

The Connections Program for Psychological and Spiritual Development – Handouts

David H. Rosmarin, PhD

Center for Anxiety – New York, NY

McLean Hospital/Harvard Medical School – Belmont, MA

© Copyright notice: This treatment manual is protected by the United States Copyright Office and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without written permission from its author.

Table of Contents

Handout Introduction-a – Overview of the Connections Paradigm	3
Handout Introduction-b – Group Rules	4
Handout Introduction-c – Chart.....	5
Handout 1a – Overview of Intrapersonal Connection.....	6
Handout 1b – Session 01 Exercises	7
Handout 2a – Body Accepting Discomfort/Distress	8
Handout 2b – Session 02 Exercises	9
Handout 3a – Soul Loving the Body and Providing for its Needs.....	10
Handout 3b – Session 03 Exercises	11
Handout 4a – Body Expressing Needs & Raising Issues to the Soul.....	12
Handout 4b – Session 04 Exercises	13
Handout 5a – Soul Tolerating the Body’s Idiosyncrasies with Love & Patience.....	14
Handout 5b – Session 05 Exercises	15
Handout 6a – Overview of Interpersonal Connection.....	16
Handout 6b – Session 06 Exercises	17
Handout 7a – Noticing the Needs of Others: Three Levels.....	18
Handout 7b – Session 07 Exercises	19
Handout 8a – Providing for the Needs of Others.....	20
Handout 8b – Session 08 Exercises	21
Handout 9a – Noticing our Disconnection.....	22
Handout 9b – Session 09 Exercises	23
Handout 10a – Remaining Connected to Others.....	24
Handout 10b – Session 10 Exercises.....	25
Handout 11a – Overview of Spiritual Connection	26
Handout 11b – Session 11 Exercises.....	27
Handout 12a – Recognizing our Limited Scope of Control.....	28
Handout 12b – Session 12 Exercises.....	29
Handout 13a – Recognizing Order & Design in the World	30
Handout 13b – Recognizing Order & Design When Life Seems Unfair	31

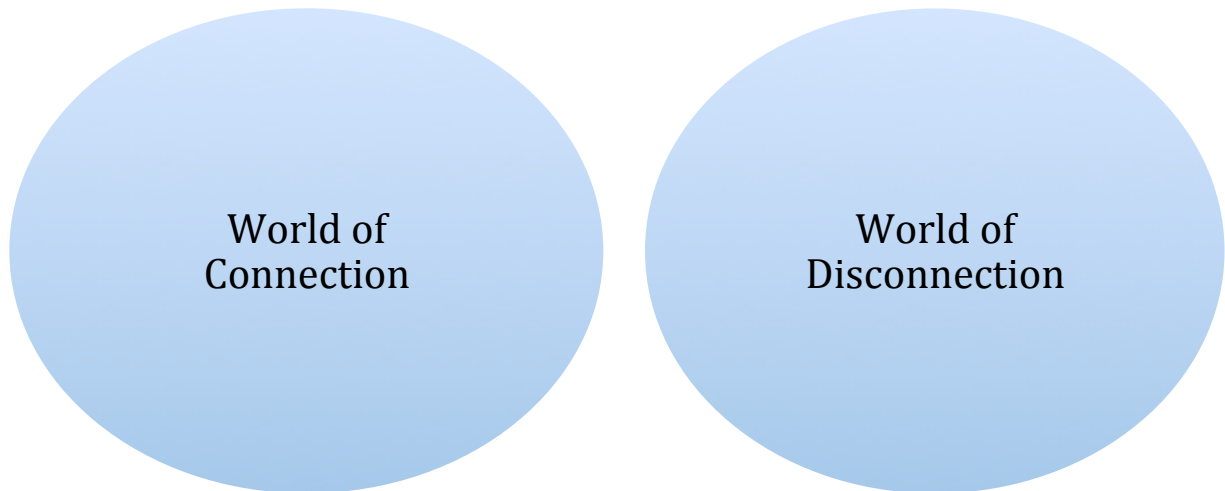
The Connections Program: A Spiritually-Based Treatment for Worry, Stress & Depression

Handout 13c – Session 13 Exercises	32
Handout 14a – Developing a Godly Vision	33
Handout 14b – Session 14 Exercises.....	34
Handout 15a – Exerting Heroic Efforts for God	35
Handout 15b – Session 15 Exercises.....	36
Handout 16a – Summary of Connections Program – Intrapersonal Connection.....	37
Handout 16b – Summary of Connections Program – Interpersonal Connection	38
Handout 16c – Summary of Connections Program – Spiritual Connection	39
Handout 16d – Description of all 15 Connections Exercises	40

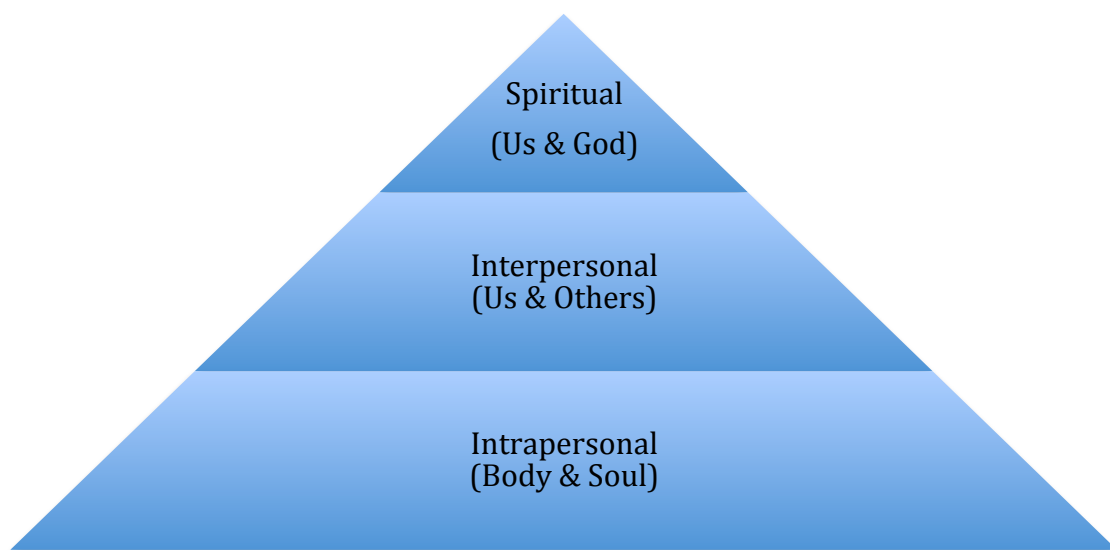
Handout Introduction-a – Overview of the Connections Paradigm

This program is predicated on a spiritually-based paradigm for understanding human emotion called “Worlds of Connection & Disconnection” – here is a brief summary of the paradigm:

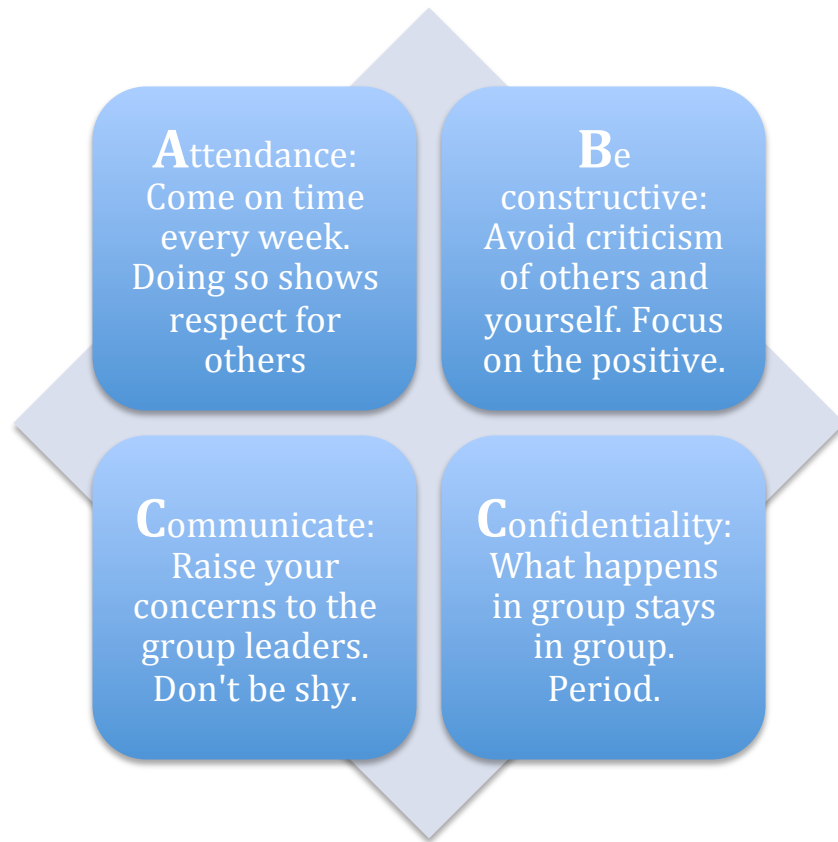
- 1) At any moment in time, human beings dwell in one of two worlds:



- 2) Connection involves coming together of two complementary and contrasting entities. By contrast, Disconnection involves their separation or estrangement. This occurs in three central domains or levels: Body & Soul (intrapersonal Connection), Us and Others (interpersonal Connection) and Us and God (spiritual Connection).
- 3) At each level of connection, there is a giver and a receiver. Connection occurs when one entity provides for the other, which in turn accepts its gifts.
- 4) The three levels are hierarchical:



