



## 03 Ep #496 The Distressed Inner Child and a Holiday Navigation Guide

**0:00:00.7 Speaker 1:** Sonja created the Love the Word Bible Study method just for you, based on Mary's personal practice and formulated for your personality and temperament. Get your Love the Word meditations every Monday morning by signing up at [biblestudyevangelista.com](http://biblestudyevangelista.com). Now, here's Sonja.

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**0:00:42.9 Sonja Corbitt:** I'm jumping right in today because I have a lot to cover. And this is going to be a detour away from the original plan for the series, because even before I finished the last show, I was already sensing a roadblock with the upcoming holiday season. And after seeing some of your posts on the community sharing the experiences that you had through the Little Way inner child visualization exercise, I can see that many of our inner children are in distress. They're sad, they're lonely, they're scared, and so I'm going to give you a couple of tools, first of all, to begin identifying why in the world you feel guilty that this is not the most wonderful time of the year. Even if you had a relatively good family life, chances are very high that you are going to be mingling with people who are going to tweak the worst, and most difficult, most painful parts of you.

**0:01:46.1 SC:** It could be that you're grieving, it could be that you have great expectations that you already know probably won't be fulfilled for the season, for your family, for those relationships, it could be lots of things. And the holidays, especially, make us long for those traditional, warm family feelings and connections. And when was it that we developed these expectations that life was supposed to be a certain way? Or the holidays were supposed to be a certain way? Or that people around us are supposed to behave like we expect them or need them to? And there is a link between our expectations and our disappointments. And we get disappointed because we're flooded with all these shoulda, woulda, could-aves and we're unprepared for the holidays when we could easily preempt a whole lot of the problems that come up. And so I'm gonna give you some tools to start learning to take life as it comes rather than through the lens of your great expectations.

**0:02:45.9 SC:** And I say that without criticism because I'm the queen of great expectations, but I have learned to work with those instead of against them. And so, the holiday season can be like a perfect storm for the inner child and the panic that can be created by the anticipation of these times of the year. So I'm probably gonna be using some extreme language here and I'm doing that just to make it clear and maybe a little jarring for you, particularly if you resist the idea that you

experienced any neglect or abuse or trauma bonds in your past. We live in this denial because, you know, it's just painful. It's painful to recognize that perhaps we have been abused and perhaps we do have trauma bonds with the people who were supposed to protect and provide for us. Maybe you already know that. And the feeling of the holidays just creates that pit in your stomach, and your chest gets tight, your heart races at just the thought of all of the landmines that can occur during this particular time of year.

**0:03:55.5 SC:** So I'm gonna give you... I hope I have time to give you a survival guide or a navigation toolkit for this time of year. And I'm only hitting the high spots here. I'm qualifying this entire show by saying I'm only hitting the high spots. We're not getting really deeply in. I'm just giving you a place to start so that you can start looking more deeply into the issues for yourselves beyond this show. So let's just talk about emotional abuse because it can cause physical and emotional and intellectual issues. You can have muscle tension, you can feel shame, you can have trouble sleeping, your PTSD could be triggered or tweaked. And when we're thinking about abuse, usually physical abuse comes to mind first. And you may even say that word is way too strong, especially if your early life was outwardly healthy. My dad was a cop, my mom worked in a bank. Between the two of them, they knew everybody in our town. We looked like a perfectly happy, healthy, middle class family.

**0:04:56.5 SC:** But at home, we lived in constant stress because of my dad. Abuse occurs in many forms. Emotional abuse is just as serious as physical abuse, according to studies. And sometimes they happen together. Sometimes the emotional abuse precedes the physical abuse, particularly because my dad was a cop we didn't experience a whole lot of physical abuse, although there was some of that. But most of it was emotional because he didn't want anybody to see it. And the couple of times that it was seen, the authorities got called in. And so he would not usually physically abuse us. But here are some signs of emotional abuse. Yelling, name-calling, insults or ridicule, attempting to make you question your sanity, which is sometimes called gaslighting, invading your privacy, punishing you for not going along with what they want, trying to control you and your life, isolation from family and friends, subtle or overt threats. And if you were a child and you experienced these kinds of things, there's no control over it.

