rediscover who God created us to be by looking at Scripture.

I am . . .

- Loved with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3).
- A new creature (II Cor. 5:17).
- Strong in the Lord (Eph. 6:10).
- God’s child for I am born again (1 Peter 1:23).
- Qualified to share in His inheritance (Col. 1:12).
- Set free (Jn. 8:31-33).
- Accepted in Christ (Eph. 1:6).
- The apple of my Father’s eye (Ps. 17:8).
- Chosen (I Thess. 1:4).

If you are struggling or confused about who you are because others have robed you with their perceptions, stand in front of your mirror each day and repeat these “I am” statements to yourself. Others can be added.

Remember God does not create junk that is not good for anything but the trash. Each person has a purpose and a beauty unique to them.

Paula Silva
Can a FOOL be an Abuser?

An abuser may be male or female from any culture or from any racial or socio-economic background. They may appear normal, charming, or religious. They may be the usher, the elder, or even the pastor at your church. Abusers come from all walks of life. Each abuser though does exhibit certain common traits. These traits are found in the Word of God as we look at the word, FOOL.

Let’s look at some passages of scripture and note the traits.

* **Proverbs 12:15:** “The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice.”

  Trait: A Fool thinks he is always right.

* **Proverbs 28:26:** “He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.”

  Trait: A Fool trusts in himself alone, but may profess he is trusting God.

* **Proverbs 29:11:** “A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.”

  Trait: A Fool vents his anger without concern for how it affects their partner.

* **Proverbs 1:7:** “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and discipline.”

  Trait: A Fool is not interested in resolving conflict and will not listen to reason.

* **Proverbs 13:20:** “He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.”

  Trait: A Fool in relationships causes others to suffer with his destructive behavior injuring body, soul, and mind.

* **Psalm 73:6-8:** “Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment . . . They scoff and speak with malice; they threaten oppression.”

  Trait: A Fool is mocking and threatening, violent in some form, and is malicious in their relationships.

Fools can be compared to rough sandpaper that does not beautify anything it scrapes up against. Instead it creates deep gouges that mars the original beauty of the object.

Take time to think through these scripture passages and identify those that are Fools/Abusers in your life. Knowing what you are dealing with is the first step to relational wisdom.

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Paula Silva
Responding Wisely to a FOOL

After identifying our Fool, we may ask ourselves “Now What!” We can once again turn back to the wisdom of scripture to learn how to respond while heading its warning.

- **Proverbs 24:25**: “Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared.”

*Wisdom: Over time we can become like the angry person when we continue to be in relationship with them. The longer we stay connected the more entangled we become in their behavior.*

- **Proverbs 13:20**: “He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.”

*Wisdom: Physical injury and/or mental damage will occur if we choose to be a companion with the wise.*

- **Proverbs 19:19** “A hot-tempered man must pay the penalty; if you rescue him, you will have to do it again.”

*Wisdom: Don’t keep the FOOL from suffering the consequences of their behavior. If you rescue them, you are enabling their behavior to continue and you will have to rescue them over and over again.*

- **Proverbs 17:12**: “Better to meet a bear robbed of her cubs than a fool in his folly.”

*Wisdom: Keep your distance from a FOOL otherwise you will experience fierce, frightening actions that are worse than a mama bear fighting for her cubs.*

Your FOOL could be your husband/wife, mother, father, sibling, your son/daughter, friend, employee, or your boss. For various reasons you may feel these individuals must remain in your life at some level.

You can begin to see the effect they are having on your life. You know you cannot change them (although you would like to fix them), but you can change how you interact with them.

The first step you can take is to DETACH. You may not be able to physically remove yourself from the FOOL’s presence, but it is important to emotionally detach. Words will still come at you from their angry lips but tell yourself “I’m dealing with a FOOL This is their foolish behavior. Their words are lies.”

Emotionally detaching is not an easy thing to do and will take practice and time for it to happen. When angry darts fly at you, try to remove yourself from the FOOL’s presence. Do something that you consider as self-care. One woman went into the bathroom and turned on her radio to listen to music so she could not hear the words.

If the FOOL is at your place of employment, you may have to busy yourself with your job responsibilities. In some cases, you may have to get a new job.

Try not to lash back with angry words. You will only be adding fuel to the fire. Your words will be used against you presently as well as in the future.

