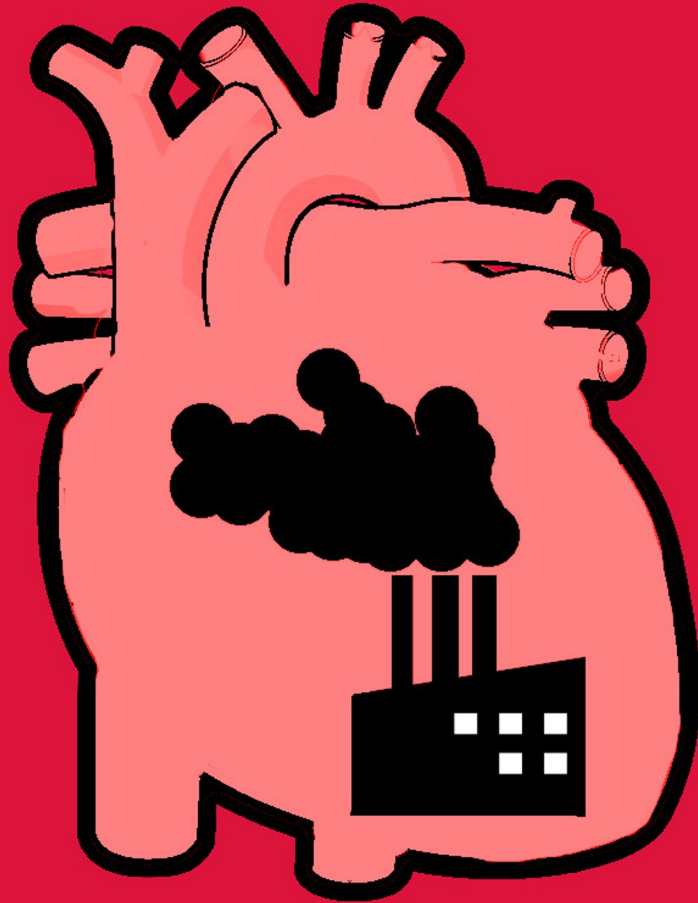
***Above all else,
guard your heart,
for everything you do flows from it.***

Proverbs 4:23

PROFESSOR LEVEL:

- A - average
- B - Below Average
- C - Can't have dinner
- D - Don't come home
- F - Find a new fa

ASIAN



**The human heart
is an idol factory
— John Calvin**

PROBLEM



The image shows the back seat of a car with light-colored leather upholstery. A large, dark, semi-transparent arrow points from the left towards the right, passing over the seats. The text is overlaid on this arrow.

PERFORMANCE

Focus on results not effort.

REDEMPTIVE

The Redemptive way is creative restoration through sacrifice—to bless others, renew culture, and give of ourselves. Redemptive actors pursue an “I sacrifice, we win” approach with the agency and resources available to them. The motivating force behind the Redemptive way is fundamentally other-centered: to love and serve.

We rarely expect to encounter the Redemptive; though whenever we do, we're changed.

— CREATIVE RESTORATION THROUGH SACRIFICE

— I SACRIFICE, WE WIN

— LOVE AND SERVE

Above all else:

- more than anything else you may guard
- the most important thing you can do is be careful what you think

Guard your heart:

- Guard your thoughts
- Watch your mind
- Keep a hand on your head

מִשְׁמָר mishmâr from H8104:
**place of confinement,
goal, prison, guard,
watch, observance**

One commentary:

...the entity upon which a guard is placed is almost **always a creature that must be restrained** (e.g., a prisoner [Lev 24:12, etc.], a dragon [Job 7:12]), rather than a valued item that is to be protected.

In that sense it may mean either to keep a look out to keep someone or something in custody and so restrain it as a prisoner.

