

Best U



## **MODULE 5: FREEDOM IN YOUR FUTURE WHY OVER-FUNCTIONING PREVENTS YOUR PARTNER'S REPENTANCE**

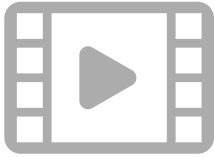
Another form of people pleasing is over functioning. Over functioning is doing for others what they should be doing for themselves and the Bible warns us about this in Galatians by telling us, we should help others when they when they have a burden, right? The burden is something that's so unmanageable. It's way too heavy for them to carry by themselves. They need our help but a load is something they're supposed to carry. Scripture says each should carry their own load.

We get into trouble when we help others carry their load, and that it can be disguised as carrying. Who are you really caring for when you carry someone else's load? Are you boosting your own self-worth? By rescuing others by becoming invaluable to them. By being their hero? The truth is that our over functioning, codependency or enabling really doesn't help them. Maybe in the short term, right? But in the long term, your over functioning disguised as help hinders their growth and maturity.

Over functioning enables the other person to continue to be irresponsible. And it also leads to our burnout. We get frustrated when we overextend ourselves. But when we do that, over functioning, our motive, this need for validation or security, even though it's passive, consider this: It's a form of control because we're playing the role of God. It's control camouflaged as care.

Galatians six eight says whoever sows to please their flesh from the flesh will reap destruction. One author explained it this way. Martha disguised her over functioning as caring for the needs of others and trying to accomplish too much. She lost sight of herself and her guest, Christ Himself. She offered hospitality at the expense of herself. And I love this one: She confused caring about someone with having to take care of them.

Jesus even warned the disciples against over functioning when he sent out the 72. He told them when you go into the towns, the highways and the byways and preach the good news if people won't listen to you, if they weren't listened to your words, (and how familiar does that sound when maybe your partner doesn't want to listen to your words?) Jesus told him, shake the dust off your feet. Now that may sound vindictive, but we can't make others hear us or listen to us. And if we insist on it, we often do so. at our own expense, we lose our peace, right?

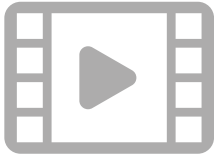


The reason that Jesus told them to shake the dust off their feet is simple. To let their peace return to them. He said if the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it. And if it's not let your peace return to you. Because we can't function without our peace, right? So think about it. When you over function, when you over communicate, when you over justify or over argue to prove that point one more time, when you over defend yourself to say it better just one more time, use a better analogy. What happens to your peace? It evaporates right? it morphs into anger and bitterness or, or resentment or maybe the flip side—depression and anxiety. And then this ugly monster shows up...the guilt monster.

Have you all ever dealt with the guilt monster? I wish I can tell you that you can stop people pleasing and not feel guilty. I wish I could tell you that but I would be misleading you. As you know changing any habit is not easy. If you have a habit of pleasing others changing that habit is going to be uncomfortable at first. But are you going to let your feelings dictate your actions? You know, here's the thing if you need a new job, and you don't like interviewing, are you going to avoid applying for a job because you hate interviewing? No, you're going to face your discomfort, right?

A new mother probably doesn't like changing diapers, but she does it anyway. And you know unless you're like Monica on friends and you'd love to clean, you probably aren't going to enjoy vacuuming. Or cleaning your bathroom but you don't let your feelings rule your actions. There are so many things that we may not like doing but we face our discomfort anyway. Like the carpool line at school, when you're picking up your kids or helping your children with algebra or science. I mean you can tell right there what subjects I despised! Or taking a COVID test. I don't know anyone who likes their nose and brain the prodded with a stick but here's the thing. It's good to know that when the discomfort leaves when the action is over, the discomfort usually leaves. You get the new job. Your baby's bottom is clean you your house is spotless and the stick up your nose? Maybe you find that you didn't have COVID Right?

But like theses and so many other things that we don't enjoy, stopping this cycle of people pleasing is uncomfortable. But understanding that this guilt feeling, while it may be normal, it is not the boss of you. Guilt is an invisible dictator that keeps us in bondage. When we stop bowing to its demands it can feel very intimidating, but eventually when we practice asserting ourselves, the guilt will begin to subside.

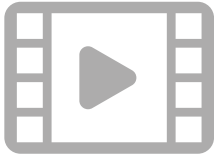


I remember a time a few years ago when my daughter texted my husband and I asking if we could spot her \$100 so she could catch a ride to work in the rain. Because it was raining outside and it takes \$100 for an Uber ride for a three mile drive to work? Obviously she needed money for something other than that, but she was definitely pulling a big guilt trip on me because she was banking on the fact that this mother wouldn't want my daughter walking to work in the rain. Right.

But let me give you a little background because my daughter was a single woman in her early 30s. Not just a teenager, right? She's in her early 30s with very few responsibilities. She didn't have a vehicle and she seemed really content about that. She'd been working part time for the last two years. She'd kind of taken life easy. No big deal and even though we offered to help her go back to school she talked about it but she never took us up on the offer. You know this was her lifestyle, her choice, right?

