

# Whole-Brain Living

## Session 2: The Elevator in Your Brain

### 1. Review: The Power of Joy

- Joy is the fuel your brain is designed to run on.
- Joy is relational. "We are glad to be together."
- Joy should lead to rest, which renews us for more joy.

### 2. Review: Rhythms of Joy and Peace

- "The LORD your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will **rejoice** over you with **gladness**, He will **quiet** you with His love, He will **rejoice** over you with singing." - Zephaniah 3:17
- We are designed to run on rhythms of Joy and Peace (Rest).
- Need to respect our capacity and know when to take a breather.
- Need to learn to recognize the need for a breather in ourselves and others.

### 3. Why 'Appreciation'?

- Leads to connection
- Restores and deepens 'Relational Mode'
- Changes our brain (trains it to notice and focus on what is good)

### 4. Exercise: Practice Appreciation

- Take 3 slow, deep breaths
- Think of a time you felt joyful, peaceful, or connected
- Re-enter the moment as fully as possible (what did you feel, hear, smell, etc.)
- Give it a 1-2 word name (e.g., "sunset")
- Ask God, "What do you want me to know about this?"

### 5. Maturity, Capacity, & Relational Skills

- Maturity = Reaching my potential at every age and stage of life.
- Capacity = How much pressure does it take before you blow up, shut down, or turn into a different person?
- Relational Skills = brain-based skills that enable you to navigate life in relationally healthy and satisfying ways.

### 6. Right & Left Brain - Two Different Operating Systems

- Right hemisphere: Relational Skills
- Left hemisphere: Problem Solving

### 7. Right brain

- Cycles 6x per second
- Emotional Regulation
- Non-verbal
- Values, Identity Center, Self-control

## 8. Left Brain

- Cycles 5x per second
- Analyzes (problem solving)
- Interprets
- Explains (verbal)

## 9. White Matter - Habits

- 200x per second

# The Elevator in Your Brain

### 1. Level 1: Attachment (*hypothalamus and nucleus accumbens*)

- The attachment center can be thought of as a light bulb. It turns on when we feel like bonding to or attaching to someone.
  1. **Joy Bonds** – Safe, calm, and connected. This happens when someone notices our light is on and is happy to see us. Joy bonds create Secure attachments.
  2. **Fear Bonds** – Unsafe or uncertain connections.
    - a. Dismissive (the light bulb stops coming on as often because it hurts too much when no one responds.)
    - b. Distracted (the light bulb stays on just in case someone will respond.)
    - c. Disorganized (the light bulb becomes erratic and doesn't know how to synchronize with others.)

### 2. Level 2: Assessment (*amygdala*)

- The assessment center is sometimes known as the Fight, Flight, or Freeze center of the brain. It evaluates attachments with one of three options.
  1. Good – Like a green light, this lets your brain keep functioning without any interference.
  2. Bad – Like a red light, this signals your brain to react with anger (Fight).
  3. Scary – Also like a red light, this signals your brain to react with fear (Flight or Freeze).

### 3. Level 3: Attunement (*cingulate cortex*)

- The attunement center is the part of the brain that “reads” the world around us. It is sometimes called the “mother core” because it is primarily developed during the infant and early toddler years through interaction with the mother or primary care giver.

### 4. Level 4: Action (*right orbital prefrontal cortex*)

- The action center is home to our identity center and our joy center. It is the part of the brain that remembers who we are and how it is like us to act.

### 5. Level 5: Narrative (*left brain*)

- The left brain is the problem solving, analytic part of the brain. It creates a narrative to explain your life based on the information it gets from the right brain.

## Immanuel Journaling

- Write a prayer of thanksgiving: *Dear Lord, I am thankful for* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Write a response from God's perspective: *Dear child of mine* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Share with the Lord: *"Jesus, what's on my heart right now is..."* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Jesus' tender response toward me: *"My dear child..."* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Homework

- Share joy with at least 1 person a day this week.
  - E.g., Intentionally convey you are glad to be with someone through your voice tone, facial expressions, and relational interaction.
- Take 1-3 minute pause daily this week (you can use "One Minute Pause" app)
  - Close your eyes
  - Slow deep breaths
  - Release everything to God
- Use the Immanuel Journaling method this week (preferably tomorrow!).