

Volunteer Orientation

Workbook



Help • Hope • Healing

“And though a man might prevail against one who is alone...

...a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”

Ecclesiastes 4:12

Introduction:

Welcome to the work of making disciples. As the apostle Paul told the Ephesian elders, they were there to “equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ...” (Ephesians 4:12) Caring for those in recovery is a ministry and we will do our best to equip you for it. More importantly, we will equip you to transfer your faith in a meaningful way to those most in need of the Good News of the Gospel.

Jesus quotes Isaiah in describing the work of the Gospel in poetic terms according to Luke 4:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he has anointed me
To proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

Through the anointing power of the Holy Spirit, you too will be able to give good news to the poor because those in bondage to drugs and alcohol can be set free. Those who are blinded by their dependency and oppressed by addiction will be able to find grace and favor with God. We thank you for your willingness to spread this good news to those who most need it for the honor and glory of God through the power of Jesus Christ His Son.

A Word about Your Clients:

If you are new to ministering to those in recovery, you may have some preconceived notions about who these people are. We often think of them as homeless, poor, destitute and in grave need. Without a doubt, some of them are. However, there are many more people in our neighborhoods, churches, and even families who are struggling with addiction and appear to be leading normal, productive lives. No one starts out dreaming of becoming an addict whose life is falling apart, but inevitably, this is where the path leads. Regardless of where our clients are, they are all in need of the saving grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. There are none who are “not that bad,” nor are there any who are “too far gone,” as long as they still draw breath. One of the key concepts we need to embrace is that we are all standing together in the same place – about to go under if not for the hand of God in our lives – and we all depend on one another to help support us in the rough times.

You will find in this ministry a great deal of sorrow, heartbreak, and despair. You will also find a great deal of joy, comfort, and relief. It is not an easy ministry and it will drain you. You will experience tremendous successes and devastating failures. It’s a part of what we do. However, through the power of prayer and the comfort of one another, we will be there with you to make sure you persevere. Be strong and of good courage.



Format

Team Approach

Recovery support is a team effort. There are no solo acts. We are all in this together. You will engage in team activities over the course of today's class.

Another skill that we will foster is a trust in your teammates based on the integrity of mutual support. There will be opportunities for you to share with your teammates today. You will come to rely on their support and they will rely on you for support as you begin your work together.

Course Overview:

Introduction – Welcome and Overview

This section will introduce you to the Jordan's Crossing Resource Center and what we hope to accomplish today. You will also learn about the Team of Three concept in the context of this ministry.

Session 1 – What is a Team of Three?

There are three essential ingredients to a successful Team of Three that will enable them to succeed over the long haul. This session will identify these ingredients and give you a chance to discuss them in the context of what the Team of Three will do.

Session 2: How will a Team of Three Work?

The second session will look at how the Team of Three accomplishes its purpose. We will discuss what a Team of Three is *not* before we go into detail on what it will be doing. This session will conclude with an exercise on one of the most important skills needed to make a Team of Three work well.

Session 3: How do I get started?

By this time, you will be eager to get started on putting your Team of Three together and moving forward. We will give you a helpful tool to get things going and talk about next steps.



Introduction

Welcome



What am I getting into?

We are seeing hundreds of people dying from the effects of addiction all around us. More people in the U.S. have died from drug overdoses in 2016 than were U. S. casualties in the entire Vietnam War. It is no understatement to say that we are engaged in a battle. The fact that you are here means that you want to join the spiritual battle for the souls and lives of those trapped in addiction before they become casualties. We thank you for your willingness to step into the spiritual warfare surrounding us.

The Jordan's Crossing Resource Center is at ground zero in the battle for the souls of those trying to escape the snare of addiction on the west side of Columbus. We are a volunteer-run and volunteer-sustained organization dependent on the contributions of supporters like you. To help you understand us a little better, here is a video from our founder, Fred Rieser.

See: <https://youtu.be/NyHH1bfza38>

What are we doing today?

Our goal for today is to take this vision that Fred shared and put it into practice in a tangible way through the implementation of the Team of Three concept. By the end of today's session you will know:

- What a Team of Three is
- Who makes up a Team of Three
- What the Team of Three accomplishes
- How the Team of Three works

Let's get acquainted

Take some time to get acquainted with the two other people at your table. Share the following:

- Your name and title or occupation
- Your church background and volunteer experience
- Why you want to work in recovery ministry



Session 1

*What is the
Team of Three?*



What Is the Team of Three Concept?

The Team of Three is a trio of caring individuals who are coming together to support one another to live a fulfilled life in Christ.

Who is in a Team of Three?

These are individuals willing to be:

- _____
- _____
- _____

The fourth member of the group is a recent graduate from a recovery program. This individual provides the rationale for forming the Team of Three, but the objective is to incorporate them as a fully functioning team member engaged in building up one another in Jesus Christ. The JCRC will facilitate the connection between Teams of Three and those wanting to join as a fourth member.



A Note about Recovery Programs: *The JCRC does not advocate for any particular program. While our organization is faith-based, we recognize that people enter addiction through a variety of paths and they leave addiction through a variety of paths as well. Whether an individual is coming out of a faith-based 12-step program, a secular program, a moderation management program, or even no formal program at all, they are welcome to join a Team of Three. It is important to respect the individual's choice for their own recovery path and for that reason, we discourage Team of Three members from being judgmental regarding other programs or preferring one program over another as the best one to follow. Individuals respond to programs on an individual basis and what works for you or your friends is unlikely to work for everybody. Respect individual choices for recovery options.*

Reflection Activity

While individuals enter and leave addiction on an individual basis, there are often common elements that describe the path. We can use parables and metaphors to capture these common elements and relate them in a way that fosters reflection and discussion about what it means to be on the recovery journey. Follow along as we explore one such story.



The Wall

By Gloria Jay Evans

I don't know when I first began to build the wall. I suppose it was when it occurred to me that I could keep people out of my life by building a simple wall. The wall would be a kind of boundary, a kind of protection. At first the little wall was only knee high. It was really quite attractive, made of native stone I had found in my life.



The wall was so small that some people didn't notice it --- and fell flat on their faces.

Others saw it, but would step over it and come very close to me. I found this very uncomfortable. So I built the wall higher.

This was really much better. But soon I found that people would come and rest their arms on the wall while talking to me. Some stayed too long and some were not my kind of people. And even when I edged the top of the wall with sharp stones, they didn't seem to notice.

One day one of them vaulted over the wall and stood right inside. This made me angry. I decided to build the wall higher.

As I continued to build, I became more and more self-sufficient. I painted designs on the stones. I made arcs and colored windows that distorted the light so that one could neither see in nor out.

The wall pleased me so that I longed to show it to someone --- or explain how I had achieved each design. But I realized that no one had stopped by to talk for some time. Some walked by not seeming to notice me or my wall. Others stood sadly by and watched me build. I thought they were jealous of my wall and I resented them, all of them.

One day a man stopped to listen as I explained how I was building the wall. He wanted to come inside to see what I was doing. I explained to him that the whole purpose of the wall was to keep people on the other side. But I could tell he didn't understand or care. As he left I went back to build the wall higher.

