

# Grasping God's Delight

As Christian counselors we hope that the connection between client and caregivers will be so satisfying that it will enable our clients to see that they need healthy connections. That will empower them to take the risk of being vulnerable and sharing their need with God and others.

Being created in God's likeness, we experience the most delight when we are connected to Him and to others. \*The following four corners describe common kinds of connectedness we experience.

## Disconnected, No Real Connection

Safety and Control

- Always giving, never receiving
- Decision making in isolation
- No real investment in others
- Closed system
- No outside intelligence or energy
- Family and colleagues feel invisible and tend to lose heart and withdraw
- Leads to increased stress, fear, anxiety
- Loneliness and burnout

## The Unhealthy Connection

Approval

- "It's a connection, preoccupation, or pull toward a person who has the effect of making you feel bad or not good enough in some way...inferior, defective...you become less of you—crippled."
- Instead of freely doing your work, you worry about how others think about how you are working. This hinders performance.
- It can also be an internal critical judge that has lived in your head for a long time.

## The Seductively False "Good Connection"

Comfort

- "Enough, I want to feel good."
- Escaping into alcohol, drugs, shopping, an affair, etc.
- An attempt to soothe, distract
- It's never enough; I need more
- Self-medicating
- Emptiness
- Still searching, no fun anymore
- So you go back and settle for unhealthy connection or no connection at all

## The Real Connection

Coram Deo  
in the presence of God

- Based on NEED and reaching out to others for help
- A place of authenticity, allowing one's self to be known, understood
- Mutual Investment
- Needs, feelings, and weaknesses can be shared safely
- "I don't have all it takes to get things done, but everything I need to get them done does exist." (Others/God)
- Being with me and for me

## Reflection

### Questions for the counselor to consider:

- In which corner do you currently find yourself?
- From your experience in your family of origin, did anyone mirror real connection to you?
- Where did you learn that it's unsafe to connect?
- Are you getting regular healthy connection from safe people yourself?

### Questions to consider about your client:

- In which corner is your client?
- From your client's family of origin, where did she learn it's unsafe to connect?
- How might approval of others become too important?
- How can you help her grieve her wounds?
- How might you create a safe environment that will enable her to be vulnerable and admit that she has needs?

As a conduit of God's grace, our need as counselors is to constantly be counseled by God's Word, worshipping and delighting in Him, being renewed by the Spirit daily. If we are not delighting in God, we won't be able to help our clients delight in Him either. Our hope is that our connection with God will be felt by our clients as we mirror His love, grace, and delight in them, until they begin trusting Him more and experiencing what it means to live Coram Deo under God's smile and delight. As well, to be effective in your role of counselor, it is important to participate in a regular growth context for yourself, such as therapy and or a small group, where real life issues are addressed.

## Devotional

With the Spirit's help the Bible can counsel us and prepare us for our work with our clients as we point them to the Wonderful Counselor. Check out this online devotional to meditate on God's Delight in Creation:

[counseling.redeemer.com/devotional1117](https://counseling.redeemer.com/devotional1117).

