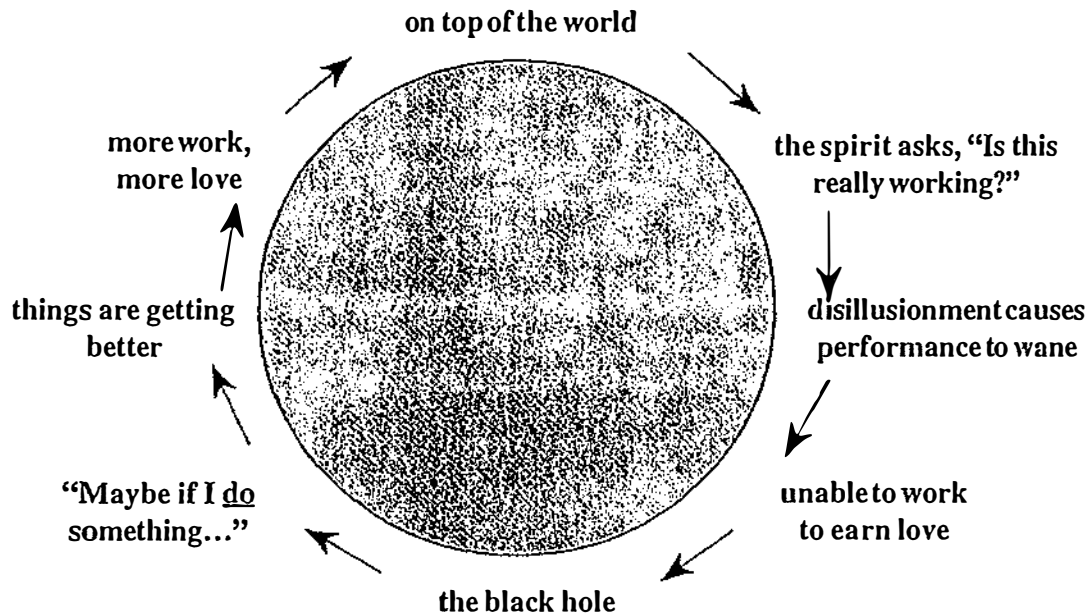


E n r i c h m e n t



Performance Orientation/Depression Cycle

This cycle is a common dynamic in people dealing with performance orientation. As these individuals come to believe the lie that they must earn the right to be loved, they work harder and harder to perform. This performance is rewarded in countless ways: the job promotion, the higher pay, the status, the compliments, the sense of well-being that comes with approval and acceptance. It all seems so perfect!

But something begins to happen. The more performance-oriented people strive, the less reward there seems to be. They have passed the top of the cycle, doing more and more, receiving less and less reward. At some point, their spirits realize their efforts are not getting the desired results. Everything they do to please others and to be accepted is not bringing peace. In its place, have come anxiety, tension, and an increasing sense of futility.

At this point, a mild depression may set in. It is not always noticed right away and usually is not attended to. Work is no longer rewarding, hence there is decreased performance and less affirmation. The depression deepens, spiraling quickly. Less reward, more depression, less ability to perform, less reward, deeper depression until the debilitating spiral empties into a "black hole." The depressed performers may live in that hole for some time, in the company of stored angers, hates, disappointments, and a sense of numbness. There are no vivid colors or sweet sounds. The spirit may shut down and can no longer support vitality in the body or soul. This is the bottom of the cycle.

At some point, these people may realize they are not getting the needed love and acceptance, and begin working to "get themselves back on track." Out of nowhere they seem to muster just enough strength to "earn" that all-important pat on the back, that "fix" of love that sends a surge of life-giving energy. Every little bit of renewed strength enables them to perform again. Signs of acceptance and love appear more frequently and the depression lifts. Unfortunately, the cycle is only beginning again.

FATHER'S LOVE LETTER

An intimate message from God to you.