I became so absorbed in my wall that I found little time for anything else. I searched my life for new and different stones. I found stones that I didn't even know I had.

The design was very important to me. I would build and rebuild until it was just the way I wanted it. Some stones were so dear to me that I polished them carefully several times a day. Then one day I realized the wall was so high that I no longer saw anyone go by. I no longer heard anyone. Everything was quiet.

"Is anyone there?" I yelled.



There was no answer. It was dark inside the wall and the air was foul. I sat there for a long time. It was quiet and dark and lonely. Only the whispers of my memories could be heard.

I thought of those who did not like my wall, who had laughed at it, scorned it, been jealous of it. I sat in the shadows and listened for someone to come and tell me that they really liked it. But it was dark and quiet. Very quiet.

I don't know how long I sat in the shadow of my memories, but one day I noticed that one of the stones didn't match as well as I had thought and the wall was crooked. This was too much. I had thought my wall was perfect. But it was not. Frantically I examined the wall and, sure enough, there were other imperfections.

To add to the pain of my discovery, one day someone yelled from the other side. "Your wall is ugly. It is twisted and gray and misshapen!" It was the day the flower fell at my feet that I began to cry. I ran to the wall and climbed to see who had thrown it over. By the time I reached the top, no one was there. I returned to the flower and sat for a long time looking at its perfection. I began to see the folly of my wall and its imperfection.

Floods of tears brought me to my knees. "Oh, I am so alone, my wall is too high. My wall is imperfect and ugly. Everything is in vain. I have nothing left. Won't someone help me --- Please?"

Then a strange thing happened. Something inside me stirred as a baby quickens in its mother's womb. And in the stillness of my broken world I knew in my whole being a blessed presence. I knelt there in wonder that God would come to me. And I wept with joy that I was not alone --- and that my darkness had been penetrated by his blessed light.

For days I stood in the joy of his presence. My wall shone with the warmth of his light and I no longer felt cold and alone. I knew that he had watched me build my wall and that He had waited patiently for me to see it was in vain.

Finally it occurred to me that He would know why my wall was so ugly. When I asked Him, He began to teach me. Day by day He showed me my error. He gave the stones names. "This stone is jealousy. You must remove it." Sometimes I would be reluctant. For days I would protest. This was my favorite stone. It was one I had saved and cherished for years. When I was finally ready, He helped me remove the stone.



One day when we had removed one of the heavier stones, a hand came through the opening. "Take it," He said.

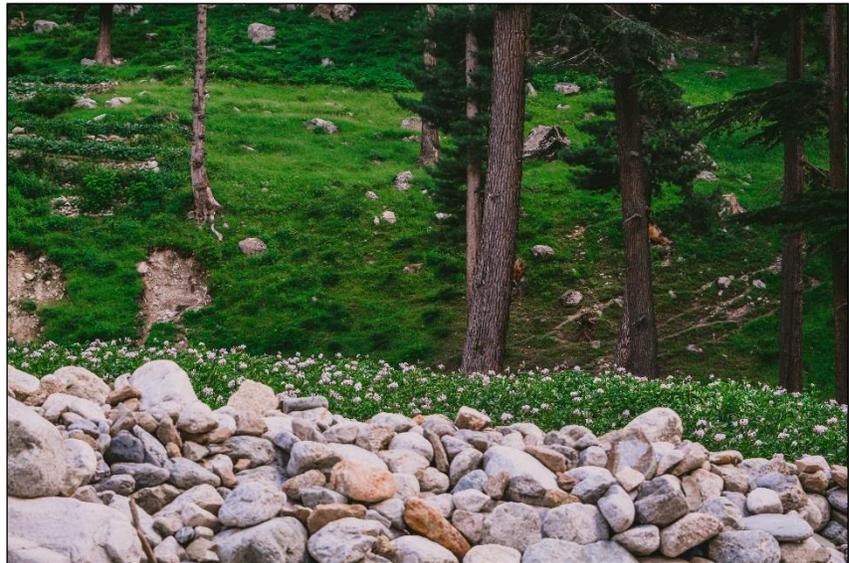


Hesitantly I took the hand. For a long time I stood in the warmth of that grasp. Somehow I knew the hand and the one behind it had been waiting for an opening in my wall. There stirred in me a hunger and a longing for human comfort. At first I thought His presence within my wall was enough. But with the coming of the hand clasp, I knew He had come to tear the wall down. A part of me wanted to spring forth but another part of me cried out in fear. Why couldn't I keep a part of the wall? His presence was enough. I looked at all the stones I had collected throughout my life. Some were still in the wall. The others He had stacked neatly in a corner. If I ever chose to rebuild the wall, I could. I begged Him to throw them away but he told me that in them, I could test my strength. How they tempted me!

One day when He didn't seem to be around, I dashed over and picked up a cherished stone to rebuild my wall. It was then I realized that if I were to be strong enough to live without the wall, I would have to know the stones were there. I would have to know the name of each one. In knowing their names, I could not use them again without betraying Him.

As we removed more stones, the light came in. And His light would shine out. I began to look through the open places. I could see things I hadn't noticed for a long time --- dewdrops, ladybugs, sunbeams, and blades of grass. He told me many things and gave me gifts. The more I talked to Him the more I wanted to talk to Him. I saw things I had never seen before and heard things I had never heard before.

One day as I was standing by an open place, a man stopped to talk. I told him about the blessed presence and how He had changed my life. The man said he understood. "But," he said, "if that's true, why do you have this block of resentment in your wall? I can't see Him. The stone blocks the way."



I looked and sure enough, one of my most prized rocks lay directly in front of me covering nearly one side of the wall. It had been one of the first stones I had placed. It was a large conglomerate of disillusionment, childishness, stubbornness and other petty stones. I asked the man if he would help me remove it. I was so ashamed the blessed presence might see this large rock. The man did loosen the stone and I thanked him as he went on his way. I wondered how I could ever remove that stone without help.

I really tried. I tugged and tugged and struggled and struggled but it only moved slightly. I sat down in despair. I knew the man was right. The stone must be removed.

"Oh dear," I said. "How can I ever remove this one! It is so big and I am so weak."



"You cannot move it," He said.

"But I must," I replied. "The man said he could hardly believe you were here with that stone in the wall."

"If you really want the stone removed, I will remove it." We went carefully over to the wall and chipped away each small stone until the large one was diminished.

Even with the stone of resentment gone, people kept stumbling over debris and remnants of the wall as they walked through my life. There was a woman who knew Him and had let Him tear down her wall. She walked in and sat down on one of the stones. I told her what He had done for me and she told me what He had done for her. I told her how I had suffered so and that I would never forget how forsaken and lonely I had felt inside my wall.



"Yes," she said, "self-pity is a terrible thing."

When she left I found the stone of self-pity in my wall. It was wet with my tears. I dried it off and laid it with the other stones. The wall was almost demolished. I looked around at all the world I could see. I thought of His great love for me and breathed a deep sigh of satisfaction and pride that I should have come so far.