**0:06:02.1 SC:** You are automatically isolated from family and friends, largely because most of your life is controlled by the authority figures that are supposed to provide and protect you. So if you have been emotionally abused, you're not guilty, even though you feel guilty, right? And there's not a correct way to feel about it. Emotions, remember, are like puppies, they have to pee, they are what they are, and they're morally neutral. It's how we behave out of them that can become destructive or sinful. So abuse isn't normal, but your feelings are. If you recognized yourself or someone in your close family structure in those signs of abuse, you might be in denial. But certainly it can be shocking as an adult to find yourself in a situation where you're even contemplating the word abuse. And it's natural. It's natural to hope that you're wrong about it. You may be also confused, you might be afraid, you might feel hopeless, you might feel shame, and if you've had those feelings over a long period of time, you can also see the behavioral and the physical side effects. You might have difficulty concentrating...

**0:07:17.5 SC:** You might be moody, you might have muscle tension, nightmares, a racing heartbeat, aches and pains. Long-term effects of emotional abuse can be as powerful as physical abuse. Over time, they contribute to low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, chronic pain, guilt, insomnia, social withdrawal, loneliness. And there's a lot of research that indicates that emotional

abuse can contribute to the development of chronic conditions, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia. Children who grow up after having experienced abuse, particularly long-term, they often engage in toxic behaviors as adults. They're more likely to develop eating disorders, headaches, heart disease, mental health issues, obesity, substance abuse disorders, but definitely there is guilt associated with the desire or the need to get away from the people who are oftentimes our families or the people that we are supposed to love the most and who are supposed to love us the most.

**0:08:28.4 SC:** When we have this sort of guilt about, particularly, the holidays that are supposed to be so happy and so warm and cozy and nurturing and all those things, if you have guilt because you don't want to be involved in that stuff, there may be a trauma bond. It could be just a matter of grief for some reason. Maybe a loved one has died and you're dreading the thought of putting on that happy face and yet you know there's gonna be an empty seat at the table and it's really raw for you. Maybe you have infertility issues and everybody's gonna have new babies and families and you just had your third miscarriage. Maybe you're single or divorced and you're sick of people asking when you're gonna get married or your children are gonna be with your ex. Maybe you're trying to quit drinking, or you have, and everybody there is gonna be drinking and over-drinking. Maybe the tons of food have made you anxious because you have difficulties, or your family has difficulty, with good relationships, good healthy relationships with food.

**0:09:30.0 SC:** Maybe there's some sort of tension or competition around spending money and who can give the best presents or who has the best house. All of that stuff is very stressful. And wanting to pull back, particularly in a self-preservation way, can really make us feel guilty, particularly if we have something called a trauma bond. What is a trauma bond? A trauma bond follows a cycle. It's predictable and it's characterized by an imbalance of power. So recognizing a trauma bond for what it is can help you break it. I asked a therapist one time, "Why in the world do I keep going back here? I feel guilty and then I start to re-engage and as soon as I do, it starts the cycle again." And she said that term trauma bond, "You have a trauma bond." And I thought, "What?" So there's an actual explanation for that. And there is. It's both biological and emotional. It's cyclic. It is a pattern. It's familiar and so it's hard to break.

**0:10:31.4 SC:** You feel tied to the person or the parent and you feel unable to get away or break away. This emotional attachment develops out of a repeated cycle of abuse, devaluation, positive reinforcement. So it's natural to develop a bond, particularly a parent who sometimes treats you with kindness and maybe effusive kindness. That's a reward part of the cycle. So a lot of abusive relationships begin with this shower of affection and assurances of love. They call that sometimes love bombing. And that shower of affection succeeds in drawing you back in because you remind yourself of the good parts of the relationship or the early days of the relationship and you think that they can be that person again or that they really are. Under the bad parts they're really good, under all of that. "And if I could just bring that out of them and help them, then they would be that way all the time." So here's my question. How has that worked out so far?