Handout Introduction-b – Group Rules



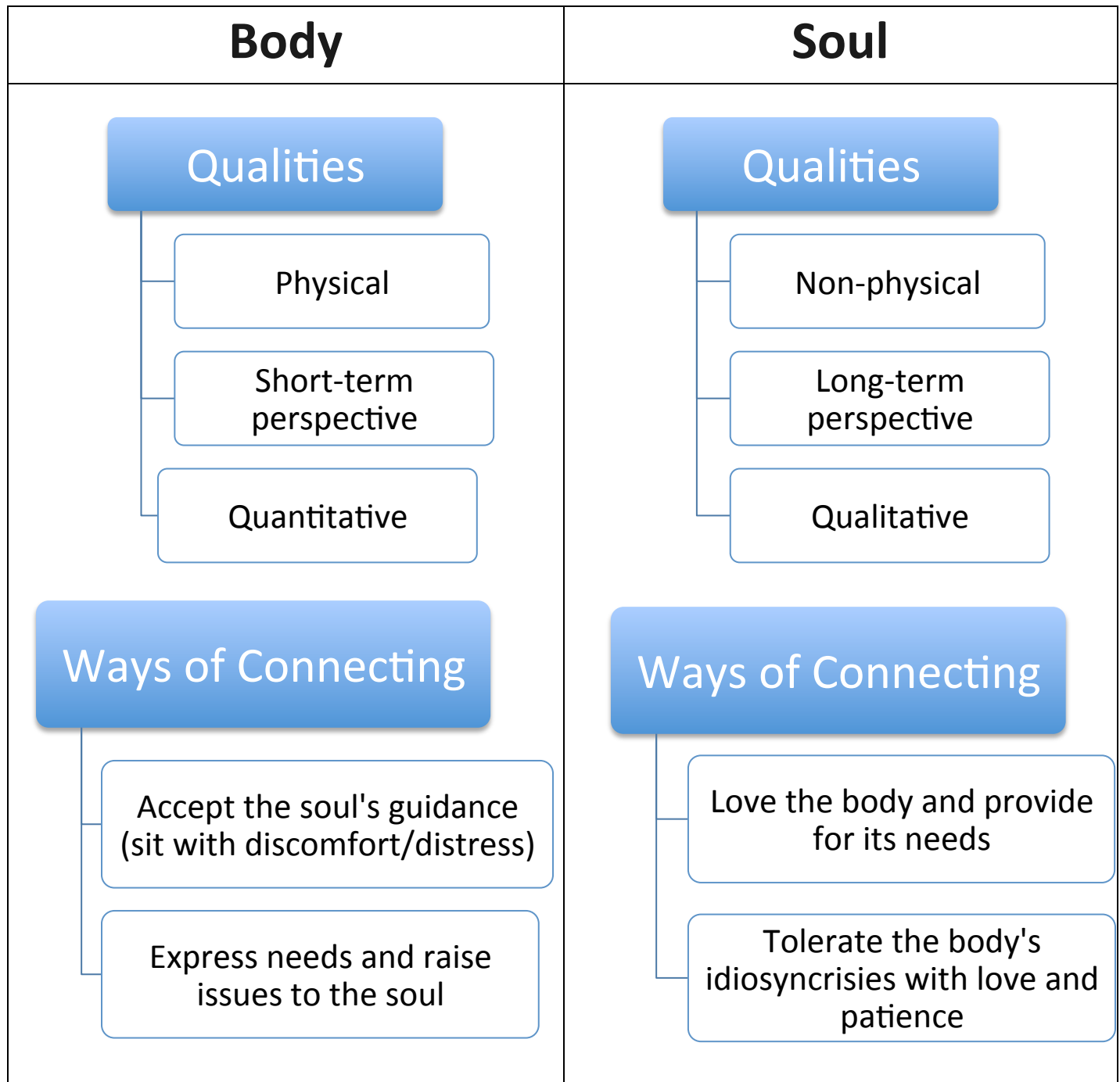
The Connections Program: A Spiritually-Based Treatment for Worry, Stress & Depression

Handout Introduction-c – Chart

Date	Chart	Skill #1	Skill #2	Skill #3	Worry (0-10)	Phys. Stress (0-10)	Sadness (0-10)
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							
17							
18							
19							
20							
21							
22							
23							
24							
25							
26							
27							
28							
29							
30							
31							

Handout 1a – Overview of Intrapersonal Connection

Human beings are comprised of two complimentary entities: A body and a soul. According to the Connections paradigm, body and soul thrive when they get close and stay close to each other by creating intimacy, love and connection. To this end, body and soul have opposite/complimentary qualities and connect in opposite/complimentary ways:



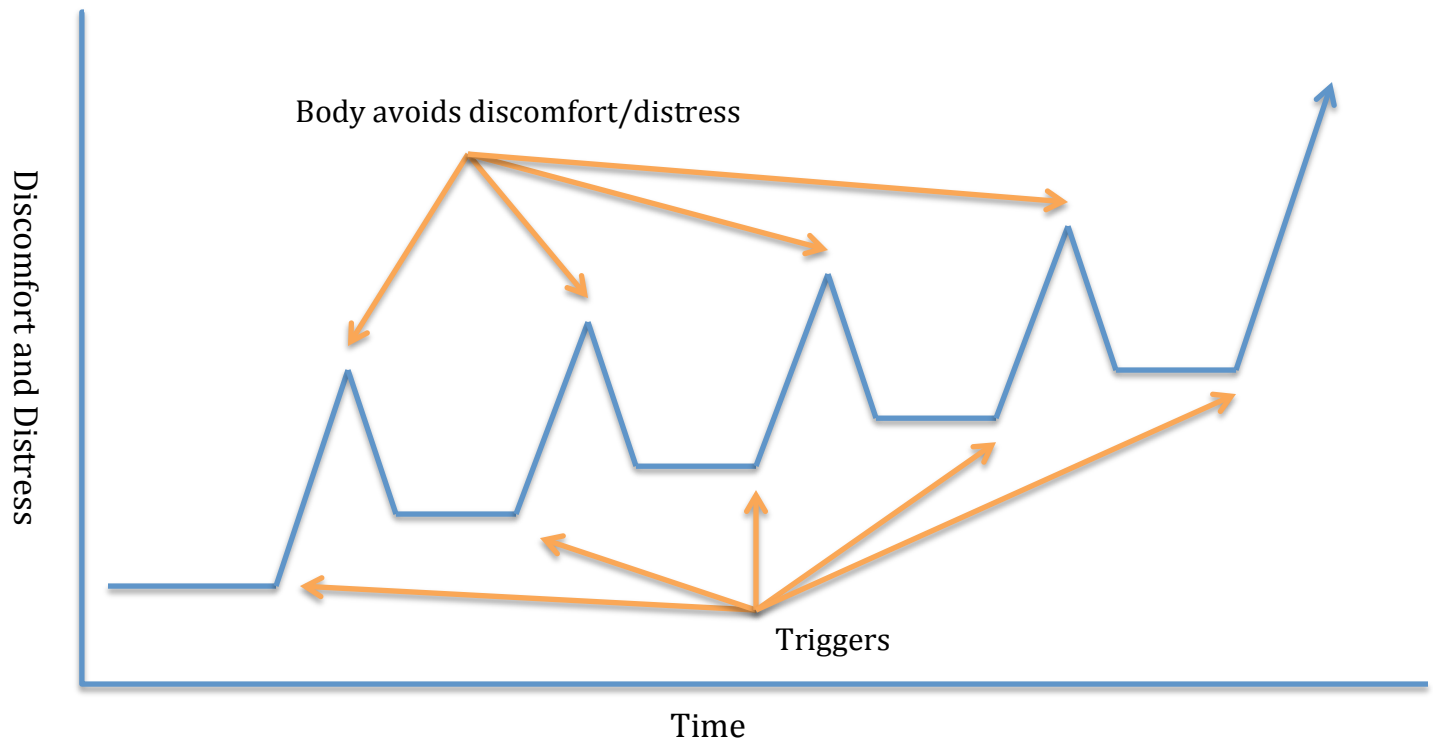
Handout 1b – Session 01 Exercises

Exercise #1: Communication is essential to facilitate Connection in any relationship. Intrapersonal Connection is no different – your soul and body need to communicate with each other in order to build Connection. Our 1st exercise, therefore, is to have a verbal (out loud) conversation every day between your body and soul that lasts no fewer than 3-volleys, once per day. There are no rules regarding the content of the conversation – you can speak about anything. The exercise simply involves speaking.

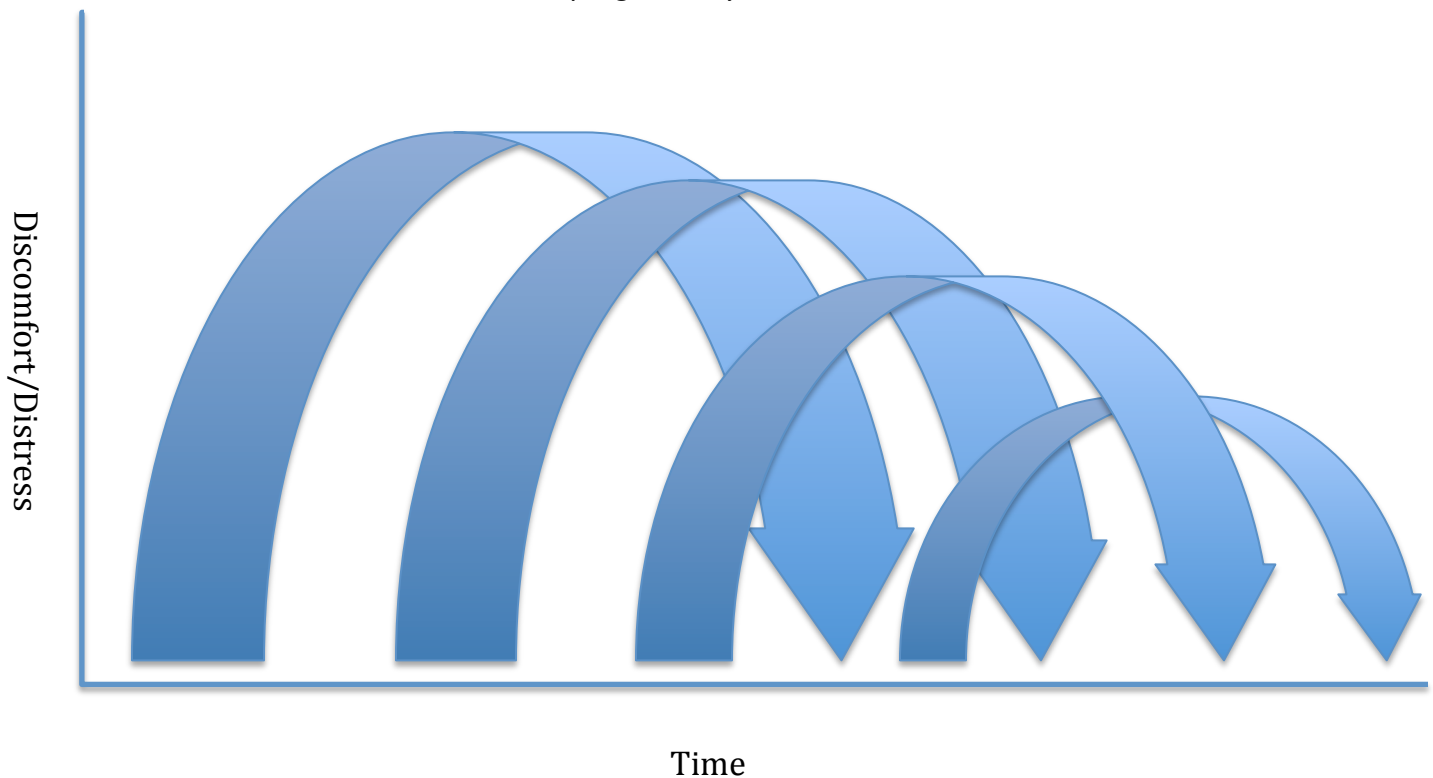
1. Chart: Charting, Exercises*, Anxiety (0-10), Stress (0-10), Sadness (0-10)
2. *Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal Conversation (out loud), 1x/day
3. Exercise #2: n/a
4. Exercise #3: n/a
5. Exercise #4: n/a
6. Exercise #5: n/a
7. Exercise #6: n/a
8. Exercise #7: n/a
9. Exercise #8: n/a
10. Exercise #9: n/a
11. Exercise #10: n/a
12. Exercise #11: n/a
13. Exercise #12: n/a
14. Exercise #13: n/a
15. Exercise #14: n/a
16. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 2a – Body Accepting Discomfort/Distress

When the body avoids discomfort/distress, it is easier in the short term but becomes progressively harder over time.