My Child,

You may not know me, but I know everything about you. Psalm 139:1 I know when you sit down and when you rise up. Psalm 139:2 I am familiar with all your ways. Psalm 139:3 Even the very hairs on your head are numbered. Matthew 10:29-31 For you were made in my image. Genesis 1:27 In me you live and move and have your being. Acts 17:28 For you are my offspring. Acts 17:28 I knew you even before you were conceived. Jeremiah 1:4-5 I chose you when I planned creation. Ephesians 1:11-12 You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book. Psalm 139:15-16 I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live. Acts 17:26 You are fearfully and wonderfully made. Psalm 139:14 I knit you together in your mother's womb. Psalm 139:13 And brought you forth on the day you were born. Psalm 71:6 I have been misrepresented by those who don't know me. John 8:41-44 I am not distant and angry, but am the complete expression of love. 1 John 4:16 And it is my desire to lavish my love on you. 1 John 3:1 Simply because you are my child and I am your Father. 1 John 3:1 I offer you more than your earthly father ever could. Matthew 7:11 For I am the perfect father. Matthew 5:48 Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand. James 1:17 For I am your provider and I meet all your needs. Matthew 6:31-33 My plan for your future has always been filled with hope. Jeremiah 29:11 Because I love you with an everlasting love. Jeremiah 31:3 My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore. Psalm 139:17-18 And I rejoice over you with singing. Zephaniah 3:17 I will never stop doing good to you. Jeremiah 32:40 For you are my treasured possession. Exodus 19:5 I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul. Jeremiah 32:41 And I want to show you great and marvelous things. Jeremiah 33:3 If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me. Deuteronomy 4:29 Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4 For it is I who gave you those desires. Philippians 2:13 I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine. Ephesians 3:20 For I am your greatest encourager. 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you. Psalm 34:18 As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart. Isaiah 40:11 One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes. Revelation 21:3-4 And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth. Revelation 21:3-4 I am your Father, and I love you even as I love my son, Jesus. John 17:23 For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed. John 17:26 He is the exact representation of my being. Hebrews 1:3 He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against you. Romans 8:31 And to tell you that I am not counting your sins. 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled. 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you. 1 John 4:10 I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your love. Romans 8:31-32 If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me. 1 John 2:23 And nothing will ever separate you from my love again. Romans 8:38-39 Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen. Luke 15:7 I have always been Father, and will always be Father. Ephesians 3:14-15 My question is... Will you be my child? John 1:12-13 I am waiting for you. Luke 15:11-32

*Love, Your Dad
Almighty God*





a prayer to end striving...

Lord, I have come to see my performance orientation. I confess to You that although my head believes salvation is by grace, my heart drives me to earn favor, to be "good enough" to present myself to others and to You. I admit that I cannot change myself. The fear of not being accepted or loved is so overwhelming it puts me into gear and I begin performing again. When acceptance is given with no strings attached, I cannot receive it. I ask You into my heart to do the work in me, for me. Bring my striving to death. I want to rest in Your love. Help me remove the hindrances I have erected which prevent me from entering into Your love.

Lord, I have been angry with You for putting me into this family, this position. I don't want my anger to keep me from You, so I ask that You restore my heart. I forgive my family for _____ (*list the woundings that helped form P.O. and those that fueled it.*); I ask Your forgiveness for my angry responses, my fear and insecurity, my impure motives, and for not believing the truth.

Lord, I renounce the family lies (*name them specifically*):

I accept my identity as Your child. Help me learn how to live that identity in my daily life. Help me to feel, to know within me that "success" is simply being Your child. Help me to be like You, Lord.

I ask You to bring to death in me the structures, the habit patterns of performing I have created (*be specific*): _____

I ask You to minister to the ambivalence in me when I want correction but cannot receive it, or when I want and need compliments but cannot believe them. Likewise, be the Lord of my tongue so that wisdom and kindness permeate the corrections and compliments I give. Help me to take my eyes off my needs and fears.

Lord, I resign from managing the universe. I give to You my compulsive need to control people and situations. I recognize I have wounded _____ (*list those you know*) by not affirming their contributions—I always had to edit, add or correct. I could always do it better. Forgive me, Lord, for both my insecurity and my arrogance, as well as for the wounds I have caused. Help me to believe I am not responsible for all that goes on around me. Forgive me for always being a "Martha," and help me to hear when You call me to be "Mary." Show me where I have taken on jobs or duties for the wrong reasons, and give me the wisdom to resign from them if necessary.

Help me to fall in love with You, Jesus, so that what others think of me is not important. You have said that it is You working in us that enables us first to will and then to act according to Your good purposes. I want to be a good workman, but only with Your strength and Your will. Help me to be like You, Lord.