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**0:13:11.0 SC:** Trauma bonding can happen between a child and an abusive caregiver or some other adult, a hostage and kidnapper situation, leaders and members of cults and in domestic abuse. So trauma bonds look different depending on the type of relationship, but they tend to have two main characteristics. First of all, you form a deep emotional attachment with someone that causes you harm or is abusive. And this repeated cycle of abuse and positive reinforcement keeps you sucked in. Oftentimes you feel crazy, particularly if you have grown up in the church or in a Christian environment, even nominally, because we're taught over and over and over about charity and love and turning the other cheek and going the extra mile and all that stuff. And so when it's bad, we feel guilty for having the feelings of being manipulated and being abused. And when it's good, we deny the other person's fault in the abuse.

**0:14:11.0 SC:** We justify their actions. We blame ourselves for their abuse. We increasingly isolate from other support structures, often because the people that are abusing us either demand it overtly or subtly. They seek to create more and more dependence on them. And in so doing, they isolate us from other people. I'm thinking particularly of a situation where my sister was very, very young, 14 or 15, and she was in a relationship with an abusive man who was almost 10 years her senior. And she called my father to, I guess, rescue her. And he removed her from the home that she shared with this man and didn't tell anybody else in the family where she was. And forbid her from reaching out to me, her older sister, or our mother. And she was, like, missing. We couldn't find her. We didn't know where she was for like a week. And come to find out, she just jumped from the frying pan into the fire. And she thought dad, you know, she was still at that stage where she didn't know or understand...

**0:15:24.1 SC:** And I didn't either, but she particularly didn't know and understand how my dad operated and why she ended up with this abusive guy, right? Because she was familiar with that. That's the cycle of abuse where physically and emotionally and mentally the cycle is familiar and so we continue to repeat it. But the abuser often tries to isolate you from the very people who want to help and who can help because they want you dependent on them. And of course, if this kind of abuse happened to you as a child, you had nowhere to go. Most of us, we're told we should tell somebody if we're experiencing something terrible. But if it's a parent, we don't want them in trouble. We don't wanna get put in foster care or... Oh my gosh, there's just so much emotionally involved in detaching from these relationships and wounds. Our psychologists and therapists tell us that there are seven stages to trauma bonding, first is love bombing and then, that's how they gain trust. And they increase our dependency.

**0:16:26.8 SC:** Then criticism and devaluation, gaslighting, submission and resignation, loss of self and value and emotional dependence. Those are the stages. And of course, as I mentioned, this is a

cycle. And so trauma bonds depend on intermittent reinforcement so that we are sucked back in and fool ourselves or tell ourselves that they're really good people and we should feel terrible for having these suspicious emotions and thoughts about them. But in abusive relationships, the other person does occasionally treat you well. They might give you gifts or call you their soulmate or take you out or maybe help you relax, urge you to relax. In parent-child relationships, this is natural because we live with parents for so long. And of course, they're not gonna always be abusive. And oftentimes, they say they love you with their words while they're abusing you. And then they tell you it's your fault, that you're bad or that you deserved it or that you did something wrong to deserve this sort of punishment or this abuse.

**0:17:33.8 SC:** And when they treat you well, then the love, the feeling of love, begins to overshadow your fear of being abused further. And so you slowly start to regain this sense of trust. You might ignore or suppress memories of past abuse or past behavior until the cycle repeats again. And then you're caught blindsided or you feel it's your fault and you justify their behavior. But ultimately, trauma bonds depend on a power imbalance. And this is why they're so harmful, especially between employers and employees or parents and children or government and citizens. Any sort of power imbalance in which you are being abused can create a trauma bond. And this imbalance of power often makes us feel like they control us to the point where we don't even know how to resist or break free. And perhaps we don't even want to yet. We might still be in denial. So even if you manage to physically detach or physically leave the relationship, and I've shared several times that I left the State to get away from my father physically, you're still going to have difficulty breaking that bond.