When the body sits with and accepts discomfort/distress, it is more difficult in the short term but becomes progressively easier over time.

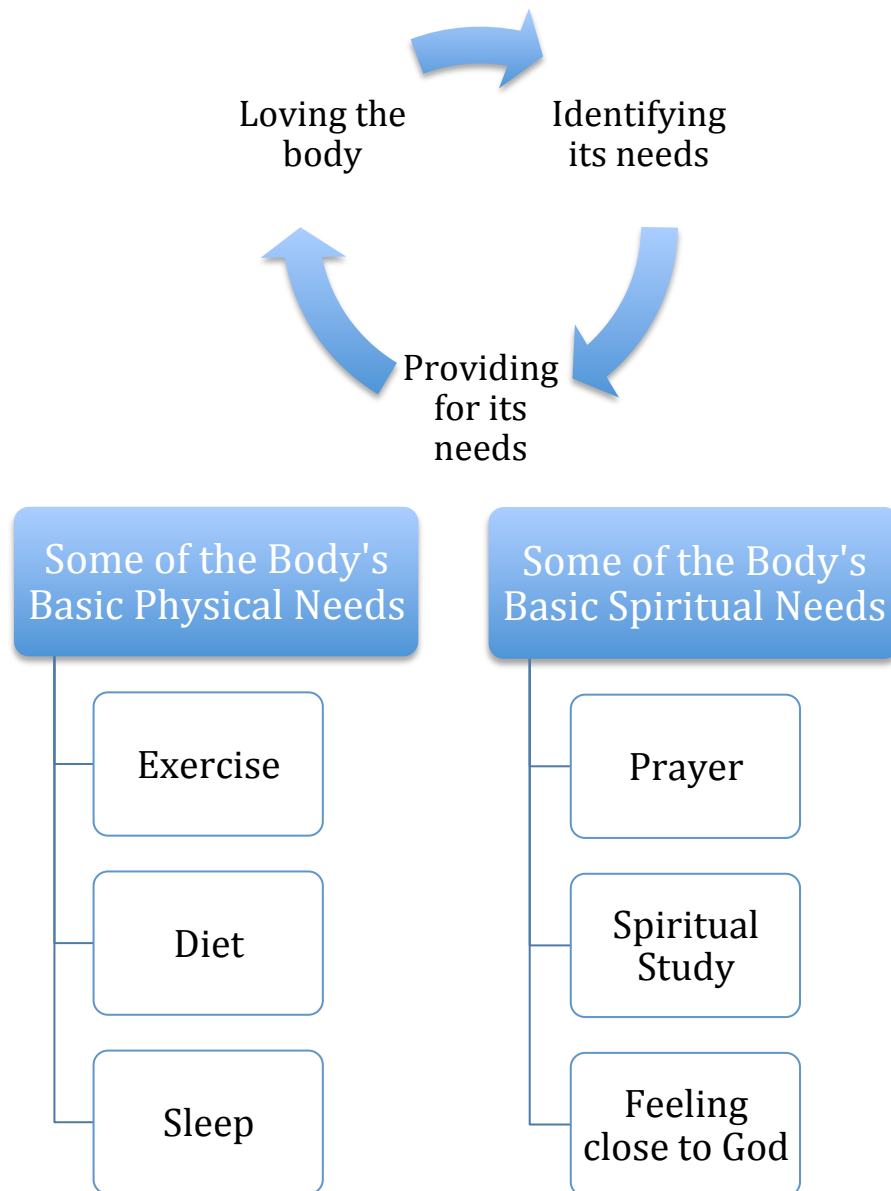


Handout 2b – Session 02 Exercises

Exercise #2: Once per day, (a) engage in an activity that your body avoids because of discomfort/distress, although your soul recognizes that it poses no real threat to your wellbeing, or (b) hold back from engaging in an activity that your body does excessively because of discomfort/distress although your soul recognizes that it is not truly necessary for your wellbeing. The purpose of this exercise is for your body to build Connection by tolerating and accepting distress and discomfort.

1. Chart: Charting, Exercises*, Anxiety (0-10), Stress (0-10), Sadness (0-10)
2. *Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
3. *Exercise #2: Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
4. Exercise #3: n/a
5. Exercise #4: n/a
6. Exercise #5: n/a
7. Exercise #6: n/a
8. Exercise #7: n/a
9. Exercise #8: n/a
10. Exercise #9: n/a
11. Exercise #10: n/a
12. Exercise #11: n/a
13. Exercise #12: n/a
14. Exercise #13: n/a
15. Exercise #14: n/a
16. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 3a – Soul Loving the Body and Providing for its Needs



SOME OF THE BODY'S BASIC PHYSICAL NEEDS

- Exercise – vigorous physical exercise (at least 30 min x 5x/week)
- Diet – healthy breakfast of 300-500 calories within 2-3 hours of waking, each day
- Sleep – average of 7.5-9.0 hours/night

SOME OF THE BODY'S BASIC SPIRITUAL NEEDS

- Prayer – praise, request, and thanks (at least 1x/day)
- Spiritual study – learning about spirituality (at least 5-minutes/day)
- Feeling close to God – mustering up a sense of closeness to God (at least 1x/day)

Handout 3b – Session 03 Exercises

Exercise #3: Once per day, have your soul select a gift for the body, initiate a conversation with the body about the gift, and bestow the gift to the body, in regards to (a) one physical and (b) one spiritual need. Physical needs may include cardiovascular exercise, going for a walk, food, sleep, rest/relaxation, medical care, massage, humor (e.g., YouTube videos), music, or social time. Spiritual needs may include prayer, spiritual study, attending spiritual/religious services, or taking a moment to feel close to God.

Note: Next session you will receive a new exercise. At that point and at each subsequent session, we will need to bump one existing exercise off your chart.

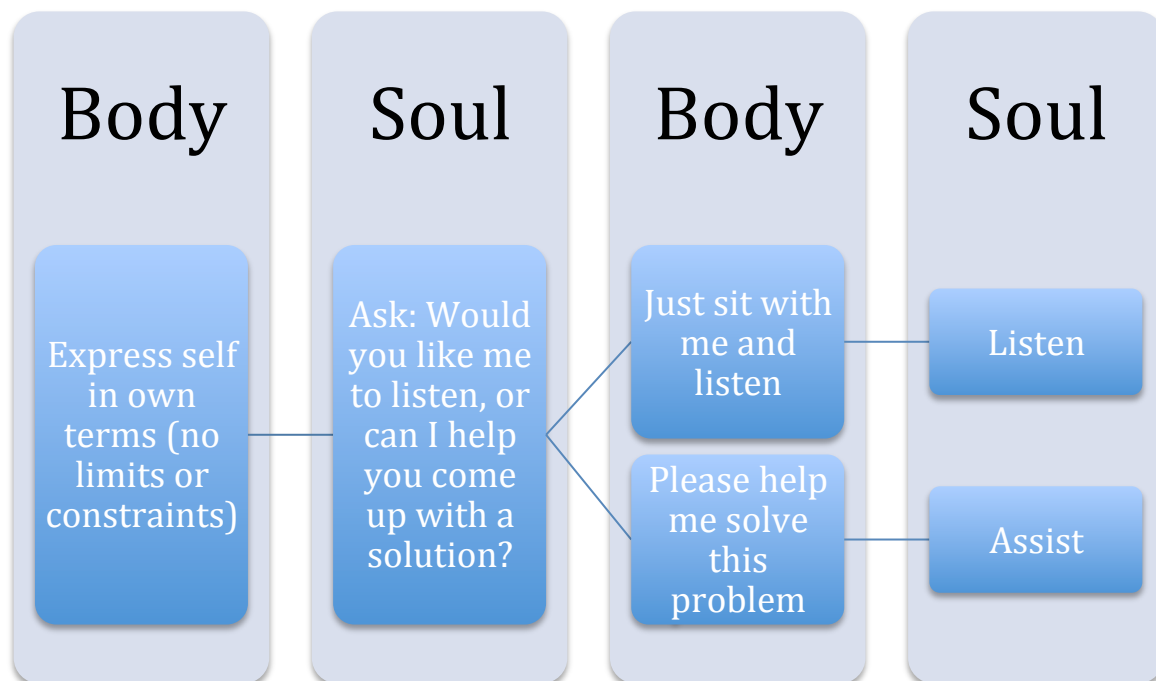
1. Chart: Charting, Exercises*, Anxiety (0-10), Stress (0-10), Sadness (0-10)
2. *Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
3. *Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
4. *Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
5. Exercise #4: n/a
6. Exercise #5: n/a
7. Exercise #6: n/a
8. Exercise #7: n/a
9. Exercise #8: n/a
10. Exercise #9: n/a
11. Exercise #10: n/a
12. Exercise #11: n/a
13. Exercise #12: n/a
14. Exercise #13: n/a
15. Exercise #14: n/a
16. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 4a – Body Expressing Needs & Raising Issues to the Soul

Expressing Needs: Move past negative emotions (e.g., shame, guilt, disgust) and simply describe your need in detail to your soul.



Raising Issues: Complete the following steps to engage in a discussion with the soul about a current problem.



Handout 4b – Session 04 Exercises

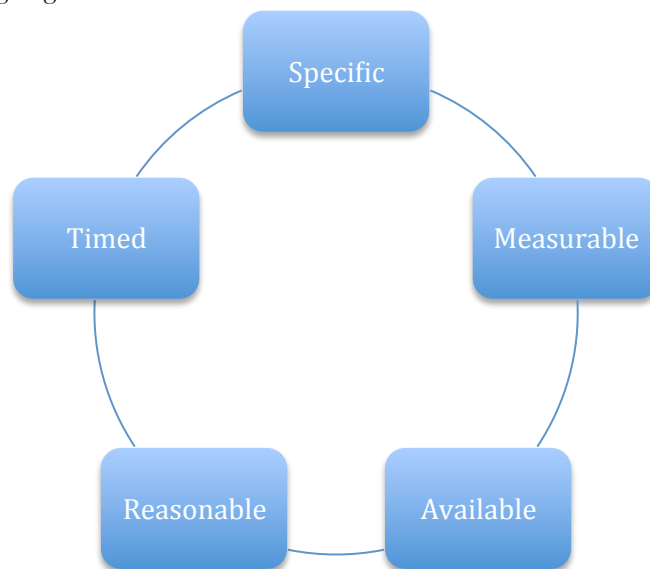
Exercise #4: In order to successfully facilitate Intrapersonal Connection, the soul must learn to listen to the body when it describes its needs and speaks about issues that it is facing, and the body must learn to open up and Connect through speaking to the soul even if it feels uncomfortable or vulnerable. Therefore, our fourth exercise is for our bodies to feely describe a need or raise an issue to the soul – in as much detail as possible – once per day. Just Connect to your soul by speaking freely and without constraints – don't hold anything back.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For this session and all future sessions, continue to do all previous exercises, though only chart the ones marked with a * below.