"Look how much I have accomplished," I thought. "How much better I know Him than

some of those others out there. Poor unenlightened ones who don't know Him nearly as well as I. It is so easy. Why can't they see?"

Overwhelmed by all He had done for me and all He had taught me, I stood upon one of the remaining stones and began to tell anyone who passed by what the blessed presence had done for me. I was appalled that no one seemed to hear or understand what I was saying. I told them how dark and lonely it had been inside the wall. And how He had come to help me tear it down. How vain it was to build walls. I noticed others working on walls and ran over to plead with them to stop, but no one would listen. In my frustration I cried out, "Why can't they hear? Why can't they understand? Why can't they believe me?"

I lay face down on the stone I had stood upon. It was extremely large, highly polished. It had been my great prize. It was more than life size.

"Do you want the answer to your question?" He asked.

"You know I do," I sighed.

"Raise your head and look at the stone you are lying upon."

I raised my head and gasped for I saw my own reflection in the massive stone. There was pride in my look and manner. I knew the stone was pride. Quietly, we removed it.



Now we could see beyond the meadow and a path led forth from where I stood. Then He said a strange thing. "Now you must go. I will go with you and yet I will stay here."

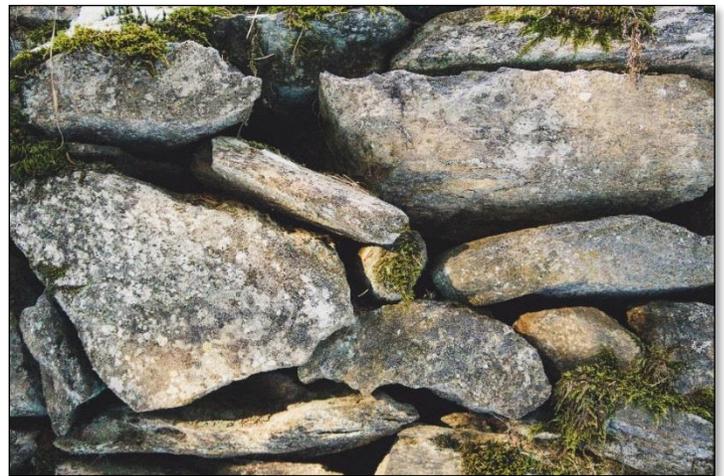
"But I don't want to leave," I protested. "The wall still stands. There are other stones to remove. I want to be here with you."

"I said I would go with you. There is an opening in the wall for you to come and go. Do you remember the flower that fell at your feet, the hand that you clasped, the woman who showed you self-pity or the man who showed you resentment?"

"Oh yes," I sighed, "Oh yes."

"Then you must go and do likewise. For to whom much is given, much is expected. Wherever you go I go with you. And whenever you come back here to be tempted or to remove more stones I will be here."

So I went forth. Soon I saw a wall builder. He had just started to build his wall. I saw pain and hurt in his face --- and confusion in his frenzy to build. I leaned against the wall wanting to tell him I understood. But the stones were placed so that the sharp edges cut me and I retreated in pain. I stood by the wall nursing my wounds. In sadness I watched him build. Soon his wall was so high I could not see him and my heart ached because I knew it was dark and lonely inside. I called to him but he could not hear. The ugliness of the wall was unbelievable. I reached out and touched it, leaned against it. I don't know how long I was there but one day I heard someone yell, "Your wall is ugly. It is twisted and gray and misshapen."



Strangely, though I had never heard a sound from the wall before. Great racking sobs exploded from inside. Tears streamed down my face and I cried out in frustration, "Won't You help him please? Please?"

I thought my heart would break. In desperation I looked about. If only I could give him a gift to ease his pain. I looked down to find a small flower at my feet. Hastily I plucked it and threw it over the wall. Then the sobbing stopped and I knew a great peace, for in some strange way I knew that the blessed presence had come to him and that my aching heart and the gift of the flower had helped bring it about. I knew that soon there would be an opening in the wall, and I could grasp his hand. I knew, too, that he might never know that it was I who was there. But it really didn't matter for in some wonderful way, I had become a part of every man's life. Through the blessed presence we would all become one. Somehow I knew I would never be the same.

I returned to my wall and the blessed presence was there. Together we removed the stones of fear, mistrust, and indifference. He said, "Now you begin to understand love. Without love, all the things I have told you would be meaningless. You will begin to live in peace and understanding. You will learn





gentleness and kindness. But it will take time. I will always be with you."

So it was that I went forth reaching out --- sometimes just waiting beside a wall, sometimes tossing a flower, sometimes grasping a hand.

There are days that I return to my wall. I touch the stacked stones and examine the remnants of my wall. At times I am filled with a desire to rebuild it, but we talk and He helps me to be strong. Sometimes we remove another stone.

It is strange that I began to recognize others like myself. When I see someone with a flower, I know that it will be thrown over a wall.

Sometimes I see someone standing by a wall sadly watching a wall builder. I see those who are sitting on stones explaining what kind of stones they have used.

I know the blessed presence is with them, too. We pass on the path and a great love passes between us. I see peace in their eyes and faith in their hearts and I know that someday the walls will be down and we will all walk free from place to place --- The Great Family Of God.

THE WALL, A PARABLE is a fully illustrated book by Gloria Jay Evans. Published by EE Books, 1999 and Word Books, 1977. Copyright 1977 Word Books and 1999 Gloria Jay Evans.



Exercise – The Wall

Complete the following activity in class. Answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

What are some of the things we do to build our wall?

What does the wall mean to us?

What is the key to identifying what the stones are named?

What is the danger in trying to convince others to remove stones?

What is the difference between convincing others and throwing flower?

How would we describe the purpose of a Team of Three?

Now that we have a way to think about our work with those in recovery, let's apply these thoughts to the Team of Three concept.



Who is in a Team of Three?

In simplest terms, these are three people who have a genuine love of Christ and a desire to be friends. They can have a variety of levels of spiritual depth and experience, but at least one of them needs to be someone **mature in faith** and familiar with scripture.

They should have a **shared affiliation** of some sort. This can be a shared organization such as church, association or fellowship. It might be a common interest. It is something that unites the group from the outset and helps inform the work with the fourth individual. For instance, if everyone in the group enjoys fishing or Buckeye football, the fourth person can be made to feel welcome and a participating member of the group by joining them in these activities.

At least one member should be knowledgeable and experienced in **recovery**. They should be at least two years clean and solidly into their recovery. They provide two essential functions that helps the group:

- They translate what it means to be in recovery to those who have never gone through the process. They can also explain other issues related to recovery.
- They form a strong “us” approach to working with the fourth individual. The Team of Three should *not* be seen as a group of three folks who take on someone as a “project.” Instead, it is a group of friends who get together with shared interests and goal of spiritual growth.

Exercise – Team of Three Formation

Take time right now to form a team of three.

What does a Team of Three do?