**0:18:42.1 SC:** And sometimes you need outside help. You're going to feel incomplete or lost without them. And so you eventually go back because the cycle it's familiar and you don't know how to live without it yet. Here are some characteristics of trauma bonds: You feel unhappy and you may not even like the other person anymore, but you still feel unable to end it. When you do try to detach or leave, you feel physically and emotionally distressed. When you say you wanna leave or detach, they promise to change or they deny all culpability or responsibility completely, and they don't actually make any effort to change or they deny that they need to.

**0:19:22.0 SC:** You fixate or obsess on the good days, using those to prove to yourself that they actually really do care about you. You make excuses, you defend their behavior when other people point it out. You continue to trust them and you hope to change them, or hope that they will change. You protect them by keeping their behavior a secret, either from the larger community or other family members, and for me, this was an overt threat, "You better not tell anybody because look at my position in the community, I'm a police officer, we're family, we're blood that takes precedence over everything. Your loyalty remains with me." And those bonds linger even if the abuse happened a long time ago, and even if you're physically detached from them in some way, either maybe in college, or maybe you have your own home now, or maybe you've moved away, maybe you're divorced from them, but you're gonna find it difficult to stop thinking about them, even though they've hurt you, and you're gonna feel this overwhelming urge to reach out and try again.

**0:20:22.1 SC:** I used to play sad sappy love songs and apply them to my father. It was kind of sick, but I didn't know. I just longed to have his approval and his love, and was willing to almost do anything to get it. And especially if you're coming from a place that demands charity, you're gonna continue to go back unless and until you know that this is abuse, you know it's a trauma bond and that it's unhealthy and even uncharitable to you and your inner child, and your family and your

marriage, whatever.

**0:20:55.5 SC:** And that's why I'm using really strong language here and somewhat extreme cases, so that if you have some abuse or neglect in your background, that could be what's causing all this angst surrounding the holidays, and I want you to have tools so that you can stop the cycle. People don't choose to be abused and they can't help development of trauma bonds because they're driven by some pretty strong biological processes. You're probably familiar, if you've listened to me at all, with the fight or flight response, that's your body's automatic response to a perceived threat and people respond in four different ways: Fight, flight, freeze and fawn, and when you face abuse or fear the possibility of abuse, your brain already recognizes the distress and it starts to send warnings to the rest of your body through adrenaline and cortisol.

**0:21:50.5 SC:** All of that floods in and jump-starts your survival instinct, and it triggers emotional and physical tension. So we should thank our bodies, first of all, for its signals, and when the thoughts of abuse start to get too painful or too difficult, then you start focusing on the positive parts of your relationship and you ignore or block the rest, sometimes in a total denial that anything awful, any kind of neglect, any kind of abuse happened because, God forbid, we accuse our parents or even not accuse, but just come to an awareness of the reality of our lives, because often in other areas, they have created a place of privilege for us, either financially or a position in the community, and they remind us over and over about how lucky we are to have them, so we rationalize and we make excuses and we justify their behavior, particularly because we just don't wanna be wrong, we don't want to see the truth.

**0:22:48.9 SC:** And I'd like to make a qualification here because it's not that we're dog-piling on parents or even other people, it's just that we're coming to a realization and a consciousness of the truth of the situation so that we can start to protect ourselves. And so the inner child doesn't panic every single time we have to interact with those people on an ongoing basis. So our bodies get involved trying to signal to us that danger is imminent and our hormones play a part too. Apologies, gifts, physical affection, all of that that is offered by the abusers those serve as rewards and they help reinforce that rush of relief and they trigger dopamine, they prompt the release of oxytocin, another feel-good hormone that further strengthens the bond.

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**0:23:49.7 S1:** You are listening to The Sacred Healing 12:30 Podcast, because love heals.