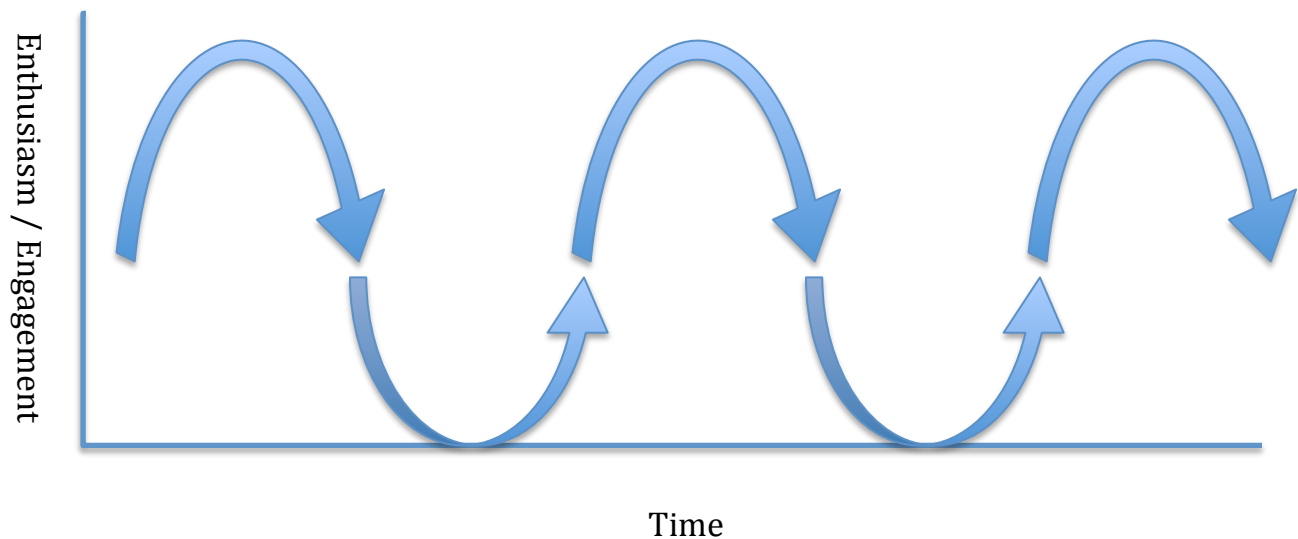
1. Chart: Charting, Exercises*, Anxiety (0-10), Stress (0-10), Sadness (0-10)
2. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
3. *Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
4. *Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
5. *Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
6. Exercise #5: n/a
7. Exercise #6: n/a
8. Exercise #7: n/a
9. Exercise #8: n/a
10. Exercise #9: n/a
11. Exercise #10: n/a
12. Exercise #11: n/a
13. Exercise #12: n/a
14. Exercise #13: n/a
15. Exercise #14: n/a
16. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 5a – Soul Tolerating the Body’s Idiosyncrasies with Love & Patience

Tolerating the Body’s Language



Tolerating the Body’s Cycles



Tolerating the Body’s Processes of Behavior Change

$$\text{Behavior Change} = \text{Size/Intensity of Activity} \times \text{Time}$$

The most effective strategies for *long-term* behavior change maximize time and minimize size/intensity of the activity.

Handout 5b – Session 05 Exercises

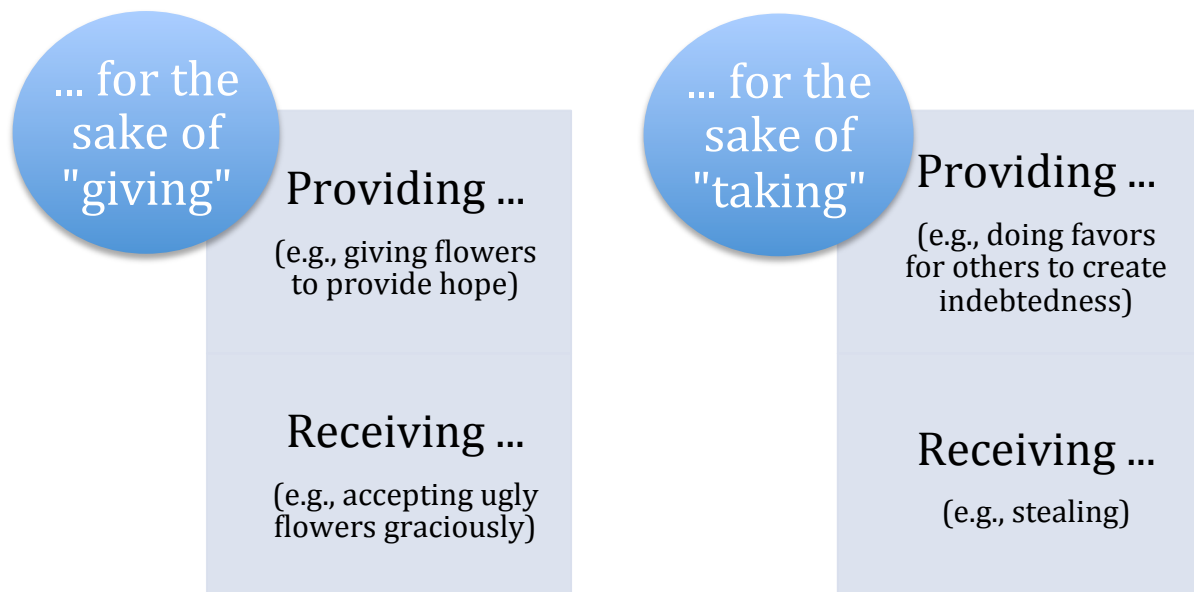
Exercise #5: Our new exercise is for your soul to tolerate the body, once per day. This involves: (1) Conjuring up a recent event in which your body fell short in a goal that he/she had; and (2) Having your soul speak words of encouragement and love to your body. It's recommended that you take at least 60-seconds to do this exercise each day (30-seconds conjuring & 30-seconds encouragement/love). The goal is for our souls to remain Connected to our bodies when they doesn't fulfill our expectations.

1. Chart: Charting, Exercises*, Anxiety (0-10), Stress (0-10), Sadness (0-10)
2. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
3. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
4. *Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
5. *Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
6. *Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
7. Exercise #6: n/a
8. Exercise #7: n/a
9. Exercise #8: n/a
10. Exercise #9: n/a
11. Exercise #10: n/a
12. Exercise #11: n/a
13. Exercise #12: n/a
14. Exercise #13: n/a
15. Exercise #14: n/a
16. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 6a – Overview of Interpersonal Connection

In a nutshell, interpersonal connection involves entering another person's world. Dwelling in the world of interpersonal connection involves “Giving” (as opposed to “Taking”).

“Giving” entails (1) identifying the needs of other people, (2) considering those needs, and (3) exerting an effort to meet those needs. However, there are four ways to provide/receive and not all of them involve “Giving”:



There are many ways to facilitate Interpersonal Connection.

In this program we are going to focus on just four:

- 1) Noticing the needs of others
- 2) Providing for the needs of others
- 3) Noticing our disconnection from others
- 4) Remaining connected to others

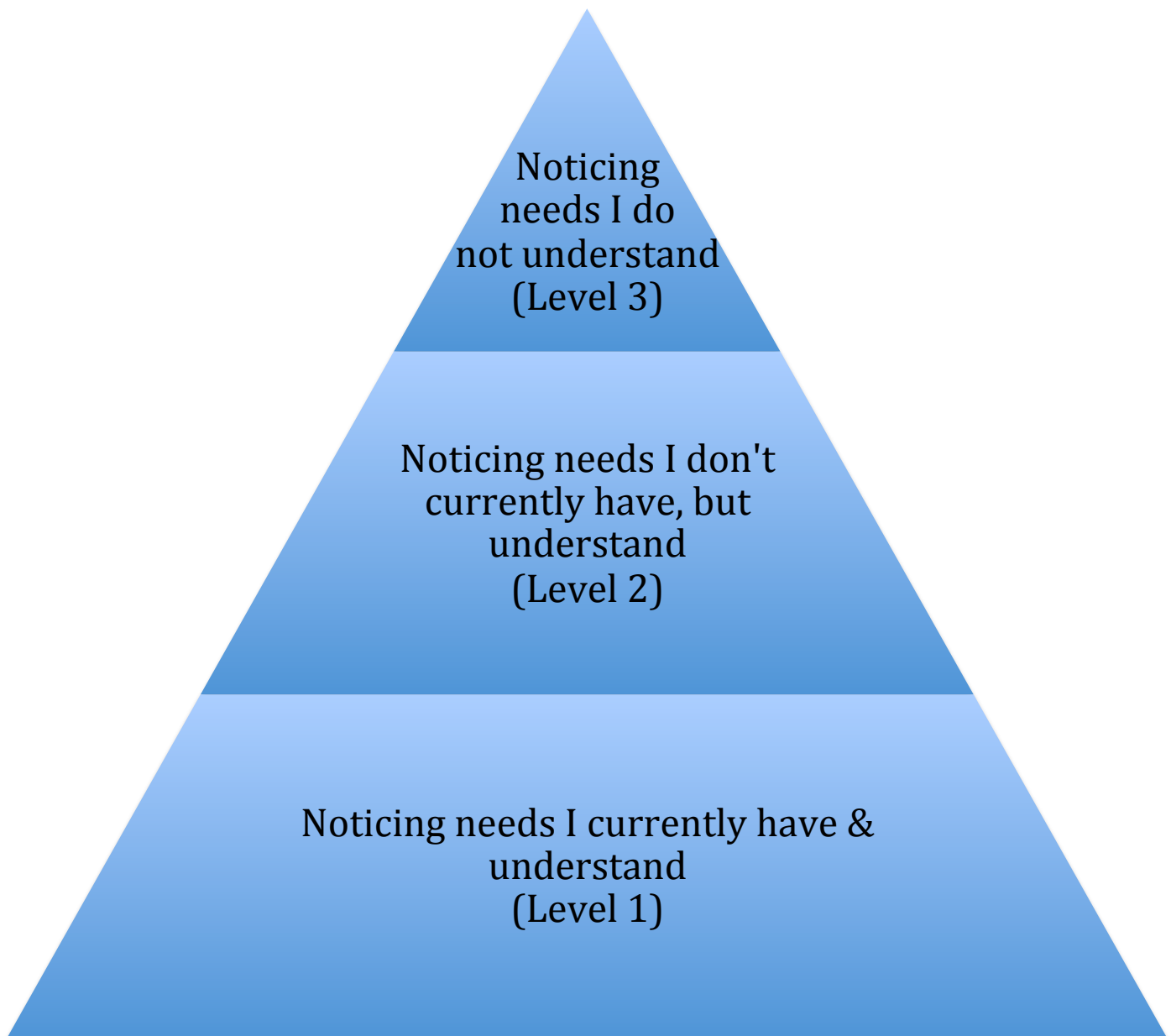
Handout 6b – Session 06 Exercises

Exercise #6: Our new exercise is to notice others' needs, once per day. You can "get a check" for noticing any need – physical or spiritual – that any other human being has, at any point during the day. The only caveat is that you must notice the need *before* the person expresses his/her need verbally or behaviorally. For example, once a person says "Can you please give me a dollar?" or even if they put out their hand to ask you for a coin, you've lost the opportunity. The point of the exercise is to leave our own world for a moment and actively delve into the experience of another person (as opposed to being passively pulled into their world). Note that at this point we are not involved in providing for others' needs. The goal here is simply to notice – i.e., to perceive and understand what others' lack.