In 2023, 29% of U.S. adults
reported having been
diagnosed with depression at
some point in their lifetime

~ 10% higher than in 2015

PROBLEM

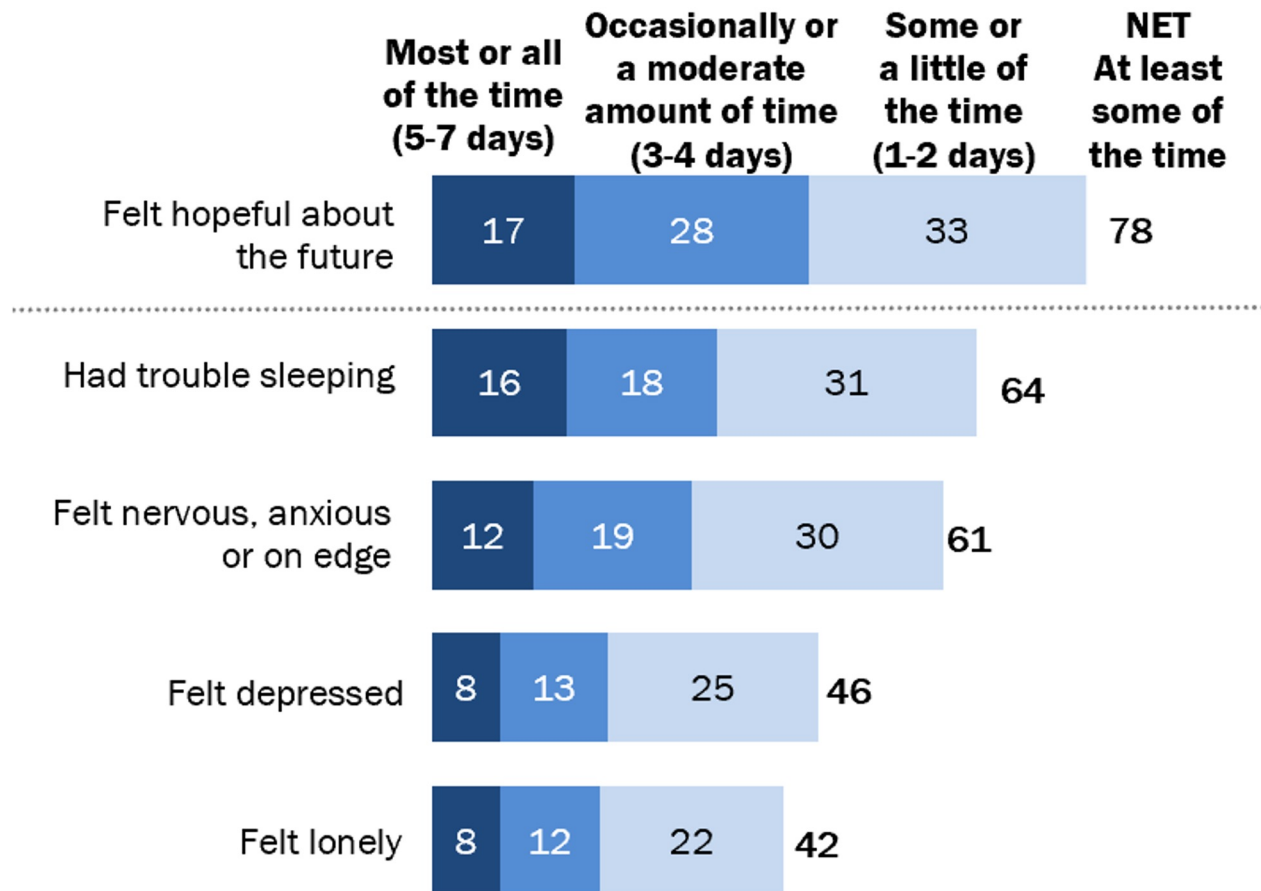
People spend 1 hour
and 50 minutes
worrying each day

86% of adults identify as worriers

PROBLEM

Having trouble sleeping and feeling anxious were the most commonly reported feelings of psychological distress in September 2022

% of U.S. adults saying that in the past seven days they have ...



PROBLEM

Money and finances

- Rising cost of living
- Saving for retirement
- Financial security

Health and safety of loved ones

- Children's wellbeing
- Health of family and friends
- Fear of losing someone close