**0:24:00.9 SC:** Losing it more often? Or lost yourself entirely? Binging on food, alcohol or your phone? Feeling exhausted, anxious, angry, scared? You've done all the novenas, all the consecrations, adoration, daily mass, Bible study, therapy and deliverance prayers. Why has none of it given you permanent relief? Does God not care? He does care, but you can't feel it because you need to be cherished, you need to be healed. In Sacred Healing 12:30, I teach you how to live authentically from the holistic love of God and the power of Mark 12:30, heart, soul, mind and strength. I teach you how to be cherished, I teach you how to guard your peace, I teach you how to love authentically, I teach you how to heal deeply, I teach you how to feel better because you can only love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, if they are healing and whole in Him. The love you were made for is only a mouse click away, go to [biblestudyevangelista.com](http://biblestudyevangelista.com) to stop the emotional vomit and start experiencing the miracle of living authentically from the healing love of God in your heart, soul, mind, and body.

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**0:25:30.1 SC:** If all this talk of abuse and trauma bond has got you panicking because you're seeing yourself or another person in this kind of situation, there's no need for panic. The only reason I'm even bringing it up is because so many of our inner children are in distress and I want you to understand why, first of all, and secondly, to begin feeling empowered to take care of your inner child, to put some boundaries in place, that's all we have to do, we don't have to cut off contact completely necessarily, sometimes we do. If it is truly abuse that's actually dangerous, either emotionally or mentally or physically, then we do need to cut off contact, we need to maybe take some stronger steps, but in a lot of our situations, it's not dramatic, it's just that we really need some relief and we really need permission to put those boundaries in place to give ourselves the relief we need and the space we need and the detachment that we need, that the saints speak of and the Church teaches, so that we're not in this constant place of lack of peace.

**0:26:37.1 SC:** So we've looked at some biological reasons for why these trauma bonds get formed, we looked at the fact that they come from a power imbalance, which was especially true in my case. We've looked at the cyclic nature of a trauma bond, and we've looked at some of the signs of abuse. So how do we break these kinds of bonds? How do we get this detachment? Well, that's part of what our pop quizzes and our repeating patterns are meant to help us with. Our brains and our bodies already recognize the emotional and the chemical highs and lows of the cycle, so they are huge signals for us in where the anxiety and the fear and the issues lie, the people with whom they are attached. And I know it sounds trite, but recognizing the existence of abuse and trauma bonds is a first step.

**0:27:31.1 SC:** So honestly, you can stop the guilt. We're gonna talk about this, I promise, in the passage on Matthew 18, but the guilt keeps you believing that you cause the abuse or you brought it on yourself, and that makes it harder to start to get some detachment and to get some health and growth in those relationships and some boundaries, put boundaries in place, especially Christian guilt, right? You deserve peace. And so we learn to replace that guilt and self-criticism and blame with the truth of God's Word, and that helps us stand in our identity as God's child.

**0:28:10.7 SC:** Do I need to cut off contact completely? We'll look at that in great detail when we look at the passage on Matthew 18, but if you do decide that it is truly dangerous to you, your children, your marriage, or if you just decide you don't wanna put up with it anymore, or if you just decide you need some space to heal and to sort of get some clarity, do it. Do it. You don't have to do it forever, just because we may create space temporarily or stop communication, it doesn't mean we have to do it forever, but if you decide to do that, that's what disrupts the cycle. Stopping communication disrupts the cycle, it keeps them from being able to pull you back in.

**0:28:50.9 SC:** And that gives you space and time to heal and to get stronger in the truth of God's word and your identity in Christ and in your boundaries. Now, if you co-parent, this might not be possible, but you can establish a plan to maintain only the necessary contact, and you can create physical distance, and perhaps that means not spending the holidays with these people, set aside those great expectations and just see the truth of it. And go with that and just let it be what it is, but work with the truth of what it is, not in your denial and in your hopes and dreams and expectations of how it has to be or how it should be, or how it could be, work with what it is, look at the truth please, and stop being a victim. Stop being a victim, you are responsible for your life, your

decisions, the quality of your life and the quality of your relationships.

**0:29:52.5 SC:** We teach people how to treat us. And love is respect. If they don't respect you, it's because we've taught them not to respect us, and if they don't respect us, they don't really love us. Now, I'm gonna give you some tools for your navigation-of-the-holidays tool kit. You might call it a survival guide, but the first step is to predict what's probably gonna happen, predict what's going to happen based on your past experiences, what could go wrong even with all of your preparation? What are your common triggers or those things that tweak you? And try to predict them and change things up a little bit. If you know it's going to happen based on previous interactions, and you also know the cycle of trauma-bonding, then you can see that this stuff is predictable and if it's predictable, why do you keep stepping into the same path of the oncoming train knowing that you're gonna be obliterated again and again and again?

