



PWOC

Protestant Women of the Chapel

WORKSHOP: INSECURITY

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PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: Insecurity is an issue most women of all ages deal with on a daily basis. If we can be aware of the ways that insecurity presents itself and aware of our own triggers, we can take steps to live a more free and authentic life- ultimately finding our true security in our relationship with God.

1. WHAT IS INSECURITY? WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Oxford Online Dictionary Definition: in·se·cu·ri·ty /insi'kyooriti/
noun: insecurity; plural noun: insecurities

1. uncertainty or anxiety about oneself; lack of confidence.

"she had a deep sense of insecurity"

- synonyms: lack of confidence, self-doubt, diffidence, unassertiveness, timidity, uncertainty, nervousness, inhibition, anxiety, worry, unease

"he hid his insecurity"

- vulnerability, defenselessness, peril, danger, instability, fragility, frailty, shakiness, unreliability

"the insecurity of the situation"

2. the state of being open to danger or threat; lack of protection.

"growing job insecurity"

- synonyms: unstable, rickety, rocky, wobbly, shaky, unsteady, precarious, weak, flimsy, unsound, unsafe

"an insecure railing"

Take a moment to circle the words in the definition that are the most accurate and descriptive to you in describing insecurity.



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ROOTS OF INSECURITY (*So Long Insecurity, Beth Moore*):

- **Instability in the Home** (including various types of abuse, divorce, substance abuse by a parent, mental or physical illness in the home, financial instability)
- **Significant Loss** (person- including still birth, miscarriage, abortion, a home, a relationship)
- **Rejection** *MOST COMMON ROOT* (from a parent, friend, spouse, child, boyfriend, etc.)
- **Dramatic Change** (accident, financial crisis, even positive changes like a new move, or a new baby)
- **Personal Limitations** (learning disability, physical handicap, scar, acne)
- **Personal Disposition and Temperament**
- **Our Culture** and the pressure it puts on women to be young and beautiful
- **Pride**

ACTIVITY 1: You can work by yourself or with a partner. Take a look at the **Roots of Insecurity**. Which of the categories most resonates with your personal experience? Underline it. Would you add anything to that category? If so, add it.

Think of an area of insecurity for you personally? Can you see how it fits into one of the categories?

II. HOW DOES INSECURITY MASQUERADE ITSELF?

The following two quotes are by Joseph Nowinski, from his book *The Tender Heart*:

Insecurity refers to a profound sense of self-doubt---a deep feeling of uncertainty about our basic worth and our place in the world. Insecurity is associated with chronic lack of confidence in ourselves and anxiety about our relationships. The insecure man, or woman lives in constant fear of rejection and a deep uncertainty about whether his or her own feelings and desires are legitimate. (p.17)

- Insecurity hides in anxiety and fear of rejection.



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The insecure person also harbors unrealistic expectations about love and relationships. These expectations, for themselves and for others, are often unconscious. The insecure person creates a situation in which being disappointed and hurt in relationships is almost inevitable. Ironically, although insecure people are easily and frequently hurt, they are usually unaware of how they are unwitting accomplices in creating their own misery. (p. 23)

- Insecurity often involves self-sabotage.

Point to ponder: **What is driving my insecurity? How am I a willing accomplice?**

- Arrogance can be a mask for insecurity: *I feel so badly about myself, I have to convince you that I'm worth something.*
- Judging can be a mask for insecurity: *I feel unsafe. It feels safer to me to hold tight to my own views and keep you out.*
- Competition can be a mask for insecurity: *You intimidate me. I need to prove my worth by outperforming you- whether in conversation, in a game, or in an ordinary task.*
- Making comparisons can be a mask for insecurity: *I feel like I don't measure up. At least I can find other people that I'm better than.*
- What are other behaviors that may be a mask for insecurity?

ACTIVITY 2: In our first activity we took a look at the common roots of insecurity and hopefully related our own personal insecurity to one or more of those roots. Go back to the roots. Think about an insecure behavior you have noticed in yourself or in another person. Where is it coming from? What is the hidden lie or fear behind the behavior?

Work with a group of 3-4 people to discuss these questions. Remember that you do not have to share your personal struggles. You may use an anonymous person as an example and share what you have observed about their behavior. **NO NAMING NAMES!!!**



III. FINDING TRUE SECURITY

"But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they never stop producing fruit."