Job and career worries

- Job security
- Work-related stress

Relationships

- Finding a partner
- Family conflicts
- Friendships

Personal health

- Developing serious illnesses
- Mental health concerns
- Sleep problems

Appearance and weight

- Body image issues
- Aging concerns

Future uncertainties

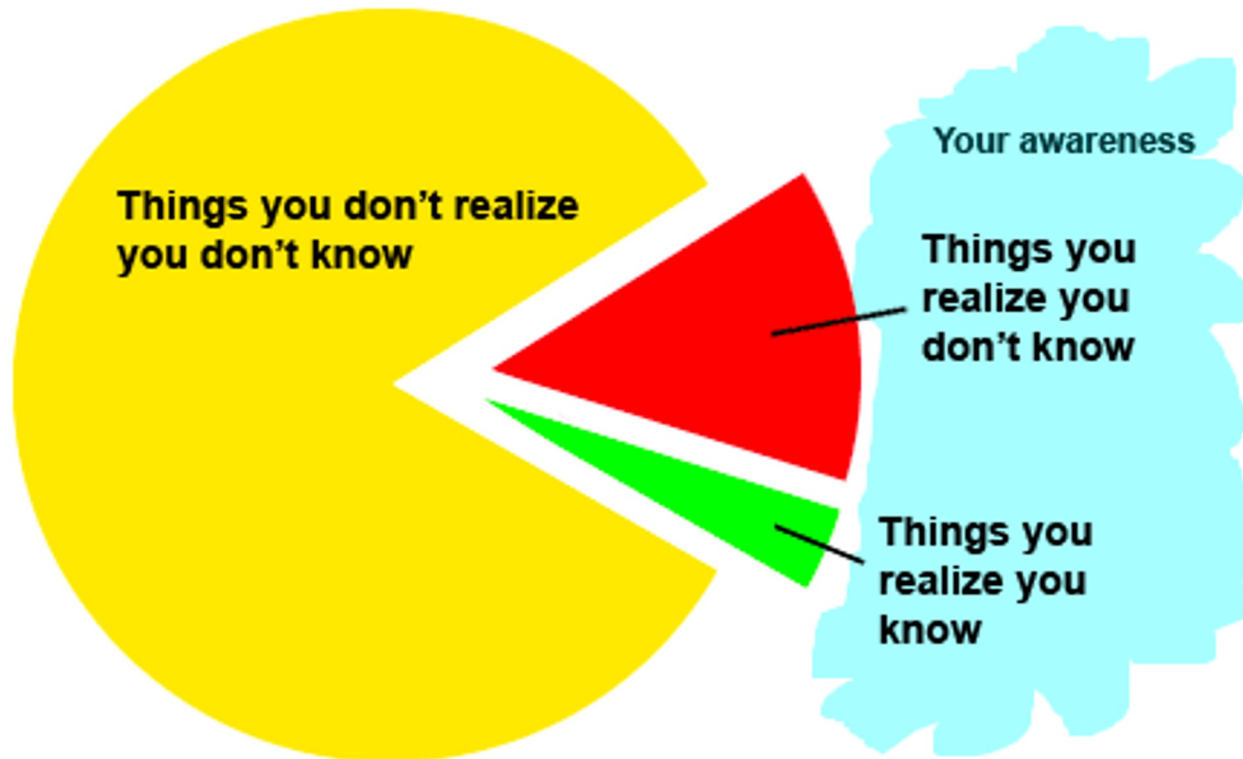
- Anxiety about the unknown
- Long-term planning concerns

Personal safety

- Crime
- Accidents
- Concerns about the dying process

PROBLEM

Body of all possible knowledge



Psalms 139:23

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

Proverbs: 23:19

Listen, my son, and be wise, and set your heart on the right path:

Deuteronomy 4:9

Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live.

God Prepares and Purifies Our Hearts

- Ezekiel 36:26 – 'I will give you a new heart...'
- The heart is where God begins His transformation.

Philippians 4:6-7

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

SOLUTION

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is:

- true
- noble
- right
- pure
- lovely
- admirable—

if anything is excellent or praiseworthy

—think about such things.

