



BE THE BODY

SERVE

Why Do I Do What I Do For Others?

The exercise that follows is simple, but not easy. You will be asked to consider your most recent interactions with people. *Why did you say what you said? Why did you do what you did? Why did you refrain from doing what you could have done?*

You said a kind word to a colleague at work.

Why?

Was this to encourage him or to impress him? If it was to impress him, why are you concerned with what he thinks of you?

You corrected your daughter when she left the light on?

Why?

Was this to teach her responsibility, or was it about your personal anxiety over money?

There are three stages to this first of two exercises:

- Brainstorming—Identify your actions and inactions toward others over the past two weeks.
- Heartstorming—Uncover the heart behind these actions and inactions.
- Entrusting—Discuss what you discovered with God.

To do this well, you must be thoughtful, prayerful, and daring. As always, use the pages that follow as a guide; but don't restrict yourself to the pages. If important insights or ideas take you off the page, you're encouraged to "color outside the lines."

After this initial assessment you will explore holistic solutions for serving others by examining "What's Underneath" their needs.

First Stage Brainstorming

On the page that follows, answer the following two questions as many times as possible:

What “loving actions” have you taken toward people in your relational world over the past two weeks?

What “loving actions” could you have taken, but held back, toward people in your relational world over the past two weeks?

Use the following categories and examples to generate your thoughts:

Serving Someone

*Examples: I cleaned the house for my wife on Monday because I knew she was tired.
I went with my small group to serve at the soup kitchen this week.*

Investing in Someone Relationally

*Examples: I invited my neighbors over to dinner Saturday evening.
I avoided meeting with a friend who was seeking counsel about her marital problems.*

Encouraging, Affirming, or Speaking Kind Words to Someone

*Examples: I praised my son for his good report card.
I didn't congratulate my co-worker on her recent promotion.*

Showing Kindness to Someone

*Examples: I stopped to offer help to the person whose car was stalled.
I didn't use a calm or considerate tone of voice when sharing my feedback with my boss.*

Saying “Yes” to Someone’s Invitation/Request

*Examples: I went with my roommate to her art show, even though I didn't feel like going.
I didn't offer to pick up my friend's father from the airport.*

Putting Someone’s Preferences Above Your Own

*Examples: I invited my in-laws to stay for the whole week, even though I didn't want them to.
I didn't let my friend choose where we went to lunch on Thursday.*

If you find it helpful, think through different relational circles in your life:

Family
Extended Family
Friends
Work
School
Neighbors
Church
Unknown (store clerks, drivers on road, etc.)



I Did...

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I Didn't...

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Second Stage Heartstorming

Of the actions or inactions you listed, circle the six that either surprise or trouble you the most. In the space provided below, thoughtfully and prayerfully ask yourself why you did or didn't do the described action. Continue to ask and answer "Why?" until you are at the deepest-known motive you can identify.

Example:

Action/Inaction: I called an old friend and wished him a happy birthday.

Why?

➤ It's been a while. I wanted to talk with him.

Why?

➤ I wanted him to know what I am doing now.

Why?

➤ I wanted him to know of my recent success.

Why?

➤ I wanted to be impressive.

Your Actions:

Action/Inaction:

Why?

➤

Why?

➤

Why?

➤

Why?

➤

Action/Inaction:

Why?

➤

Why?

➤

Why?

➤

Why?

➤



Action/Inaction:

Why? ➤
Why? ➤
Why? ➤
Why? ➤

Action/Inaction:

Why? ➤
Why? ➤
Why? ➤
Why? ➤

Action/Inaction:

Why? ➤
Why? ➤
Why? ➤
Why? ➤

Action/Inaction:

Why? ➤
Why? ➤
Why? ➤
Why? ➤



Themes

Read over each of the six actions and inactions. What themes do you notice? Are there common motives underneath each of these actions or inactions, or are each of the six different? What themes are encouraging? What themes are convicting?

Theme:

Thoughts and Comments:

Theme:

Thoughts and Comments:

Theme:

Thoughts and Comments:

Theme:

Thoughts and Comments:



Third Stage Entrusting

Talk to God about any themes or observations you have made.

