

CHAPTER 17

Eliminating Pain And Suffering

God: Okay. Start the seminar now. I will take the part of the audience.

Me: Good evening, my friends. I am Peniel. I am very pleased that you have come this evening. I sincerely hope that we all obtain a great deal of useful wisdom that shall help us tremendously in our daily lives. I offer this workshop free to all of you because I love all of you. This workshop is dedicated to the greater glory of God. It is entitled “Eliminating Pain And Suffering.” Are there any questions before I start?

Yes, I have a question.

I just knew You would!

I'm not real clear on the meanings of the words pain and suffering. I know that you usually have very specialized meanings for some words. To clarify exactly what they mean, please give us your intended meaning.

I'm glad that You asked. According to Webster's, pain is taken from the Greek word poine, which meant payment. Webster's primary definition is Punishment. Other definitions are: Usually localized physical suffering associated with bodily disorder (as with a disease or an injury), and The basic bodily sensation induced by a noxious stimulus, received by naked nerve endings, characterized by physical discomfort and typically leading to evasive action.

Webster's says that suffering comes from the Latin root sufferre, which means to bear. Webster's primary definition is: To submit to or be forced to endure. Another definition is: To endure the mental state of distress. Is everyone with me so far?

Yes.

For my own purposes, I make this major distinction between the two: pain deals with physical things, and suffering deals with emotional things. Heat, if it is too intense, will cause pain. The burn scars may make you ashamed and you will suffer embarrassment. Do you all get the difference that I mean between the two?

Yes.

I have some very specialized meanings for these two words that are covered in a workshop on understanding. I shall not recover all of that information here. It is enough that we all recognize that we know what pain and suffering is in our own personal lives, for we have each experienced it in no uncertain terms. It doesn't matter what exact definitions we use in this workshop to define these two terrible things, let's just sum them up and call it feeling bad. Whatever we consider against our choices of what we should like to feel, that's part of it. It's all bad.

How did it all get started?

As God created Adam and Eve, they experienced no pain or suffering. God did not deem it good for man, as he is supposed to be, to endure pain or suffering. It is not within OUR natural order of things.

Isn't there some evil that cannot be stopped?

Perhaps there is some pain and suffering that God has determined that you WILL have to endure, when the time for it comes; perhaps it is his will. It is not within our ability to modify the will of God or prevent or alter this particular pain or suffering. Therefore, it is best—even though we may not understand this. Since this pain and suffering—which we shall call inevitable by the will of God—is good for us and should not be changed, we shall not discuss it here.

Okay. But where does most of our pain come from?

WE cause, allow, create, invent, make, or set up about ninety percent of all of the pain and suffering that we endure, unless we are already perfected in our love of God and fellow man.

What about the rest?

The other ten percent you do not cause. I will call all influences and powers, such as Satan and demons, evil. Of that ten percent, nine-point-nine percent is caused by evil. That leaves only about one tenth of one percent that is actually the inevitable will of God that you must endure.

Why does God decide that we will endure even a little pain?

Let us first speak of the vast majority of your pain and suffering—that ninety percent that you yourself are instigating. WHY? Why would a sane person cause himself such anguish? Think! You are causing—or at least allowing—the vast majority of your own current pain and suffering. And, subconsciously, you are aware of this fact. What possible reason would you or your subconscious have for setting you up for such trouble? Consider this question for a moment before we continue. Ponder this and see if you can come up with a reasonable answer—if what I say is true.

We don't know. It seems crazy, yet we're pretty sure that we do bring much of it upon ourselves, just as you have said.

Let us explore together the reasons through some typical examples. We'll look at others and perhaps some light shall shine through onto our own actions and motives.

Okay, give us an example.

Here's the first situation: Jeff goes out drinking with several of his buddies. They get a little drunk, and then Jeff pulls a real cute stunt. In this crowded bar, Jeff finds the biggest, ugliest, meanest looking monster of a man that he can and proceeds to pour a beer all over his head, for no apparent reason.

That seemed like a real dumb thing to do.

Now, I am sure that you understand that Jeff is in the process of causing himself quite a bit of suffering. He was a little drunk, but he's not stupid. I ask you: Why did he do this?

I don't know. It seems like there wasn't any reason to do it.

This much I have surely learned about human behavior and motivation: all actions of a human being that are voluntary are done with a reason, and each time they are believed to be in the individual's best interests at the time. And ninety-nine percent of a person's actions are done for the same reason: the satisfaction of a particular need. What possible need or needs do you think Jeff is going satisfy through his choice of this action?

