

How to Spiritually Abuse Those You Minister To!

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This "tongue in cheek" check-list is meant to be taken with a grain of salt, while still, in a humorous way, alerting us to attitudes and beliefs that may inadvertently lead to potential spiritual abuse.

- Assume that every emotional or mental issue is a spiritual issue, versus believing that every issue has spiritual implications; for example: believing that all issues are demonic.
- Deal only in psychological aspects of woundedness and ignore the spiritual aspects. Our enemy, Satan, is involved at all levels of woundedness—sometimes he causes the wound himself. But he always tries to prevent emotional AND spiritual healing needed for full recovery.
- Have a faulty view of emotions—see emotions as not important or equate them with “the flesh.” Therefore believe that there is no room for emotional healing, or, viewing emotions as a sign of spiritual immaturity or lack of spirituality.
- Discount ALL medical interventions believing that Christians should never take medications to help regulate brain chemistry.
- Blame the person’s sincerity or spiritual maturity if your “method” of help fails
- Assume that medications should ALWAYS be used for apparent mental issues
- Assume that medications should NEVER be used for apparent mental issues
- Be a “dichotomist” not a “trichotomist.” Have a world view of only two types of people: healthy or sick, instead of three types of people: healthy, people at the beginning of their healing process, and all of us who, at various times, are working through difficult issues in our lives.
- Have faulty theology--Emphasize a “New Creation theory” in which the past is not important: "forgetting what lies behind. . ." Phil. 3:13. (This view does not take into account that when Paul wrote it, he had already had encounters with the Lord that brought truth to his past. Therefore, he could now move forward.)
- Believe that Christians cannot have demonic influences in their lives—This forces you to disbelieve the person’s reports of supernatural events or inner voices, so you treat such a person as mentally ill
- Have an imbalanced deliverance approach including screaming at or restraining the person (using "power encounters" when doing spiritual warfare)
- Overemphasize one aspect of healing and growth—You may say, “You’ll never be healed if you don’t repent, or if you don’t forgive,” or "You weren’t serious about your forgiving." (Instead we need to

realize that forgiveness is a command, a byproduct of seeing the situation from the Lord's perspective. Forgiveness is a process and may need to be reaffirmed.)

- Promise unattainable expectations such as “We will get you healed,” or “You can be free in two easy sessions!”
- Use a "one-size-fits all" approach—That is, having only one "method" and trying to fit that method into everyone's healing process; believing that, “This is the one and only method and if used properly, always works.”
- Re-Parent Inappropriately—Take the role of a parent in the adult person's life and focus on controlling instead of facilitating the healing process, thus putting the person in an ultra-dependent mode, not respecting their personal choices.
- Abandon them—This is when the helper pulls out of the relationship with the person because the helper is overwhelmed and can't handle it, or is experiencing burnout. This can be avoided if the helper has clear boundaries from the Lord in the relationship with the person in the first place.
- Breach trust and/or confidentiality—Pass on information to others, even under the pretext of prayer concerns, which can destroy the relationship.
- Disregard a DID diagnosis when ministering to the most shattered. Treat all the “voices” inside a person as demonic.
- Treat the person like a space alien after an embarrassing “episode.”!