SOLUTION

TRAIN



TIMOTHY

BE



BARNABAS

PURSUE



PAUL

SOLUTION

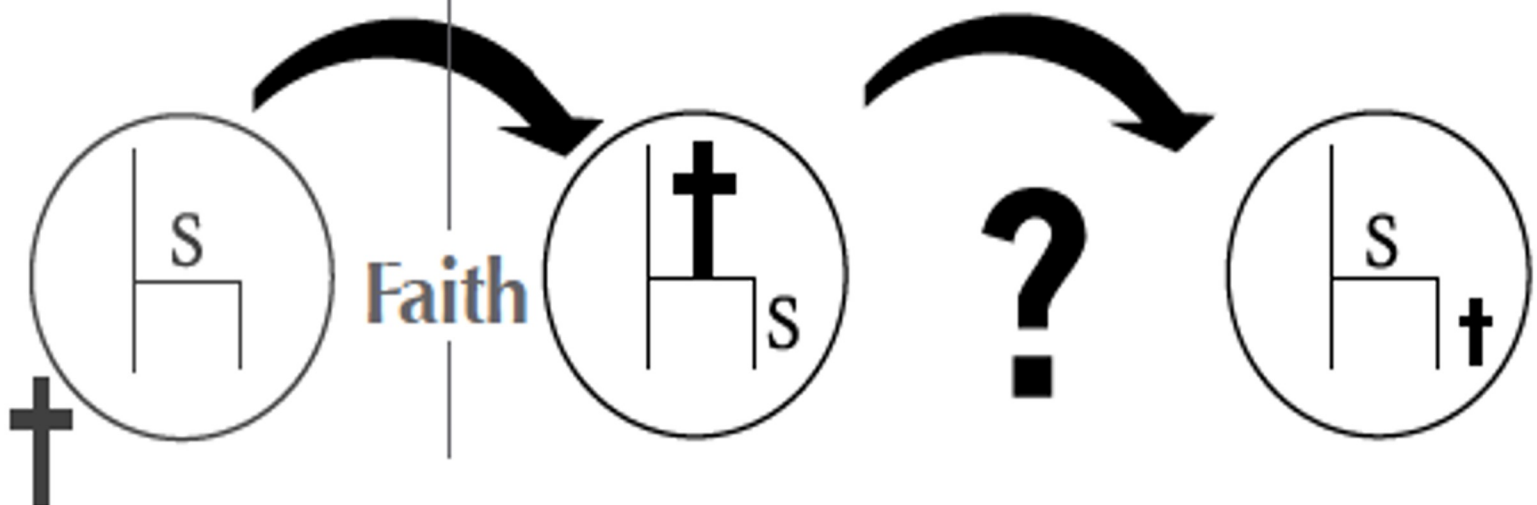
A Self-centered Life

Before Receiving Christ

A Christ-centered Life

After Receiving Christ

A Self-centered Life



SOLUTION

Commands of Christ

- 1 Repent, Believe in Jesus Christ, and Receive the Holy Spirit**
Mark 1:15, John 3:16, John 20:22
- 2 Be Baptized** Matthew 28:18-20
- 3 Break Bread** Matthew 26:26-27
- 4 Love God and Others**
Matthew 22:36-40
- 5 Pray** John 16:24
- 6 Give** Luke 6:38
- 7 Make Disciples**
Matthew 28:18-20

For everything you do flows from it:

- Everything you do comes out of your heart.
- Carefully guard your thoughts because they are the source of true life.
- A person's life is determined by the thoughts stored in the heart or mind

SOLUTION

Mark 7:21-23

For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person.”