Probably the need to get killed!

Let me give you a short list of some of the basic psychological needs: Acknowledgment, Attention, Acceptance, Appreciation, Admiration, Forgiveness, and Compassion. Do you see how Jeff is setting up to get some of these needs fulfilled through this action of his? There should be no doubt that Jeff is going to get a lot of attention from this act. First of all, he's got the monster's attention. He's also got the attention of his buddies and the attention of everyone in the whole bar. As a matter of a fact, it got real quiet for a minute as everyone just looked at Jeff. He was the star of the moment and was in the spotlight.

As you can imagine, the outcome of Jeff's actions was going to be a busted face. Naturally—he didn't pick out some wimpy little guy that he might have a chance at beating in a fair fight. He picked out a Mac Truck to fight. He obviously wanted this guy to beat him up! So, Jeff gets what he wants—a rearranged face; it's all cut and bruised, and will be this way for several weeks. Oh joy; just think of how much attention Jeff will get from everyone that he sees. They'll ask him all about it and he can recount the story for hours on end. Lots of attention. And then he'll get plenty of compassion. "Oh, you poor thing—does it hurt?" But the key to his particular choice of actions is forgiveness. This is the outstanding need that underlies his choice of actions here.

We don't see how that fits in with what he did.

You see, his buddies HAD to come to his rescue and get hit a few times in the ensuing brawl. And now, for weeks, Jeff can go to one of his buddies and say, "Eric, man, I'm really sorry for what I did. It was really stupid, man, and I'm sorry that you got hurt defending me." And then, if he wants to, he can add, "And I'm

sorry that I'm such a drunk. I'm sorry that I'm a pain in the butt. I'm sorry that I embarrassed you. I'm sorry..." He can be sorry about a lot of things. And if he doesn't get enough forgiveness from Eric, he's got four other guys that were there also that he can go apologize to. He can milk this for weeks, and if it gets old, he can do something else really harmful and stupid and start all over.

You know, I've known people who did just that kind of crazy stuff every once in a while. And he'd go around apologizing over and over until he drove everyone crazy.

Do you see just how well planned this little game was. Ingenious! And this is how our subconscious mind works. Of course you couldn't ever convince Jeff that this was why he did it. He says that he was drunk and just did it. But we know better. We wouldn't confront Jeff with this truth, for that would expose his game; and he couldn't have that.

Is that all there is to why he did it?

It goes much further and deeper than this, for our subconscious mind is a master of games; yet this should be enough explanation to see a lot of what's really going on. This much is for certain: Jeff's suffering was his own doing in this instance. He caused it; he honestly thought that it was best for him at the time and that he needed it! And this is our big mistake.

What mistake?

We really don't need this suffering. We don't really need any of this pain that we are currently enduring. If we are causing it because we think that it is good for us—and we are mistaken and won't even acknowledge this—we're hurting ourselves needlessly. We need none of this world's pain, suffering, disease, humiliation, or sickness. We can get our needs met perfectly well through other avenues and means. And the other ways do not cause any others or us any undue harm, pain, or suffering. Why cause suffering if it is not good or needed?

I don't know. Why are we like this?

The problem lies in our false beliefs. We mistakenly believe that this is the best and easiest way to get our needs met. We have learned most of this through example.

Like how?

I know a person who I believe is a hypochondriac. I feel great pity for her and her family, not so much because she endures a lot of suffering, but because she needlessly causes herself such pain and suffering. And as you can imagine, her children have similar problems as well. They learned through her example that this is the way to get attention and to get much of what they want. The tragedy is that there is so much real pain and suffering that they are causing to themselves and others; and through their examples they are making others more susceptible to this game. I pray for her and all like her that have adopted damaging games such as these because they knew no other way to receive the love that they desperately need. Have mercy on all of them, Lord; they know not what they are doing.

Can these things be learned in other ways?

Yes. Let me give you another example of how we might learn these bad habits. Dad likes to come home most every day and tell what a rotten day he has had to get mom to say, "Ah, you poor dear." He receives the attention and compassion he needs.

And mom likes to burn the toast in the morning so dad will complain about it. She thinks, *At least this way he knows that I exist in the morning.* And she can say, "Oh, I'm so sorry. I've burned the toast again, dear."

Sounds like My house.

