



# Heart Transformation: Identifying Our Strategies for Self-Redemption

One reason it's important to identify a person's Deep Idols is because even when the Surface Idols have been released, true lasting heart transformation will not take place without understanding and addressing the Deep Idol. For instance, someone who used alcohol (Surface Idol) to avoid pain and seek comfort (Deep Idol) may stop drinking, but may still seek comfort in more acceptable ways and continue to disengage from life. Understanding someone's Deep Idol will help us as caregivers to compassionately appreciate the context of the person's life stories in which it developed and help bring deeper healing, repentance and reliance on the Lord.

## Key points to remember:

- There are two basic patterns of idolatry that we lean towards: Mastery and Avoidance.
  - Mastery – to assert that we are worthy, valued and good.
  - Avoidance – to hide, cover up, and suppress our sense of unworthiness or badness.
- We use all four deep idols – we, of course, have all four basic desires and any of them can become disordered. We are that complex! And this reflects the impact of the fall and depth of our brokenness.
- Even though there is one that is dominant...
  - Other deep idols can also manifest because we often use both patterns of mastery and avoidance, at different times.
  - Other deep idols can surface depending on situational or relational contexts.
- It sometimes takes a while for a counselor to identify which one is dominant.
  - There is no simple checklist or formula. People are way more complex and fascinating and multi-layered than that.
  - But, nonetheless, we can begin making a hypothesis early on and collaboratively exploring it with a client throughout therapy.

# The Four Deep Idols

Mastery	Definition / over-desire	Fears / greatest nightmare	Impact on relationship dynamics	Problem emotions
Power	<p>Over-desire for significance through success, winning, and influence. May feel the need to be right, the best, competent, outstanding, “special” person. In fact, you may hear your clients assert how “good” they are.</p>	<p>Fears humiliation and meaninglessness. Wants to avoid feeling insignificant.</p>	<p>Others are either idealized (corresponds to desire) or devalued (corresponds to fear). Others feel used by them.</p> <p>Affirmation/praise from others is not a priority or they do not depend on it, because they are their own judge and they know that they are right and good.</p>	<p>Dominant emotion is anger expressed outwardly.</p>
Control	<p>Over-desire for certainty which exhibits through control of self, environment, others – not necessarily by dominance, but more by control over doing something – working hard, being self-disciplined, upholding standards.</p> <p>They may seek certainty and may seek to be self-sufficient.</p>	<p>Fears uncertainty, criticism and may want to avoid feelings of uselessness, irrelevance (I don’t matter), which may lead to a sense of being invisible (non-existent).</p>	<p>Others feel condemned around them. They believe others rely on them. Others are drawn to their capacity to perform (very capable) and solve problems, but others are kept at a distance and they usually do not feel much affect toward others.</p> <p>Social distance is present, while power people seek a wider social circle.</p>	<p>Dominant emotion is feeling worried or anxious.</p>
Avoidance	Definition / over-desire	Fears / greatest nightmare	Impact on relationship dynamics	Problem emotions
Approval	<p>Over-desire to please, to get affirmation and acceptance through relationships by helping and meeting others needs/desires.</p> <p>They need to get positive feedback, to provide services so that others need them. They may be susceptible to codependency.</p>	<p>Fears rejection, avoids conflicts, and may struggle with cowardice.</p>	<p>Others are feared or idealized. Others may feel smothered because client needs their affirmation for the client to feel worthy.</p> <p>Others tend to see them as warm, friendly, considerate, non-aggressive.</p> <p>Absorbs criticism and may easily say that they are bad or wrong.</p>	<p>Dominant emotional reaction is implosion of fear. Avoids situations for fear of conflict and avoids people for fear of rejection.</p> <p>Usually seeks connections with others to soothe their fear.</p>
Comfort	<p>Over-desire for avoidance of pain/stress by seeking freedom from responsibilities, expectations, and anything that may feel unpleasant by seeking immediate gratification through addictive behaviors or through numbing and escaping.</p>	<p>Fears stress and demands and may seek privacy.</p>	<p>Others may feel neglected or annoyed because they may seem indifferent and may be unproductive. They do not believe that others care about them, thus the lack of response to others. They tend to be passive-aggressive.</p>	<p>Dominant emotions experienced are restlessness, boredom, and weariness as a result of detaching, consequently feeling meaninglessness and isolation.</p>

