

PODCAST REFLECTION GUIDE

Episode 5: The Protective Patterns We Build



Opening Reflection

Take a slow, deep breath and invite God into this time.

“Lord, open my eyes to see how my unmet core longings and the wounds that accompanied them led me to certain false beliefs that brought so much emotional upheaval in my life.

Show me today the ways I’ve turned to other things to soothe the pain I have felt.

Thank You, Lord, that you are right here to meet me at the point of my greatest need.

You want me to come to You with no shame. Help me to do that, Lord.”

Part 1: Listening Reflection

As you listened to Anita’s story, could you resonate with any part of her story? If so, why?

When you consider the core longings— significance, purpose, understanding, safety and security, a sense of belonging, and of course, love, which ones resonate with you the deepest? What do you need most right now in your life?

Part 2: Feeling vs. Soothing

Check the ones you turn to:

☐ People pleasing	☐ Avoidance/denial	☐ Binge-eating/restriction
☐ Perfectionism	☐ Withdrawal/isolation	☐ Doom-scrolling
☐ Procrastination	☐ Overworking	☐ Shopping
☐ Substance abuse	☐ Rumination	☐ Anger/Aggression

Others: _____

As you have identified your coping strategies just now, how are you feeling?

Part 3: Exploring the Power of Story

In the last episode, you identified a lie that was embedded in your heart. You've acknowledged the painful emotions believing it brought you.

As you consider your coping strategies you identified above, do you see any connections yet between the lie, the emotions that lie carried with the coping strategy you turned to? Write down any insights here.

Part 4: Your Story Matters

When you consider the ways you have/or do cope(d) with deep emotional pain, can you relate to the "trying harder approach" to change that outward behavior? How has that felt for you?

Do you agree with Anita that those coping behaviors helped you to survive emotionally as a child? If so, describe how. *Example: Anita felt safe and like she belonged when people were pleased with her. She felt significant when she achieved and strove for perfection.*

Can you see yet how your coping behavior may be pointing you to a wound God wants to heal?

Part 5: Experiencing Truth

In this episode, Anita shared how as children, we all turned to certain coping mechanisms to get our needs met, and how at the time, we were soothed by them. But now as Christian adults, what once soothed us has become a stumbling block or bondage that is now holding us back.

With that in mind, read these verses slowly and prayerfully.

Ps.27:1 *“The Lord is the stronghold of my life, [Hebr. “a spiritual fortress that cannot be shaken] Whom shall I dread?”*

Ps.27:8 *“When You said, ‘Seek My face’, my heart said to You, ‘Your face, O LORD, I shall seek.’”*

Eph.3:8 *“To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ.”*

Reflection

How would it feel for you to finally begin to let go of these dysfunctional behaviors, knowing you possess *the unfathomable riches of Christ* and *the Lord is your spiritual fortress and in Him, you cannot be shaken*?

Is it your heart’s desire to say to the Lord, “Your face alone, O Lord, do I seek?”

If that is your heart’s longing, tell Him that now.

If you want that to be true, tell Him that also.

Part 6: A Guided Prayer

In this episode, Anita recounted **three questions** God asked in the Garden after sin came into the picture:

Jesus,

It is astounding to me that You desire for me to come into Your presence just as I am—with all the ways I have tried to soothe my own pain instead of turning to You.

There is a part of me that wants to hide in shame.

You know my story completely and You know exactly why I feel this way. And still, You say, “Come to Me when you are weary and feel you are carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders and I will give you rest.”

You ask me the same questions You asked Adam and Eve in the Garden,

Where are you?

Who told you that?

Where have you taken your longing to be.....loved? Or significant? Or to belong, etc?

Now picture God saying this to you:

I come to you now, beloved, with so much tenderness in My heart for you.

I come to meet the deepest longing of your life.

I want to come and heal your every wound.

I want you to feel My deep, lavish love for you. I would have rather died than to ever live without you, My beloved.

I want you to break agreement with all the lies that have kept you bound.

I will be with you to hold you and comfort you when you grieve all the losses of your life.

I will not leave you or abandon you.....ever.

I will forgive your every sin.

I will give you a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

It is for freedom that I have set you free.

Where are you now, beloved? Tell God how you feel and what you long for.

Part 7: Closing Reflection

Sit quietly for a moment with this statement:

“Beloved, I want You to come confidently into My presence in whatever condition you are in. I am always ready to welcome You in.”

What happens inside you as you read those words?

This Week’s Invitation

Rather than escaping this week into your way of coping, practice pausing long enough to explore why you feel like you must turn to that behavior.

Can you stop and tell God about it first?