

Quick Summary of What Causes Wounds and the Remedies to Heal Them

First, our goal is to get to Heaven to be with God for all eternity. To be with Him, our theme on earth should be: **Glorify God; save souls.**

In **Jn 10:10b**, Jesus says, “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

- ◆ What takes us away from living an abundant life?
- ◆ What keeps us from conforming our lives to Christ, and instead becoming deformed? Three things: (1) the world, (2) the flesh, and (3) the devil. These three things work together, and there is some overlap.

Most people are not being formed properly. The goal of this short paper is to show some examples of how people are being deformed, and then how to remedy that.

1. The World

-The world directly or indirectly tells us that we should look good and feel good all the time.

-It tells us that we should be successful.

-"Eat, drink, and party as much as you want."

-"It's your life and your body; you can do what you want. You can be what you want."

-"Who cares about God or what sin is? As long as it feels good, you can do it." The world hates God and His Church. See **Jn 15:19**.

-"Your opinion and your feelings matter. Truth is relative; it is what you want to make it."

-"Be comfortable. Take it easy."

-"Play all the video games you want, watch all the YouTube and movies you want. Enjoy all the Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Netflix you want."

→ Obviously, we could list a lot more, but the bottom line is that the world places our attention on ourselves and our emotions. It makes us gluttons of food, drink and media. The world feeds us lies and tells us that sinning is okay. It promotes self-absorption, false identities and ideologies. If we don't know our identity, we will never be able to fulfill God's mission for us. Because of our self-absorption and taking in too much information, we become angry to some degree. We become depressed and want to cover up the pain with sexual sins, drugs, alcohol, gluttony, more media, and workaholicism.

2. The Flesh

-**Mk 14:38**: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

-Even though we have been baptized, we still have the effects of original sin. Our reason is darkened. It is

dull and not as sharp as we think. Our will is supposed to choose the true good at all times. We sometimes choose evil because we are weak, or we are ignorant about something. Our emotions are erratic and disordered. Sometimes we get angry or anxious, and we don't always know the cause. Or we hold on to emotions way too long.

-Our memory records everything—good and bad.

Sometimes we obsess about bad memories.

-Our will is weak, so it can stir up the wrong images in the imagination.

-Our cognitive "power," which is the faculty in our mind that allows us to make associations, is defective. Because of a negative experience, a news item, or a feeling, we might make a wrongful association.

Examples: "My dad grounded me, so I am never going to talk to him again." "I had a bad experience with a parishioner at Church this weekend, so I am quitting the Catholic Church. It is full of hypocrites." "I don't feel good, so something must be wrong with me."

[These are "stinkin' thinkin' patterns." They destroy people!]

3. The Devil

-**Jn 10:10a**: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy."

-**Jn 8:44c**: "When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

-Simply put, the devil is a liar who wants to steal from us, kill us, and destroy us. Since he hates God, he hates us, because we are made in God's image. He wants us to submit to him instead of God.

-He knows our woundedness, and will work on our imagination and emotions in order to weaken us and influence us to sin, hold grudges, gossip, etc.

-His theme: "Anything but God." He wants us to fill our minds with worldly things and think and talk about them. We end up talking about sports, music, entertainment, ourselves, etc.

-The battle for the soul is through the mind. The devil will try to lead a running, negative commentary in order to weaken us and tempt us into sin.

-The devil wants to get us to focus on ourselves (self-focus) and to develop traits of narcissism. [Some traits of narcissism: (1) unreasonably high sense of self-importance, (2) an inability or unwillingness to recognize the legitimate needs and feelings of others, (3) getting emotional or stressed when things don't go one's way, (4) judgmental of others, (5) secret feelings of insecurity, shame, humiliation and fear of being exposed as a failure, (6) talk about oneself a lot, (7) cannot handle criticism. (Note: Laugh with me—I think all of us are on the "spectrum" to some degree, but we need to realize it and admit it.)]

Some Remedies against the negative influences of the world, the flesh, and the devil

These remedies will overlap into all three categories. Various prayers and spiritual advice can be found at nococcm.org/fr-freihofers-resources/

1. Remedies against the Influence of the World

-Since the world is feeding us too much information and slipping in some lies, it behooves us to eliminate social media or reduce it to a bare minimum. Social media does not form us correctly, help us glorify God, or save souls. Most of it is a waste of time. This will free us up for more important things—God, family, and friends.

-All the negative stories and information coming in are causing people to become angry, depressed, fearful and anxious. There are a lot of evil things happening in our government, our culture, and our world. There are some suspect and compromised leaders within our own Church. We really only need to see a headline occasionally and pray for things to get better, instead of wasting our time (and filling our minds) with negatives news.

-St. Padre Pio said, “Pray, hope, and don’t worry.”

-We cannot fight the battle on all fronts. We should choose one or two issues and work at being good at those. E.g., pro-life effort; feed the poor, propagate the truth by running a Bible study, etc.

-We need to learn the truth (it sets us free!) so that we can identify the lies. We learn the truth by studying our Bibles, catechism, lives of the saints, etc.

2. Remedies against the Weakness of the Flesh

-We must strive to be faithful and thankful at all times.

Phil 4:4-8: “Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”

-We need to forgive all who have hurt us. “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.” If we don’t forgive, we end up being “tied” to the other person. We lose energy and time by being angry, depressed and obsessed.

-God can heal gender confusion. He will walk with anyone. We must surrender everything to Him.

-We must actively “fight” against our weaknesses through prayers and proper formation (Bible, catechism, study about Catholic virtues, etc.).

-We should practice virtues that oppose the vices and defects that we have. For example, if we generally walk around looking stoic, sad, or cold, we need to practice being joyful and approachable around others.

-We must identify our stinkin’ thinkin’ patterns. We must renounce, in the name of Jesus, all the negative things that were said to us and all the negative things we think about ourselves. [I can help you with this, if you want. Some people might need a good Christian therapist to help them identify what some of these negative patterns are.]

-Two recommended books (written by therapist Dr. Bob Schuchts) for those who want to find root causes of wounds: (1) *Be Healed* (2) *Be Restored*.

-We might need a nutritionist to help us. Vitamin B-Complex and Magnesium might take the edge off of those who suffer from a little depression or anxiety.

-We need to eat right, exercise and sleep properly. Our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit.

-We need to offer up our mental and physical sufferings to Jesus as a prayer, so that they don’t get wasted. E.g., “Jesus, I am suffering greatly right now. I feel very sick. I unite my sufferings to You on the Cross to give to the Father for Him to use as He wishes. Please remember my family. Amen.” See **Col 1:24**.

3. Remedies against the Attacks of the Devil

-First, we must admit that he does exist and wants to take us down. He attacks us in our weaknesses through the imagination, memory, cogitative power, and emotions.

-His goal is to isolate us and convince to go into self-pity (or self-hatred) so that he can wound us further and keep us away from God and the help we need.

-We should study the Rules of Discernment of St. Ignatius of Loyola. See the nococcm.org website.

-For those who are going through an authentic, intense spiritual battle, Jesus told St. Faustina [*Diary*, paragraph 1560]: (1) not to fight a difficult temptation alone, but to tell her confessor, (2) not to lose her peace, but to live in His presence and pray to Mary and the Saints and Angels for help, (3) to be certain that He is supporting her, (4) not to be afraid of temptations or any struggles, but instead to fight, knowing that the victory is always on her side, (5) that fighting bravely glorifies God and amasses merits for her. Fighting against temptation with Jesus shows fidelity to Him.

-We should go to Confession regularly & frequently, so that the devil can’t accuse us of anything.