

The 5 Stages of Maturity

Session 1: Introduction

1. How would you define maturity?

Maturity can be defined as: *Reaching my God-given _____ at any age and stage.*

2. The 5 Stages of Maturity

- Infant, Child, Adult, Parent, Elder
- Where did this model come from? Shepherd's House (now Life Model Works)
 - People could receive healing and great counseling, but unless they had a multi-generational community of people "glad to be with them," they would not be able to sustain their healing.
 - The wounded not only needed healing, but also needed maturity skills and healthy community.
 - There are 5 stages of human maturity confirmed
 - Cross-culturally,
 - Biblically,
 - Scientifically!
 - Their findings were written up in the book, *Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You*, James G. Friesen, E. James Wilder, Anne M. Bierling, Rick Koepcke, & Maribeth Poole. (Available at www.deeperwalkinternational.org)

3. The Map to Maturity

- Where I am now
- What I missed
- Where I am headed
- How to get there

4. The Problem of Immaturity

5. Signs of blocked Maturity

- Inability to regulate emotions
- Inconsistent behavior
- Fear-based guidance
- Low satisfaction
- Poor sense of identity ... and more

6. Maturity Principles

- A person's physical age or stage does not determine his/her maturity.
- Maturity does not give us more value.
 - "Our value is inherent, unchangeable, everlasting, and complete" – Amy Brown
- Maturity is valuable.
 - Maturity increases the success and satisfaction of marriages, parenting, leadership, etc.
- People naturally desire to mature. However, few know how to attain it or how to teach it to others.
- Maturity is not automatic.
 - It is not a byproduct of salvation.

- Maturity can be blocked due to a lack of healthy relationships and unresolved traumas.
 - 'A' Trauma = the **A**bsence of good things we needed
 - 'B' Trauma = **B**ad things we should not have experienced
- Maturity is a life-long process
 - It is something we cooperate with God and others in developing, across our entire lives.

7. How to Grow in Maturity

- Identify holes in your maturity
 - i.e., the Needs and Tasks that were missed at each stage
- (Continually) Get God's perspective on life, ourselves, and others
 - Need to be tender toward weakness, in ourselves and others
- Multi-generational Community
 - Models maturity tasks for us
 - Teaches us who we are (group identity)
 - Helps us connect with Jesus for healing

8. Immanuel Interaction

- Take 3, slow, deep belly breaths
- Ask God to bring to mind a special, joyful memory.
- Write a prayer of thanksgiving: *Dear Lord, I am thankful for* _____

- Write a response from God's perspective: *Dear child of mine* _____

- Ask: "Jesus, what so you want me to know about how you see me?" (and/or "Who am I to You?")
 - Write down the thoughts, words, impressions that come to mind without filtering (you can test it later).
- Jesus' tender response toward me: *My dear child...* _____