IMPORTANT: These sample prayers are not formulas; rather, they offer ideas and direction. Be led by the Holy Spirit, and use the substance of this prayer as a guide. Also, please acknowledge these prayers as sample narratives, in which gender-exclusive references are used as they would be used in a real situation. For this reason, some prayers are for a female and others for a male. All are interchangeable.

PERFORMANCE ORIENTATION

What are your: “If I don’t Then I won’t be loved and accepted.” Or “In order to be loved..... I must.....

If I don’t _____

If I don’t _____

If I don’t _____

If I don’t _____

In order to be loved I must _____

In order to be loved I must _____

In order to be loved I must _____

These are all Ungodly Beliefs.

THE HEART OF AN ORPHAN

THE HEART OF SONSHIP

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| See God as Master | IMAGE OF GOD | See God as a loving Father |
| Independent / Self-reliant | DEPENDENCY | Interdependent / Acknowledges Need |
| Live by the Love of Law | THEOLOGY | Live by the Law of Love |
| Insecure / Lack peace | SECURITY | Rest and Peace |
| Strive for the praise, approval, and acceptance of man | NEED FOR APPROVAL | Totally accepted in God's love and justified by grace |
| A need for personal achievement as you seek to impress God and others, or no motivation to serve at all | MOTIVE FOR SERVICE | Service that is motivated by a deep gratitude for being unconditionally loved and accepted by God |
| Duty and earning God's favor or no motivation at all | MOTIVE BEHIND CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINES | Pleasure and delight |
| "Must" be holy to have God's favor, thus increasing a sense of shame and guilt | MOTIVE FOR PURITY | "Want to" be holy; do not want anything to hinder intimate relationship with God |
| Self-rejection from comparing yourself to others | SELF-IMAGE | Positive and affirmed because you know you have such value to God |
| Seek comfort in counterfeit affections: addictions, compulsions, escapism, busyness, hyper-religious activity | SOURCE OF COMFORT | Seek times of quietness and solitude to rest in the Father's presence and love |
| Competition, rivalry, and jealousy toward others' success and position | PEER RELATIONSHIPS | Humility and unity as you value others and are able to rejoice in their blessings and success |
| Accusation and exposure in order to make yourself look good by making others look bad | HANDLING OTHERS' FAULTS | Love covers as you seek to restore others in a spirit of love and gentleness |
| See authority as a source of pain; distrustful toward them and lack a heart attitude of submission | VIEW OF AUTHORITY | Respectful, honoring; you see them as ministers of God for good in your life |
| Difficulty receiving admonition; you must be right so you easily get your feelings hurt and close your spirit to discipline | VIEW OF ADMONITION | See the receiving of admonition as a blessing and need in your life so that your faults and weaknesses are exposed and put to death |
| Guarded and conditional; based upon others' performance as you seek to get your own needs met | EXPRESSION OF LOVE | Open, patient, and affectionate as you lay your life and agendas down in order to meet the needs of others |
| Conditional & Distant | SENSE OF GOD'S PRESENCE | Close & Intimate |
| Bondage | CONDITION | Liberty |
| Feel like a Servant/Slave | POSITION | Feel like a Son/Daughter |
| Spiritual ambition; the earnest desire for some spiritual achievement and distinction and the willingness to strive for it; a desire to be seen and counted among the mature. | VISION | To daily experience the Father's unconditional love and acceptance and then be sent as a representative of His love to family and others. |
| Fight for what you can get! | FUTURE | Sonship releases your inheritance! |

Galatians 3:1-3 (MSG)

You crazy Galatians! Did someone put a spell on you? Have you taken leave of your senses? Something crazy has happened, for it's obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives. His sacrifice on the cross was certainly set before you clearly enough.

²⁻⁴ Let me put this question to you: How did your new life begin? Was it by working your heads off to please God? Or was it by responding to God's Message to you? Are you going to continue this craziness? For only crazy people would think they could complete by their own efforts what was begun by God. If you weren't smart enough or strong enough to begin it, how do you suppose you could perfect it? Did you go through this whole painful learning process for nothing? It is not yet a total loss, but it certainly will be if you keep this up!

Galatians 1:10 (The Voice)

¹⁰ Do you think I care about the approval of men or about the approval of God? Do you think I am on a mission to please people? If I am still *spinning my wheels* trying to please men, then there is no way I can be a servant of the Anointed One, *the Liberating King*.

