

SIM CAFÉ- Week 2

This series is focused on Trauma issues. We want to become more trauma informed. So we could assume that we need to look at what happened in boarding schools with children.

But actually, the topic is much broader...

Relational patterns develop in all of us as a result of all of our childhoods and histories. There are relational challenges that happen with parents and children. Children and the boarding school staff. And missionaries and the nationals they were with. Between missionaries. And including the leadership from the top and all the way down.

So, the content is applicable to all. Hopefully you will find nuggets that will be helpful to each of you!

Attachments Built Through Attunement

Attachment Patterns

Last week we looked at how we are designed to be safely connected with others. To experience that we are really seen, understood, joined, cared for, protected, have an advocate.... And our automatic nervous system (poly vagal system)- developed before birth- is primarily concerned with safety in these regards!

We experienced various degrees of devastation through Disconnection. We are designed from conception for connection! Safe and secure, consistent and constant bonds!



We are going to build on this foundation... look at how attachment/ relational styles are created.

GROUNDING EXERCISE

"Stranger" Experiment- 1970's Mary Ainsworth:

The Strange Experiment

1970's – Mary Ainsworth. Research to understand attachment pattern and Adaptive Stances

Secure, Avoidant/ dismissive, Anxious/ Ambivalent/
Resistant

1990's- Disorganized
Reactive Attachment Pattern

Children 9 – 18 months

Mom, child and a stranger

Observe the emotional tone in the child with the departure of mom from the room, connection with the stranger who came in to be present when mom was gone, the playing alone, and the reconnection with the mother.

Observer was Looking at

1. Proximity and Contact seeking in the child with mom in each phase
2. Contact with mom in order for child to maintain themselves in the experiment
3. If there was Avoidance of proximity/ closeness and contact with mom in each phase. ((turning away, increasing distance, gaze avert
4. Possible resistance to contact and comfort (anger, pouting, thrashing, attempts to repel, which might alternate with efforts to maintain contact.
5. If child used search behaviors in hopes of finding comfort or a safe and grounding base.

These symptoms were used to understand what kind of relational patterns were developing within a child... and through years of follow up, if these patterns continued.

The children that were in a secure attachment-

SECURE ATTACHMENT: child felt confident that the mom (Caregiver) will be available.

Used the 'safe base' to be soothed, comforted and gain confidence to explore the room/world

Appropriate and moderate upset when mom left.

There was a lack of resistance to mom's approach and lack of avoidance when she re-entered the room. Easy re-connection with mom.

AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT: Child showed little interest in being dropped off or reunion with mom. Avoidant of mother and stranger.

Child was overly independent. Did not orient to mom when investigating environment. Showed a lack of distress to separation. Seeming indifference to being alone. (during tests where child's hear beat was being tracked with electrodes.... Heart rate escalated, hands became sweaty- while no external sign of distress. Appeared well- adjusted.)

ANXIOUS/ AMBIVALENT/ RESISTANT ATTACHMENT: Child was clingy in being left but unable to receive reassurance or comfort. Clingy and defiant mixture. (ambivalent)

When mom returned, there was no avoidance of mother, but there was also some frustration and reactive distancing.

DISORGANIZED ATTACHEMENT: Child was primarily shut down when mother left the room. She vacillates between being frozen or running away and running towards parent in disorganized manner when re-connection is expected with mom. Craving the connection while simultaneously fearing parent.

REACTIVE ATTACHEMENT: Might be described as an escalated 'Disorganized' pattern. The child often had unexplained withdrawal, fear, sadness, listless, withdrawn. There is no seeking of comfort or showing no response when comfort is given.

Escalated, 'over the top' behavioral problems.

It is understood that the cause is often due to the initial years included severe lack of bonding with birth parent or initial care givers. Living within the foster care system and institutional living, frequent changes in living situations. Often shows up in children who were adopted. No bond formed at beginning of life.

Secure:

Henri Nouwen talks about attachment when he writes about being in a place where "you feel so truly safe and so well held that the ups and downs of your life aren't able to (overly) distress you or excite you."

This is a Secure Attachment. A Safe base. Knowing you are not alone. That you have Someone who has your back in a competent way.

The dorsal and sympathetic branches do not have to be on high alert... and a person can confidently relax and live in an engaged manner in the world.
What God's desire has always been!

Insecure:

- Anxious
- Dismissive
- Disorganized
- Reactive Attachment

We all have blends of these patterns...