**0:30:56.4 SC:** Now, I realize I'm making this very simplistic. You might be in a relationship with someone else who has trauma bonds and they keep sucking you into that same dynamic that's not even in your family, but it still creates anxiety for you. Yes. It's simplistic to say, "Detach. Just don't go." I understand that. I'm just... I have already qualified this whole episode by saying I am super simplifying here just to get you thinking along these lines, but when someone gives you a gift, do you throw it out in the yard, in the elements? Do you cast your pearls among swine? Your peace is your gift from God. It is your gift. Are you gonna guard it? Or are you going to throw it out to the elements? To those who will trample it under feet, to those who don't care and who don't value your peace. You have to value your peace enough to be able to put some boundaries in place and stop accusing other people of making you feel miserable.

**0:32:00.1 SC:** You are allowing it. I think it was Dr. Phil who coined the phrase that "the past is the best predictor of the future", and the reason you're already feeling anxious about the holidays is because you already know how it's gonna go down. You have lived through this so many times. So use the prediction then to help you, number two, prepare. Prepare for what you know is gonna go wrong or what probably will go wrong, and start now brainstorming ways to preempt them, to get in front of it. Thinking back over your life, you know that some things are probably not ever going to change, and even if they can, or if they might, what makes you think you're gonna be able to do that for 'em?

**0:32:42.0 SC:** What makes you think you're gonna be their Holy Spirit? And God forbid, if you're actively, purposely, consciously trying to make that change happen because you are truly stepping into the role of controller, which is, that's actually demonic. Control and force are not of God. God doesn't do that, he doesn't control and force, He invites, and He is the one who convinces. The scriptures tell us that that's the role of the Holy Spirit, so back off trying to play God and just go with what you know is probably gonna happen based on previous interactions, my usual mantra is "plan for the worst and hope for the best", because we do hope for the best, but I don't walk into situations like that anymore expecting things to be different, because [chuckle] I have learned.

**0:33:36.1 SC:** I have learned, number one, I can't change people, and number two, we are creatures of habit, and until the Holy Spirit does a work in someone of truth and illumination, they are not going to see what I see and they're not gonna feel what I feel, and it's up to me to put good boundaries in place for myself and protect my peace, the peace of my family, the peace of my marriage, the peace of my relationship with God, because the truth is, in so many of those situations, they ended up being occasions of sin for me. I knew that I was walking into a battlefield



and I was ready to fight, and so I was spoiling for the fight, knowing that it was gonna come and then I'm angry, I'm defensive automatically...

**0:34:16.9 SC:** The smallest thing might cause me to lash out and then I'm confessing a lack of charity. Why do we do this to ourselves? Because of trauma bonds, because of biology, because of emotional abuse, because we truly do love them and want things to be different, and we truly do expect something different, but the problem is that we love those people and those situations more than we love and have charity for ourselves and we, as a matter of our relationship with God, owe ourselves and our inner child, at least as much charity as we would extend to anyone else. Anything else is sin. So we predict and then we prepare emotionally, mentally, physically, spiritually. This is why I said some of y'all need some one-on-one, so you can get some perspective from a Catholic point of view, a Christian point of view on boundaries and your physical symptoms and your negative, compulsive thoughts or the thoughts that drag you back into the abuse cycle, but for goodness sakes, if you're having a panic attack already about the holidays, please look at just not attending, put your great expectations aside and just go with the truth of how you feel and what you know based on past experience, and put a plan in place.

