



# core LIES

*discovering and dealing with the* **lies** *we  
don't even know we believe*

s a r a h m a e

# Core Lies

*Discovering and dealing with the lies we don't even know we believe*

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*“Go, consecrate the people. Tell them, ‘Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow; for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: That which is devoted is among you, O Israel. You cannot stand against your enemies until you remove it.’”*

*.Joshua 7:13, NIV*

*“...until you deal with the lies, and very specifically, you haven't dealt.” –Arabah Joy*

## History of the Core Lies Concept

The core lies concept was taught to me by Cathy Bowman, an older, wiser, godly woman and mentor. She took me through the process of uncovering some of my own lies so that I could see their deception and in turn believe the truth.

Understanding core lies has changed my life – my walk with the Lord and my relationship with others.

The core lies concept came from Cathy's husband Dave Bowman, Campus director at Penn State University for the Navigators Ministry. Dave developed the core lies concept over many years. The term "core lies" originated in a conversation between Dave, his wife Cathy, and their dear friend and counselor Kimberely Knochel. Cathy shared that some event had hit her painfully in her "core." Kimberely said, "Cathy, that isn't your core, but your core LIE."

Hugely influenced by the teachings of Larry Crabb and Neil T. Anderson, and being in ministry for over 33 years, Dave and Cathy have seen the destructive nature of deeply imbedded lies within themselves and others. They now mentor others in understanding, uncovering, and dealing with core lies so people can walk out their faith in freedom and truth.

*Thank you Cathy and Dave! I am so grateful for you and your ministry. My time in the Navigators and under your mentorship was life-changing.*

\*Core lies concept used with permission.

# Introduction

*“...no lie comes from the truth.” 1 John 2:21, NIV*

Below the flesh, creeping behind bone, in secret places of the spirit, lie wounds.

These wounds – these sin stuck wounds – they self-protect, they build walls, they leak venom. We deny the truth when we live out of our wounds. We believe lies.

In the deepest part of us, in our core, they are there, in every one of us, these lies. Each human spirit holds different ones, but they all infect. Like gangrene, the lies slowly permeate parts of our heart, seeping through vessels to infect our whole being if they are not cut off.

Lies make us slaves.

But there is hope (there is always hope when we know Jesus). We can learn how to identify these destructive lies and then begin to root them out so we can see the truth clearly.

In uncovering our lies and dealing with them we will find the freedom to be who God intends us to be; we can live authentically. The transformation from wound-living to freedom-living will allow us to love God and love others without fear.

Discovering and dealing with our core lie is not easy, it can hurt in the deepest places of our heart; the buried places, the wounded places. It is hard work to weed out the roots of pain and history and sin-flesh. We have to be willing to be vulnerable; to dig into the muck and let the Spirit reveal our lies so we can see them and so He can cut them off.

I invite you to experience with me the freedom that comes from the truth; I want you to peel back the layers, just like peeling off the layers of an onion, and discover the lies you don't even know you believe.

Let's begin.

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:1,2, ESV*

# What is a Core Lie?

A Core lie is something we believe that resides so deep down inside of us that it has almost become a part of our personality. We don't know it's there, and furthermore, we have learned how to live in such a way that subconsciously controls much of our thought life and behavior. It is such a subtle occurrence that we do not see or understand the damaging affect it is having on our life and the lives of those around us. Our core lie is based on what we put our worth and value in apart from God.

Discovering and dealing with our core lies is a process, a journey, which continues throughout life. While we usually have one prominent core lie that once discovered breaks strong bonds, God reveals others to us throughout our life as they surface. However, the main one will most likely try and rear its ugly head for most of our time here on earth. If we're paying attention, aware of its subtle influence, we can begin to discover what it is as God chooses to nudge us toward dealing with it. Once we have seen the truth, we can be more equipped in combating it. We might sense freedom from a lie today, but it will most likely arise throughout our life, especially if it is our main lie. The key is to be sensitive to our emotions and to the leading of the Holy Spirit; we must pray for a soft, teachable heart.