These relational 'dance steps' we develop play out in all our relationships from early childhood on. They impact all of our interactions- with ourselves, others and with God! These internalized patterns impact how we experience others, how we 'see' others and 'hear' what they express. How we 'interpret' them and thus relate with them.

It impacts how we go about creating a safe environment for others.

How we go forward in developing and pursuing unity and peace and love. How we pursue- individually as well as a community- being people who are recognized as representative children of God, who have character that is kind, patient, tender, long suffering, gentle, have impulse control/ self control rather than being reactive. That we are known/ recognized by our ability to love well.

We can grow in understanding systemic relational dynamics that are foundational, regardless of whatever space we find ourselves as connected with the mission.

The content we will go over today is applicable for those of us adult MK's who grew up in the mission and attended boarding school. The parents who sent their children to boarding school. To those who were/ are in leadership roles. To those who have young children or grandchildren and want to help them grow up in secure relationships. To those who want to listen and support those who have been wounded and listen to the pain-filled stories. To all of us who have a desire to pursue repair, restoration and healing in our relationships.

To the degree we ponder the content of this topic of 'Attachment Patterns', we will have a shift that I mentioned last week in regards to Dr. Bruce Perry's book. We will be curious and ask "What happened in your life that brought you to where you are today?"

We will be able to recognize how some people live out of a nervous system that stays highly energized and Anxious- attempting to get the other person to feel better so life will be 'fixed'

and safe. Or will be energized to get people to notice, connect and attach to them. Or we will recognize when people are living from a 'shut down' stance. They minimize life's dynamics, are Dismissive/ and Avoidant- won't engage in the emotional life of others. We'll be able to make more sense of those who live emotionally Disorganized lives- at times getting overly energized in how they relate and at times revert to being shut down and stay distant.

To the degree that we understand ourselves and the patterns within others, we can go forward in a focused way towards healing and better tailor our interactions in ways that can be helpful.

I could easily spend an hour on each one of the attachment patterns and noticed that I will lose track of time if I 'wing it'. So, I have pulled together an overall description of each one, and a possible 'picture' of the type of upbringing a person has to develop a specific pattern and then tie it over into how it plays out in how we experience a relationship with God. So, I am going to mostly read what I pulled together so as to keep myself on track and cover what I want to.

There is a lot of material available for you to go to if you want to think more slowly over the content. You can 'google' the attachment patterns. Or grounding techniques, the development of self awareness and mindfulness. Or you could go to my website (Maribethpoole.com) where I have written some blogs on these topics and developing emotional capacity.

Patterns are significantly formed in the first months of life- 18 months, 2 years, through age 5/6

What happens in the caregiver is biochemically implanted/ reproduced in the child.

This foundation will be built upon and might shift. But also helps determine how well a child will do when hard things happen later in life. (Hard things vs. 'trauma')

WHAT CREATES DIFFERENT ATTACHMENT PATTERNS ?

SECURE ATTACHMENT PATTERN- (Can be painful if we did not have this! Calming/ Grounding techniques).



50-60% of population have secure attachments??? [how did the pandemic and rise in social media impact this?]

Description of Upbringing:

In infancy, parents delight in their bundle of joy. Enthralled throughout their child's entire growth process. Tunes in to infant's specific physical and emotional needs. Connects in timely manner to needs whatever need arises.

As child develops, parents recognize and values infant's uniqueness preferences and individuality, encouraging them to flourish.

Child knows they have a secure base to come back to after being out in the bigger world.

Child is encouraged to express her thoughts and opinions and talk about the hard times that come in growing up. Her parents stayed involved, helping her learn to voice her needs, receive help as needed, take care of herself, empathize and appropriately care about/for others. Child is encouraged to try new things and can do so with confidence due to the secure base in life provided by the family. The family environment sets the stage for the child to be able to return to joy and peace/ calm from any situation or emotion.

As the child grows, she learns what brings personal satisfaction and joy. She has opportunities provided in which she can learn of the power given to her by God to bring life to others.

From what she has experienced in the family, she has a good representation of what God is like, helping her transfer confidence to God.