The group will meet regularly and maintain contact with each other for the purpose of creating a support system for one another. We strongly recommend that the group meet face-to-face rather than by conference call or online. While we recognize that there are occasions where one person may not be able to attend due to other commitments, it is best if the whole group meet together most of the time. You can arrange your meeting times flexibly to make it as easy as possible for all to attend, but you should plan on meeting at least once a week, especially at the outset to fulfill the Purpose of the group.

Recommended agenda for weekly meetings

We expect the groups to form their own agenda based on the needs of the group, but we recommend, at minimum, that the agenda include the following:

- Open in prayer
- Sharing of scripture
- Expression of gratitude for something that happened since the last meeting
- Discussion based on the Team of Three **Conversation Card** prompts
- Close in prayer.



Commitment of support

The Teams of Three should become mutually-supporting groups dedicated to building one another up in Jesus Christ. We are not prescribing set times, set activities, or set goals because we believe the group will work these out for themselves. However, we do feel that there are three essentials for sound spiritual formation.

- **Authenticity:** The Team should be willing to embrace a radical honesty that allows for the discussion of deeply personal and sometimes painful spiritual goals.
- **Availability:** The Team should be willing to be contacted at any time by any other member of the Team as much as is reasonable to support one another spiritually
- **Accountability:** The Team needs to be willing to report out on the activities of the Team at least once a month, whether to discuss milestones, progress, setbacks, or challenges.

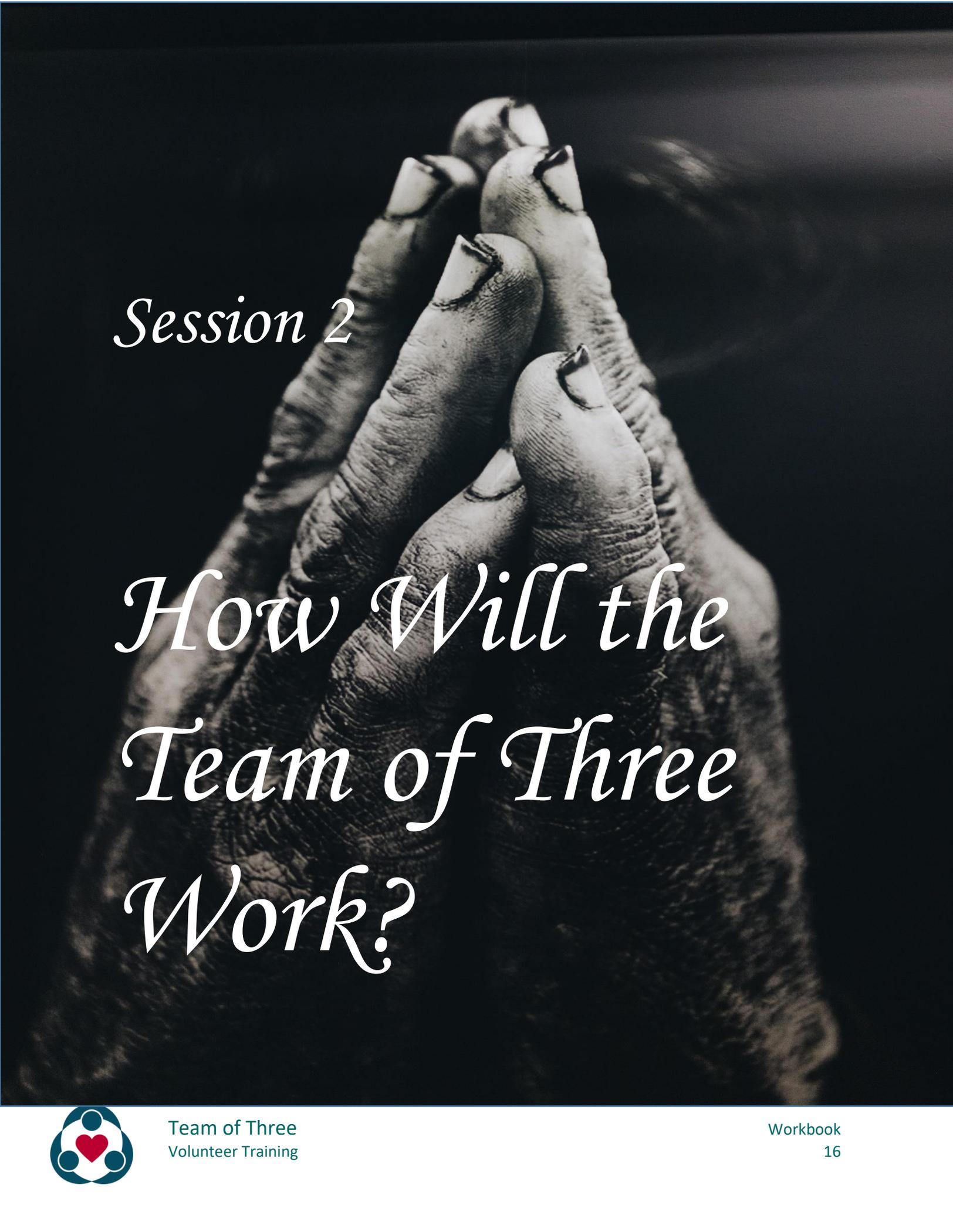
What will the Team of Three accomplish?

The goals of the Team of Three may seem modest in comparison to the enormity of the problem. Addiction, alienation, loneliness, poverty and a host of other human conditions may seem intractable and beyond our ability to solve. Even Jesus said that we will always have the poor among us. Our challenge is how to accomplish small victories that will chip away at these harmful conditions in the lives of individuals. The Team of Three is set to accomplish the following:

- **Spiritual formation:** In general, the Team of Three should be mindful that the purpose of the group is to build up all four persons to have a deeper walk of faith and experience a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Each individual contributes something substantive to this end and we need to value the contributions of the other members of our group.
- **Friendship:** Not everyone finds it easy to form friendships. The Team of Three provides these individuals with the opportunity to experience true friendship in the context of a caring environment of concerned individuals. Our foundational verse is Ecclesiastes 4:12, “...a threefold cord is not easily broken.”
- **Support:** One of the dangers of church attendance is the concern about “what others think” of us. There is pressure in public to portray ourselves as better than we actually are. This leads to a host of unhealthy coping mechanisms, the most pernicious of which is dishonesty or hypocrisy. In a Team of Three, the radical authenticity opens us up to a safe place where we can share our walk in Christ with trusted companions who will lift us up and help us become what God wants for us.

In the next session we will look at what we need to do to make that work. We will see what the Team of Three is *not* before we look at what it is and practice a key skill necessary for making the Teams of Three function effectively.





Session 2

*How Will the
Team of Three
Work?*



The Modern Parable of the Good Samaritan

We would encourage you to read this account when you get a chance. We are including it here in total so you can refer back to it. In summary, it takes the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and explores the question, "What happens on the day after?"

The Modern Parable of the Good Samaritan

by J. L. Cook

September, 1999

I woke up early this morning with God on my mind. I had various little spiritual thoughts flitting around my mind, like the birds flitting around the trees just outside my window. After a while, my thoughts came to the subject of bums and homeless people, and how I should treat them.

