

The 6 Stages of Spiritual Heart Disease

Today, because of the lack of cultivating healthy love in our hearts, many wander through life with severe heart conditions. I am speaking about more than just medical heart issues, but spiritual and emotional heart issues.

These conditions come out of ignoring the spectrum of heart experiences in life, including loss, grief, sorrow, joy, peace and contentment.

These heart conditions arise from people neglecting the tending of their hearts. When we pay attention to the life of our hearts, we allow healthy self-love to make way in our lives. Because so many have not been loved properly, they have no reference for love, let alone healthy love of self. So we ignore this issue and move on in life.

The following six heart conditions begin to arise as a result. They work in stages. We begin at stage one, but if the diagnosis is ignored, we move further along until we end up at the last stage.

Typically, people do not end up in my office until they are at the last stage. They have lived for years without tending to the life of the heart and cultivating a love relationship with God, themselves and others.

As you read through each of these, once you feel that you no longer connect to the stage you are reading, you are probably at the previous stage. The good news is that, wherever you are, there is hope for God to breathe change, if you are open.

1. Broken heart – This is where it all begins. Everyone on the planet has a broken heart to some degree, because we are all broken to some degree. No one has received love or given love

perfectly. The quicker we can identify that we carry a broken heart, the quicker God can address areas that need a greater revelation of love.

Self-love cannot be experienced when we leave a broken heart unhealed. The broken heart is a condition that arises when those who were supposed to love us did not. They either released harmful actions against us or they neglected to act in loving ways that we needed.

Most people carry a broken heart because they were not given what they needed. This becomes difficult to see unless we get a reference for what we did not have. For instance, the majority of people on the planet have no memory of their earthly father saying the words, "I love you." Yet without knowing this was important, people will live on without letting that get healed and resolved. They walk around with a limp of unknown origin.

2. Fearful heart – Any area of brokenness makes room for fear to enter. Insecurity is the land where fear loves to dwell. Every area of insecurity and brokenness has a work of fear attached to it. Those with a fearful heart become trained to avoid any past pain from reoccurring.

Love has such a powerful effect that it actually casts out fear. Love and fear displace each other. When I am neck deep in fear, it drives out my ability to sense and experience the power of love. When I am living in the divine sense of knowing I am loved and allowing that love to settle within myself, fear has no ability to access my being. The answer to fear is love, yet every form of fear will pitch a fit to keep our hearts bound by its torment.

Even in the last days, Jesus said men's hearts will fail because of fear. Fear will tag team on a broken heart to keep us focused on our past hurts as our story for the future. Those with fearful hearts not only struggle to walk in love

for themselves, they struggle to embrace experiences and be fully present. They are always projecting into that which they are not at peace about. Fearful hearts become hypersensitive and constantly live to avoid being hurt or exposed.

3. Angry heart – As our fears remain intact, the stress and insecurity adds on another layer on top of fear: anger. The anger comes in to defend our brokenness and keep anyone away who might be a potential threat to us. All anger stems from unresolved brokenness. Very little of the anger has anything to do with the current situation or subject. It has way more to do with a past wound that has never been addressed.

So many attempt to use anger *management* as a solution. Yet that is all they end up doing—attempting to *manage* it. In reality, they should be removing this battle. But we cannot remove something that we have allowed to become a defense mechanism.

An angry heart left unaddressed will eventually carry hate along with it. Yet the target of hate is not primarily others. This is a work of self-hate. The person may be angry with a past relationship, family member or life disappointment, but the target of their fury is against themselves. They carry an underground monster of self-hate that drives the overall angry presence they carry. The anger may stay bottled up or lash out on others, mainly because they have hatred against themselves.

4. Hopeless heart – When we walk through life overcompensating for our brokenness and serving our fears every day, we get exhausted. I know I did. You can only be angry for so long until you hit an exhaustion stage. Depression sets in. Energy becomes low. Irritability is high.

At this point, your faith becomes weary. The promises of God seem too far away. Breakthrough looks out of reach. Hope becomes weak. Our minds become so vulnerable to every negative thought that crosses the airwaves.

This is where people develop a “hope deferred” condition.