Hebrews 3:12 (AMP)

¹² Take care, brothers and sisters, that there not be in any one of you a wicked, unbelieving [Ⓜ]heart [which refuses to trust and rely on the Lord, a heart] that turns away from the living God.

1 John 4:18 (AMP)

¹⁸ There is no fear in love [dread does not exist]. But perfect (complete, full-grown) love drives out fear, because fear involves [the expectation of divine] punishment, so the one who is afraid [of God's judgment] is not perfected in love [has not grown into a sufficient understanding of God's love].

1 John 4:18 (MSG)

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day—our standing in the world is identical with Christ's. There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life—fear of death, fear of judgment—is one not yet fully formed in love.

2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)

⁷ For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

Romans 8:38-39 (AMP)

³⁸ For I am convinced [and continue to be convinced—beyond any doubt] that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present *and* threatening, nor things to come, nor powers,

³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the [unlimited] love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Proverbs 29:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the Lord shall be safe.

Galatians 5:13 (NLT)

¹³ For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.

Luke 15:2-32 (NCV)

² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to complain: "Look, this man welcomes sinners and even eats with them."

³ Then Jesus told them this story:

⁴ "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep but loses one of them. Then he will leave the other ninety-nine sheep in the open field and go out and look for the lost sheep until he finds it.

⁵ And when he finds it, he happily puts it on his shoulders

⁶ and goes home. He calls to his friends and neighbors and says, 'Be happy with me because I found my lost sheep.'

⁷ In the same way, I tell you there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who changes his heart and life, than over ninety-nine good people who don't need to change.

⁸ "Suppose a woman has ten silver coins,^[a] but loses one. She will light a lamp, sweep the house, and look carefully for the coin until she finds it.

⁹ And when she finds it, she will call her friends and neighbors and say, 'Be happy with me because I have found the coin that I lost.'

¹⁰ In the same way, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God when one sinner changes his heart and life."

¹¹ Then Jesus said, "A man had two sons.

¹² The younger son said to his father, 'Give me my share of the property.' So the father divided the property between his two sons.

¹³ Then the younger son gathered up all that was his and traveled far away to another country. There he wasted his money in foolish living.

¹⁴ After he had spent everything, a time came when there was no food anywhere in the country, and the son was poor and hungry.

¹⁵ So he got a job with one of the citizens there who sent the son into the fields to feed pigs.

16 The son was so hungry that he wanted to eat the pods the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 When he realized what he was doing, he thought, 'All of my father's servants have plenty of food. But I am here, almost dying with hunger.'

18 I will leave and return to my father and say to him, "Father, I have sinned against God and against you."

19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son, but let me be like one of your servants."

20 So the son left and went to his father. "While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt sorry for his son. So, the father ran to him and hugged and kissed him."

21 The son said, 'Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'^[b]

22 But the father said to his servants, 'Hurry! Bring the best clothes and put them on him. Also, put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.'

23 And get our fat calf and kill it so we can have a feast and celebrate.

24 My son was dead, but now he is alive again! He was lost, but now he is found!' So they began to celebrate.

25 "The older son was in the field, and as he came closer to the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing."

26 So he called to one of the servants and asked what all this meant.

27 The servant said, 'Your brother has come back, and your father killed the fat calf, because your brother came home safely.'

28 The older son was angry and would not go in to the feast. So his father went out and begged him to come in.

29 But the older son said to his father, 'I have served you like a slave for many years and have always obeyed your commands. But you never gave me even a young goat to have at a feast with my friends.'

30 But your other son, who wasted all your money on prostitutes, comes home, and you kill the fat calf for him!'

31 The father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours.'

32 We had to celebrate and be happy because your brother was dead, but now he is alive. He was lost, but now he is found.'"

Matthew 11:28-29 (NIV)

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Hebrews 4:9-10 (NIV)

9 There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; 10 for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works,^[a] just as God did from his.

Galatians 2:20-21 (MSG)

19-21 What actually took place is this: I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God, and it didn't work. So I quit being a "law man" so that I could be *God's* man. Christ's life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him. Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no

longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not “mine,” but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not going to go back on that.

²¹ Is it not clear to you that to go back to that old rule-keeping, peer-pleasing religion would be an abandonment of everything personal and free in my relationship with God? I refuse to do that, to repudiate God’s grace. If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily.