

enditnow® Emphasis Day

Resource Packet

August 24, 2024

SERMON

Go Find My Sheep

Written by Joanna Daniel

CHILDREN'S STORY

Lost and Found

Written by Tamara V. Lawrence

SEMINAR

The Trauma-Informed Church

Written by Joanna Daniel

With contributions by Samantha Fessel

enditnow®

Adventists Say No to Violence

Prepared by Department of Women's Ministries

General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

On behalf of the enditnow® team of General Conference departments

12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD, 20904-6600 USA



Children's Ministries, Education, Family Ministries, Health Ministries,
Ministerial Association, Women's Ministries, Youth Ministries

Seventh-day Adventist® Church



GENERAL CONFERENCE
WORLD HEADQUARTERS



WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

April 2, 2024

Dear Church Leaders:

Both the Old and the New Testaments refer to God's people as sheep, to the body of believers as a flock, and to our Lord as the Shepherd. More than ever, abuse victims need to know that Jesus cares about them. And that's where we come in, says Joanna Daniel, author of the 2024 *enditnow*® sermon titled "Go Find My Sheep." The Shepherd is looking for people to go in search of the lost. He is looking for people who will minister as He does.

In the seminar titled "The Trauma-Informed Church," Joanna Daniel tells us the trauma-informed church is aware of the impact trauma makes on the lives of members. The informed church operates with sensitivity, care, and compassion, making the environment safe for everyone to worship. She describes five ways the church can help traumatized people heal and find a community. They include an informed team, awareness of existing barriers, effective listening, preserved confidentiality, and continued support.

May God bless you, your teams, and every local church while you are preparing for the *enditnow*® Emphasis Day, August 24. May our congregations, with God's help, become safe and caring places. May they become oases of Jesus' love.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stele".

Galina Stele, D.Min.
Associate Director
Women's Ministries

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor. 13:13).

12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring MD 20904-6600 USA • Office (301) 680 6608 • women.adventist.org

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About the Authors

Joanna Daniel, is a compassionate counselor, dynamic speaker, and accomplished author. As the founder of Wounds to Scars, an organization dedicated to empowering adult survivors of childhood trauma and supporting women who have experienced abuse, Joanna has become a beacon of hope for those in need of healing.

With a deep commitment to making a positive impact Joanna and the Wounds to Scars team facilitate conferences and retreats that provide safe spaces for individuals to embark on their journey toward healing.

Recognizing the importance of extending healing beyond individual experiences, Joanna is actively involved in creating and writing training programs for organizations and churches. These programs are designed to equip these entities with the tools and knowledge needed to create safe spaces for people to heal collectively, by fostering environments of trust and empathy. Joanna is Qualified Counselor and Registered Counselor Member ACC who lives in Wales, United Kingdom.

Samantha Fessal is a seasoned counselor with thirteen years of experience in the field. Her professional journey has seen her working across various sectors including the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) service, the 3rd Sector, and in private practice. As an Integrative Counselor, Samantha utilizes a holistic approach to therapy, drawing from multiple therapeutic modalities to tailor treatment to the unique needs of every individual. She lives in Wales, United Kingdom.

Specializing in working with adults who have endured abusive childhood trauma, Samantha brings empathy, understanding, and specialized techniques to her sessions.

She is adept at addressing a range of clinical syndromes such as depression and anxiety disorders, stemming from both past trauma and current life circumstances.

In her practice, Samantha creates a safe and supportive environment where clients can explore their experiences, process their emotions, and develop coping strategies to foster healing and growth. Her commitment to ongoing professional development ensures that she stays abreast of the latest research and therapeutic techniques, enabling her to provide the highest standard of care to her clients.

Tamara V Lawrence has been married since 2010, a missionary since 2013 and became an adoptive mother in 2017. These three institutions have shaped her into the confident, determined woman she is today. Hence, her ministry is called Marriage Ministry Motherhood. Though a qualified journalist, Tamara has been a teacher and Headmistress for over ten years in mission schools in Guyana and Romania. During that time, she found her passion for family life as she witnessed the huge gaps between parents and their children. She has been using her skills as a public speaker and writer to connect with the Woman of Strength and Courage in women of all class, age, or ethnicity. She uses her positive attitude and welcoming smile to attract many to her, and with her warm encouragement she guides them to success through her devotional "Take No Thought," as well as her online magazine, "Ladies L.I.F.E." (Living Intentionally for Eternity) and her social media platforms.