5. Hard heart – Hope deferred can be healed by walking through each of the previous stages and releasing the fears and anger we have towards others and ourselves. But when we neglect this, we develop another dangerous condition—a hard heart. At this stage, the heart has lost its ability to believe. A callousness forms around the heart, so even when a passionate message of freedom is delivered, their eyes are veiled and hearing is dulled.

Hard hearts don’t hear encouragement or hope anymore. It takes a divine work of the Holy Spirit and the person’s willingness for a hard heart to be opened.

Please understand, when I talk about a hard heart, I am not only addressing someone who is not a Christian and is resisting the gospel. I have crossed paths with hundreds of proclaimed believers that carry a hardened heart. They talk about times in the past, but they have nothing current they are growing in. They are manifesting the same ways and patterns for years, with no new change. This is a sign that hardness is present.

The only solution to a hard heart is the act of humbling ourselves before God as well as others. When we do this, we position our hearts for the hardness to melt off and tenderness to take residence.

6. Numb or checked out heart – Getting to this stage is deadly. Of all the people I have worked with for over 20 years, the numb and checked out heart has been one of the most challenging to help. When the heart is engaged, the possibilities are endless for change. When it’s at this stage, it can seem nearly impossible to break through.

The numb or checked out heart has become a more common condition today. Although the previous heart conditions listed here are dangerous when unchecked, this stage is lethal.

You can minister 100 tons of nuclear love from heaven, but you will still get nothing. Very little engagement. Very little heart connection. You can see it in their eyes. Lights are on but no one's home. Try to help a key area in their life, and they check out. They may be present in the room, but absent emotionally.

People at this stage have either given up tending to their heart or never did so to begin with. Those who have become weary with their hurt, pain, anger and fears can often slide into a place of numbness. The pain becomes so unbearable to confront that checking out becomes a programmed way of living. They can go to work, pay their bills and say thank you; but inside, they are numb.

A Numb Culture

In fact, we have a numb heart-disconnected culture. Millions of people watch a show called *The Walking Dead*, which I believe is a reflection of the conditions taking place in the hearts of people. They don't see their need for heart healing and they walk around like zombies. Quite often, they don't even care. They wander around in life without ever tending to what matters most.

This numbness drives everything. The rise of mental illness goes back to a lack of love reference. The body knows when love is not present. When someone lacks proper love in their heart, their physiology can recognize the signals and break down. This is one of the reasons I believe we are not seeing a dent made into the world of medical health. People's bodies are breaking down because they feel separated from a loving relationship with God, themselves and others. They live in an emotional prison. The problem is they are so checked out they have no ability to recognize that inwardly they are dying.

Transformation

So I tell people, if you're mad at God, go ahead and tell Him.

If you're sad, cry out to Him with everything you got. At some point in the heart exchange, God will meet you and lead you into transformation. He will always begin by showing you the depth of His love to fill your heart.

Without this change, our culture will manifest what Jesus prophesied, "the love of many growing cold" (Matt. 24:12). This coldness will first manifest within. We lose our ability to love ourselves, so this gets reflected in our relationships with others.

We all will love others in direct proportion to how we have been able to love ourselves with a fully engaged heart. Before we get any further into talking about the issues of your life, engage your heart. Awaken it. Ask God to give you a new heart. Humble yourself and allow the work of God to revive your heart. Face the pain you suppressed. Grieve through what you did not allow yourself to grieve. Let God once and for all breathe healing life into your heart. Out of that will flow a chain reaction to everything else.

Mark DeJesus has been equipping people in a full time capacity since 1995, serving in various roles, including, teaching people of all ages, communicating through music, authoring books, leading and mentoring. Mark's deepest love is his family; his wife Melissa, son Maximus and daughter Abigail. Mark is a teacher, author and mentor who uses many communication mediums, including the written word, a weekly radio podcast show and videos. His deepest call involves equipping people to live as overcomers. Through understanding inside out transformation, Mark's message involves getting to the root of issues that contribute to the breakdown of our relationships, our health and our day to day peace. He is passionately reaching his world with a transforming message of love, healing and freedom. Out of their own personal renewal, Mark and Melissa founded Turning Hearts Ministries, a ministry dedicated to inside out transformation. Mark also founded Transformed You, a communication platform for Mark's

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