Due to knowing well that God is all He claims to be, as she grows, she has confidence as she go through life, having Him as a Secure base and Resource and is always investing in her best interest. She is looking forward to the 'adventures' that are to come. She is not fearful of the mistakes she will make as she relates to her family, friends, co-workers, and others. She is not unnerved by the many things she must learn. She is a non-defensive and eager learner. At the times when interpersonal conflict arises, she does not withdraw in fear or become

angry and demanding. Instead, she interacts with the person- pursuing mutual care and respect, if at all possible. When difficult situations occur, she is not reactive. She calmly takes the time needed to learn fully what the situation is before responding. In complex situations her response is often helpful to everyone involved and people feel comfortably supported when she is there. She is able to draw out the struggles another person is having, reflectively showing her understanding as she joins them in the path that lies ahead.

[The importance of grieving. Feels awful.... In actuality is a way of acknowledging our worth, honoring the valid need we had/ have]

Relational Connection with God: (as previously stated) What she has experienced in the family helps her transfer confidence to God.

One with a secure attachment pattern lives with an inner calm and joy in knowing God's heart towards her described in I Cor. 13. He is characterized by being patient and kind. He does not get upset when she gets credit and praise, so she does not have to put herself down with false humility. She knows He is desiring for her to be honored and not shamed. He does not hold her sins and mistakes against her -but keeps a clean slate in His mind towards her. She senses how God believes in her and what she is about. His love is persevering, and she experiences ways that His loving kindness, goodness and mercy follow her daily. As a result, there is an easy flow of engagement with God and the world. When hard times comes, she is not overly despairing due to a knowing that it is not the end of the story and God is writing the final chapter as a remarkably good one. Being confident all will be ok; she is not afraid to risk and fail. She enjoys the reality of John 10:9 where Jesus exclaimed "I am the gate; whoever enters through Me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture." (safe home base from which she can go out and engage the world and come back to it.)

Summary:

What is needed to develop a secure bond/ attachment?

[Initially and to grow an 'earned secure attachment ability/ relationships]

Needed not only for MK's!

Great implications as to what is needed to prevent trauma as well as in relating in ways that **enhance restoration**, healing, repair in relationships!

1- Attunement on a regular basis Synchronization

Did your parents know what you felt (at each age?)
Did you 'feel felt'?

2- Responsiveness Consistency! Caregiver being Present and available when needed.
How did your parents respond with whatever you felt?
Meaningfully? Reactively?

3- Engagement Non-intrusively
Did your parents pursue getting to know you with all your uniqueness and idiosyncrasies?

4. Regulate Affect Interactive Co-regulation/ self regulation
Did your parents help you gain comfort and soothing? Were you brought back into your 'window of tolerance'?
Interpersonal peace was attained.

{when these ingredients above are met- a person feels seen/ heard/ validated in how they would have/ do experience what happened to them... and when this happens they can better experience being valued and receive comfort}

5. Parental Emotional Strength
Were your parent strong enough to allow you to have big emotions?
Or did you sense that you had to be emotionally ok in order for them to be ok?

6. Repair
Were your parents willing to repair relationship when they hurt you?
Did they own their responsibility for wrong inflicted?

7. Competent Gentle Protectors
Did you experience having an active advocate who is non-reactive while pro-active in creating safe environments and havens?

8. Eye contact (Beam Glean).

9. Face to face interactions

10. Truthfulness, Authenticity

11. Playful Interactions

12. Relaxation together

If these are not present, there is trauma happening within one's nervous system.

TRAUMA- SET UP FOR INSECURE ATTACHMENTS

- SET UP DEPRESSION, ANXIETY....
- FOR ADDICTIONS, OCD, OBSESSING ON TOPICS AND TASKS, HOARDING....

We can have a mixture/ blend of these insecure patterns!



DISMISSIVE/AVOIDANT ATTACHMENT ADAPTATION/PATTERN: (correlates with the Dorsal branch of P.V)

Recall the Silent Face experiment.

Absence of a mothering presence, of a 'nourishing other'. Disconnection. Sense of abandonment. Cut adrift.

No one is there, consistent sense of rejection/ criticism, left alone too much.

Lack of experiencing delight in existing, and genuinely welcomed.

Locked into a 'bubble of self' due to no place to land relationally. Overly self-reliant. Uncomfortable in asking for help. Preference of pets, plants and technology over people.

Description of Upbringing:

Tragically, these children quickly learned the rule that 'children are to be seen and not heard'.

They do not experience the faces of their parent's lighting up in the delight of who he was. His emotions were dismissed as being a bother, unimportant and 'incorrect'. The significance of his needs was not recognized and often went unmet. At times, he learned that his need presented an inconvenience to his parents and if he wanted to avoid the pain of their frustration, being ignored or shamed, he must not let it be known.