Ultimately, we cannot authentically Love People if we do not first Love God at our core. Our part is to openly confess to God what is currently true about our hearts and to entrust ourselves to him for transformation. If we are to truly be *transformed* and liberated to truly love people, then we *must* invite God into the process.

Spend time now inviting God into your journey and sharing with him any insights you've gained so far. Did you discover a love of recognition and approval at your center? Confess this to God and ask him to begin to change your heart. Did you discover a love of money? Talk to God openly about why you feel so driven towards padding your bank account and listen for anything he might want to share with you. Did you discover good motives and drive? Thank God for the good work he has already done in your heart.

Use the space below to journal your insights.

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What's Underneath

Most of us, when we first consider the needs of the people around us, see them from one angle. We see the struggling marriage, but we miss the abusive past fueling the relational hardship. Or we see the financial struggle, but we miss the addiction influencing the person's stewardship. We might call the first need the *presenting* problem. Underneath the presenting problem, there may be a host of other needs. Most of life's challenges are not one-dimensional.

Here you will be asked to take the previous assessment to the next level by considering those situations through the lens of holistic serving. What other needs (physical or spiritual) might be related to the presenting needs? In truth, you may or may not know, so you'll want to be careful about drawing hard conclusions. Considering what may be under the surface not only inspires greater understanding, but also sets you up for a greater ability to serve in a way to truly make a difference.

There are three stages to this exercise:

- Holistic Needs - Looking underneath the presenting need.
- My Limitations - Recognizing areas of your own limitations in meeting holistic needs.
- My Network - Actively engage your network in the body of Christ to meet holistic needs.

First Stage Holistic Needs

In this First Stage, consider a sample scenario and then consider the real-life situations you identified in the the previous assessment..

Sample Scenario: A childhood friend is in the midst of an extremely difficult marriage. The situation is fairly complicated, and it appears to be hardening. He or she is deeply in debt and barely talking. You recall years ago when this friend's parents went through a divorce, and you know bits and pieces about the abusive stepfather who took the place of your friend's real dad. You also suspect your friend may be masking pain by escaping to addictive behaviors. It troubles you to see history repeating itself, but you care very much for this friend and would like to do something to help.

What physical needs do you see in this scenario? What questions can you ask to gain greater understanding?

What spiritual needs do you see in this scenario? What questions can you ask to gain greater understanding?

How might the person's physical and spiritual needs be related?



Looking back at your responses to the previous assessment write your own real-life scenarios as you experience them in the world around you. Then answer the questions below to assess holistic needs.

Scenario 1:

What physical needs do you see in this scenario? What questions can you ask to gain greater understanding?

What spiritual needs do you see in this scenario? What questions can you ask to gain greater understanding?

How might the person's physical and spiritual needs be related?



Scenario 2:

What physical needs do you see in this scenario? What questions can you ask to gain greater understanding?

What spiritual needs do you see in this scenario? What questions can you ask to gain greater understanding?

How might the person's physical and spiritual needs be related?



Second Stage My Limitations

This Second Stage is designed to help you recognize areas of your own limitations in meeting the holistic needs of those around you. For each of the scenarios above, you are asked to distinguish between: 1) needs that you are *able* to meet on your own, and 2) needs that you are *unable* to meet given your current limitations of time, resources, giftedness, etc.

Scenario 1:

What needs are you likely *able* to meet on your own?

What needs are you *unable* to meet on your own?

Scenario 2:

What needs are you likely *able* to meet on your own?

What needs are you *unable* to meet on your own?



Third Stage My Network

This Third Stage is designed to help you consider how you might actively engage your network in the larger body of Christ to meet the holistic needs in the world around you. What resources are available through those you know, your church, or other helpful next steps?

Who do you know in the body of Christ whom you may be able to partner with in meeting the needs you have identified? What is their gifting or experience that makes you consider involving them?

| | Person(s) | Gifting | Experience |
|------------|-----------|---------|------------|
| Scenario 1 | | | |
| Scenario 2 | | | |

What resources or ministries are available through your local church or other organizations that you could partner with in meeting the needs you identified? If helpful, click through your church's website to familiarize yourself with various offerings.

| | Ministries and Opportunities |
|------------|------------------------------|
| Scenario 1 | |
| Scenario 2 | |