Both Tamara and her husband, Richard, have served as missionaries in more than six countries spanning three continents. They currently live in Guyana and are dedicated to their permanent mission—that of raising their three adopted native daughters.

Program Notes

Please feel free to translate, adjust, and edit the resource packet according to your division's needs, including the best Bible version for your use. Also, you are free to adapt the packet according to your cultural audience. When your division has translated the assigned packet for French, Portuguese, and Spanish, please send us a digital file to share with our sisters who need it. Check our website for additional translated packets that you may be able to use.

Scripture References

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A Suggested Order of Worship Service

Opening Prayer

Hymn of Praise: Hymn #367

Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal

"Rescue the Perishing"

Pastoral Prayer

Special Music

Call for the Offering

Children's Story

"Lost and Found"

Scripture Reading

Matthew 18:11, NKJV

"For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost."

Sermon

"Go Find My Sheep"

Hymn of Response: Hymn #373

Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal

"Seeking the Lost"

Closing Prayer

–end of suggested order of service–

Children's Story

Lost and Found

Written by Tamara V. Lawrence

Tamara was a missionary teacher in the jungle of South America. She loved to explore the rich landscape. One weekend she decided to go camping with older students. As they walked deep into the jungle, everyone was excited.

They walked for almost two hours into the jungle to a permanent campsite built by loggers who were not working there at the time. It was safer for the campers to sleep in the loggers' huts because that part of the jungle had jaguars, wild pigs, deer, and deadly snakes.

On Sabbath morning after a refreshing morning bath in the huge river, they sat down for a yummy breakfast of crunchy homemade granola with coconut bits.

With breakfast finished, they sat on logs for their Sabbath service. From this location Tamara noticed a sandy island in the middle of the river. They were all fascinated and wanted to explore the island.

After lunch, the campers borrowed the loggers' canoe. They had to take turns being rowed to the island. Three passengers crammed into the canoe along with the rower. It was not easy to keep balanced. And the journey was longer than it looked.

It was just over two hours before the rower would return to get the last group of children. But there was a problem! Now they now had four people left to travel along with the rower instead of three. Everyone climbed in, being careful not to tip the boat. It was not easy to keep balanced, but the five people set out.



Halfway up the river the canoe capsized, and the passengers were spilled out into the river. Not a strong swimmer, Tamara's heart gripped with fear as she struggled in the water. The rower got the canoe turned over and climbed back in with one of the passengers. Tamara and two other missionaries did not want to overload the boat and began swimming back to shore.

They decided to stay close to the river's edge to avoid getting lost and began to walk back to the campsite. Because the sun was beginning to quickly fall toward the horizon, they walked fast. As they walked, they used their hands to pull away bushes and create openings to move through. With each step she took, Tamara hoped she would not surprise a snake.

Suddenly Tamara's little group was stuck. They could not move forward. A wall of super-high, thorny bushes seemed to line up closely together in front of them. Tamara turned around looking for the way they had just come. She couldn't see where the bushes had been pulled

apart to create their path. No sign of where they had come from was visible in the dusk. Then they realized they were no longer close to the river. They were lost! They couldn't move forward or go backward. It was almost dark, and the wild animals would be coming out soon. They had no knives, machetes, or weapons. Tamara was becoming very frightened.

"We need to pray!" she said.

So, they bowed their heads and asked Jesus to help them find the right way to the rest of the campers. Moments later they heard shouts. The students were calling for them. "We are here! We are here!" yelled Tamara's group. The three lost missionaries were found. The students said they had been calling for more than an hour, but Tamara's group never heard a thing—not until they stopped and prayed.

Boys and girls, God has already sent Jesus to save you. Remember that when you are lost in this world, stop, and pray, and then listen for His voice. He loves you and will always come when you call for Him to rescue you.