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. *Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. *Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. *Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs, 1x/day
7. Exercise #7: n/a
8. Exercise #8: n/a
9. Exercise #9: n/a
10. Exercise #10: n/a
11. Exercise #11: n/a
12. Exercise #12: n/a
13. Exercise #13: n/a
14. Exercise #14: n/a
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 7a – Noticing the Needs of Others: Three Levels

It is easiest to notice others' needs when we ourselves concurrently have those same needs (e.g., when we feel cold and notice that others are chilly as well). It is harder – and therefore a higher level of Interpersonal Connection – to notice others' needs when we do not currently have those needs, but we have experienced those needs in the past (e.g., we are currently not cold, but someone comes in from outside and is shivering). Finally, it is hardest – and therefore the highest level of noticing others' needs – to recognize when other people have needs that we have never experienced and therefore do not understand (e.g., because of cultural or gender differences, or because we have never had those needs before).



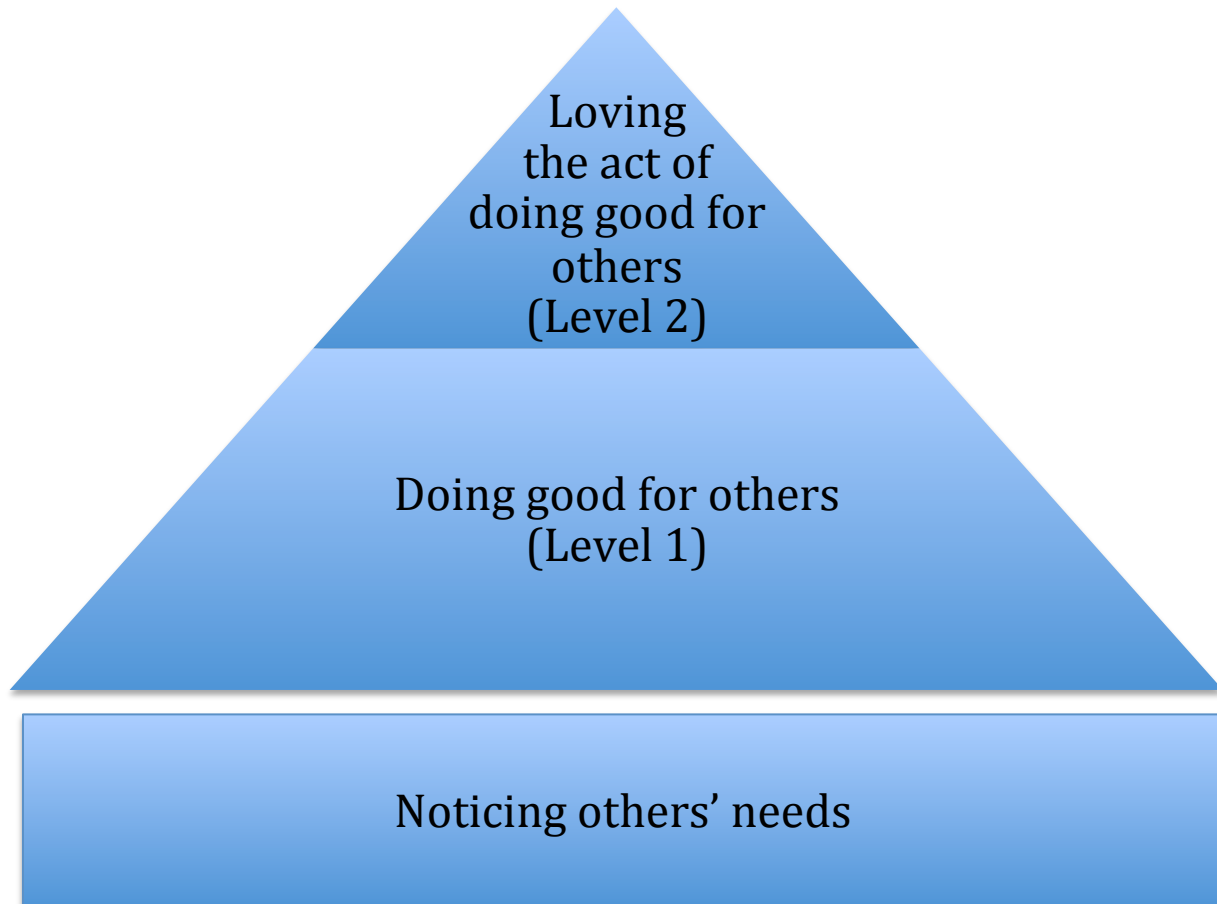
Handout 7b – Session 07 Exercises

Exercise #7: Notice another person's needs at levels 2 or 3 (i.e., needs that we do not currently have) once each day. You can "get a check" for noticing others' needs that you have had in the past but currently don't have, or needs that you've never had before. Just as with exercise #6, this applies to *any* need – physical or spiritual – any other human being has. And of course, we need to *actively* initiate the process of noticing the need – once the other person attempts to make his/her needs known we lose the opportunity to "notice."

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. *Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. *Exercise #6: Notice the Needs of Others (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. *Exercise #7: Notice the Needs of Others (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. Exercise #8: n/a
9. Exercise #9: n/a
10. Exercise #10: n/a
11. Exercise #11: n/a
12. Exercise #12: n/a
13. Exercise #13: n/a
14. Exercise #14: n/a
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 8a – Providing for the Needs of Others

The most basic form of Interpersonal Connection is noticing others' needs. To the extent that one notices others' needs, one can build greater Interpersonal Connection by providing for others needs. This has two levels: (1) Doing good for others, and (2) Loving the act of doing good for others.



Handout 8b – Session 08 Exercises

Exercise #8: Once per day, after noticing a need of another person, provide for that need. It's a big bonus if you *love* the act while you're doing it (this can be marked on your chart with a star next to the check).

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. *Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. *Exercise #7: Notice Others' Needs (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. *Exercise #8: Provide for Others' Needs, 1x/day (bonus: Love the act of providing for others' needs)
9. Exercise #9: n/a
10. Exercise #10: n/a
11. Exercise #11: n/a
12. Exercise #12: n/a
13. Exercise #13: n/a
14. Exercise #14: n/a
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 9a – Noticing our Disconnection

When it comes to intimacy and closeness with other people, the standards of the Connections Paradigm are much higher than those of Western culture. In fact, Interpersonal Connection is defined as any behavioral manifestation of irritation or anger, regardless of how small. This includes any observable action, comment or gesture that is motivated by a desire to Disconnect from another person, such as:

Murder

Causing injury/damage

Causing pain

Refusing to see someone

Refusing to speak to someone

Speaking to someone, but not sincerely

Speaking sincerely, but without eye contact

Speaking with eye contact, but withdrawing early from the conversation

Spending as much time as previously, but not bestowing as much grace

Being gracious, but without as much enthusiasm

Handout 9b – Session 09 Exercises

Exercise #9: Count the number of times each day that you engage in a behavioral manifestation of anger or irritation, regardless of how small towards other people. The goal of this activity is to *sensitize* ourselves to our Interpersonal Disconnection, and thereby lower the threshold for Disconnection in our lives.

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. *Exercise #7: Notice Others' Needs (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. *Exercise #8: Provide for Others' Needs, 1x/day (bonus: Love the act of providing for others' needs)
9. *Exercise #9: Notice our Disconnection from Others, count how many times we engage in *any* behavioral manifestation of anger/irritation each day, and record the # on your chart.
10. Exercise #10: n/a
11. Exercise #11: n/a
12. Exercise #12: n/a
13. Exercise #13: n/a
14. Exercise #14: n/a
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 10a – Remaining Connected to Others

Remaining Connected to others has two main components: (1) Guarding against (refraining from) disconnection, and (2) Continuing to bestow goodness upon others when they do things we don't like. However, as one progresses in these facets of Connection, it also becomes easier to (3) Notice our Disconnection from others. This, in turn, makes it easier to guard against Disconnection and bestow goodness to others when irritated.



Handout 10b – Session 10 Exercises

Exercise #10: Once each day, complete the following visualization: (1) [15s] Remember a time when someone triggered anger, irritation, or resentment inside of you, and you responded with Disconnection. (2) [30s] Recall the event vividly in your mind. What did they do? What effects did it have on your life? (3) [30s] Now, recall how you responded to the event. What did you do to Disconnect from the person? (4) [30s] As you remember the event and your response, imagine what would have happened had you not Disconnected. Picture them acting just as they did – without any changes – but this time, imagine yourself guarding against the Disconnection and continuing to bestow goodness upon them. And that's the end of the exercise.

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. Exercise #7: Notice Others' Needs (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. *Exercise #8: Provide for Others' Needs, 1x/day (bonus: Love the act of providing for others' needs)
9. *Exercise #9: Notice our Disconnection from Others, count how many times we engage in *any* behavioral manifestation of anger/irritation each day, and record the # on your chart.
10. *Exercise #10: Visualize a time when you Disconnected from another person, and how you may have handled the situation with more Connection, 1x/day.
11. Exercise #11: n/a
12. Exercise #12: n/a
13. Exercise #13: n/a
14. Exercise #14: n/a
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 11a – Overview of Spiritual Connection

Spiritual connection is comprised of (1) Experiencing God's presence in our lives, and (2) Fulfilling God's will. In this program, we will focus on two sub-parts of each (below).



Handout 11b – Session 11 Exercises

Exercise #11: Once each day, rely on God while you engage in a simple activity. As you do an everyday activity (e.g., turning on a light, standing up from your chair, or writing with a pen), cultivate some awareness that God must be involved for you to be successful in the activity. The goal of this exercise is to facilitate greater awareness that (1) God is present in our lives, and (2) we are responsible to be active players in God's world.

