

Road to Emmaus

Biblical Counseling Center

Gathering Data & Discerning Problems Biblically

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Introduction:

1. Paul ministered the Word in _____ formats. (Acts. 20:20, 27)
2. The _____ ministry of the Word involves many and is general in nature.
3. The _____ ministry of the Word is limited and is specific and intense.
4. The _____/_____ to communicate God's Word effectively in both formats can be learned.
5. The 6 elements of the private ministry of the Word are:
Gathering Data, Discerning the Problems, Establishing Involvement,
Giving Hope, Providing Instruction, and Giving Homework.

I. Gathering Data (I like to call it "getting to know the person")

A. It's a _____ part of the counseling process (Pr. 18:13).

1. Many fail to gather facts first (1 Sam. 1:12-14; Job 4; Acts 2:13).
2. It will determine how effective you will be (Pr. 18:15; Jas. 1:19).
3. It requires good communication (verbal, non-verbal).

B. The _____ kinds of data- Mack (*Counseling* by MacArthur)

1. _____ – Some contribute directly or indirectly to their problems (2 Cor. 4:16).
 - Sleep, diet, exercise, illness (Ps. 32:4; 1 Cor. 11:30; Jn. 9:3)
 - Medication *The Christian Counselors Medical Desk Reference*

2. _____ – What resources does the counselee bring to the table?
 - Spiritual
 - Intellectual

3. _____ – Emotions are important aspect of our hearts.
 - “Emotions are an inherent part of what it means to be a person; they express the values and evaluations of a person and influence motives and conduct. “ *Feelings and Faith*, Brian Borgman, p. 26
 - Emotions can be like a warning light.
 - Emotions can be expressed negatively (Eph. 4:26) or positively (Ps. 4:4-5).

4. _____ – What they have done or not done that brought them to counseling?
 - By commission / omission (Gen. 4:1-7)
 - Many Scriptural examples (Ps. 1:1-3; Lk. 6:46-49; Jas. 1:25)

5. _____ –What is this person thinking, believing, or worshipping?
 - Only God knows the intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12).
 - Motives are key (Mk. 7:18-23; Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 5:16-21; Lk. 6:43-46).

6. _____ data – We need to hear the person’s story.
 - What are the major events in their lives?
 - How has their past influenced them?

C. Areas to Explore

1. In General: Spiritual, Family, Work/school, Health, Financial, Social, Current Concerns.

2. More Specific:
 - _____: parent/child relationships, peer group, teacher/school

 - Older _____ and Young _____: sexuality issues, dating problems, communication breakdown, life meaning, school/work

 - _____ Singles: resentment regarding marriage, objectionable habits, immorality, disorganized life schedule

- _____: husband/wife relationships, parent/child relationships, in-laws, work schedule, finances, sex, immorality, communication breakdown
- _____ Persons: Loneliness, physical limitations, self-pity, fear of death, wasting time
- _____ with Disabilities: resentment, loneliness, self-pity, depression, sense of uselessness, manipulation of others

D. How do we gather data?

1. _____, _____, _____, and Speak. (Prov. 18:13, 15, 17)
2. Use the Personal Data Inventory Form (PDI). (or PHPE)
 - Require counselee's to complete the PDI.
 - Review and highlight the PDI carefully.
3. Ask appropriate, relevant questions.
 - Be gracious, humble and non-judgmental (Col. 4:6; 1 Cor. 10:12).
 - Ask open - ended questions that go both broad and deep.

See X-RAY Questions by David Powlison

<http://storage.cloversites.com/crosshaven/documents/xray.pdf>

4. Observe non-verbal behavior – their tone, attitudes, & body language (Gen. 3:8).
 - Look for facial expressions and posture.
 - Watch for patterns and reactions.

II. Discerning Problems Biblically

A. Appropriate data _____ be gathered to properly discern problems.

B. An _____ interpretation of the data must be made in order to discern problems correctly.

1. Use Biblical _____ and _____ to describe problems.

- It is generally not helpful to use psychological labels.
- Redefine psychological or worldly terms by using biblical language.

For examples: Call sin “sin”, not a weakness, characteristic, trait, disposition, etc.

Call an “affair” adultery. Call “shoplifting” theft. Call “badmouthing” gossip or slander. Call an “addiction” enslavement or bondage.

2. Look for _____ or _____.

- What is their view of God?
- Do they have a biblical view of mankind?
- What is their view on trials and suffering? (Rom. 8:15-25)
- Whom are they living their life to please?
- How do they identify themselves? (Eph. 1:1-14)
- Who or what motivates them?

3. Look for complicating factors.

- lack of _____
- lack of creative imagination
- lack of _____
- lack of perseverance
- lack of personal _____
- lack of Biblical objectives
- lack of a _____-orientation

C. Levels of problems to be considered

1. _____ problems: what prompted them to seek help; emotions are frequently prominent.

2. _____ problems: actions that produced the difficulties; facts-oriented.

3. _____ problems: thinking a behavior patterns repeated so often that they have become habitual.

4. _____ problems: what the person worships and desires most (Mk. 7:14-23, Rom. 1:25, James 4:1-3) These are what drives a person to do what he does.

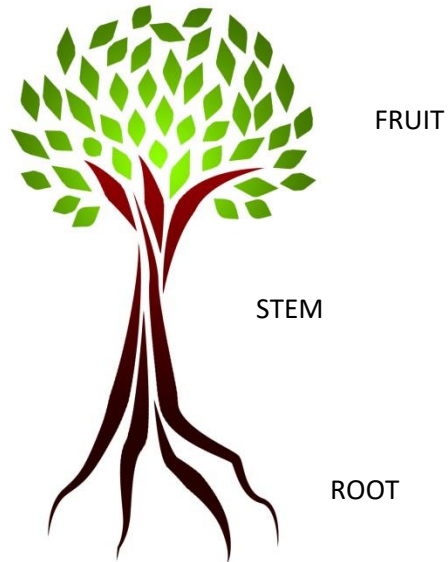
D. Other considerations

1. Determine the **person's relationship with God**

- Is this person saved or unsaved?
 - Review their reported spiritual information.
 - Have them describe their relationship with God / Jesus Christ.
- If saved, then evaluate their spiritual maturity?
 - The natural, the spiritual, and the fleshly (1 Cor. 2:14-3:3).
 - The idle, the fainthearted, and the weak (1Thess. 5:14).

2. How do you distinguish ***fruit problems from root problems?***

- Look for the common among the uncommon (1 Cor. 10:13).
- Look for connections between problems (presentation, performance, preconditioning, heart-level)



Resources:

Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, (Baker, 1970)

Jay Adams, *The Christian Counselors Manual*, (Zondervan, 1973)

John MacArthur, *Counseling: How to Counsel Biblically*, (Nelson, 2005)

James McDonald (ed.), *Christ-Centered Biblical Counseling*, (Harvest House, 2013)

Paul Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemers Hands*, (P & R Publishing, 2002)