-Jeremiah 17:7-8 (NLT)

Characteristics from Jeremiah 17:7-8 of a person who puts their confidence in God:

How does God respond to our insecurity?

- *The Lord is like a Father to His children, tender and compassionate to those who fear Him. For He knows how weak we are; He remembers we are only dust. Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. The wind blows, and we are gone- as though we had never been here. But the love of the Lord remains forever with those who fear Him. His salvation extends to the children's children of those who are faithful to His covenant, of those who obey His commandments.* -Psalm 103:13-18 (NLT)
- *We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.* -2 Corinthians 4:7 (NLT)

KEEPING IT REAL: WHAT TO DO IN THE MOMENT?

1- Embrace Your God-given Dignity: Beth Moore, in her book *So Long Insecurity*, writes that insecurity is about losing our *God-given dignity*. Psalm 8:5 says that God crowned humans with glory and honor.

- In the moment, do your best to pause and ask yourself, "How is my behavior eating away at my dignity?"
- Say out loud, "You have crowned me with dignity. I am worthwhile and honored in your sight. I am chosen; I am not here by chance."
- Recite Proverbs 31:25, insert your name in place of "she." *She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future."*



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2- Transform Your Mind: I can make a mental choice to shift my focus onto the truth from God's Word, rather than continuing in my own destructive behavior. State a truth that fits the situation, like: "God has made me worthy of respect" or "I am completely clothed by His righteousness" or "I am strong in Christ" or "What others think of me is less important than what God says is true of me."

- In the moment, do your best to pause and ask yourself, "What does God say about me? What is a truth I can speak to this lie?" If you don't know, ask a trusted friend or a mentor who has walked this road.
- Say out loud, "My reaction is destructive to myself and others. God help me to embrace Your truth in this situation."
- Recite Romans 12:2 *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

3- Set boundaries: We will always have triggers of insecurity and we will have to decide whether or not we're going to take the bait.

Insecurity does not have the right to "stalk" every other reaction. We can be hurt without also being insecure. We can be disappointed without also being insecure. In other words we set boundaries on our insecurity. We acknowledge the hurt but we don't allow it to touch the deeper part of us-our sense of worth and value. We don't allow it to cause us to question our key relationships. We don't allow it to erode our identity as God's beloved children.

- In the moment, do your best to pause and separate insecurity from the situation at hand. Is your insecurity tagging along with your reaction? Are you able to see its influence?
- Say out loud whichever is most appropriate:
 - "I can be hurt without also being insecure."
 - "I can be disappointed without also being insecure."
 - "I can be shocked without also being insecure."
 - "I can be unsure without also being insecure."
 - "I can be humble without also being insecure."
 - "I can be _____ without also being insecure."



- Recite James 1:2-3 *Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.*"

ACTIVITY 3: (Whole-group discussion) Which of these tools do you think you'd be most likely to use? Which speaks the most truth to your situation?

APPLY IT TO LIFE:

We can begin to break the cycle of insecurity this very day. This takes time; be patient with the process. Sometimes you have to "fake it till you make it." When we put these new principles and behaviors into practice, the cycle begins to break- even though we may still *feel* insecure in the moment. We can make a very deliberate choice to not act on that feeling. Insecurity is demolished one situation, one reaction at a time.

- Psalms 40:3 *He has given me a new song to sing, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see what He has done and be amazed. They will put their trust in the LORD.*
- Hebrews 10:35-36 *So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that He has promised.*
- Isaiah 58:8–9a *Then your salvation will come like the dawn, and your wounds will quickly heal. Your godliness will lead you forward, and the glory of the Lord will protect you from behind. Then when you call, the Lord will answer. 'Yes, I am here,' He will reply quickly.*

How is God challenging you through this workshop? Are you willing to embrace the truth that you are worthy, honored, and esteemed? Are you willing to take steps to better incorporate truth into your life, one situation at a time? Take a moment to write down any last thoughts that you do not want to forget.

A prayer for security: Dear God, I come to you this moment because I need some things only You can give me. I need restoration, Lord. I need my dignity back. You alone know what insecurity has cost me, what trouble-even torment- it has caused me. I desperately need and want to be delivered from my chronic insecurity. I am ready to discover what it means to be truly secure. Amen.