*"When lies have been your companion, your friend, your soother in the dark, it is hard to let them go." –Arabah Joy*

## **Our Lies Impact Us Deeply**

God has created us to be emotional, rational (thinking), and volitional (choice making) beings. Because we are woven in this fashion, we learn how to cope and relate this way. The lie/lies that are ingrained in our hearts dictate much of our emotions, thought processes, and choices because we have believed them so faithfully (without even realizing it). Many of us speak and write and live out of the wounds that foster our lies. As we learn to believe the truth, we will not only find freedom for ourselves, but we will see wounds in others and be able to love them better.

## **The Origin of Our Lies**

Our lies most often seem to come from negative experiences in our childhood. However, the ultimate root of these lies comes from a combination of sin and the enemy slithering around in our wounds and whispering deception in our ears.

*"He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies." John 8:44, ESV*

## **Why We Need to Deal with Our Lies**

The whole reason we seek to discover and deal with our core lies is so we can obey God's great commandments.

*"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:36-40, NIV*

When we confront our lies and choose to believe the truth, we are freer to respond and incorporate the great commandments. Core lies block us from loving God and loving others.

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## *In a nutshell*

Core lies are deeply rooted beliefs that are not true.

# Digging In to Discover Your Core Lie

*"We form our personal beliefs (some of which are destructive lies) when we examine and respond emotionally to the "evidence" of our past hurts. These lies come out of our emotional responses to the hurts." –Dave Bowman*

## **Beliefs → Goals → Behaviors → Emotions**

"I think I am not *good enough* (belief), therefore I must *be perfect* (goal). In order for me to accomplish perfectionism I have to be *controlling* (behavior). When I am not in control, I get *angry* (emotion) when others don't meet my expectations."

### **Beliefs**

We all hold beliefs about ourselves whether we realize it or not; some of the beliefs are true and some are not. Many of our beliefs lead to goals we make for ourselves in order to get the "upper hand" on the negative beliefs we have about ourselves (remember, we do most of this without knowing it). We want to try and be the opposite of what we *think* we are.

Let's see if we can uncover some of the beliefs you have in the crevices of your heart. Grab a pen, head on over to the next page, and circle any belief that strikes a chord.

# Beliefs

- I am bad
- I am not good enough
- I am forgettable
- I am a failure
- I am not worth fighting for
- I am stupid
- I am wrong
- I am ugly
- I am not wanted
- I am not in control
- I am lazy
- I am weird
- I am of no value
- I am defective
- I am shameful
- Is something else coming to your mind?  
Write it here.

Once you have recognized a belief you have about yourself, it's time to start looking at the goals you have made for yourself.

## **Goals**

*"Your personal goal often is to prove that you are the opposite of what you truly believe yourself to be. This is because you don't think others accept you the way you think you are." -Dave Bowman*

We are volitional beings – we make choices. Some of the choices we make have to do with the lies we believe. Remember, these goals are often subconscious.

On the next page are listed some goals we make because of our lies (do any stand out to you? Grab a pen and turn the page!):

# Goals

- I must be good enough – perfectionist
- I must be competent
- I must be fit
- I must be respected
- I must look like I have it all together
- I must be pretty
- I must be smart
- I must be right
- I must look good
- I must be in control
- I must be wanted
- I must be successful
- I must hide myself
- Your turn...

*"Therefore, in order to achieve this goal, you have imposed an unbreakable law on yourself ("I must do..." and "I must be...") and on others ("You must view me as..." and "You must treat me as..."). This law is not God's law, but your own, selfish law." -Dave Bowman*

*"I wanted everyone to think I was a good mom. I had to let go of what other people thought of me because it was affecting how I dealt with my girls." -Cathy Bowman, Wife to Dave Bowman*

## Behaviors

*"...relating styles are chosen to avoid the hurt, pain and subsequent feelings—anger, surprise, helplessness, etc. you have experienced in the past...A core lie forms a goal which affects behavior...Goals are the bridge between your beliefs and behavior. In order to understand what your goal is, you must look at your behavior (self-protection, manipulation) and emotions (anger, anxiety, etc.) to see if you can find a repeating pattern." –Dave Bowman*

We all have a style of relating our goals. Here are some styles (or behaviors) of relating:

- Nice
- Outgoing
- Quiet
- Controlling
- Funny
- Intelligent
- Sarcastic

Dave Bowman sums up behaviors like this:

"My behavior is how I try to control (by manipulating others or protecting myself) my life to avoid experiencing pain. It is extremely painful when I am not seen as and do not feel my goal is met of being competent, intelligent, etc. Therefore, I will behave in any way necessary to assure that I will be seen by others, myself, and God as...competent, good, intelligent, wanted, etc. so that my goal is realized. I never want to be put into a situation of vulnerability where I am not in control."