Of course, he was just a child, so what did he know? Although he did want to be loved and given attention, he learned not to expect it or seek it. He knew that his needs, opinions, feelings and desires were unimportant. In order to navigate in his world, he focused on being a good child. He appeared to be well adjusted since he did not voice complaints or appear to be a clingy child. This

'getting it right' added to the cycle of not receiving focused attention. There was no need to be met and no behavioral problems to be disciplined. This inflexible and non-spontaneous pattern led him into the path of a rigid relational style.

Those who grow up in this type of environment live with a focus on following rules. If they were not going to be delighted in and cared for, this is the best survival technique they could come up with to stay as safe as possible with their caregivers.

Since they have not developed an inner confidence in handling hard situations, they feel a need to have clear guidelines to follow. This becomes more important to the person than entering into the emotional pain or disturbances occurring in his own life or with those he meets.

These people's creativity and ability to problem solve are limited due to the main focus on following rules. They have to figure out the 'rule' to follow in order to minimize the upsets that come in life.

It is fearful for him to let people have possible negative opinions of him. Thus, he is motivated and guided by a strong shame focus. He is defensive when problems occur and afraid he may be found 'wanting'. These fears govern his focus as he tries to 'be good' and not a bother, inhibiting his capability to learn.

Due to his need to keep life seemingly in control, he is not able to enter fully into a difficult situation. To do this, he must dismiss or minimize the full significance of what he or others are experiencing.

Due to growing up in an environment in which his needs, emotions, opinions and ideas were disregarded, his mind internalized the belief of being unimportant. Later, he is not able to easily recognize his own value.

Memories are 'recorded' through a process that includes emotional 'wiring'. Not getting the message that who he is and what he thinks is of any importance, may have laid the groundwork for life's events not to be 'logged' well in his memory. Thus, he has a limited view of himself. He believes that 'obedience' is more important than who he is. He must perform in order to obtain any amount of acceptance or love.

Spontaneous and creative thinking has been discouraged, resulting in his interpersonal relationships being stilted. His view of life is inflexible as he takes a restrictive approach to living in the world.

Relational Connection with God:

Tragically, what these individuals have encountered in their early years is transferred to how they perceive God. They have little awareness that God cares about how they are doing. They are certain that what matters to God is obedience and having a 'right attitude'. They experience God as distant, mostly uninvolved and a taskmaster. While knowing the theological truth of God's love being unconditional, their experiences with God are characterized by a dryness and dissatisfaction.

They mistake 'rules' for relationship and thus pursue obedience as a way to secure their standing with God.

Tip for pursuing healing:

In addition to pursuing the specifics listed above under Secure attachment as to what is needed to develop and 'earned secure attachment pattern',

Focus on 'making a mountain of a mole hill'



DISTRACTED/ ANXIOUS ATTACHMENT ADAPTATION: (Pre-Occupied or Entangled Parents)

**Child becomes Co-dependent/ overly parentified :
need to make sure parent/caretaker is ok in order to
obtain a stable home environment**

Fear of ambivalence/ lack of consistency in others. Unpredictability is scary, breaks trust, internally waiting for betrayal.

Wanting relationship but don't know how to keep it due to being programmed to wait 'for the other shoe to drop'.

Live with an urgency to keep a 'cry response' on. Presenting a need may result in being cared for, addressed and feeling loved.

Lack of freedom to say 'No' [by age 2, a developmental goal is to be able to say no!]. [Or possibly an urgency to say 'NO' and live defiantly to everything.]

Overly focused on the other person rather than self-focus.

Description of Upbringing: (correlates with the Sympathetic branch of P.V. High levels of emotional energy)

The parents of these children may truly have desired to give their child the attention and love needed; yet they were often distracted from doing so by other issues in life that riveted their emotional attention. "The squeaky wheel got the grease." Whatever situation had the most emotional intensity determined their focus.