I would have gladly given her \$100 if I thought it would have made a difference. But I was very disappointed in her lack of motivation and I didn't want to support or enable her laziness. And yet I was extremely torn. You know as a mother, you want to help your kids right? But would helping her in this situation really be helping her or would it only satisfy my own desire to be a good mother? And this guilt, it wrestled with my rage. I mean, I was angry. It may sound harsh, but that's what I was feeling. Because in my mind, I was thinking how dare she think that I'm going to support her laziness. And so this is what I told my husband. I texted him and I said, Man, I just want to give her \$20 but it's going to come with a lecture! And my husband said, Just tell her no. And I'm like, okay, that sounds easy for you. But I was not there yet. And so I knew better than to answer her right away. I had to pause and process right? Sometimes, you know, this guilt monster doesn't go away. Sometimes we have to pause and process and give ourselves the opportunity to think about what's the best way to handle this situation.

And I'd like to tell you ladies that, you know, I did it in five minutes. Nope. It took me about 45 minutes to really think about how I could do many things, not just respond to her, but get rid of my anger. And so we're all human. And I knew I wasn't going to bow to my guilt. But I wanted God to give me wisdom in the moment. And I knew that a lecture was not going to accomplish anything. It would not achieve the outcome that I was hoping for. It would only give me the satisfaction of airing my opinion. And so after a bit of reflection, I knew what I had to do. I had to allow her to suffer the consequences of her own actions.



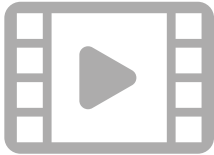
I knew my lecture would not be a good teacher, right. But I first had to come to this place of resolve. I had to let go of my anger. I had to let go the outcome and I had to get to a place where I could let her own her own feelings. And then I had to know that I could be okay with that, that I wasn't responsible for how she felt if I said no, that's on her. Letting other people own their own feelings is a great mark of maturity to not take on that guilt if somebody gets mad at us.

So here's what I did. I texted her back a short reply, a short response. I didn't want to tell her everything I wanted to say at first because I really wanted to engage her in a dialogue if she was willing. When my children first came out of my protective custody, when they aged out, I learned the hard way that unrequested advice is perceived as criticism. That was a hard lesson that I learned, you know, offering opinions when they weren't receptive to hearing what I wanted to say. And so that took me a long time to learn. So here I'm not going to give her a lecture. Well-meaning advice is counterproductive for maintaining quality relationships.

So my first response was this. I said Brittany, I'm going to have to say no, this might be a good time to think about getting another job. And when I said this, there was no hint of sarcasm in me anymore. And I don't know how if she could tell that in a text message because she's just reading text, but I knew for me I had to get rid of that first. And her reply. This was what she said. "Just thought I'd ask." And then two words that a parent loves to hear: "You're right." I couldn't believe my ears. And that's when I knew I had permission to say something else. That she was receptive. That her heart was open to hear one more thing and I took the liberty to make one final comment and I said, "I hate to see you suffer. But sometimes suffering is a great motivator to change."

And her reply was hashtag truth. You know in that moment, two amazing things happened. My guilt evaporated, and my anger left and not bowing to that guilt monster can do that for you too. When we refuse to allow guilt to dictate our actions, it frees us from feeling angry at the injustice of compliance to a request that we didn't want to accept. It also gives the other person the opportunity to take responsibility for their actions.

And today, I'm really happy to say that she has a much better job now. She landed a wonderful job a couple of years ago and she's already gotten promoted twice. She also has a car and she's working on saving for a down payment for a house. But you know,



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But you know, I hope in part that it's due to the fact that I didn't enable her or over-function. But here's the key: Even if she didn't change, my refusal to bow to that guilt monster would have prevented my bitterness from eroding our relationship.

Because when we give when we don't want to, when we say yes when we really want to say no, when we stay silent because we're afraid of rejection, or disapproval, when we offer function because we're seeking validation, then others take advantage of us or don't appreciate our help or reciprocate, when we need help, our unmet expectations...what do they do? They produce this bitterness and they rob us of the joy that we need to live. They take away our peace. They strip us. So don't let that guilt monster rob you blind. Face it head on until he eventually fades away. And I call him a he because I just think the guilt monster is a he.

So we've got to stop allowing other people to be...we've got to give them the freedom to be disappointed in us. And so I hope some of these passages that we've talked about today, kind of shed some new light on maybe giving you permission to speak up, to confront, to stop people pleasing.

Father God I just thank you so much for your word that brings life and revelation and clarity on how we can move forward and confront things that you want us to confront so that our peace will return to us and I pray in the days to come that Your Holy Spirit would remind each of us and the ladies that will listen later about the importance of guarding our heart and letting our peace return to us and the importance of considering others more important than ourselves, more important than our own discomfort of facing conflict or not worrying about what other people think of us so that we're not passively walking in selfish ambition. So I thank you for your word God and I ask you to bless each lady moving forward that you would give her wisdom for her relationships and for the future that you have planned for her in Jesus name. Amen.