## The Smoke Signal – Emotions

*"Usually 99% of anger comes from a lie. Righteous anger is very rare." –Dave Bowman*

Attached to every lie is an emotion.

Anger, anxiety, and depression are emotions that clue us in to our lies. Emotions are not a problem in and of themselves, but they can be indicators of a problem. Emotions can be like smoke signals that warn us there is trouble, so if we pay attention to the "signals" they can be of great service to us in revealing our lies.

*"When people react fearfully, there's almost always a lie." – Renee*

Start paying attention to what makes you angry, anxious, or depressed. It is helpful to keep a journal where you write what prompted your emotions. No matter how silly the situation seems, write it down. Remember, these are clues that will help to open your eyes to the truth.

### Smoke Signal Example

Recently I watched a popular T.V. show about little girls who participate in pageants. One little girl featured on the show was only nine years old, and in this particular episode she was all dressed up and practicing her walk for the stage. She was thoroughly enjoying herself and the attention from her family when her fruit embellished hat fell off. In the drop of a dime (or a hat) the tears came peeking from her eyes and she angrily stomped off to her room. When the interviewer asked the little girl what was wrong she said, "I hate when the fruit falls off because *it means I'm not perfect.*" When I heard that little girl declare that if she did everything right she would be perfect (her heart behind the words), my heart hurt for her. Her lie was loud and clear to an alert listener: "you must be perfect to be good enough; to be loved." The tears and anger came because her goal for achieving perfection was blocked. Of course that little one couldn't be perfect because none of us will ever measure up to that standard, nor are we asked to.

*"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10, NIV*

### **Three Key Emotions**

**Anger/Frustration**, whether it's directed toward yourself, others or God, indicates a blocked goal. In an attempt to cover up shame that has developed because of the pain that we have suffered in the past, we sometimes turn on ourselves. We want to be seen in a manner that would prevent us from being hurt, so we develop a false identify. In this way we can hope to gain the love and acceptance from others that we crave so deeply. When our goal of presenting our "made image" is blocked (when we *think* we are being exposed), we get angry.

**Anxiety/fear** creeps in when we are uncertain whether we will accomplish our goals. We aren't sure if we will be exposed for who we *think* we are; we aren't sure we can control someone's response to how we want to be perceived. We don't want to be exposed for who we *think* we really are ("not good enough"), so we run away.

**Depression** can be a very real, clinical issue that involves chemical imbalances in the brain. We are not talking about this kind of depression. We are talking about the kind of depression that results from a feeling of failure and hopelessness in the day to day because of unattainable goals we have experienced. We say to ourselves or others, "I will do (or be) \_\_\_\_" and when it doesn't happen how we planned, we feel like failures, and sometimes we think, "why bother even trying again, I will just fail." The problem is not that we have failed (of course we have, we set an unattainable goal for ourselves, a goal that God doesn't set for us), it is that we have put a law on ourselves that isn't from God. Instead we should say, "Lord, with your help today, I will walk faithfully to your call."

## Emotions Cheat Sheet

A cheat sheet into why we experience the emotions we do (keep this in your back pocket):

**Anger/Frustration**=Blocked Goal  
**Anxiety/Fear**=Uncertain Goal  
**Depression**=Unattainable Goal

*"All three emotions are choices even though they may not seem like choices. (e.g. "This is who I am. I can't change it!") Through the years, you have chosen (consciously and/or subconsciously) to program yourself to emotionally respond to certain situations in certain ways. ("This is who I want everyone to see and I'll do all I can to ensure they see me this way".)" -Dave Bowman*

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## In a Nutshell

The lie is in the worth and value we put on our goals, and that we think we can control our lives apart from God.

Example: "My worth and value is based on being pretty (because I believe I'm ugly). I must control my life in order to be pretty. I do this to avoid all pain." The lie is that you think your worth and value come from being pretty.