It seems easy to care about most unfortunate people in the world, but bums seem different to me. They are not really a part of this modern world of mine. They seem to live in a totally alien world of their own. And when our paths cross, I feel totally at a loss to do anything at all. So I usually pass on by, trying not to look at them, especially not face to face. I want to help them, but how can I? They don't seem to want to better themselves. They just wander about the streets, barely managing to exist. Yet, they are not a part of society at all.



Jesus asked me, "Have you ever read in the scriptures where I instructed my followers to love their neighbor?" I promptly retorted that these people were not my neighbors. "Why, I even had to go out of my way, just to give them a dollar! They really aren't my neighbors, are they, Jesus?"

Jesus kind of smiled at me, and His eyes sort of twinkled. Then He began to tell me the story of the good Samaritan. But He updated it. He told it as if it had happened right here in my town, during my life time. So I listened. And I wrote down the words to this story...

Once there was a certain business man who worked in downtown Nashville. Each day, on his lunch hour, he would walk a few blocks up the street, to eat at a nice restaurant. One day, as he was passing a certain alley way, someone grabbed him by the arm, and dragged him into the alley. Two men began to beat this business man without mercy. They took his money. They took off all of his clothes. They threw him into a dumpster. They left him to die. The business man was bleeding badly. He struggled to get out, but he could not. All he managed to do was wallow around in the stinking filth, until he sunk to the bottom. Then, he laid his head down, and passed out.



Now this dumpster was not far from the street. Several people who passed by heard moans coming from this dumpster. Their day was already planned out to the last detail. They had no time for such nonsense as helping some bum who had fallen into a dumpster. And so, not just one, but many people passed on by, and ignored the noise. Most of these people were very religious. They attended church every week. They tithed their money, so the church could help the poor and less fortunate.

Finally, an old bum came stumbling down the alley. He was looking in all the dumpsters, hoping to find some discarded food. He heard the moans, too. And since he had nothing else to do, he decided to investigate. This was an adventure for him, a welcome break in his day. After all, he didn't often hear a dumpster moaning! He carefully lifted the lid, being ready to run at the first sign of danger. All he saw



was a naked man with trash and filthy scum stuck to his body. He kind of snickered and said, "Fella, you know you can't live in dumpsters, don't ya?... But all he heard in reply was more moaning. Finally, the bum realized the man wasn't drunk, just badly hurt. So with very great difficulty, he dragged the man out of the dumpster. He slapped the man on the face a few times, but the man wouldn't wake up, he only moaned.

The bum thought to himself, "This is all I need, more problems in my life, one more thing to deal with." He knew if he left the man here, he would probably die. So he grabbed the man by the arms, and dragged him to the street. He waved at a cab, and as he was putting the man in, the driver started yelling at him, saying, "What am I supposed to do with him?" The bum replied, "Take him to the nearest hospital!" But the cabbie demanded, "I have to get paid, nobody rides for free!" The bum reached into his pocket and pulled out all of his money. Two dollars and some change, that was all he had after standing at the road all day long, holding his little sign. He had been looking forward to a nice evening, maybe some food, maybe some beer. He offered the money to the cabbie, saying, "Is this enough?" The cabbie looked at it, and his heart softened a little, and he said, "Yes, that is enough." And off the cab went to the nearest hospital.

Then Jesus looked at me and asked, "Of all the people who passed by, which one of them turned out to be this man's neighbor?" With tears streaming down my cheeks, I could barely get out the words, "The bum. The bum proved to be this man's neighbor." Then Jesus very gently said, "Go, and do likewise."

However, this story was not over. Jesus began to tell me what else happened, after these events. He told me to listen carefully, and write it all down...

Now, after all of this, the bum was very tired. This was more physical work than he had done in years. He had no money for supper, but he was too tired to care. So he just sat down and put his head in his lap, to rest. After a while, he felt someone nudging him awake. Looking up, he saw a well-dressed business man, looking down at him.



He thought the man was going to yell at him, because he had a very serious look on his face. But the man just blurted out some words, saying, "God told me to cross over the street, and give you twenty dollars." Well! Now the bum was wide awake. Money always brought a little energy to his old body. He raised his eyes to look at this man. He realized that he had often seen him walking by, with a friend. Neither man had ever given him anything before, except maybe a scornful look, as they passed on by. The man was holding out a twenty dollar bill. The bum quickly took it. His heart leaped for joy! Then, for some reason, he asked, "Where's your friend?" The man said, "I don't know. I am looking for him. Have you seen Him?" The bum said, "I don't know, maybe. I think a cab took him to the hospital. He was all beat up, real bad." Then the man ran off in search of his friend. The bum felt a strange feeling come over himself, as he watched the man hurry off. It had been a long time since he had done anything he could be proud of. Somehow, he felt a little better, deep inside. Then he got up, and went to have the best supper he had had for years.

The business man finally found his friend at a nearby hospital. His friend was in a coma. They were calling him John Doe because he had no ID. The man quickly told them his friend's real identity. Then he called the man's wife, and asked her to come quickly. Soon, the lobby was filled with people. The man's wife and children were there. His boss and several co-workers were there. His pastor and several friends from his church were there. They all hoped the man would live. They prayed and prayed for him. Then, after three days, the man suddenly woke up, and opened his eyes! Everybody rejoiced and praised God, even the doctors and nurses!



After the man felt a little better, they asked him what had happened. He told them about being beat up, and thrown into a dumpster. He remembered that one man had a baseball bat. Another man had a piece of steel. And they laughed, as they beat him. Then, he barely remembered someone pulling him out of the dumpster. He couldn't see who it was. But the person smelled terrible, like one of those detestable bums. Whoever it was, dragged him down the alley, and put him in a cab. That's all he remembered.

Then his business friend told the story of how God had led him to give twenty dollars to the old bum on the corner. And the old bum told him that his friend was in the hospital. He said, "That's how I found you." Tears began running down the sick man's face. He lifted up his eyes, saying, "Oh Lord, if only I had as much love for others, as this bum had for me!" Everyone in the room was touched, and they all cried together.



After many days in the hospital, the man finally became well. Soon he was able to return to work. God put it on his heart to find this old bum, and thank him for saving his life. So every day after work, he looked for this bum. But he did not find him for many days. Finally, one day he saw the bum standing beside the road, holding out his sign. A feeling of great joy and appreciation came over the man as he approached the bum. He asked the bum, "Do you remember me?" The bum answered, "I don't know, maybe." So the man reminded him, "You pulled me out of a dumpster and put me in a cab. You saved my life!" The bum replied, "Yeah, so what?" The man explained, "I want to thank you. Would you let me buy you some supper?" The old bum thought for a moment, and then said, "OK" And off they went!

The man did not take him to just any restaurant. No, he took him to the best restaurant in the whole town. The hostess didn't want to let the bum in, because of his offensive odor. But after the business man took her aside, and spoke to her for a minute, she reluctantly seated them at a table. They ate a very good meal. Slowly they began to feel at ease with each other. They began talking as if they were old friends. Soon, the bum opened up his heart, and told the man how he came to live on the streets. The man listened to every word, and was deeply touched in his heart, that anyone should have to live like this. He asked the bum if there was anything he could do for him. But the bum just said, "No." The man was very determined to do something for this bum. And so, after much pleading, he convinced the bum to come home with him.