—end of children's story—

Sermon

Go Find My Sheep

Written by Joanna Daniel

“For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost” (Matthew 18:11, NJKV)

The Parable of the Lost Sheep is recorded in Matthew 18:10-14 and Luke 15:1-7. Both writers give us a vivid description of the action the shepherd took when the sheep became lost; and both writers describe the shepherd’s joy and ensuing celebration that accompanies the return of the lost sheep.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus provides a wonderful picture of God’s heart of joy and His call to celebrate the return of the lost sheep.

Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep’” (Luke 15:3-6, NIV).

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus makes an important statement that God’s desire is to keep His sheep from being lost:

“Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish” (Matthew 18:14, NKJV).

Why was the sheep lost? Was it left behind or did it wander off? Did it lose sight of the others or was it unable to continue following? Try to imagine the sheep feeling lost and alone, away from the community of the other ninety-nine sheep.

The research shows that many people stop attending the church because of relational factors. The reasons include perceived hypocrisy, different types of conflict, broken relationships, and lack of friends or support.¹ However, although some members keep coming to the church, they also feel neglected, lonely, left behind with their personal tragedies, and forgotten by people and God.

That is how many victims of abuse feel in our church congregations—lost and alone:

- The woman sharing about her experience of domestic abuse.
- The family reeling from the disclosure of sexual abuse.
- The young person coming to grips with being groomed.
- Another victim being molested at a church event.

¹ ASTR blog “The Narrow Road” (May 17, 2016). <https://www.adventistresearch.info/narrow-road/>

The Lord points to the reasons why the sheep were scattered. In His reproach to the irresponsible shepherds of Israel, He says,

“You do not feed the flock. The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost” (Ezekiel 34:3, 4, NKJV).

More than ever, abuse victims need to know that Jesus cares about them. And that’s where we come in. The Shepherd is looking for people to help go in search of the lost. He is also looking for people who will strengthen the weak, bind up the broken, help the wounded.

In their book, *How People Grow*, the Drs. Henry Cloud and John Townsend² talk about the importance of community in a person’s growth. God’s plan for our growth includes other people. You and I are needed to help find the one sheep that became separated from the others. You and I are needed to help the one sheep to heal and feel part of the church community.

However, sometimes in cases of abuse our silence shows as indifference and lack of care, leaving people without the safety of a church family.

Others who are struggling in an abusive relationship realize from the attitude of others that it's best if they do not disclose abuse and the abuser. Also, the distraction and the validity of why the sheep became lost often diverts attention from the issue of abuse itself. Abusers conclude that the church is a safe place where they can continue harming others. When we are silent or indifferent, abusers can continue hurting their families or individuals and keep serving in church even after disclosure.

The victim often feels disillusioned by the church and ostracized by God with nowhere to go for safety. The church is the place where people should be able to come to feel safe. The church should be a refuge from the storms and problems we experience during the week. We come to church to learn about the Good Shepherd and to feel the comfort and warmth of His protective care, to feel support and care of one another.

“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; ... Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:10,15, NKJV).

When an injury happens in a place where care should be administered, it is confusing to the victim, sending the injured one in a tailspin—because love shouldn't hurt.

Many times, people don’t know what to do when there’s disclosure of abuse, and many err on the side of caution. Unfortunately, this usually results in ostracizing the victim. Women know all too well what this type of isolation feels like.

² Cloud Henry and John Townsend. *How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals about Personal Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press, 2001), chapter 3.

JANE

Jane was married to a popular evangelist, and she had a beautiful family that looked good on the outside. However, Jane suffered physical, sexual, and financial abuse for many years. After years of praying, receiving counsel from various elders and pastors, and enduring silent turmoil, Jane decided it was time to leave the relationship.

Jane was Sabbath School superintendent when she decided to leave her abusive husband and find safety for herself and her children. After Jane left the marriage, the church felt she was no longer capable of leading, and she was forced to resign her position. Due to gossip and being side lined from her duties, she was shunned from women's groups and lost the respect of her peers. Jane was told things such as, "If you fasted and prayed more, your marriage would have survived."