Since the FOOL repeats his folly, you can in calm moments develop responses that could be options to relating to the difficult person the next time an incident happens. This will help you not to become so entangled in their behavior.

In summary:

- **Identify** the FOOL in your life
- **Seek** God’s wisdom in dealing with and responding to your FOOL
- **Detach** or physically distance yourself from the FOOL
- **Pray** for your FOOL that they will allow God to work in their heart and renew their mind so their behavior changes.
- **Forgive** your FOOL

Paula Silva
IN THE NEWS WITH TEEN FOCUS

AVAILABLE WORKSHOPS

I Will Not be Silent – The Importance of Teaching our Children About Healthy Relationships

Education is critical for both boys and girls, in helping prevent today’s youth from experiencing destructive relationships that will destroy their spirit. This workshop will provide insight into the importance of education and demonstrate how we can show our children God’s design for their relationships as well as their value according to Scripture.

Following this workshop attendees will be able to:

♦ Understand who is at risk.
♦ Recognize the potential warning signs for dating violence or abuse.
♦ Know the key differences between a healthy and an unhealthy dating relationship.
♦ Learn the importance of educating youth on God’s design for relationships as well as their value according to Scripture.

It’s Time to Start the Conversation – What is a Healthy Relationship?

This workshop will start the conversation on healthy relationships. These conversations will empower our youth with critical knowledge and support while directing them towards better relationship choices. By understanding God’s love for them, our youth can begin to seek a partner based on God’s ultimate design for relationships.

Following this workshop attendees will be able to:

♦ Recognize the warning signs for abuse.
♦ Know the difference between a healthy and an unhealthy dating relationship.
♦ Learn where to find help.
♦ Learn God’s true design for their relationships.

Alice Harmon is the Teen Program Coordinator for FOCUS Ministries, an organization that offers education and training for individuals, churches, and organizations who want to help bring hope and healing to the victims of domestic abuse.

A personal survivor of domestic abuse, she has not only received extensive training on the cycle and types of abuse and the impacts it has on those involved, she has experienced the effects firsthand. Driven by her past experience, Alice is committed to helping young people avoid violent and abusive situations by educating them about establishing healthy relationships.
I Like the Way it Hurts

In a time where the B-word is not simply allowed but frequently utilized on prime-time television, our young women are also inundated with portrayals of violent and overly dramatic relationships. The television shows, movies and music videos today readily introduce the concept that disrespect and derogatory language is not only the "norm", but that it is acceptable.

As a result, young women are becoming insensitive to the detrimental nature of these types of relationships and begin to emulate and tolerate these types of behaviors in their own lives. Young women need to see themselves for who they truly are in God’s eyes and understand why they are worthy of respect.

In this workshop attendees will learn:
- Drama is NOT cool.
- Jealousy and control ≠ “he loves me”.
- The importance of giving and receiving respect.
- Who I am in God’s eyes.

But Your Temper’s Just as Bad as Mine is

This workshop is aimed at today’s young men that are flooded with images of violence. In today’s culture, aggression is often rewarded and respected while humiliating others is tolerated. Young men in sports are further encouraged to “win at all costs”, teaching them that compassion and empathy are a weakness.

God has clearly defined the role of a husband and a father. With great power comes great responsibility, and this responsibility begins with truly understanding God’s design. From there, they can learn how to accept responsibility and hold each other accountable for their actions.

In this workshop attendees will learn:
- What constitutes abuse?
- Violence ≠ Strength
- The importance of giving and receiving respect.
- Does the Bible really tell women to submit to their husbands?
- What can I do about it?

Additional talks for special events or specific topics can be arranged.

Alice can be contacted by phone at 312-945-TEEN or email her at aharmon@focusministries1.org.
Sometimes we create our own prison choosing to live in darkness and captivity of abusive relationships.

We expect God to remove us even though we refuse to take the first step out of the darkness and walk into the Light.

We allow ourselves to feel totally helpless not realizing the awesome power God has given within us to those that are believers. The Holy Spirit is not only our comforter but our counselor. We are not alone as we walk toward the Light.

Thoughts to Ponder

Words that Heal

Keep sound wisdom and discretion so they will be life to your soul, and adornment to your neck. Then will you walk in your way securely, and your foot will not stumble. When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Do not be afraid of sudden fear, nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes; for the Lord will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught.