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[music]

**0:36:22.1 SC:** There's a bunch of Ps in here, but once we have predicted from the past experiences what is likely to occur in the future, we can prepare, and most of the time that really begins mentally and emotionally. You start preparing, first of all, by accepting the reality of what is, not what you expect or what you hope for, but the reality and the truth of what is. This was one of Jesus's greatest criticisms of the Pharisees, is that they lived in unreality, and in fact, that's the definition of mental illness, is living in a non-reality, if you're living in these great expectations, you're living in mental illness. You're trying to convince yourself that it's gonna be different, and the truth is, it probably won't.

**0:37:09.0 SC:** It definitely won't if you don't change, if you don't start to do something different, it's not gonna change. And they say that that's the definition of insanity, is doing the same thing over and over, expecting a different result. And I know you've heard that before, so we're predicting and then we're preparing mentally, emotionally, spiritually, physically. Then we need to put a plan in place. What is the plan? And here is where you can let charity rule, and God. I like to give people a couple of chances, so I might show up at the holiday party, the Thanksgiving dinner, the Christmas celebration, I might show up there, but if once, twice, something happens, that is rude, distasteful...

**0:37:56.0 SC:** Manipulative, at this point in my life, I don't even call it out, especially 'cause some of these situations, it's not gonna be helpful or constructive to do that, I will already have made plans for a quick exit, it's probably gonna happen, so, what is my time limit? I might only spend an hour because that is emotionally all of the energy I have to be able to devote to these sorts of

situations, maybe it's two hours for you, and that's if everybody's behaving, we had my grandmother's funeral recently, and I mean, I knew what was likely to happen, and luckily it didn't, it turned out to be an actually a pretty decent sort of situation, and I even called my sister later and I said, "Man, you know, so and so and so and so they behaved so well, I bet that they totally had a melt down as soon as we left the funeral," and of course, that's exactly what happened. So they were on their best behavior, at least in public, but then afterward everything degenerated and of course, they were closer to her than to me, so she had to deal with that fall out, but she's learning how to do that too.

**0:39:01.0 SC:** I'm so proud of her, I am so proud of my sister. One day I'll tell you some of that whole story, but I am so proud of her because she's learning to put boundaries in place and learning to guard her peace, and learning to allow herself to have a good time. Now, I say this in one-on-one consultations a lot, if it is a true situation of abuse and trauma-bonding, you almost cannot be too drastic in how much you detach, especially in the beginning, it is so important to give yourself the mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical space that you need to heal and get stronger in the love that God has for you, so that you can then extend true charity to your neighbor, and that involves good boundaries.

**0:39:51.3 SC:** In the beginning then, detachment is... Often it feels extreme, it feels extreme because of the trauma bond, it feels extreme because of the abuse and the cycle of abuse and the imbalance of power, if it is a mild case, maybe the person doesn't... They really and truly don't know they're doing it, and they would change if you shared it with them. And of course, you have to sort of experiment with that, give them a chance or two to find out exactly what kind of relationship is this, and then over time, once you have detached and you've given yourself and your inner child space to heal and to grow stronger, then perhaps you can move into spending more time with that person.

**0:40:31.9 SC:** It's all relative. And it's all a process. All I'm trying to do right now is just get you to think along these lines. And even if it's just people that annoy you, you only have enough emotional and spiritual and intellectual energy that you can invest in certain things, particularly if you're introverted. So you need to predict and you need to prepare, and you need to plan. What is your plan? What's your exit plan? What's your plan for that so-and-so person that always is manipulative? Or is always critical? Or whatever, plan for that, then protect yourself, protect yourself and your loved ones, your inner child from those inevitable issues and confrontations and snide remarks sometimes that you know are gonna happen.

**0:41:22.9 SC:** It might mean you have to have some kind of difficult heart-to-heart before you get together with someone, or it might mean that you shift your priorities and opt out of potentially harmful situations or peace-sucking situations. Here's a really mild example, my parents divorced when I was 13, and every single Thanksgiving and every single birthday and every single Christmas turned into a tug of war, we had to be at that house and then that house, and then not just the parents individually, but also the grandparents individually and we could never be stationary on the day of the great celebration when I really just wanted to spend it with my family, my children and my husband, and every single time, it was constantly this guilt and manipulation for whose house are we going to first and how long did we spend there? And did we actually eat there or did we just spend a little time and leave?