This inconsistency in availability, sensitivity, perceptivity and effectiveness leaves the children with a sense of uncertainty, giving them an urgent and constant need for comfort from external interactions. At times, the parents remembered their desire to love their child -without tuning in to his specific needs at the time. They zeroed in on offering attention based on their own time, agenda and urgency, rather than considering the impact on the child. This lack of sensitivity resulted in emotionally engulfing the child. The child may often feel overwhelmed and anxious regarding future interactions. [possible life example of parents at college graduation]

Internally they often are consumed with and driven by emotional doubts of one form or another. (Am I loved? Will the person leave me? Am I going to be rejected? Will I be cared for only if I have a 'big enough' problem? Will other's need to love me on their timetable drown my needs for timely synchronization?) They have been conditioned growing up to focus on the emotionally demanding situations in life, and thus their mind tracks these types of situations. They learn to attach to emotional crises more than to people. Along with this undercurrent, these individuals are often truly very caring, gravitating to the 'underdogs'. They can be wonderful caregivers. Yet it can add to a disfunction. While they receive great appreciation from those they help, they learn this is a great way to receive the attention they crave.

This helps to continue a pattern that started in their childhood. Whichever person or event is the most demanding is the one that grabs their attention. They too

live with ‘the squeaky wheel gets the oil’ syndrome. People do know they are important when a crisis occurs, but if nothing urgent is being presented to these those with an anxious pattern, others may not know his true love for them. The pattern of tracking the emotionally charged situations of life result in their being ‘off and on ‘ in relationships, depending on the emotional intensity of the moment.

His preoccupation with demanding situations might result in his being unreliable relationally as well as with day-to-day responsibilities.

Due to the crises of the moment, responsibilities often are not taken care of, which results in frustration with him by others.

These people live from a place of insecurity that often plays out with them demanding the spotlight, being appreciated and respected. Even though they desire to gain security from relationships, they gravitate toward relationship with people who are demanding or frustrated with him.

When these individuals have a need in their own life, they may be distracted from life’s responsibilities as they seek someone to meet their need. When they have found someone, they tend to become overly dependent for a period of time, being paralyzed and not functioning as well as they wish.

These adults often have a secret addiction. Although feeling guilty and trying repeatedly to stop, they continue to be drawn to pornography or food, television, alcohol, compulsive reading, drugs, nicotine.... They try to remind themselves that they will hate themselves later, but the urge for the personal excitement or distraction from their anxiety is stronger than self discipline. The days most barren of personal affirmation and tenderness are the ones they most often give in to an addiction. These individual’s lives are often governed by chaos more than by their values and goals.

Relational Connection with God:

Tragically, these individuals carry the undercurrent of anxiety and driven-ness into their experience with God. They pursue emotional highs and circumstances being ‘fixed’ as evidence of God’s love. They are

more familiar with 'excitement' and 'joy' than with internal shalom, inner calm and peace.

Tip for pursuing healing:

In addition to pursuing the specifics listed as to what is needed to develop and 'earned secure attachment pattern',
Focus on developing ability to get to inner calm.



DISORGANIZED/ DISORIENTED. (correlates with the mixture of the Dorsal and Sympathetic branches of P.V). [brake and gas pedals pushed at the same time. Often paralyzed in making a decision]

Description of Upbringing:

Some people tragically grow up in homes fraught with fear. The parents to whom the child needs to go for security were the very ones who brought the child fear. Mothers may have a very high level of fear and anxiety, whose emotions flowed out to her children when she relates to them. [Whatever is happening in the caretaker gets biochemically reproduced in the child!] (ie. If mother is constantly certain that danger was lurking, their house would be broken into, Dad was hurt in an accident if he was late getting home from work, and the children would get hurt when they played and climbed-

The child learns from the parent that the world is not a safe place to live.) The child also may have lived in the terror of her father (dorm parent) coming home at the end of each day. Would he fly into a rage? Was tonight the night that he would enter her bedroom and violate her? Would he again smash mom against the wall? Yes, it is certain to these children that the world is unsafe, not organized or reliable, and will not offer love and protection.

Those who grew up in a very chaotic and fearful environment, internalize the chaos and fear. When living with a constant sense of dread and anxiety, they learn the world and relationships are not safe or reliable

and something 'bad' is going to happen. When a child has no secure and trustworthy caregiver, they have no constancy to build a secure view of the world. When a parent is 'scary' due to outbursts of rage and abusiveness this is added to their internalized belief that the world is unsafe and unreliable. Parents, who are supposed to be a source of comfort, were also a source of danger and fear for her. The child is often left frozen in a stance between avoidance and tracking all fear inducing situations. As life progresses, the individual struggles with emotional, social and cognitive difficulties. The internal disorganization will impair future interactions with others and inhibit the ability to function well. They will have a poor coping capacity, a marked inability to regulate emotional responses, stay focused, and 'on track' in life when stressful situations arise. Tragically, they can emotionally disintegrate when hard times arise and their lives increasingly are characterized by emotional outbursts, implosions and chaos.