Proverbs 3:21-26 NASB

Domestic Violence Training for Churches/Groups/Organizations
Topics:
- What is Domestic Violence? — A Closer Look at Verbal, Emotional, Sexual, Physical, and Spiritual Abuse
- Characteristics of an Abuser/Why Does He Do That?
- Recognizing a Victim of Domestic Violence
- Why Women Stay or Leave/ Developing a Safety Plan
- How Does Domestic Violence Affect the Family Especially Children
- Teen Dating Violence
- What Can the Church Do?
- Do’s and Don’ts of Counseling
- Signs that the Abuser Has Changed
- Church Safety Plan/Risks
- Becoming an Anchor in the Storm/ How to Help Someone in an Abusive Relationship

Development of Domestic Violence Program in Churches
- Do’s and Don’ts of Counseling Victims and Abusers
- Development of Domestic Violence Policies and Procedures for Churches
- Step By Step Approach for Churches to Address the Issue of Domestic Violence
- Training for support group leaders
Prayer Requests & Urgent Needs

Urgent Needs:
- New board members with expertise in fundraising, marketing, and the law
- An office space to accommodate the increasing need for the ministry

Praises:
- Dedicated support group leaders
- Development of TEEN FOCUS relationship workshops

Prayer Requests:
- Pray for our TEEN FOCUS team as they develop our teen program
- Pray for a facility for our FOCUS Women’s Center. It would enable us to expand our services
- Pray for funds to hire much needed staff
- Pray for board members as they make critical decisions regarding the direction of the ministry
- Pray for women and families who contact our FOCUS Women’s Center.
- Pray for pastors’ wives that are being abused.
- Pray for individuals, churches, and businesses to commit to monthly giving.
- Pray for all the FOCUS support group leaders
- Pray for houses in IL, to be donated for use as transitional homes.
- Pray for churches to understand the gravity of domestic violence and will develop appropriate responses.
- Pray for FOCUS as we plan for 2014.
- Pray for those that come to the ministry for help that do not know Jesus.

Upcoming Events

- June 21-22, 2013: Partners in the Journey Training (Support Group Leaders Training), Oakbrook Terrace, IL
- July 8, 2013: Alice Harmon interviewed on This is the Day Moody Radio
- Sept. 11-14, 2013: AACC World Conference exhibitor, Nashville, TN
- October 12, 2013: DV Seminar, Pittsburg, PA
- Oct. 25-26, 2013: Partners in the Journey Training (Support Group Leaders Training), Oakbrook Terrace, IL

The mission of FOCUS Ministries is to provide a safe place for teens, women, and families who experience domestic violence and abusive relationships to find hope and healing in Jesus Christ.

Funding: FOCUS Ministries is a not-for-profit 501 c3 organization funded by contributions and grants. If you would like to help us minister to hurting people through our educational materials, support groups, counseling, and financial assistance to victims of domestic violence, please send your gift to FOCUS Ministries, Inc., P. O. Box 2014, Elmhurst, IL 60126 or online at www.focusministries1.org. A tax-deductible receipt will be provided for all contributions.

FOCUS Ministries (and all individuals affiliated therewith) disclaims any personal liability for information presented within this newsletter or in seminars, workshops, and support group meetings. You should always consult a professional for medical, psychological, legal, financial, or biblical advice.

Summer 2013 FOCUS Newsletter
Ways You Can Help FOCUS Ministries

Please consider making your online purchases from Shaklee through: www.focusmin.myshaklee.com/us/en/ A portion of your purchase will be credited toward FOCUS Ministries. More on: Shaklee

Go to GoodSearch.com. Enter FOCUS Ministries as your favorite charity in the box provided, verify and search. The search engine is powered by Yahoo! and each time you search, designate FOCUS Ministries as your charity, verify and search. GoodSearch will then make a donation to FOCUS.

Go to GoodShop.com. Enter FOCUS Ministries as your favorite charity in the box provided, verify and browse the online mall. Choose from over 500 popular online merchants from Best Buy to Wal Mart. A portion of your online purchase will be donated to FOCUS Ministries and the shopping experience through GoodShop is exactly the same as going to the online retailer's websites directly.

Please Choose FOCUS as your favorite charity at iGive.com. You can help FOCUS Ministries when you make online purchases! For more information, please visit http://www.focusministries1.org/igive.asp.