**0:42:14.4 SC:** Well, what choice do we have when you're expecting us to be at six different places

on one day, and then making us feel guilty if we don't spend the same amount of time and eat the same amount of food at every single place? So I just decided one day, "Here's my plan. I ain't doing that anymore. From now on, I'm not doing either, I'm not going to any of them. This is my family and my time and my marriage and my children and my Christmas and my Thanksgiving too, and that's how I wanna spend it? No. I wanna spend it the way it should be spent in peace," so I started in small ways and in drastic ways, to some other people, I started protecting my peace, I started protecting my family and on the word of family, I wanna share something with you that came back to my attention this week that I think some of us need to hear again, this reality brought great, great comfort to me as I was trying to detach, for the first time, emotionally from especially my father, but even my mom in some situations, I mean she was the safe place for me, but I also got some guilt from her when I spent time with him or just...

**0:43:20.3 SC:** You know how parents are, they don't even mean to be sometimes. At the foot of Mount Sinai, when God instructed Moses to sprinkle the blood of atonement over the people, and in the Old Testament tabernacle, when the blood of the atoning sacrifice was poured out at the base of the altar, those were signs that God and the people shared the same blood, they were family. So that the Psalmist can say in 20:17, "Though my father and mother forsake me, The Lord will take care of me." Your truest family is not the blood people that you grew up with or from whence you physically came, your truest family is the angels, the saints, your church family, the Christian family, the family that you're creating, that's what you focus on, that's what you protect, that's what you spend the emotional and spiritual and intellectual and physical energy in nurturing. And that sprinkling of blood was literal in the Old Testament, Jesus affirmed it and brought it forward into the church by saying, "This is the blood of my new covenant."

**0:44:47.1 SC:** You are now part of a spiritual family that takes precedent over that physical family, Jesus said so, "unless you deny your father and mother, then you cannot be part of the kingdom", and He's speaking in these extreme terms, much like I am throughout the show, in order to get us thinking about the priority, those people who don't care about you and your family and your marriage and your kids, or you and your peace, they don't deserve your time and your energy, and when we are expending all that time and energy trying to please other people, particularly when we have trauma bonds and abuse, that's when the inner child is just totally freaked out, that's when she says, "Am I seriously gonna have to do this again?" And that's why we have the physical symptoms, that's why we're so anxious, that's why the inner child was so miserable in some of those visualizations because we have repeatedly over and over and over again continued the abuse by allowing it and continued those trauma bond cycles by allowing them and not providing for the inner child, not protecting the inner child, and when we do that over time our bodies step in and say, "You know what, if you're not gonna do this, I'll do it for you..."

**0:46:08.7 SC:** You're too tired, you're too sick, you can't even go to the Thanksgiving dinner because you are physically unable and now you have a real excuse." Wouldn't it just be more honest, wouldn't it be better and more healthy for you to see this ahead of time? To predict it? To prepare for it? To put a plan in place to protect yourself and the things and the people that you love? And to be proactive in guarding your peace, the peace that is the gift from God, to every one of His children? So part of your plan is extra nurturing before and after these events that you know are gonna stress you out, maybe self-care, which I hate that word, but at least we all know what it means, and channel up those inner resources and fuel them and put them where they are going to guard your peace the most for you and yourself and your family, and nurture the spiritual relationship and the spiritual family that is yours. And then finally, we have to forgive ourselves and

allow ourselves the peace in advance for allowing this stuff in the past, both for ourselves, for our families, for our kids. Sometimes we're the ones who are forcing our families and kids to do the stuff that none of them want to do, and we don't ourselves, but we force it out of a sense of obligation and trauma-bonding, and abuse.

**0:47:27.7 SC:** So forgive them, but don't re-engage, forgive yourself and allow yourself and your inner child the peace that you need. Peace is the guiding principle, it is your gift. Protect it.

**0:47:49.0 SC:** Thank you for listening to the Sacred Healing 12:30 Podcast. Find out more at [biblestudyevangelista.com](http://biblestudyevangelista.com), because love heals.