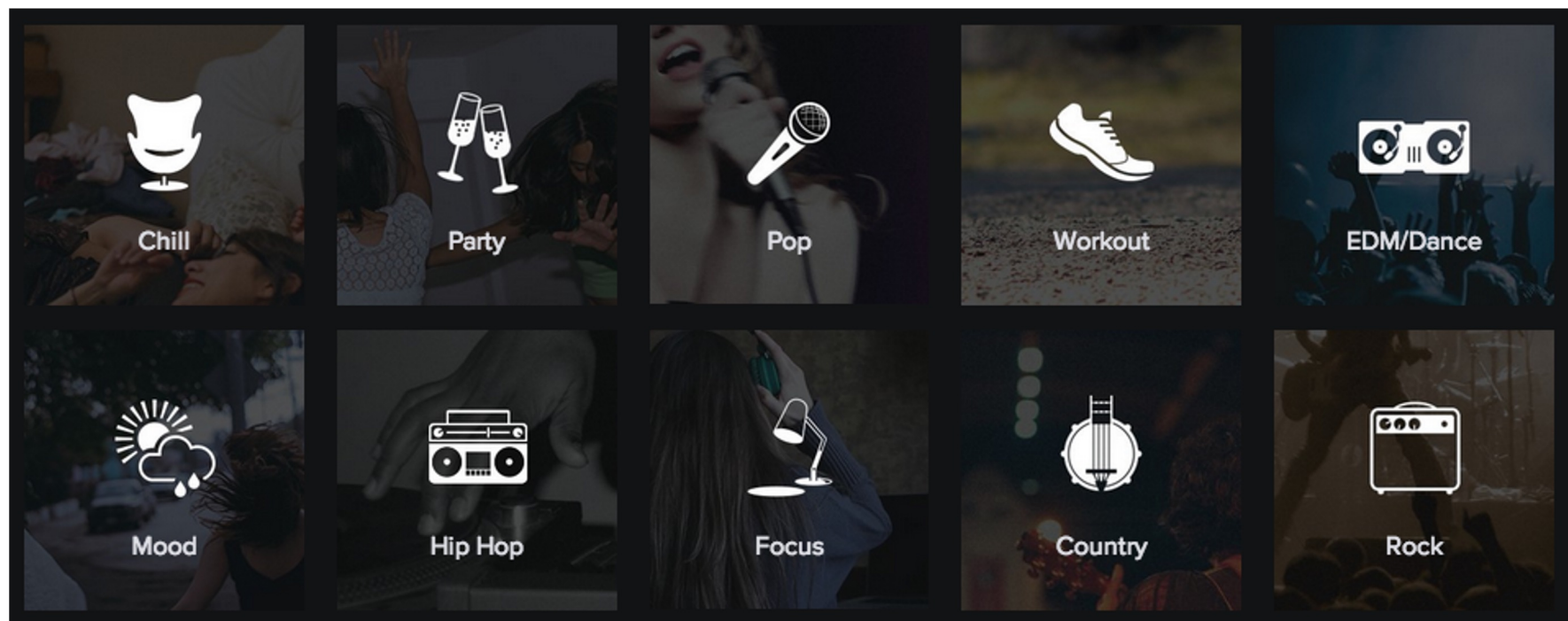
Matt 12:35

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.

Jas 1:14-15

but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.

Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.



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**APPLICATION:
A Journey of Transformation**

ROSE
SUCCESSES
WHAT'S GOING WELL?



THORN
CHALLENGES
WHAT'S NOT
WORKING?

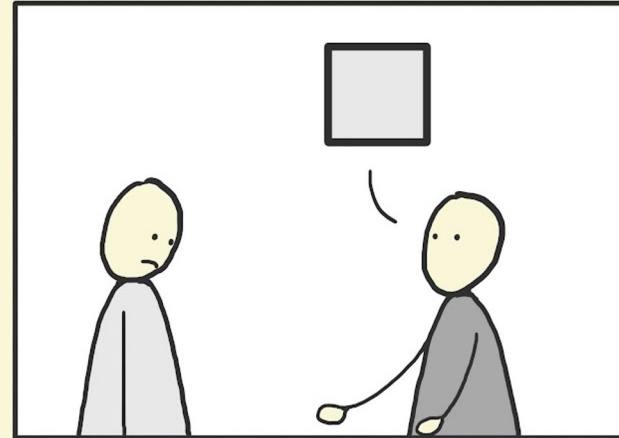
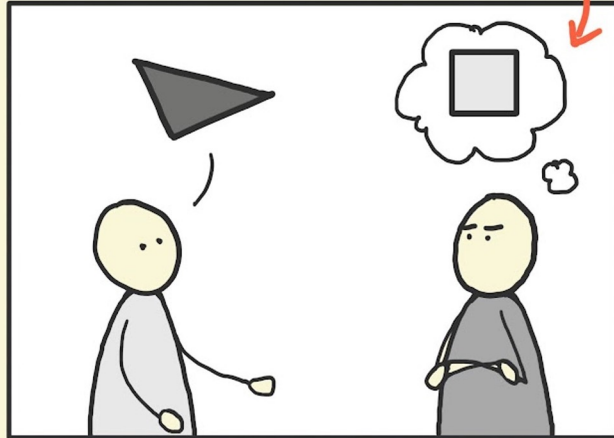
BUD
POTENTIAL
WHAT COULD
WE TRY?