Church became unbearable, and she quit going. At times, Jane felt like God had also left her. No one sought her out, no one saw the necessity of protection and love for her to survive. No longer able to cope with staying at that church, Jane was disconnected from a church home.

These are the experiences of many victims of domestic abuse across cultures. Many find the whispered conversations and the frosty distance of once "loving" people unbearable.

They think that if they prayed more the abuse would stop.

The victim's prayer is not a guarantee that the perpetrator will stop abuse of any kind. We know that a fundamental part of God's government includes freedom of choice. Stopping the abuse rests with the perpetrator's ability to hear and respond to God.

Jane struggled to find a church where she felt safe. Jane became the lost sheep, and so did her children who were at crucial stages of their Christian journey. The confusion and loss of their church home and, in some cases, friends, greatly impacted their ability to trust God.

Children like Jane's are often never sought out in a meaningful way. Their experiences are ignored as if the church struggles with how to find and bring back lost sheep.

However, we have ample examples from the life and work of Jesus to help us go in search of the lost sheep that is no longer part of the ninety-nine. The first sermon of Jesus' ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:18) quotes the Messianic prophesy from Isaiah 61:1. Let's look at the original passage in Isaiah 61 using the New International Version and read the first three verses. Pay attention to the actions the coming Messiah would do when lost sheep are found.

¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendor (Isaiah 61:1-3, NIV).

How the LORD responds to the lost and hurting is mentioned also in Psalm 147.
"He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds" (Psalm 147:3, NIV).

It is clear the healing of broken hearts and providing comfort to the wounded is crucial in the work of our LORD Jesus. When continuing the work of Jesus, we are called to find, feed, comfort, and help heal His sheep. The church's response to abuse as an unacceptable behavior can go a long way in showing the lovingkindness of God to the wounded and for helping those who experience abuse heal.

According to research done by the Barna Group, five factors change women's relationship with churches.³ One factor potentially contributing to women's disengagement from church communities is that they report finding little or no emotional support there. The article further states:

"This relational disconnect may provide a key for understanding how women are able to disengage from churches—without strong relational bonds within a church community, women's absence from church can largely go unnoticed. This begs the question of where women are finding such support—and indicates a large opportunity for those churches who are seeking to engage women in their community."

Estimates published by the World Health Organization (WHO), indicate that globally about 1 in 3 women worldwide have been subjected to either physical or sexual

³ Barna Group, "Five Factors Changing Women's Relationship with Churches," June 25, 2015.
<https://www.barna.com/research/five-factors-changing-womens-relationship-with-churches/>.
Accessed 2/29/2024.

violence, mostly by an intimate partner.⁴ This shows us that the church has the opportunity for providing support that meets the needs of more than 30% of the women in its congregations.

According to the same WHO report, "Violence against Women," intimate partner violence, whether it's physical, sexual, or psychological, causes short- and long-term physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health problems. They also affect children's health and wellbeing.

- Violence can have fatal outcomes like homicide and suicide.
- Intimate partner violence in pregnancy also increases the likelihood of miscarriages stillbirth, pre-term delivery and low birth weight babies.
- These forms of violence can lead to depression, post-traumatic stress, and other anxiety disorders.
- According to one study done in 2013 by the WHO, women who experience intimate partner violence are twice as likely to have depression and problem drinking.
- There are also a host of health effects, such as, headaches, back pain, chronic pelvic pain, gastrointestinal disorders, limited mobility, and poor overall health.
- Sexual violence during childhood can lead to increased smoking, substance abuse, and risky sexual behavior.

As a church we can respond in love to the colossal impact of abuse, ending the tragic loss of life and ending the physical, social, mental, and economic impact of abuse. We can come together to love and surround people when they disclose their pain and their wounds, pulling them into the warmth and comfort of a group who will help them heal. These are people who need the body of Christ, people who need to experience God's healing love through each one of us.

The shepherd left the ninety-nine others to search high and low for the lost sheep. Jesus stresses that when the shepherd finds the lost sheep, he rejoices over it. But first he puts the sheep on his shoulder and carries it home. This is powerful imagery of the loving, attentive Shepherd who will do whatever it takes to find His sheep and bring it home because He cares for each one.

