



Annual Conference 2015  
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## ***“Getting Better at Getting to the Heart: A Case Study”***

ACBC Annual Conference, October 2015  
Louisville, KY  
Pastor Brad Brandt  
Wheelersburg Baptist Church  
P. O Box 224  
Wheelersburg, Ohio 45694  
(740) 574-5116 (church)  
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*Description:* This workshop will be an interactive discussion of a hypothetical counseling session. The purpose is to help counselors grow in their ability to address heart issues in counseling rather than merely settling for behavior modification.

*Introduction:*

*Some Questions to Clarify First:*

- What do we mean by the *heart*? See Ezekiel 14:1-5
- What do we mean by “heart issues”?
- What are some examples of heart issues?
- What happens when a counselor fails to address heart issues in counseling?
- How do we expose heart issues in counseling?

*Through teaching*

*Through good questions*

*Through a Journal of Upsets*

1. What happened when you become upset?
2. What did you do when you became upset?
3. What were you thinking as you became upset?
4. What were you wanting when you became upset?



***Case Study: A Counseling Scenario Designed to Help Us Get Better at Getting to the Heart***

“I’m embarrassed to admit it, but we fight all the time.”

Those are the first words John said to you after you opened the counseling session with prayer. Followed by these, “You wouldn’t expect to hear that from a pastor, would you? I mean Amy and I fight about everything. Money. How to discipline the kids. Where to go on vacation. *Everything*. We can’t carry on a civil conversation without things getting heated.”

Although you’ve never met John before today, you learn from his PDI that he is an associate pastor in a church twenty miles from you, where he has served on a fairly large staff for three years. He and his wife, Amy, have been married for ten years and have three young children.

“I don’t get it,” John continues. “I mean, I know I’m not perfect, but my wife is always getting upset with me. We need help with our communication.”

When you ask John why he’s come to see you for counseling rather than his pastor, he sort of drops his head and says, “I don’t want my church to know what’s going on. You understand, don’t you?” And then adds, “I sure would hate to lose my ministry over this.”

He says Amy will probably come next time, but today she’s at home with a sick child.

***Case Study Discussion Questions:***

1. What are some *potential* heart issues that you are observing in John’s life? What information in this scenario helps you identify these heart issues?

2. What kinds of questions might you ask John to get at the *heart issues* that need attention? Come up with 5 good questions you would like to ask him.

3. What does John need most? At what point would you tell him this, and how?



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4. What passages of Scripture might you use with John in this session to minister to the needs of his heart?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What homework assignments might you give John after this first session to begin to address the heart issues you are observing?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Suppose John agrees to meet with you for at least four sessions (and let's assume that Amy also agrees to come). What might be the focus of your help during those four sessions? Come up with a tentative plan, based on what you know now, of what issues you would want to address, and in what order, between now and when you finish.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What questions does this case study raise for you about addressing heart issues?



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- --What do we mean by “heart issues”?

- --What are some examples of heart issues?





# Some Questions to Clarify *First...*

- --What happens when a counselor fails to address heart issues in counseling?
- --How do we expose heart issues in counseling?
- *Through teaching*
- *Through good questions*



# Some Questions to Clarify First...

- --How do we expose heart issues in counseling?

- *Through a Journal of Upsets*

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