He introduced this bum to his wife and his children. They learned that his name was John. They all decided, in their hearts, to treat this bum with great respect, as if he was the Mayor or the President. They led him to the master bedroom, which also had a very large bathroom. They told him to take a long bath, and sleep in the master bedroom, which he did. When John awoke the next morning, he found brand new clothes at the foot of the bed, and a note saying he should wear them. After he dressed, he came out of the bedroom. Everyone was saying, "Good morning, John! Did you sleep well?" Then they led him to the head of the table, and served him the best breakfast he had ever had. John ate the breakfast, but he felt kind of funny since everyone was looking at him, and being so nice. Suddenly John said, "Please take me home, now. I want to go back to my corner." The man drove John downtown, to the corner where He often stayed. He gave John forty dollars, and thanked him again for saving his life.



Then he asked John if he could come and see him once in a while. John said, "Yeah, that would be OK, if you won't make such a big deal about it. Just treat me like a normal person, that's all I want."

And so for weeks and weeks after that, the man would come and find John, where ever he was, and take him to supper. They became good friends, and both looked forward to these times together. One day John asked, "Why do you care about me?" The man replied, "God is trying to teach me

how to love my neighbor. Would you like to come to church with me sometime? Perhaps we can learn together?" John answered, "Well, maybe just once, to see what it's like, if you'll give me a ride."



And so it was that John came to church with his friend. Everyone there welcomed him gladly, and made a big fuss over him. It made him feel funny deep inside, like some feeling from a very long time ago. The preacher was really filled with the Spirit that day. He preached the very best sermon of his entire life. The words touched John's heart very deeply. He knew he had to have Jesus in his life. So, at the invitation, he jumped right up. With tears running down his face, and his friend right beside him, he came forward. John spoke to the entire congregation. He told them that he wanted to live the rest of his life for Jesus. So they took him, and baptized him that very moment. The whole church praised God. And they celebrated all through the rest of the day. They made John feel special. They made him feel wanted. They made him feel loved by them and by God.

After that, someone would give John a ride to church every week. Sometimes, they would find him the night before, and give him a bath. They would wash his clothes, and feed him, too. John quickly grew in love for God and for people. And that love began to change him. You could see it in his eyes and face. You could hear it in his voice. But John was still a bum. He wasn't ready to leave the streets, even though people kept begging him. The street life was all he had known for many years. It had become his home. He really didn't mind it at all.

So John continued living on the streets the same as before, except for one big difference. He walked around praising God loudly, everywhere he went. All his homeless friends thought he had gone crazy. John explained to them, "Yes, I have gone crazy, crazy for God. My heart has been broken by the love of Jesus. Now I am finally happy." John spoke many other words to them concerning this man, Jesus. Many of his friends were persuaded to believe. And the church gladly accepted all who John brought to them. John went from alley to alley preaching good news to all who would listen. But some people told him to go away, and they threw trash at him, and even spit on him. After all, what did he know? He was just a bum like them. "Yes", he said, "I am just a bum. But I am God's bum. He loves me very much and I love Him. I hope someday you will feel His love inside you, too."



Over time, many bums came to know Jesus because of John. Even today, you can see them standing on the side of the road, with their little signs. But now, these bums have big smiles on their faces. And all their signs say, "Jesus loves you very much." And passersby gladly give money to these bums, even more than ever before. The town's people regularly take these bums home with them. They feed them, and bathe them, and wash their clothes. They treat them like princes, even if it is just for one day, every once in a while.

Soon there were all kinds of homeless people praising God in the alleys downtown. God Himself rejoiced greatly for them and welcomed them gladly into His heart. After a while, some of these homeless people were re-united with their families. Some were able to go back to work and become a part of society. But not John. No, John stayed on the streets as a bum for God. This is who he was. He had no desire to be anything else. So he remained on the streets. And he was very happy, in the Lord. He was God's bum, and he was glad to be that. He had the best father in the whole world, and the best family, too. What else could a man ask for? John never worried about food or clothes or where he would sleep. He just kept looking at Jesus, and all his needs were supplied.

John lived for many more years, staying on the streets. He constantly praised God, and offered love to anyone he met. Everyone in the whole town came to know him, and love him. When John finally died, a great many people came to his funeral. The whole cemetery was completely filled. John was buried in the finest grave. The town's people gave him a nice headstone. It read, "Here lays John, a bum for God". They gave him a forty gun salute. All the people cried for him. They all praised God for him. They were filled with great sorrow and great joy, both at the same time.

When Jesus finished telling me this story, He asked me, "Do you understand now, the power of loving your neighbor? Do you understand that love brings eternal life?" At this point I was crying my eyes out, but I managed to say, "Yes, Lord, now I understand. But Lord, how can I accomplish this work? It may be beyond my ability." Then Jesus replied, "Yes, it will be very hard. You will have to take risks. You will risk having your love rejected. You will risk having your heart broken. You may even risk your own life. But remember, I will always be with you. Can you do that for Me?" I said, "Lord, I will try. But Lord, what if I find my love wasted on someone who will never change? Will that be wrong?" Jesus answered, "It is never wrong to give love away, not even if it is wasted. In fact, I want you to pretend that you are a wealthy man, rich in love. I want you to go about giving away your love. Just throw it around like you're getting rid of a large fortune. Give it to anyone and everyone you meet. Don't even try to determine if they deserve it. That would only be a distraction from your work. This is how I want you to live. This is what life is all about. This is what life has always been about, from the beginning of time. Will you do that for me?" And I promised, "Yes Lord, I will do your will."

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Considerations

By now, you should have the impression that the Team of Three is unlike any process or program you may have been involved with before. The closest analogy we can find to it is in the term “friendship.” What the Team of Three does is provide a space for that friendship to grow in the context of Christian commitment. That being said, there are some items that merit particular consideration.

Our first question is, “What does it mean to work with a recovering addict?”

Fred and Bobby

Jot down some thoughts as you listen to Fred and Bobby tell their story. What stands out the most to you?

What the Team of Three is Not:

It’s easy to get an impression that the Team of Three is similar to a peer advocate or social worker. We want to be very clear that that is *not* the role of the Team of Three, even the members have served in that function before. Other things the Team of Three is not include:

- The team of Three member is not a financial resource for each other
- The team of three member is not an employment resource for each other
- The Team of Three member is not a Family counselor
- The Team of Three member is not a drug counselor
- The Team of Three member is not a case worker
- The Team of Three member is not a social worker

What the Team of Three Is:

More importantly, we need to consider what a team of three really is.

- We are an **available** support resource of friends who are willing to listen to one another as we share issues together.
- We are an **accountable** place where everyone can be honest with one another without fear of condemnation or criticism.
- This means that we are an **authentic** place where we can all be vulnerable.