We show we care when we:

- Listen without judgment.
- Choose not to ostracize the victim after a disclosure of abuse.
- Provide warmth, comfort, and the authentic support that promotes healing.
- Speak out about the dangers of abuse.
- Hold perpetrators accountable.
- Work to make our church a safe community.

⁴ WHO, "Violence against Women." <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>. Accessed 2/29/2024.

Desmond Tutu said,

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice,
you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

Abuse is not a subject on which the church can be silent. Women and children are dying daily all around us. It is our responsibility to understand this kind of violence and to prepare the church for being a place of refuge and healing for victims.

I have shared statistics on the impact of abuse on women, however, abuse goes across culture and gender. Men are victims too. Domestic abuse against men and sexual violence against boys is also an issue.

Victims of both genders struggle to disclose to the church community abuse that happened in their family, church, or outside of it. They struggle with the loss of community after disclosure. The sad reality of grooming, domestic abuse, and sexual violence in faith communities is not only a massive problem but a great opportunity to provide compassionate, loving support to those who are hurting.

As a church, let us model the heart of the shepherd in providing care and security for the sheep and going after the lost sheep, bringing them back into the safety of the church community. Many often ask, but how do we do it?

The shepherd of the parable is a great example. He took one simple step. He went in search of the lost sheep. Sometimes going in search of a survivor means:

- Sitting with them and hearing their stories.
- Allowing them to tell the story as they experienced it.
- Listening without a filter to make us more comfortable, listening without judgment.
- Hearing the story as it is and not as we would like it to be.
- Bringing them to church events.
- Sitting together at church to show your support.
- Including them in your circle of friends or small group.
- “Being there” with them and for them.

Victims wish to be seen, not separated. They want their stories to be heard and taken seriously, not ignored. They want to know that the church cares about them, not just the ninety-nine others. They want policies that will act for their safety and protection.

Often, we hear stories of people feeling lost and alone in the middle of the church congregation. They learn to mask their pain because experience taught them pain is not acceptable.

JACK

Jack seems like one of the ninety-nine sheep in the fold, but he lives on the fringes of church—attending, but not completely involved. He cannot seem to shake the anger in his heart. He has heard countless sermons on forgiveness and has tried countless times

to forgive, but like anger, the pain of abuse lingers and sometimes threatens to overtake him.

Jack has been told on many occasions that his unforgiving heart is the problem. But the real problem is that Jack was groomed when he was a young boy and molested by the elder of the church. At the time, the families met and the resolution to the problem was forgiveness.

However, no one counted the cost of the abuse to Jack, and he's lived in shame with low self-esteem for as long as he can remember. He is "present," but he feels just as much in need of the Good Shepherd as Janet. He needs to encounter the heart of the Shepherd through the interaction and thoughtful consideration of the people in his church.

For most survivors, forgiveness and healing are two separate issues. For Jack, forgiveness meant the elder kept his position and Jack lost friends. And this should not be so. Forgiveness should not exclude consequences especially in such serious issues. And friends should not leave the wounded sheep. Although Jack now attends another church, the story followed him. He is lost and alone in a sea of faces every week.

Love requires accountability. Too often victims are left with the burden of forgiving and healing without support, and without accountability of the offenders or their acknowledgement of any wrongdoing.

NEXT STEPS

If we are to find the lost, we also need to know what to do with them when they return. Abuse has been a growing problem in the world for a long time, and it would be remiss of us to keep our heads buried, hoping it wasn't happening among us.

Authentic listening is a key tool that can be used in offering support. Often victims need someone who is caring enough to listen without judgment. They need someone who is empathetic and patient.

When we face the reality of the issue, we can:

- Put plans in place to find the lost.
- Cultivate an environment with zero tolerance for abuse.
- Say "no" to violence and work together to end it now.
- Support victims of abuse, breaking the silence that it happens in our churches as well as our communities.
- Help them heal.

CALL

The Lord says to Ezekiel:

"So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. My sheep wandered

through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them” (Ezekiel 34:5, 6, NKJV).