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. Exercise #7: Notice Others' Needs (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. Exercise #8: Provide for Others' Needs, 1x/day (bonus: Love the act of providing for others' needs)
9. *Exercise #9: Notice our Disconnection from Others, record the # on your chart
10. *Exercise #10: Visualize Remaining Connected to Others, 1x/day
11. *Exercise #11: Rely in God During a Simple Activity, 1x/day
12. Exercise #12: n/a
13. Exercise #13: n/a
14. Exercise #14: n/a
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 12a – Recognizing our Limited Scope of Control

The first step in developing Spiritual Connection is recognizing that human beings have a very limited scope of control over our experiences in life. Any of the following incidents – in isolation or combination – could occur at any moment and radically impact our lives:

Terrorist attack on a skyscraper	Major water supply contamination	Malfunctioning of all cell phone systems
Super-bacteria released from a medical center	Permanent erasure of central banking records	Major malware attack on Google
Nationwide power outage for over a year	A sudden 10-fold increase in gasoline prices	Nuclear attack on a major urban center
Chemical contamination of the air	A devastating weather event	Rampant murder of civilians by civilians
A 50-foot rise in sea levels	Deadly radiation due to an astronomical event	99% devaluation of US currency
A catastrophic collapse of the NYSE	Outbreak of a rare and deadly virus	An unrelenting meteor shower
Hostile military invasion of a foreign government	Walk out of the entire police force	Widespread social acceptance of grand theft

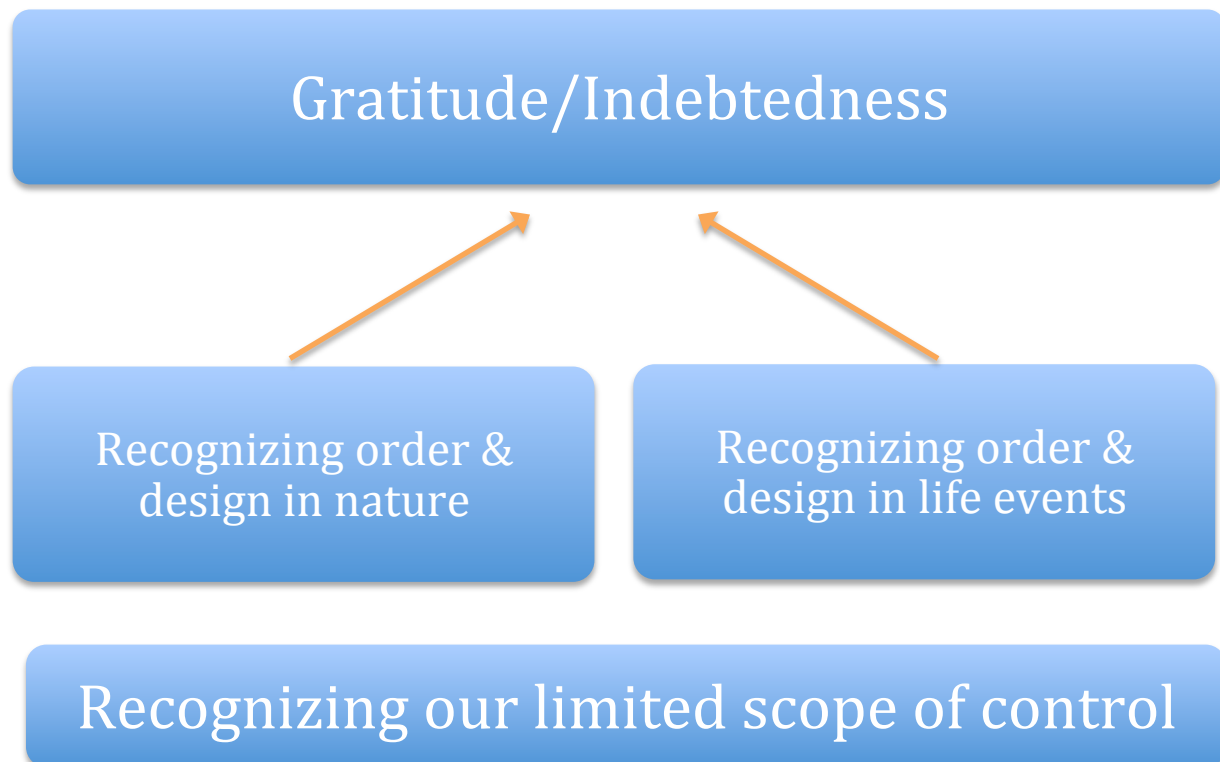
Handout 12b – Session 12 Exercises

Exercise #12: Once each day, recognize your limited scope of control by contemplating a situation in your life in which you are vulnerable. Spend a full 60 seconds imagining a scenario or situation in your life that could go badly – very badly – and picture in great detail the terrible consequences that would occur if the worst-case scenario were to materialize. Then, after a full minute of envisioning the worst that could happen, pray to God for help and protection.

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. Exercise #7: Notice Others' Needs (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. Exercise #8: Provide for Others' Needs, 1x/day (bonus: Love the act of providing for others' needs)
9. Exercise #9: Notice our Disconnection from Others, record the # on your chart
10. *Exercise #10: Visualize Remaining Connected to Others, 1x/day
11. *Exercise #11: Rely in God during a Simple Activity, 1x/day
12. *Exercise #12: Recognize our Limited Scope of Control, 1x/day
13. Exercise #13: n/a
14. Exercise #14: n/a
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 13a – Recognizing Order & Design in the World

Recognizing our limited scope of control builds a foundation for Spiritual Connection, but to develop intimacy, closeness, and love for God, one must recognize order and design (in nature and life events). This in turn generates gratitude, which we can use to enhance our Spiritual Connection (continued below).

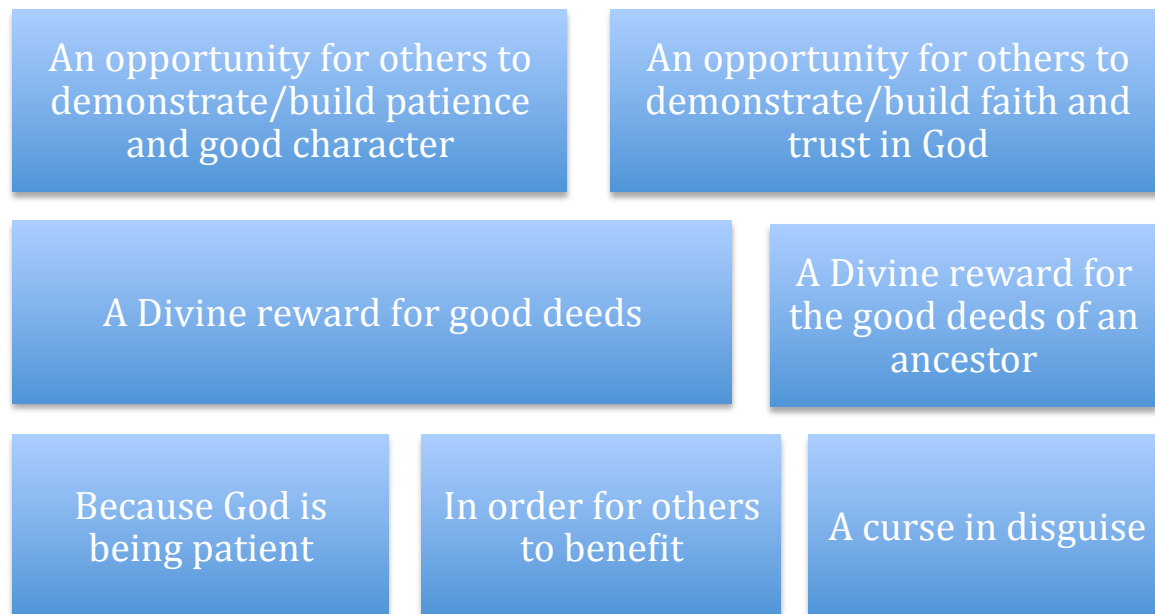


However, when one experiences gratitude, one will also feel indebtedness – an uncomfortable emotion that emerges from a desire to repay for what one has received. Indebtedness can be used to propel oneself forth in Spiritual Connection – i.e., by committing to do something for the benefactor in return. However, some individuals back out of Spiritual Connection when they feel indebted (e.g., by discounting the gifts they have received). This, of course, is Disconnection.

Handout 13b – Recognizing Order & Design When Life Seems Unfair

According to the Connections Paradigm, human beings are incapable of fully understanding why bad things happen to good people, and why good things happen to bad people. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to attempt to understand these fundamental questions, even partially.

When bad people experience good fortune, it could be ...



When good people experience bad fortune, it could be ...



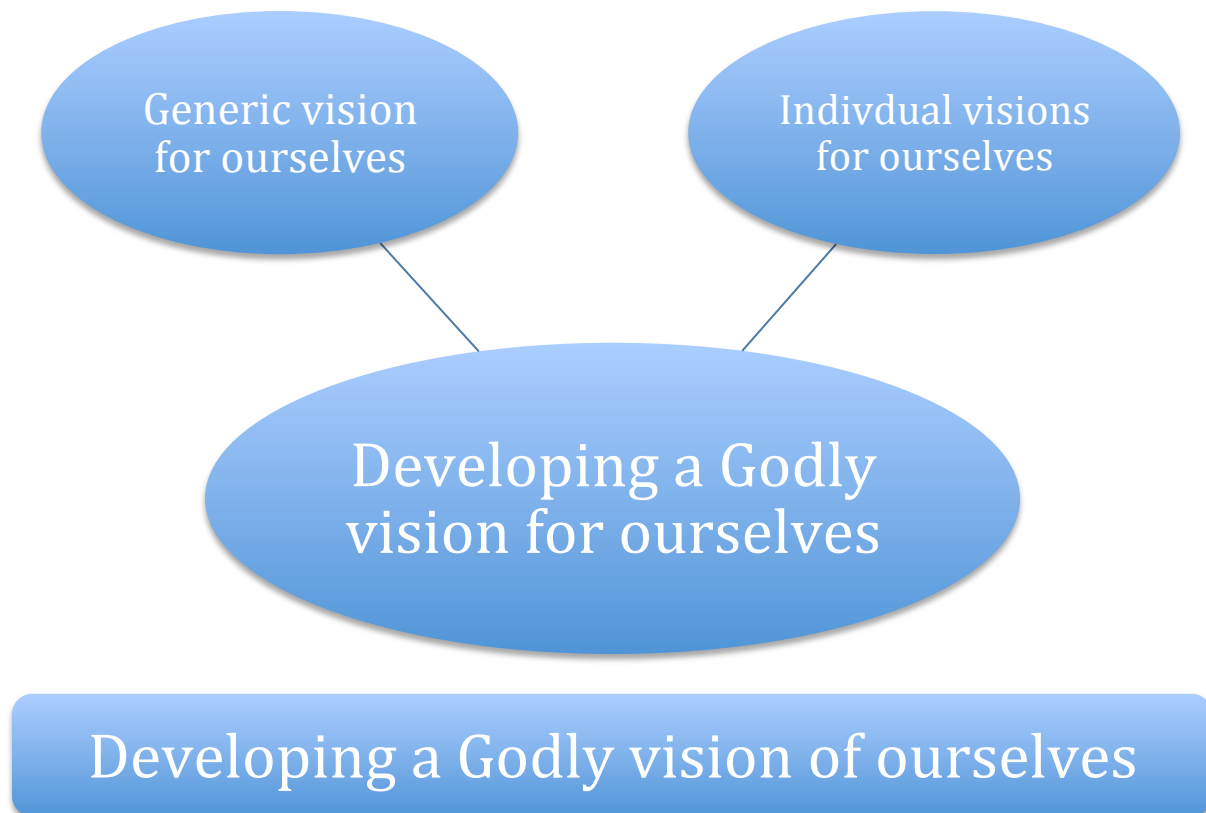
Handout 13c – Session 13 Exercises

Exercise #13: Once each day, when you eat or drink something, try to feel that God placed nutrition and enjoyment in the food/drink, just for you.

