

## **PeaceWorks University**

### *Toolbox Item: Gather Data – Victim Care*

Throughout 2022, PWU members will receive access to one video each month (twelve total) from Chris Moles in which he will introduce one of the six key elements of biblical counseling (*Gather Data, Build Involvement, Evaluate Problems Biblically, Minister the Word, Instill Hope, and Implement Homework*) and apply that key element to the specific practice of either victim care or perpetrator confrontation. After completing the *Key Elements of Biblical Counseling Success Path*, PWU members will be able to articulate each of the six key elements of biblical counseling and apply those elements to the particular needs of counselees, both victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

PWU members will also receive access to one new Toolbox item each month corresponding to the key element of biblical counseling being taught and applied in that month's Success Path video (see above). Our hope is that these Toolbox items will give you practical tools to use as you incorporate these key elements into your own counseling ministry.

**Basic Information Sheet**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the main problem, as you see it? What brings you here?

2. What have you done about it?

3. What can we do? What are your expectations in coming here?

4. As you see yourself, what kind of person are you? Describe yourself.

5. Is there any other information we should know?

## Additional Data Gathering Considerations When Counseling Abuse Victims

1. Each counselor must be cognizant of the presuppositions (regarding abuse, victims, and perpetrators) they bring into the counseling room and relationship. These presuppositions will naturally influence the way each counselor hears and interprets the data being gathered which will, in turn, influence the counsel they provide. Dangerous presuppositions can include common myths such as the belief that false accusations are as prevalent as truthful disclosures<sup>1</sup> or the assumption that abuse is a mutual marriage problem.<sup>2</sup>
2. Counselors should prepare to move slowly, listen carefully, and learn humbly as the counselee provides information concerning her case. Remember, the counselor's primary role is that of a caregiver, not an investigator.
3. Be aware that victims of domestic abuse often come into counseling with a presenting issue other than abuse such as a difficult marriage, depression, anxiety, or an eating disorder. Counselors must wisely listen to the issues being presented and look for signs of trauma and abuse.
4. Utilize extensive questions – general, “shotgun” questions about various aspects of the counselee's life, family, work, spirituality, etc. as well as the concerns, challenges, and needs she would like to address in counseling.
5. Utilize intensive questions – narrow questions specifically aimed at the details of the issues at hand. Be prepared to listen compassionately and revisit these details over time, slowly building a fuller picture of the counselee's experience, all while patiently recognizing the ways in which trauma can impact a victim's capacity to remember, understand, and communicate her story.<sup>3</sup> Counselors may use tools

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the topic of false domestic abuse accusations, please see the following resources.

- [Episode #168 of The PeaceWorks Podcast – False Allegations and Domestic Abuse](#)
- [Episode #232 of The PeaceWorks Podcast – False Reports and Abuse](#)

<sup>2</sup> To better understand why abuse is not a mutual marriage problem, please see the following resources.

- [BCTC 2018 Video - Helping the Church Respond to Abusive Spouses – Chris Moles](#)
- [PeaceWorks Blog - Not a Marriage Problem – Chris Moles](#)
- [Facebook Live Video - Focus on Men's Violence/Separate Tracks of Care Recommendation – Chris Moles](#)
- [Episode #186 of The PeaceWorks Podcast – Separate Tracks of Care in Cases of Domestic Abuse](#)

<sup>3</sup> To learn more about trauma-informed victim care, please see the following resources housed within the PeaceWorks University membership site.

- Master Class - Complex Post-Traumatic Stress with Rachael Rosser

such as the *Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs Power and Control Wheel*<sup>4</sup> or *Leslie Vernick's Emotionally Destructive Marriage Assessment*<sup>5</sup> to guide their intensive questions.

6. Withhold judgment while gathering data from the counselee.
7. Observe, take notes on, and respond to important non-verbal communication cues.
8. Ask questions to uncover and understand the heart behind the counselee's presenting behaviors as well as her responses to and resistance of the abuse she is experiencing. Counselors must be careful not to assume or assign motives without understanding.

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- Master Class - Stages of Change for Victims/Survivors with Summer Vinson-Berger
  - Master Class - The Lived Experience of Abuse with Brad Hambrick
  - Master Class - Understanding Trauma with Eliza Huie

<sup>4</sup> PeaceWorks University members can find a copy of the *Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs Power and Control Wheel* in the Toolbox section of the PeaceWorks University membership site.

<sup>5</sup> <https://leslievernick.com/the-emotionally-destructive-marriage/assessment/?fbclid=IwAR3VM0IrUJCvXg77D3pibvcUszbiXozKhU5pfge2RPWCvp2huiQDP-AiHI>