Jesus is calling us today to go find His sheep. What will be your response? Are you willing to be a part of Jesus’ big campaign of seeking for His lost sheep and caring for the wounded sheep? Will you respond, **“Yes, Jesus, I will go!”** If so, please stand with me.

Closing prayer

Seminar

Title Slide:

The Trauma-Informed Church

Written by Joanna Daniel

With contributions by Samantha Fessal

INTRODUCTION

During our journey of life, all of us will experience some sort of trauma. It can affect our well-being. At times trauma feels emotionally overwhelming. Other times trauma is physically painful. Sometimes trauma is mentally debilitating. And trauma can interfere with spiritual wholeness. Victims of trauma feel alone and helpless. What does God say about this?

Slide 2: Isaiah 43:2, NKJV

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.”

It is comforting that God is with us in every situation. But God also needs His church to be His arms and legs in person. Today we will discover ways we can help the healing process of our brothers and sisters traumatized by abuse.

Slide 3: What Is Trauma?

Trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as harmful or life threatening. While unique to the individual, generally, the experiences of trauma can cause lasting adverse effects, limiting the ability to function successfully or achieving mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being. <https://www.gov.uk/>

Trauma brings emotional pain. This poem by Christine Rigden shares some great examples of how to care for someone who is in emotional pain.

Slide 4: Reaching Out

I feel your pain
and long to touch the hurt
and make it melt away.

Yes, I know that I can't really see
the breadth
and depth
of this dark valley you're in.
I can't truly know
just how sharp the knife is
in your soul -

Slide 5:

for it is you in its path,
not me.
But I have known other valleys,
and in my heart
still bear knife-wound scars.
Even so,
I would walk your road
and take your pain
if I could.
I cannot.

Slide 6:

And yet, perhaps
in some way
I can be a hand to hold
in the darkness.
In some way, try to blunt
the sharpness of pain.
But if not -
it may help a little
just to know I care.

By Christine Rigden © 1989

<https://www.rigdenage.co.uk/poems/reaching-out/>

Let us look at the well-known story about the Samaritan women at the well. We don't know if the Samaritan woman was a domestic/sexual abuse victim as some have claimed. But we know that her life was quite complicated. And it is quite apparent she was trying to avoid meeting other women when she came to the well at noon.

Slide 7: John 4:1-29

What do you think:

- Why did Jesus ask her to give Him a drink?
- Why did He lead her to the conversation about her family situation?

- What made her such a powerful witness?

We have discussed what trauma is. We have read a poem in which we noticed some ways of reaching out to someone with emotional pain. We looked at Jesus' example of dealing with a wounded person. But how does a church reach out to traumatized people? What does the church need to know? In other words, how does the trauma-informed church act (and react) toward people suffering emotional pain? Today we will learn five keys for ministering effectively to traumatized victims of abuse.

THE TRAUMA-INFORMED CHURCH

Slide 8: The trauma-informed church is:

- Aware of the impact trauma has on the lives of members.
- Sensitive and compassionate, making the environment safe for everyone to worship.

In the trauma-informed church people understand how trauma can have adverse effects on people and will be sensitive and empathetic to people healing from the impact of trauma. This is a church that asks, "What happened?" rather than focusing on behavior. Now let's look at the ways a church can respond to the needs of traumatized people. We will call the ways to respond positively, "The Five Keys for Recovery Ministry."

Slide 9: **Five Keys for Recovery Ministry**

The trauma-informed church will:

1. Build a leadership team.
2. Understand barriers victims may encounter.
3. Listen effectively.
4. Keep confidentiality.
5. Provide safety and support.

Now let's look at each key individually.

Slide 10: **Five Keys for Recovery Ministry**

1. Build a trauma-informed leadership team.

The trauma-informed church aims to have a trauma-informed leadership team. Leaders are trained to understand the cycle of abuse and to identify abuse in the lives of people who are sharing their stories. Leaders also understand Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and they can have long-term impact. ACEs leave scars on people, inside and outside.