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. Exercise #7: Notice Others' Needs (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. Exercise #8: Provide for Others' Needs, 1x/day (bonus: Love the act of providing for others' needs)
9. Exercise #9: Notice our Disconnection from Others, record the # on your chart
10. Exercise #10: Visualize Remaining Connected to Others, 1x/day
11. *Exercise #11: Rely in God During a Simple Activity, 1x/day
12. *Exercise #12: Recognize our Limited Scope of Control, 1x/day
13. *Exercise #13: Taste the Blessing, 1x/day
14. Exercise #14: n/a
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 14a – Developing a Godly Vision

Developing a Godly vision can be broken into two sub-parts: (1) Developing a Godly vision of ourselves, and (2) Developing a Godly vision for ourselves. The former involves recognizing the human capacity for greatness, recognizing that each human being has unique talents and strengths, and believing that our capacity for greatness is within reach. The latter involves determining how to use our specific gifts to serve God, and can be divided into two sub-parts: (i) Generic visions for ourselves (i.e., activities that most or all people can do to fulfill God's will), and (ii) Individual visions for ourselves (i.e., activities that are part of our unique Divine service)






Handout 14b – Session 14 Exercises

Exercise #14: Once each day, spend 60 seconds dreaming about one of your specific and unique Divine purposes in life. While contemplate your dream, consider whether your vision is consistent with God's vision for you and the world (i.e., whether you think God would like your dreams to come true).

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. Exercise #7: Notice Others' Needs (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. Exercise #8: Provide for Others' Needs, 1x/day (bonus: Love the act of providing for others' needs)
9. Exercise #9: Notice our Disconnection from Others, record the # on your chart
10. Exercise #10: Visualize Remaining Connected to Others, 1x/day
11. Exercise #11: Rely in God during a Simple Activity, 1x/day
12. *Exercise #12: Recognize our Limited Scope of Control, 1x/day
13. *Exercise #13: Taste the Blessing, 1x/day
14. *Exercise #14: Dream Big, 1x/day
15. Exercise #15: n/a

Handout 15a – Exerting Heroic Efforts for God

Exerting heroic efforts for God involves digging deep and doing whatever we can to see our dreams turn into reality. This is very difficult to do because it necessitates:

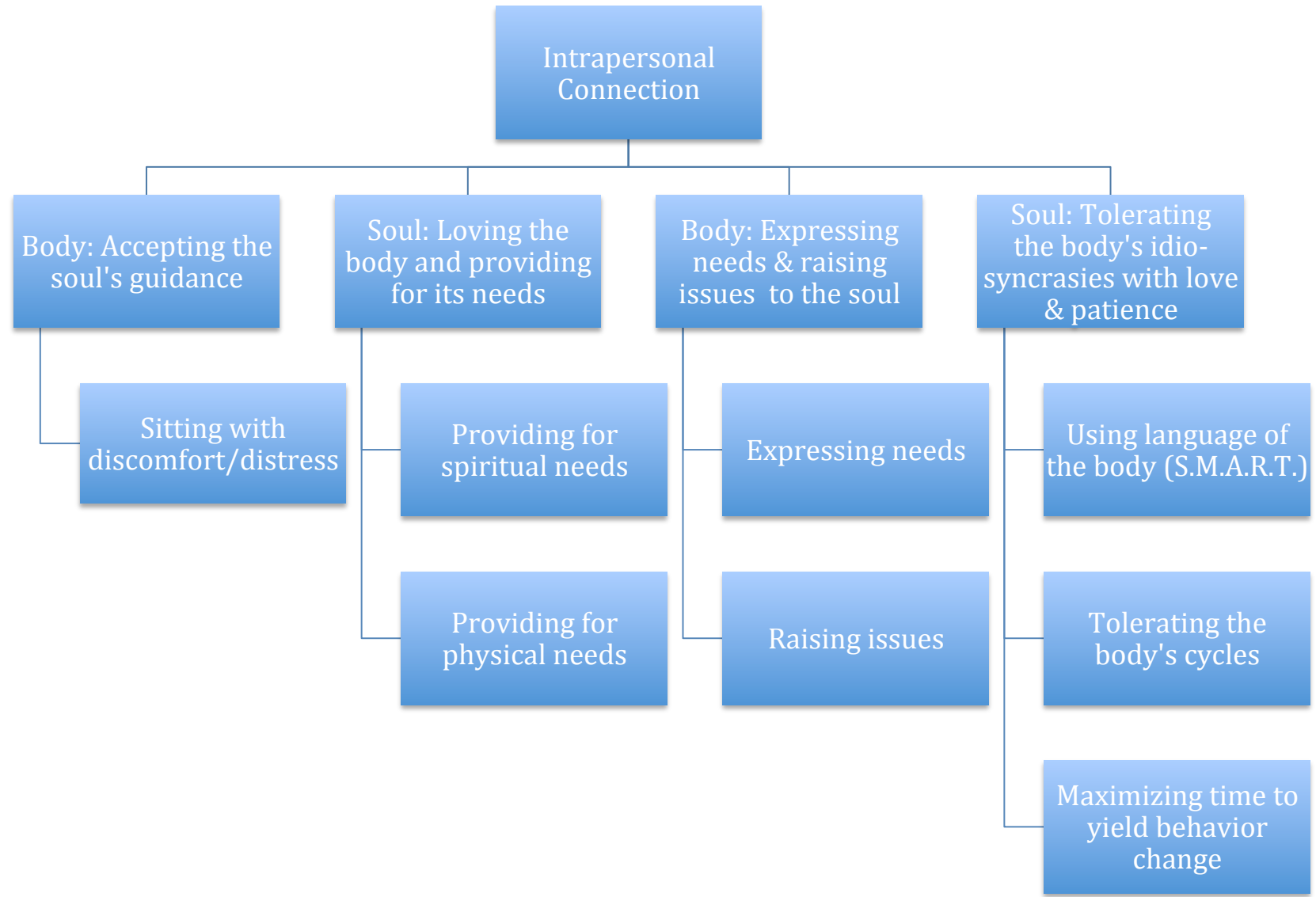
- • Taking on stress
- • Facing and not avoiding challenges
- • Never giving up!

Handout 15b – Session 15 Exercises

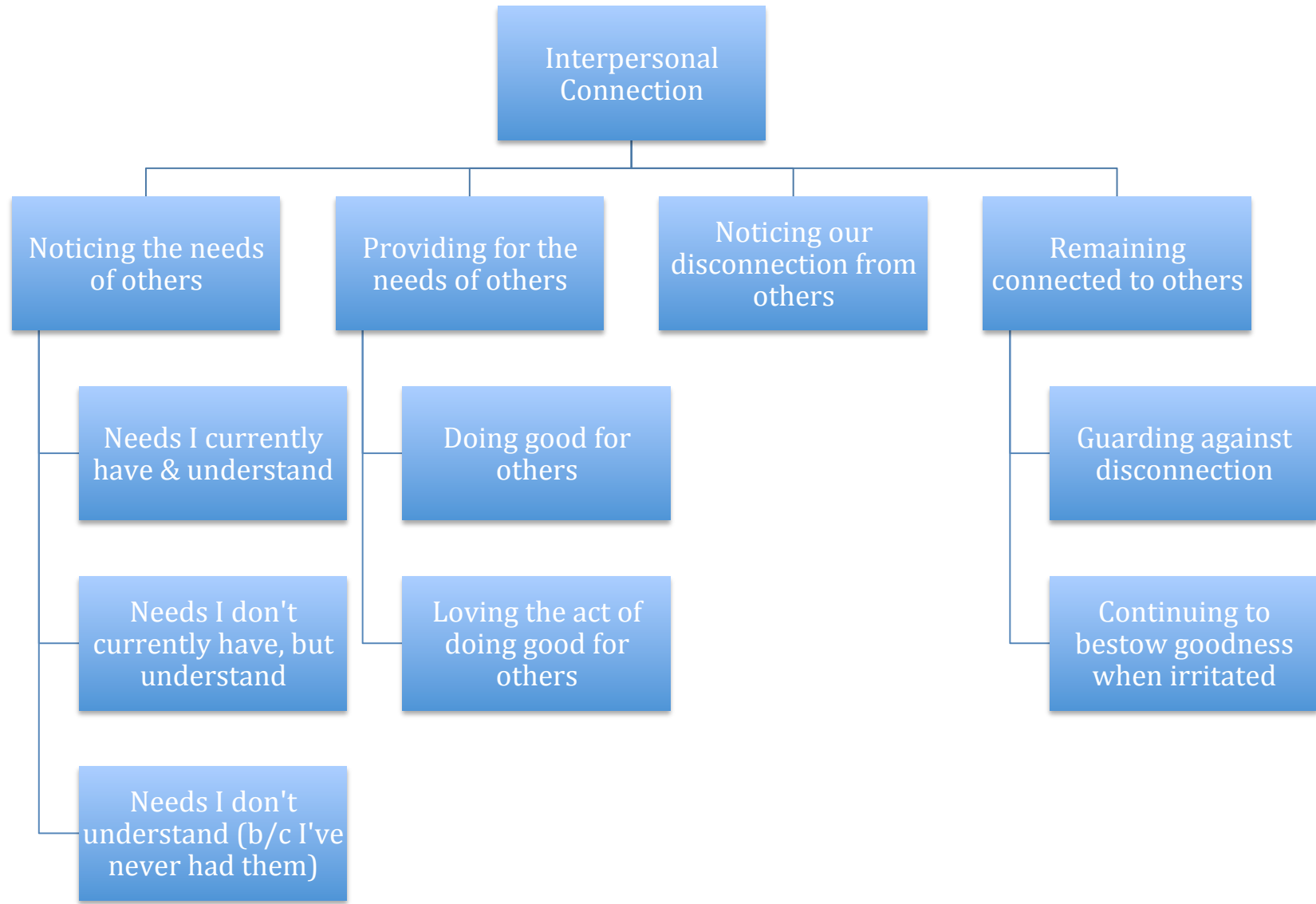
Exercise #15: Once each day, exert heroic effort for God by identifying an activity that you believe God wants you to do, and exerting yourself to complete it for the sake of fulfilling God's will.