This is only possible because we value integrity and confidentiality. This is not to say there is immunity for criminal actions, but we are endeavoring to build one another up spiritually. We are a resource for prayer, for encouragement, for the necessary relationships needed to function as spiritual beings.



What the Team of Three Needs:

In order for the Team of Three to function as well as we have described, there are some essential ingredients that we would like to look at in detail. These are:

- The power of **Spiritual Listening**
- The importance of **Valuing Others**
- The **Benefit** of spiritual encouragement

Let's start with the practice of Spiritual Listening.



Spiritual Listening

One of our greatest desires is to be heard and understood. This desire is so compelling that we forget others share this same desire and instead of wanting to listen, we prefer to talk. Even when we do listen, we do so with the intent of framing what we are going to say next.

Considerations

Imagine what would happen if we paid as much attention to hearing and understanding others instead of what we are going to say next. Take some time to consider what we would see if only we would do that and jot down some of your ideas below:



The book of Job illustrates the harm that is caused by well-meaning speakers who listen to people, only to rebut or contradict what the grieving speaker is saying. (Job 2:11 – 13 represents the most important and significant thing Job’s friends did for him. Had they stopped at this point and merely listened, they would have been far better served than what they did in the rest of the book, namely, provide advice that had nothing to do with where Job was.)



- Had Job’s friends listened to him instead of giving advice, they would have reduced his sense of aloneness and isolation
- Job would have felt included and belonging
- He would have been connected to his friends instead of estranged from them
- All parties would have benefited

What is Spiritual Listening?

What it is not:

- It is not just hearing with our ears – it is hearing with our heart
 - *My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, James 1:19*
- It is not about making ourselves important – it is about making the other person important
 - *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. Philippians 2:3-4*
- It is not about power or influence over another – it is about humbling ourselves and letting them influence us
 - *Better to be lowly in spirit along with the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud. Proverbs 16:19*

What it is:

- Surrender our needs and desires to those of the other person
- Pray for them while you are listening as well as afterward
- Pray to be open to receive what they have to say and respond with concern and love for them. We will be better positioned to say and do right things because we will come to understand the true nature of their pain



What happens when we practice Spiritual Listening?

The speaker realizes they have value and their self-esteem grows

- Someone has taken them seriously and values their thoughts and feelings
- They clarify their thinking by putting their thoughts and feelings into words
- They experience a catharsis from sharing what is inside and it is no longer bottled up (James 5:13-16)

The listener grows in grace

- Listening is a gift and a privilege
 - Opening up the heart is a gift that **honors** the listener
 - Opening the heart provides **acceptance** to the listener
 - It provides the experience of **standing on Holy Ground**
- Listening grafts two hearts
 - It **privileges you** with the opportunity to be present to the opening of someone else's heart and this is not a light thing.
 - To know someone without condemning them is to **love them**

How to practice Spiritual Listening?

Make a decision to listen

- Mentally put your own mind and heart in neutral
- Suspend judgment
- Open yourself to be exposed to the pain of someone else's heart

Practice listening

- Make eye contact
- Receptive posture (lean in, not out; open arms, not crossed, etc.)
- Track what they are saying on both *mental* (the content of what they are saying) and *emotional* (the feelings they are conveying) level
- Respond affirmatively to what they are saying ("I understand," "I know how you are feeling," "I hear you," as appropriate etc.)



Avoid the following

- **Topping;** e.g. “That’s kind of what happened to me only mine was worse...”
- **Teaching;** We don’t need to “fix” everything (Job’s friends never did “fix” him despite their valiant efforts), moralize it, or judge it
- **Tsk-tsking;** Saying “Oh, that’s not so bad” will shut down authenticity
- **Taking exception;** Arguing, contradicting, gainsaying, denying are all ways to close off authenticity
- **Test Tubing;** We are not here to analyze or interpret what’s happening. Simply accept the gift of honesty
- **Toning down;** Ignoring heavy emotions is similar to contradicting someone. Emotions are when we really hear with the heart.

Where will Spiritual Listening lead us?

Gratitude

- Listening is one of the greatest **gifts** we can give in return to the one who shares their story.
- It is an expression of **gratitude** to the one who is sharing

Growing

- Spiritual listening enables you to grow in **grace**
 - You become a more sympathetic person, not just when listening
 - You become more understanding that God’s grace extends to all
 - You begin to extend grace yourself
- Spiritual listening teaches you to **value** others
 - God loved us so much he sent his son
 - Jesus loves us so much he died for us
 - We learn to die to our selfishness in honor of others as we emulate Him

Spiritual Listening Exercise

Our greatest gift is to listen.

- Break into groups of three comprised of a **Talker**, a **Listener**, and an **Observer**
- In 3-5 minutes or less, the **Talker** should tell their story of why they are here and what they hope to accomplish as a volunteer
- The **Listener** will practice good listening skills during this time
- The **Observer** will watch the Listener and make note of what they see them doing during this interaction
- Switch roles and repeat until everyone has been in all three roles
- Record your thoughts below.



Notes

Include any general observations you would like to make in your role as Talker, Listener, or Observer:

Debrief:

- What was the hardest thing about listening?
- What were the Listeners doing while the talker was talking?
- What did Talkers notice when they had to be the Observer or Listener compared to when they were Talkers?

Sometimes people notice during this Spiritual Listening exercise that they have to participate in a way that feels unnatural to them. For instance, the Observer may have wanted to jump in and say something, but couldn't because of their role in the exercise. Or maybe the Talker would rather listen instead of having to open up. This is because all of us listen in different ways. See if you can identify what type or types of listener you are.

Listener Types

- **Dominator** – Wants to be in control of the conversation, either by taking it over or using questions to direct it where they want it to go
- **Interrupter** – Frequently jumps in. Can be benignly to “help” someone finish a thought, or more maliciously to make sure the talker says the “right” thing
- **Naysayer** – Loves to contradict whatever it is that the person claims is true and tries to turn every conversation into a contest, debate, or argument
- **Skeptic** – Similar to the naysayer, but comes across more as doubtful and unbelieving rather than argumentative or contrary
- **Enthusiast** – Always excited to talk about whatever it is that the conversation is about, sometimes to the point of annoyance
- **Narcissist** – Turns every conversation into something about them
- **Silent Listener** – Unexpectedly one of the more difficult to talk to because they don't respond to what is being talked about either positive or negative, just silently regards everything and keeps it bottled inside

If we find ourselves taking on any of these traits, we need to consider the disciplines of spiritual listening and make sure we are following the spiritual model. Always treat listening as an exchange of gifts – the gift of listening and the gift of sharing from the heart.



A Note about Conversation Styles

One of the things you may have noted during your Spiritual Listening exercise is that people have different conversation styles. This affects the way they provide information as well as the way they prefer to receive information. Be aware that there are at least four major conversation styles and familiarize yourself with their preferences. This is not an analytical tool that you should use to identify the characteristics of any one person, since most of us have varying amounts of these styles on different occasions and circumstances. Rather, it is to help you understand why some people explain things the way they do or like to have things explained to them.