A SIMPLE TOOL
FOR REFLECTION

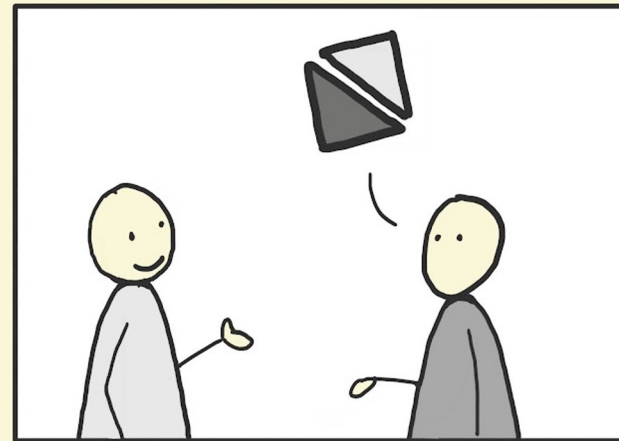
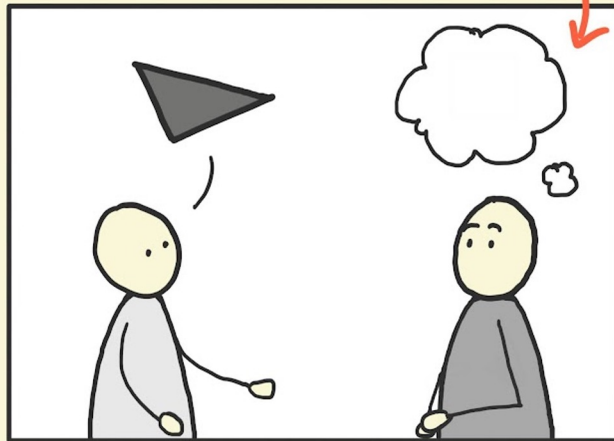
sketchplanations