Slide 11: Trauma-informed church leaders:

- Understand the lasting impact of trauma – the behavioral, mental, and physical consequences.
- Recognize trauma also affects spiritual lives.
- Know that ACEs (adverse childhood experiences) impact families for generations.
- Identify the effects of ACEs, including depression, anxiety, panic attacks, sleep problems, stress, behavior changes, and low self-esteem.

The conscious and aware church schedules regular and ongoing training in this area to keep leadership and church members knowledgeable of current research and how best to support people who experience trauma.

Slide 12: Trauma-informed church leaders:

- Set the tone for others to follow.
- Are patient when behavior seems undesirable.
- Ask questions, such as: "What do you need?"
- Respond appropriately to allegations of abuse.

Leaders are informed and expect that abused people may not fit within the norms of the group. They set the tone in patience for others to follow. Because they can identify traumatized people, they know they need to ask questions, such as, "What do you need?" When leaders respond appropriately to allegations of abuse, people feel safe enough to disclose abuse rather than remaining silent about it.

Slide 13: [Five Keys for Recovery Ministry](#)

2. Understand barriers victims may encounter.

The trauma-informed church understands the barriers encountered by people when accessing services. When the church understands these issues, the church can help fill some gaps for people who do not have access to what they need.

Slide 14: [Barriers to accessing services:](#)

- [Language](#)
- [Culture](#)
- [Finances](#)
- [Fear of judgment](#)
- [Waiting lists](#)
- [Lack of access to public funds and services](#)

When barriers are understood the church can refer people to services that can help them in their situations. Referring them to generalized services in a “one size fits all” approach is not as helpful.

Slide 15: [The trauma-informed church will:](#)

- [Become acquainted with local resources designed to help traumatized people.](#)
- [Facilitate getting professional help and resources for them.](#)

Group Activity

Slide 16: [Discussion Question](#)

What can your church do to help people when they face these barriers to accessing services?

- [Language](#)
- [Culture](#)
- [Finances](#)
- [Fear of judgment](#)
- [Waiting lists](#)
- [Lack of access to public funds and services](#)

Slide 17: [Five Keys for Recovery Ministry](#)

3. [Listen effectively](#)

The trauma-informed church knows the key component for allowing wounded people to inform members is through active and effective listening. They will hear people’s stories

as told, not as they would like stories to be. This is not easy! What are some barriers that members face when listening?

Slide 18: Barriers to effective listening

- Societal views about abuse
- Values of the listener
- Personal views of the listener
- The listener's view of the abuser
- Lecturing or giving advice
- Denying another person's feelings

When we are aware of our own barriers, we can ensure our views and actions do not harm people.

Slide 19: Effective listening is:

- Giving time to listen.
- Listening with empathy.
- Listening without judgment.

Listening without prejudice, or being aware of our prejudice, is crucial for us to listen effectively in any situation, but it is particularly true for listening to people suffering emotional pain.

Slide 20: James 1:19, KJ21

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

James summed up effective listening well.

- "Swift to hear" is identifying a traumatized person and taking the time to listen with empathy and compassion. It is maintaining confidentiality.
- "Slow to speak" is setting aside personal (and societal) values and views that may interfere with the ability to focus on the victim. It is listening to discover the person's hurts, needs, fears, expectations.
- "Slow to wrath" is listening without prejudice, refraining from judgment or even indifference. It is listening to how things are, not how we wish them to be. It is the

patience in providing the victim opportunity to disclose abuse without the fear of reprisal from yourself, the church, or the abuser.

Slide 21: [Proverbs 25:11, KJV](#)

["A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."](#)

This text shows the value of appropriately said words. We need to understand when it is appropriate to say something and when it is better just be silent and listen giving our full attention to a person who tells his or her story.

Slide 22: [Five Keys for Recovery Ministry](#)

4. Keep confidentiality

Slide 23: [Keeping confidentiality is:](#)

- [Listening with the capacity to listen.](#)
- [Listening without prejudice.](#)
- [Listening without your own story overwhelming you.](#)
- [Listening with a desire to help.](#)
- [Listening without gossiping and betraying the trust of the person.](#)

Listeners must have the capacity to listen. Having the capacity to listen means listening with confidentiality. It means listening without prejudice. It means listening without your own story overwhelming you—which means being able to hear their story without the interference and distraction of your own story. It means being truly interested with a desire to help. And it means not gossiping and betraying the trust of the person who shared the story.