Dad forgives her, just as he does every morning that they carry out this rehearsed ritual. Dad thinks that she must be dingy because she can't make toast without burning it. He doesn't understand that she **MUST** burn the toast, or else he will just ignore her and she won't get her morning forgiveness from him that she finds so important. If only dad could learn to give mom forgiveness in other ways and pay a little attention to her in the morning, mom wouldn't have to burn his toast. Doesn't he ever notice that she doesn't

burn anyone else's toast? No— he's too busy with the morning paper. And she doesn't even understand why she burns his toast.

WHY ARE WE ALL SO BLIND? These little games are saying, "HEY, I'm a person too! Give me a little of what I need!" But, no, we will not see. We refuse to admit our own deception; we will keep playing these same games and causing our own suffering—UNTIL...?

All that we really have to do is to watch our own lives carefully and examine these little games and inconsistencies in our actions. Then we will be able to see what is being done and asked through our actions, if we wish to.

What is the key ingredient to this difficulty?

Adam and Eve, before the Fall, had the same basic needs as we do now, except the need for forgiveness. And this is the key to why we do many things that we were not intended to do. It appears to me, as I have watched many people closely for several years, that most of us have this obsession with setting up reasons so that we can ask and get forgiveness from another. We say, "I'm sorry," through our words and actions most of the time. WHY? Well, we know that if we act like we are really sorry and then ask for forgiveness, the other person HAS to forgive us. It's one of the rules! To do otherwise is to break the rules; and if you break the rules everyone will chastise you. You MUST forgive someone if he sincerely asks you for your forgiveness—at least that's what the rules say.

So, how do we stop playing this game when we finally decide to?

It's easy, but not simple. You must find out why you play. And I will tell you now—you play so that you can WIN. And in this game, to win means to get your need met, whether it is the need for attention or forgiveness or whatever. You must find a way to still win without PLAYING the old harmful game. If it is the need for attention and forgiveness, you don't have to get your face busted and your friends' faces busted in the process. You can find alternative ways to get your needs met. We are all human, until our own individual perfection, so we shall continue to have these same needs. We should find non-hurting ways to get what we need.

This will improve our lives and lower drastically the amount of pain and suffering that we currently are enduring. When we can get most all of our needs met without having to resort to causing pain or suffering, then we will eradicate most of that ninety percent of pain and suffering that we are now enduring.

Can this really be done?

There are many people around, just like you, that experience much less pain and suffering than you currently do. Why do you think this is? Are they very lucky, or does God love them more than you? No, for this is not reasonable. The major differences between you and those like you who endure very little pain and suffering are in attitude and beliefs, but MAINLY in the ways that they have learned to get their needs met. I shall not discuss here the details of the way a person would go about overcoming these problems, for that is the subject of one of the seminars that I teach. It cannot be amply or correctly illustrated in the time that we have here. If you are interested in this seminar, contact me later.

Tell us at least something about how to overcome the evil we do to ourselves.

I will discuss what is the general outline for overcoming these harmful habits and games. They are:

Acknowledge that they exist.

Identify the specific games you're playing that are causing you trouble, pain, and suffering.

Examine the game or habit to see what the prize of that game is.

Identify the benefits and costs of the game.

Decide whether you wish to stop, modify, or continue this game.

Discuss your findings openly with an appropriate counselor.

Establish some goals (like finding alternate ways to win without the same costs).

Set up a workable plan to accomplish your established goals.

Take ACTION, remain consistent, and persevere.

Review your goals, and establish new ones when these are met.

These are the general guidelines and steps for modifying the games that are causing this big chunk of your current suffering.

How do we win the game we play and get the prize?

I'm sure that you realize that there are many possible different ways to win and many different prizes to get. An example is the prize of attention. Rather than being a pain in someone's side and getting your attention this way, you could give them a sincere compliment. This would not only get you the prize of the attention that you wish, it would also make the other person feel better. I'm not saying to be phony or make something up, just open your eyes and look for the good in another—you will find plenty! All people are really good at heart and there is much about each to be complimented sincerely. Why pick on another and point out their faults if they won't learn from your reproach or change and become better? Instead, compliment them on some good aspect that you see in them. In addition to receiving the attention that you are seeking, you will spread love and joy all around. Great are the benefits of not causing pain and suffering through your games, but rather, sincerely spreading love and joy through being your natural self. Try it—you'll like it.

I just can't picture Myself doing that.

Well, how about doing something nice and unexpected for a friend? They'll say to you, "Man, that was great of you. Thanks!" and they will really mean it. You will receive something greater than mere attention—you'll receive some fulfillment. Do it and see!