BE OPEN TO BE CHANGED

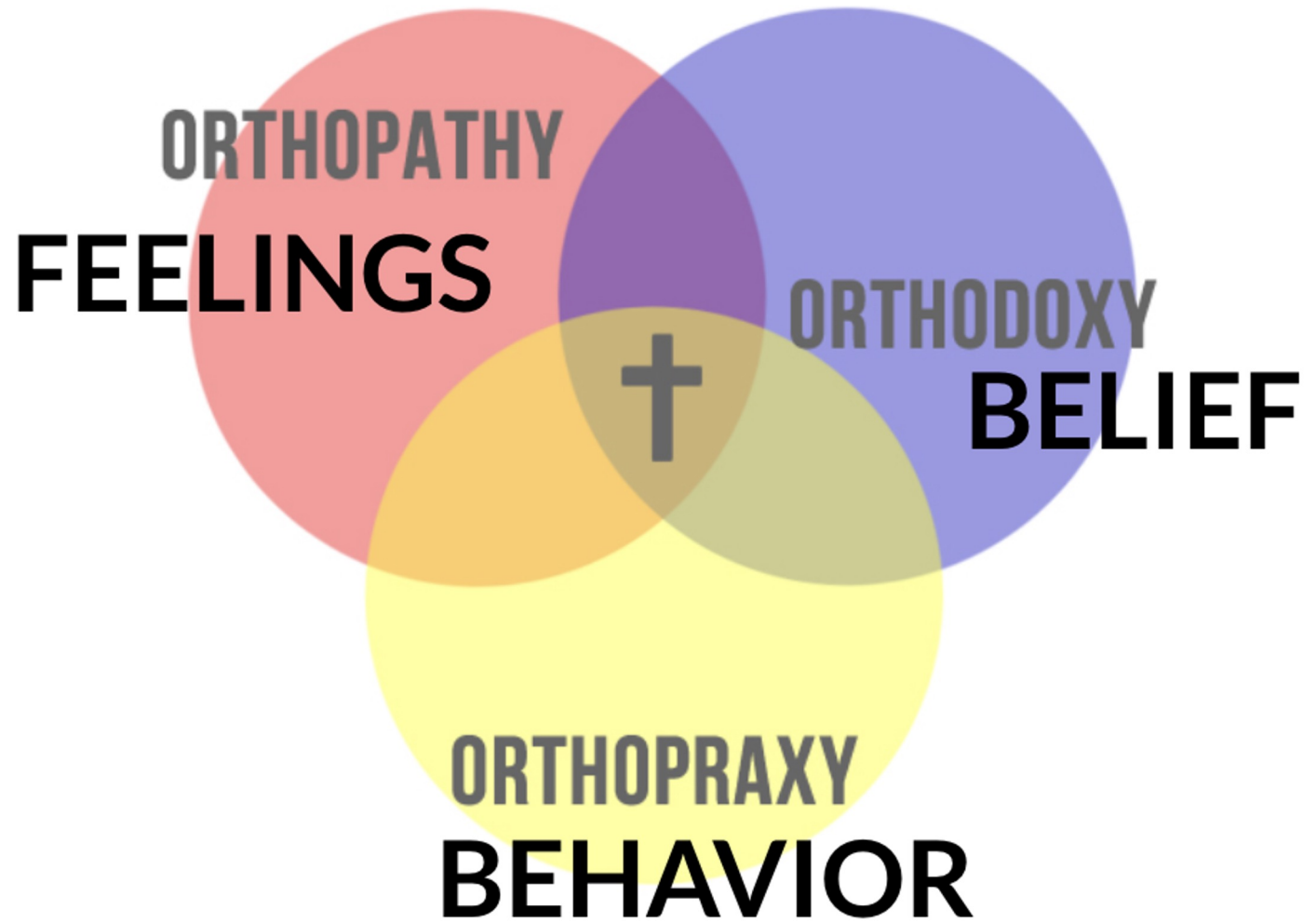
IT'S EASY TO BE THIS



IT'S BETTER TO BE THIS



sketchplanations



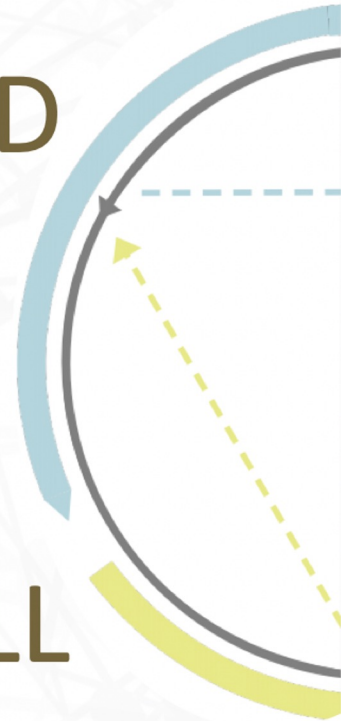
Are we in alignment with our beliefs, feelings and behavior?
Head. Heart. Hands