It may seem like these people have an internal magnet to fearful situations, since they are constantly in the middle of whatever crises is at hand. Their nervous systems must stay on high alert to possible threats and dangers. In situations that are threatening, they are unable to gain a realistic perspective, bringing themselves to a sense of calm. Instead, they may become quite reactive. It is not easy for them to receive the help needed and cannot relate in a way that is helpful to others during times of their own disintegration.

These individuals lose focus of their personal preferences and values during the times they are disoriented and internally disorganized.

Verbal reassurance will do no good. They need a calming presence until they are re-grounded.

There can be a continuum of dissociation. Different types.

Memory issues

Significant incongruity between Perception and Neuroception

Needed 'betrayal blindness'

Relational Connection with God:

Tragically, this results in these individuals experiencing their relationship with God as tumultuous and confusing. Internally, they live with fear and certainty that God is scrutinizing and tracking their failures and is disappointed, impatient or angry. This keeps them in a disorganized relational stance with God, wanting His love and care while simultaneously afraid of going close.



Personal Goal for all patterns: to grow towards an Increasingly Secure Attachment Pattern.

What is needed for Repair:

***** Understand your life story and how it impacts how you are today. SELF AWARENESS & REFLECTION is the most powerful way towards a Secure Attachment.**

Dismissive Attachment Pattern:

1. It is important for the person to recognize that everything matters! Activate your nervous system, using the 5 senses.
2. Make mountains out of mole hills. In your own life as well in the lives of others. Use Mindfulness practice. Self awareness- for the purpose of increasing awareness of one's self, preferences, hurts and delight and value.
3. Explore ways you can 'break the rules'. Push the limits of 'traditions' and rigid comfort zones. Color outside the lines.
4. Develop increased emotional capacity so as to attune and stay connected with what matters regarding self and others.
5. Grow in your experience that relationships are more important than rules.

Distracted/ Anxious / Pre-occupied Attachment Pattern:

1. It is important to learn how to get back to a place of internal calm when upset. Using the 5 senses can be helpful.

2. Deep breathing.
3. Mindfulness practices for the purpose of getting one's self back to calm.
4. Develop increased emotional capacity so as to be able to stay relationally regulated and kindly present during one's own hard times as well as others.
5. Settling self through experiencing appreciation.

Disorganized Attachment Pattern:

These people will need a stable, constant, mature person to walk life's journey with them for the long haul.

They will need to develop many brain skills. Four important ones are

1. Mindfulness .
2. Regaining Calm.
3. Building joy vs. fear tracking.
4. Develop increased emotional capacity.

If we are able to understand these dynamics, hopefully we will develop an increased sense of compassion for those with whom we are in relationship with. And we can grow in our ability to relate in ways that will be helpful.

How we can fit into another's journey toward repair:

Those who live out of a **dismissive attachment** will benefit if we slow down a conversation, bringing attention to something that is happening and ask questions, giving opportunity for reflection and awareness of how life matters and how they are impacted by life matters.

Those who live out of a **distracted/ anxious attachment** will benefit if we tune into the inner turmoil and then gently relate in ways that can help them move towards a sense of inner calm and confidence.

Those who live out of a **disorganized attachment** will benefit from relationships that remain steady, consistent, calm and attentive while tuning into their inner turmoil, fear, chaos, and shut down/ withdrawal.

At times the person needs validation that what they are going through is very important. At times they will need help in getting out of their internal chaos and back to a place of calm.

Living the heart of Jesus without weaponizing truth

Next week- Not an easy topic This session is not for those 'adamantly set' in strong opinions. This session will benefit us to the degree we can hold our opinions 'lightly' and look with eyes of tenderness towards ourselves and others.

Immanuel Connections and healing

Forgiveness

Repentance

I am aware of being nervous to talk about these topics with this group. Goes back to the dynamic- how safe do I feel in my nervous system in 'rocking the boat'.... Especially with the mission group associated with the harm I experienced. And most of you are likely much more fluent in 'bible language' and can recall verses quickly.... And I do not like conflict and will not be able to quickly pull of verses when put on the spot....

But these topics are ones I feel strongly about.... So please wade into them with me.