Is this going to take care of most of our self-inflicted wounds?

Most, but there is a problem with this system. It doesn't work well with the need for forgiveness. That's because you have created this monster of a need for forgiveness. One of the biggest reasons we need all this forgiveness is because the real us—hiding deep within the closet of our subconscious—knows full well all of the evil, pain, and suffering that we are causing ourselves and others. We do all this harm in an attempt to get our needs met. We do it this harmful way because that is the way we were taught to achieve

our goals, and we don't know any other way to get what we need.

We have seen some of the harm that we have done in the past through our games, and we hated ourselves for the evil that we had caused. So, to avoid having to constantly deal consciously with the guilt, we started suppressing the truth to ourselves. We refused to admit that we were hurting others, or we justified what we did. Regardless, the truth is seen deep down. We know the hundreds that we have hurt and the pain and suffering we have caused just to get what we wanted and needed. We didn't want to hurt anyone, but we didn't know any other way to get our needs met—and we had to get these needs met!

Shouldn't we go over in our own minds the bad things that we have done in the past?

The milk that is spilt is sour. And yet, there it stands. The question is: now that we are aware of it, will we do something about it? I guess the majority say no, but there are a few special ones who are ready to overcome their suffering and get back to joy in life. Since you have come to this workshop tonight, instead of going bowling, you're probably those people. Have you noticed that there are some people who don't seem to have this overwhelming need to hurt others so that they can then be forgiven? And some of these special people don't play most of these silly grown-up games; some of them have lives with little pain and suffering—their lives are instead filled with joy and aliveness! What a treasure, for what is important beyond doing what you should do and then fully enjoying yourself and your life? To really like yourself, and enjoy yourself and your life, this is a very high goal indeed. Yet many around you have just these things.

What is their secret?

I will tell you. They have little guilt, and they cause themselves and others little if any pain or suffering. They do not create reasons why they should hate themselves and dislike their life and others. They have the natural results of loving themselves, and enjoying themselves, their lives, and others. Their lives are full of joy and peace! I know, for this is the way my life has been for years—ever since I overcame my games and guilt, and my need for forgiveness and hurting others.

Does this type of life appeal to you? I hope that it does. If it does, know that it is just the natural type of life that you should be having anyway. Life is marvelous, if you don't have any reasons or excuses to not enjoy it. If you would like to enjoy life more than you currently do, come to whatever programs you think will be good for you. I have written and often hold a series of "Improvement Training Seminars" free of charge. Attend some of them—they'll change your life and allow you to experience that joy and aliveness that a lot of us seem to have lost since childhood. I shall assist you if you are sincere. My price is very reasonable—I charge nothing! All that is required is your time and sincerity. If you doubt that life can be this way, come and meet me and know me as I am for a while. You will see that my life is full of joy and love, and wonder and aliveness. It is only natural this way; I wish it for you also, if that be your will.

How does a person get rid of this suffering in his life?

You see, when you stop abusing other people to get your needs fulfilled, and instead get your needs met through the natural course of loving others and spreading joy, then you will not be obsessed with this need for forgiveness all the time. You will regain your self-confidence, aliveness, and joy in life and the ability and willingness to love properly and purely. So, here in a nutshell is the first rule to overcoming most of the current pain and suffering that you are enduring in your life:

RULE #1: STOP HURTING OTHERS TO GET WHAT YOU WANT.

Rather, get what you want through loving others and spreading joy. Then you will not have this monster of a need for forgiveness that now causes many of your harmful actions.

Will doing this cause much of a change in My life?

When you learn how to and sincerely follow this rule, your life will change drastically, and most of your current pain and suffering will be gone. In place of it will flow joy and peace and satisfaction. Now, let's assume that your life is already this way, and that you have been doing this for some time. Perhaps you have successfully completed my seminar or you have achieved this naturally in your

own life, or maybe you never had this bad situation initially. Now I will tell you how to eliminate the vast majority of the remaining pain and suffering in your life. If it is still not absolutely necessary and is doing no good, we should still attempt to eliminate what we can of it. There will be some, perhaps, that is inevitable for us, as I have said. If this is so, we shall endure that amount and do the most good that is possible with it. The remaining ten percent is far less than what most endure, but our goal here is to eliminate all of our pain and suffering possible, and then do the most good and derive the greatest benefit from all that remains. The second rule will accomplish both of these points.

What is it?