OPEN MIND

OPEN HEART

OPEN WILL

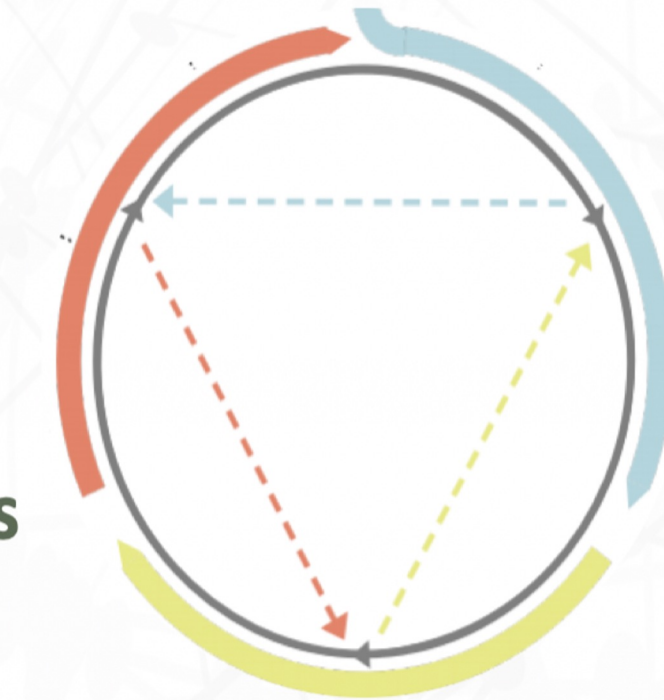


SEEKING
UNDERSTANDING

PRAYERFUL
REFLECTION

DISCERNING NEW
WAYS FORWARD

3. Imagine
Future
Possibilities



1. Form
Discerning
Community

2. Submit
Everything To God

My Life Story Map

Timeline



Aspirations
Interests
Dreams
Positive Influences

Highs



Events
People
Places
Vocations
Avocations

Lows



Losses
Hurts
Negative Influences

Insights & Questions



Noticing God

Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. *psalm 139:16 NIV*

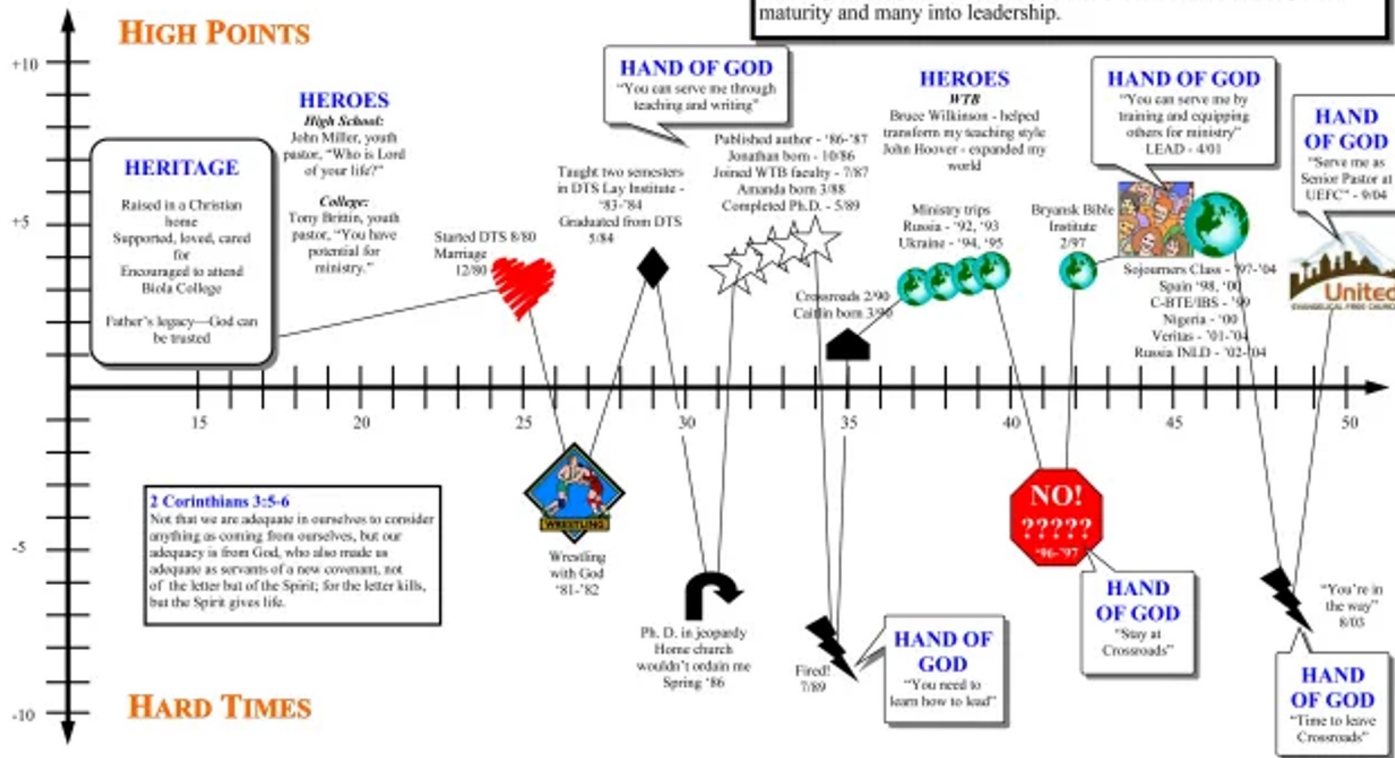
- Who: influential people
positive, negative
- What: events shaped your life
- Where: childhood, international travel
- What: career milestones

- Successes & joy – What has delighted you the most in your life?
- What have been your deepest hurt(s) and disappointments?
- How did you think about God during various chapters of your life?
- What lessons has God taught you over the years?
- What dreams have you had?

LIFE MAP of: Mark S. Wheeler

My Mission is to serve the purpose of God in my generation, thus bringing glory to his name.

My Life Vision to train and equip others through preaching, teaching, writing, and leadership development. I want to bring all to maturity and many into leadership.



Heart, Head, Hands Recap

- Heart: God prepares and purifies it.
- Head: Our thoughts reflect what's in our heart.
- Hands: Our actions flow from the heart's condition.

“Our heart is restless until it rests in you.”

-Augustine

St. Augustine's Confession

Great are you, O Lord, and exceedingly worthy of praise; your power is immense, and your wisdom beyond reckoning. And so we men, who are a due part of your creation, long to praise you – we also carry our mortality about with us, carry the evidence of our sin and with it the proof that you thwart the proud. You arouse us so that praising you may bring us joy, because you have **made us and drawn us to yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.**

Call to Action & Prayer

- Reflect: What's in your heart affecting your thoughts and actions?
- Act: Choose one step this week to guard your heart.
- Pray: Ask God to transform and protect your heart.