Analytical – Loves hard data and clearly defined tasks

- Prefer to get concrete information and focused on details
- Wants to have clear expectations
- Avoids touch-feely emotionalism

Intuitive – Loves to see the big picture

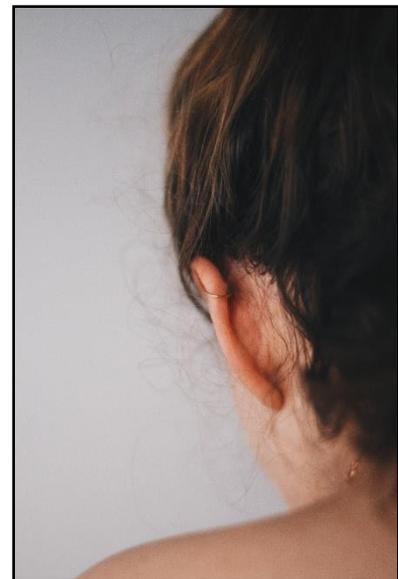
- Prefers the high-level broad overview first, focusing on the most important ideas
- Wants to know what the details are supposed to accomplish, not the details themselves
- Avoids processes, procedures, linear thinking, or anything that distracts from the main idea

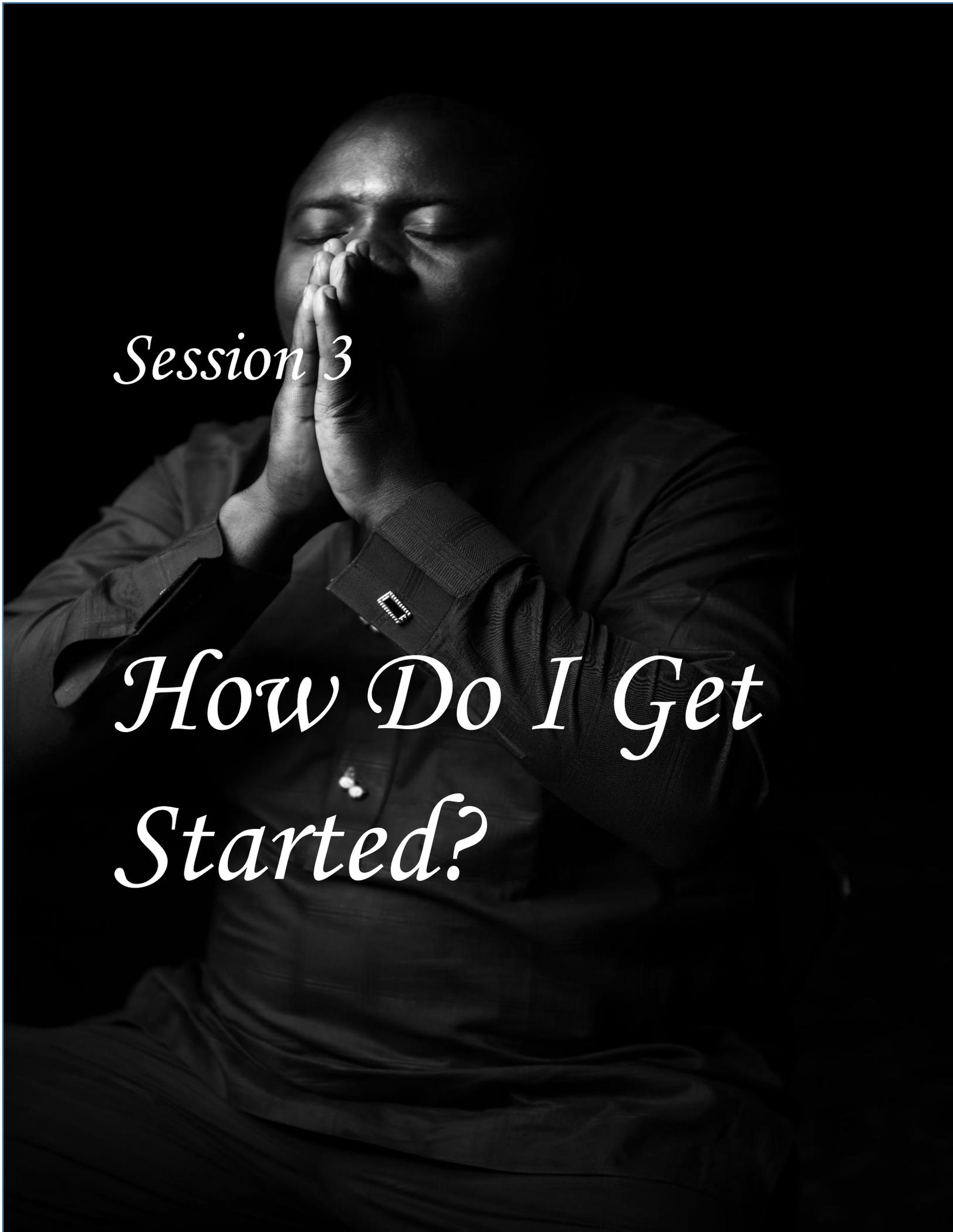
Functional – Loves the process

- Prefer to deal with the details in a step-by-step, orderly process or timeline and highly organized approach
- Wants to know the details even when brainstorming and will focus on them, sometimes to the exclusion of the main point
- Avoids ambiguity, uncertainty, and uncomfortable with things “just working out”

Personal – Loves the relationships

- Prefers the feel of a conversation rather than the content because they are more concerned with making connections than getting to the point
- Wants to know how everyone feels and is uncomfortable when someone feels left out or slighted; highly empathetic
- Avoids conflict or issues that threaten group cohesion and will often compromise to keep the group together





Session 3

*How Do I Get
Started?*

Prayer SWAP

Now that we've covered who the Team of Three is and how it functions, let's get started actually doing what a Team of Three does. During the break, we made sure that everyone has a **Conversation Card**. These cards are designed to help you get started having meaningful conversations that lead to genuine spiritual growth. To that end, we're using the acronym SWAP to emphasize the sharing nature of what we should be accomplishing when we get together. Let's go over the card together.

Conversation Card Content Overview

Opening Prayer—

“Lord, come join us as we come together in your name and open ourselves up for you to work in our lives. Let us deny ourselves and take up one another's cross to follow you as we give up our lives so that you can save our lives. Let the words of our mouth and the meditation in our hearts be acceptable in your eyes O Lord. Amen”

Share

- What have I learned during the past week that helped me have a better understanding of Christ's love and what Christ is calling me to do?
- What choices do I want to make in the future and what is the direction I want my life to go?

Witness

- When did I feel Christ's love during the past week; when did I recognize His love and when it was hard to show His love to someone?
- What challenges have I faced this week that I was able to overcome?

Accountability Actions

- What have I been doing to further my walk in sobriety and grow closer to Christ?
- What have I neglected to do or been challenged with that could impact my walk in sobriety and ability to grow closer to Christ?
- What is my plan for this week to further my walk in sobriety and grow in Christ?

Pray

- Who am I praying for today, and tomorrow?
- Pray For each other; ask for prayer for yourself, both in thanksgiving and for support.

Closing Prayer

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”