Before I give the rule to you, let us examine the ten percent of pain and suffering that remains in your life. You are not causing it, yet it is there. If this is true, it is either inevitable, or it is not. We will only speak here of that which is not inevitable. It is being sent to you or forced upon you by evil forces.

What do you mean, evil forces?

Satan is the bringer of sorrow. He dearly loves to see man suffer, so long as it serves his needs. Satan has free will also, and has a choice in whether or not he will cause you pain and suffering much of the time. For the person who is not causing himself pain and suffering, Satan and his band are causing most of what he is experiencing.

So what can we do about this?

We can get Satan to stop causing us most of the pain and suffering that he is currently sending us, if he has a choice in the matter.

How?

The answer lies in understanding Satan's motives and reasons for sending us this pain and suffering. If it is like a game and he is currently winning through causing us the pain and suffering, all we have to do is find a way to beat him at his own game—turn the tables on him. If there are rules to this game, let us find out what they are and use them to our best advantage to achieve our own goals.

The first thing to grasp and understand is that God allows Satan free reign sometimes to do with us as he will. If you are not familiar with the book of Job in the Bible, I strongly suggest that you carefully study it soon. It holds many important items we must understand for the proper application of these principles. It tells why Satan is sometimes allowed such control and power over our lives—why God allows him to do to us as he chooses. It also demonstrates Satan’s motives and wishes. It tells what the prize of this game is and what many of the rules are.

Why does Satan do what he does?

The main reason why Satan chooses to make us suffer or endure pain is twofold: One, he hates and is very jealous of a just and good person, and two, he hopes that the pain and suffering will turn us against God. His main motivation is to separate man from God. This is the prize he is shooting for. There are certain risks that he takes in playing, but since few people that he plays with are even remotely aware of the rules, he will take the risks.

What risks?

The main risk he takes involves knowing that pain and suffering can be a great weapon and tool in the hands of an enlightened individual. It can be used to advance you own wishes and gain great merit in the eyes of God, as was the case in many of the battles Job endured. If you recall, it angered and frustrated Satan to no end because Job had used the pain and suffering to gain merit in God’s sight. Satan eventually won in a particular battle because he utilized the influence of Job’s friends. He caused Job to doubt and speak contemptuously to God. In effect, he caused Job and God’s relationship to be widened instead of closed.

What is there that Satan doesn’t want?

THE ONE THING THAT SATAN CERTAINLY DOESN’T WANT IS FOR MAN TO COME CLOSER TO GOD. This is dead against what he wants. And this is also the key to both getting Satan to stop sending you pain and suffering, and to gaining the greatest merit from the pain and suffering that you will still endure. Satan thinks that we will be angry at God for allowing this to

happen, and that this anger will turn us against God and push us farther away from him. It doesn't have to! Here's how to turn the tables of this game on him to your own advantage.

RULE #2: WHENEVER ANY EVIL, PAIN, OR SUFFERING BEFALLS YOU, INSTEAD OF HAVING IT TURN YOU AWAY FROM GOD, LET IT TURN YOU TOWARD HIM AND MAKE YOUR LOVE FOR GOD PURER AND STRONGER.

And how do you do this?

Make a short offertory prayer, such as this one: "Oh, sweet Jesus, I offer You this (pain, suffering, inconvenience, trouble, temptation...) out of my love for You and my desire to love You better. I offer it in reparation for all of my sins and the sins of all men, and to Your greater glory and honor. Please use this to purify my love for You and repair the evil that I have done."

Man, you talk about upsetting Satan! This infuriates him. If you faithfully practice this every time that even the slightest little inconvenience befalls you, it won't be long before Satan is convinced that you will always do it. I've found that the result of applying these two rules in my own life has been the cessation of almost all pain and suffering. In addition, because Satan fears I will use whatever evil I am aware of to my benefit, he even hides much of the evil that happens around me from my mind.

Which should we do first, the offertory prayer or stop hurting others?

Both, and the key is the first ninety percent that we cause to ourselves. It doesn't do any good to attempt to offer any of it to God, because it's not kosher. If I hit myself in the foot with a hammer on purpose and then say, "Oh, God, I offer this pain to

You!” I think He wouldn’t be very pleased or amused. So we have to overcome this first before we can apply the second rule.

The seminar is free, and I will give it to any individual or any group of people that will endure it. I wish you love, peace, and joy. Thank you for attending this workshop. May Dad put you in His favor and keep you there eternally. Bye!