1. Exercise #1: 3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal (out loud) Conversation, 1x/day
2. Exercise #2: (Body) Sit with Discomfort/Distress, 1x/day
3. Exercise #3: (Soul) Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Need, 1x/day
4. Exercise #4: (Body) Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul, 1x/day
5. Exercise #5: (Soul) Tolerate the Body, 1x/day
6. Exercise #6: Notice Others' Needs (that we currently have), 1x/day
7. Exercise #7: Notice Others' Needs (that we do not currently have), 1x/day
8. Exercise #8: Provide for Others' Needs, 1x/day (bonus: Love the act of providing for others' needs)
9. Exercise #9: Notice our Disconnection from Others, record the # on your chart
10. Exercise #10: Visualize Remaining Connected to Others, 1x/day
11. Exercise #11: Rely in God During a Simple Activity, 1x/day
12. Exercise #12: Recognize our Limited Scope of Control, 1x/day
13. *Exercise #13: Taste the Blessing, 1x/day
14. *Exercise #14: Dream Big, 1x/day
15. *Exercise #15: Exert Heroic Effort for God, 1x/day

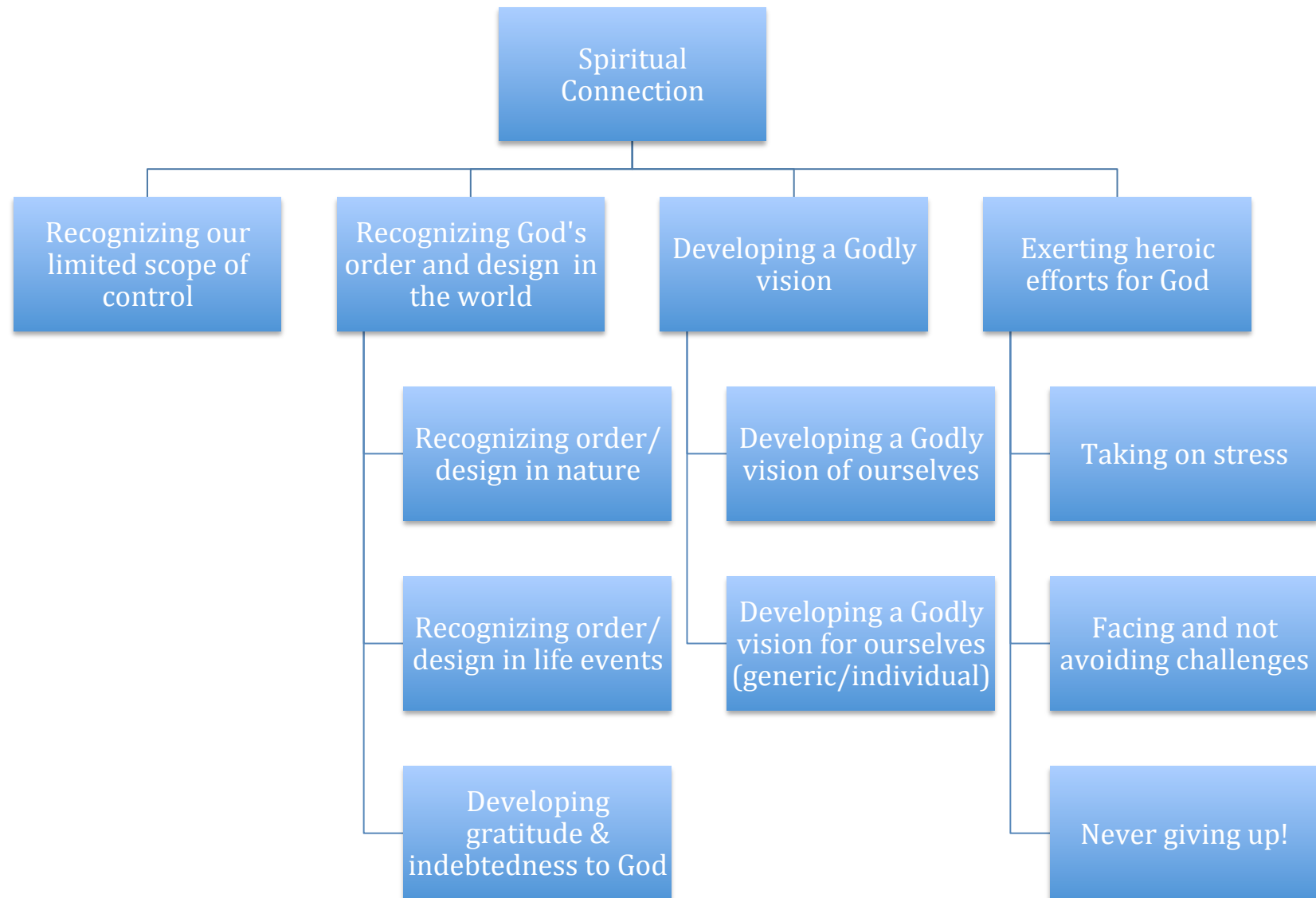
Handout 16a – Summary of Connections Program – Intrapersonal Connection



Handout 16b – Summary of Connections Program – Interpersonal Connection



Handout 16c – Summary of Connections Program – Spiritual Connection



Handout 16d – Description of all 15 Connections Exercises

Intrapersonal Connection

Exercise #1 (3-Volley Body-Soul Verbal Conversation): Communication is essential to facilitate Connection in any relationship. Intrapersonal Connection is no different – your soul and body need to communicate with each other in order to build Connection. Our 1st exercise, therefore, is to have a verbal (out loud) conversation every day between your body and soul that lasts no fewer than 3-volleys, once per day. There are no rules regarding the content of the conversation – you can speak about anything. The exercise simply involves speaking.

Exercise #2 (Body – Sit with Discomfort/Distress): Once per day, (a) engage in an activity that your body avoids because of discomfort/distress, although your soul recognizes that it poses no real threat to your wellbeing, or (b) hold back from engaging in an activity that your body does excessively because of discomfort/distress although your soul recognizes that it is not truly necessary for your wellbeing. The purpose of this exercise is for your body to build Connection by tolerating and accepting distress and discomfort.

Exercise #3 (Soul – Provide for Body's Physical/Spiritual Needs): Once per day, have your soul select a gift for the body, initiate a conversation with the body about the gift, and bestow the gift to the body, in regards to (a) one physical and (b) one spiritual need. Physical needs may include cardiovascular exercise, going for a walk, food, sleep, rest/relaxation, medical care, massage, humor (e.g., YouTube videos), music, or social time. Spiritual needs may include prayer, spiritual study, attending spiritual/religious services, or taking a moment to feel close to God.

Exercise #4 (Body – Express a Need or Raise an Issue to the Soul): In order to successfully facilitate Intrapersonal Connection, the soul must learn to listen to the body when it describes its needs and speaks about issues that it is facing, and the body must learn to open up and Connect through speaking to the soul even if it feels uncomfortable or vulnerable. Therefore, our fourth exercise is for our bodies to feely describe a need or raise an issue to the soul – in as much detail as possible – once per day. Just Connect to your soul by speaking freely and without constraints – don't hold anything back.

Exercise #5 (Soul – Tolerate the Body): Our new exercise is for your soul to tolerate the body, once per day. This involves: (1) Conjuring up a recent event in which your body fell short in a goal that he/she had; and (2) Having your soul speak words of encouragement and love to your body. It's recommended that you take at least 60-seconds to do this exercise each day (30-seconds conjuring & 30-seconds encouragement/love). The goal is for our souls to remain Connected to our bodies when they doesn't fulfill our expectations.

Interpersonal Connection

Exercise #6 (Notice Others' Needs that we Currently Have): Our new exercise is to notice others' needs, once per day. You can "get a check" for noticing any need – physical or spiritual – that any other human being has, at any point during the day. The only caveat is that you must notice the need *before* the person expresses his/her need verbally or behaviorally. For example,

The Connections Program: A Spiritually-Based Treatment for Worry, Stress & Depression

once a person says “Can you please give me a dollar?” or even if they put out their hand to ask you for a coin, you’ve lost the opportunity. The point of the exercise is to leave our own world for a moment and actively delve into the experience of another person (as opposed to being passively pulled into their world). Note that at this point we are not involved in providing for others’ needs. The goal here is simply to notice – i.e., to perceive and understand what others’ lack.

Exercise #7 (Notice Others’ Needs that we do not Currently Have): Notice another person’s needs that we do not currently have once each day. You can “get a check” for noticing others’ needs that you have had in the past but currently don’t have, or needs that you’ve never had before. Just as with exercise #6, this applies to *any* need – physical or spiritual – any other human being has. And of course, we need to *actively* initiate the process of noticing the need – once the other person attempts to make his/her needs known we lose the opportunity to “notice.”

Exercise #8 (Provide for Other’s Needs): Once per day, after noticing a need of another person, provide for that need. It’s a big bonus if you *love* the act while you’re doing it (this can be marked on your chart with a star next to the check).

Exercise #9 (Notice our Disconnection from Others): Count the number of times each day that you engage in a behavioral manifestation of anger or irritation, regardless of how small towards other people. The goal of this activity is to *sensitize* ourselves to our Interpersonal Disconnection, and thereby lower the threshold for Disconnection in our lives.

Exercise #10 (Visualize Remaining Connected to Others): Once each day, complete the following visualization: (1) [15s] Remember a time when someone triggered anger, irritation, or resentment inside of you, and you responded with Disconnection. (2) [30s] Recall the event vividly in your mind. What did they do? What effects did it have on your life? (3) [30s] Now, recall how you responded to the event. What did you do to Disconnect from the person? (4) [30s] As you remember the event and your response, imagine what would have happened had you not Disconnected. Picture them acting just as they did – without any changes – but this time, imagine yourself guarding against the Disconnection and continuing to bestow goodness upon them. And that’s the end of the exercise.

Spiritual Connection

Exercise #11 (Rely on God during a Simple Activity): Once each day, rely on God while you engage in a simple activity. As you do an everyday activity (e.g., turning on a light, standing up from your chair, or writing with a pen), cultivate some awareness that God must be involved for you to be successful in the activity. The goal of this exercise is to facilitate greater awareness that (1) God is present in our lives, and (2) we are responsible to be active players in God’s world.

Exercise #12 (Recognize our Limited Scope of Control): Once each day, spend 60 seconds recognizing our limited scope of control by contemplating a situation in your life in which you are vulnerable. Imagine a scenario or situation in your life that could go badly – very badly – and picture in great detail the terrible consequences that would occur if the worst-case

The Connections Program: A Spiritually-Based Treatment for Worry, Stress & Depression

scenario were to materialize.

Exercise #13 (Taste the Blessing): Once each day, when you eat or drink something, try to feel that God placed nutrition and enjoyment in the food/drink, just for you.

Exercise #14 (Dream Big): Once each day, spend 60 seconds dreaming about one of your specific and unique Divine purposes in life. While contemplate your dream, consider whether your vision is consistent with God's vision for you and the world (i.e., whether you think God would like your dreams to come true).

Exercise #15 (Exert Heroic Effort for God): Once each day, exert heroic effort for God by identifying an activity that you believe God wants you to do, and exerting yourself to complete it for the sake of fulfilling God's will.