It should be understood traumatized people may not share or disclose because they sense members may not have the capacity to listen or to keep it confidential. People also may not disclose because they feel the risk for disappointment is too great.

Group Activity

Slide 24: [Discussion Question](#)

[In what ways can you help create safe spaces in your church for people who experience abuse?](#)

Ideas for the facilitator: In a safe space there is empathy and vulnerability. Having trained listeners could also help make people feel safe enough to share. Confidentiality is a key component for creating a safe place.

Slide 25: **Five Keys for Recovery Ministry**

5. Provide safety and support.

The trauma-informed church will aim at creating a safe environment in its congregation so that people feel safe to speak freely and receive needed help. It can be done by the following actions.

Slide 26: The trauma-informed church will:

- Plan for the overall well-being of all members.
- Provide ways for people to find emotional support.
- Create opportunities for building relationships.

Slide 27: In the trauma-informed church

Safety is when:

- People feel comfortable asking for what they need.
- Listeners know how to find help when it is needed.
- People trust that their stories will be heard.
- Listeners hold in confidentiality what is necessary.

Slide 28: The trauma-informed church will

Develop trust, so that:

- Transparency exists.
- Leaders are honest and trustworthy.
- Expectations are clear.
- Feelings are welcomed.
- People listen.

Slide 29: The trauma-informed church will

Create support groups for:

- Survivors of sexual abuse
- Divorce recovery
- Grief support

Group Activity

Slide 30: Discussion Question

If you were to pick one of these support groups to run as a church community ministry for traumatized people, which would it be? Why? What other support groups might be helpful?

- Survivors of sexual abuse
- Divorce recovery
- Grief support

Group Activity

Slide 31: Effective listening

Effective listening is crucial in a healing journey. Some roles a listener performs can hinder it. This exercise helps identify wrong behavior while listening.

Instructions:

The seminar presenter prepares seven pieces of paper ahead of time with one of the listener role responses listed below. The presenter calls seven participants to come forward and gives each a slip of paper with a response. The presenter announces the possible roles listed on the slide. One at a time, a participant reads her response. The audience guesses and identifies a listener role after each response. When all responses are read and roles identified, the presenter asks what role is the most effective in listening to a wounded person and why the other roles hinder listening/conversation.

Slide 32: Listener Roles:

- Miss Critic
- Miss Indifferent
- Miss Editor
- Miss Caring Friend
- Miss Preacher
- Miss Manager
- Miss Know-it-all

Role responses:

1. You should call your parents right then and tell them what happened. It is too late to cry now. Pull yourself together.
2. I think your behavior in that situation and your response were not those of a mature person.
3. I was in that city. No, the church was on another street. It was on Riverside Street, not on Botanical Garden Avenue.
4. What you are telling me now is an experience many people go through. It is common for all who suffer from abuse. You were experiencing the second stage. And because it is a vicious cycle, I can even tell you what came next. You experienced stage three.
5. The Bible is clear that you should not marry an unbeliever. So, what did you expect in your case?
6. It does not matter what you felt then. The most important thing is what you decide to feel now. Just forget what has happened and move forward. Let's talk about summer sales.
7. You were very frustrated and desperate. It is so discouraging that you did not have anyone to support you and tell somebody what had happened.

Key:

Miss Critic (2); Miss Indifferent (6); Miss Editor (3); Miss Caring Friend (7); Miss Preacher (5); Miss Manager (1); Miss Know-it-all (4).

CONCLUSION

It is through effective listening and support that we become loving, caring friends to wounded people. Today we have seen that effective listening and support groups are excellent ways for church members to help people suffering from trauma.

Slide 33: [Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 534.4](#)

["We are all woven together in the great web of humanity, and whatever we can do to benefit and uplift others will reflect in blessings on ourselves."](#)

Slide 34: [1 Thessalonians 5:11, NIV](#)

["Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."](#)

The seminar can be closed with a prayer in any relevant way for the audience format.