## Journal It

Think of an instance in the last couple of weeks where you felt angry/frustrated, anxious/fearful, or depressed. Take a few moments to write out the situation and your response. Start paying attention to your emotions and what brings them to the surface.

# We Are All Wounded; We Are All Sinful –

## The Affect of Lies

*"...these unseen wounds will inevitably wound another person when he or she tries to function in areas that affect the unresolved hurts, often making things worse" Dr. Sandra Wilson, Hurt People, Hurt People*

Every one of us has wounds.

Every single one of us; no one escapes because we live in a fallen world; a pain ridden, sin-infested world.

These wounds of ours hide under the flesh where only God can see them clearly, but we all see them, we just see them with human eyes, logged eyes.

*"You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." Matthew 7:4, NASB*

We speak and act out of our wounds so often, that the words get mistaken for the person.

As we discover and deal with our lies, we will gain a more compassionate spirit; we will love better. We will see people for more than their actions or words. We will see ourselves as redeemed by the God who doesn't ask us to be good enough, or perfect enough, or smart enough, or pretty enough, or together enough, or...you get the idea.

When we bow our soul in recognition to His sovereignty, and we believe Him with our whole life, we can trust Him with the tender places; we can trust Him with our sin walls. He loves gently and He leads with grace. He will bind up our broken heart.

The truth *will* set us free.

*"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

*John 8:31,31, NIV*

*"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."*

*Psalm 147:3, NIV*

### **How Our Lies Affect Others**

*"Deal with and repent of your own "core lies" so you don't demand from, and damage, your child as much." Cathy Bowman*

I'm sure you're beginning to see a picture emerge of how damaging core lies are, and how they don't just affect us; they affect the people around us.

Let's go back to our goals for a moment. There is nothing wrong with wanting to be successful, or smart, etc. Unfortunately, because we are wrapped in flesh and fight a sin infestation daily, we tend to demand that not only must we meet our goals, but those around us must meet our goals as well. When they don't, we become angry, anxious or depressed. This is a problem. We want others to recognize the goals we've created, but we can't hold people accountable to treat us as our goals demand. We can't live up to many of the goals we have created and we were never asked to. Our goals are a false identity. They help us to feel secure in our own little worlds, but they do not give the freedom that our true identities offer. Moreover, our desires become sinful when we demand they be met in order for us to find joy, peace, meaning, value, and love in our lives.

If you do not deal with your lies, you will damage your relationships and your children. The reality is that your children will suffer some damage from you because we all fail. The good news is, the hope is, that when we fail we have a Father who fills the gaps and pick us up (Psalm 27:10).

However, we can minimize some of that damage by recognizing our lies and believing the truth.

### **How Our Lies Affect the Way We See Others**

Imagine you are perusing around blog land when you come across a blog that just infuriates you (hey, there's probably a lie there!). The words that the blog writer is putting out there are hurtful, or false, or fill-in-the-blank. You think, "What are they thinking?! How dare they say such things?" You may be correct; they may be saying things that are way off or just plain crazy wrong (or they may just have a different opinion than you have). However, if you remember that we are all wounded, perhaps you could begin to see the person behind the words. You could begin to pray for that person, or ask God to help you see them as He does. A sincere love could develop for that person as you begin to have compassion on her. We all act out of our wounds. We see people by their actions and words. I'm asking you to see past that. I'm asking you to say, "God, please help me to see this person as You do, and help me to love them as I love myself." As you open yourself up to a love that challenges and permits itself to be hurt, I think you will not only understand the heart of God better, I think you will find the most glorious and exhilarating freedom.

# Freedom from Your Lies

*"God gives life to the dead." Romans 4:17, Paraphrase*

This is my favorite part.

Truth.

We must replace the lies with the truth.

Sounds super easy, or perhaps trite, right? You've heard it a million times, just believe the truth. But we all know it is much harder to do.

Why is that?

It's hard because dealing with our core lies is hard. Being willing to dig in and face pain, to be vulnerable before the Lord as He takes us to tender places to reveal where certain lies began. While it is as simple as believing the truth, it is as complicated as our flesh-spirit battle.

We have to call out our own sin.

Whatever brought on the lies in our lives, we have to admit that we have sinned against God by using our own defenses to protect ourselves instead of depending on Him.

*"Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight." Psalm 51:4, NASB*

Listen, I know you were hurt, or wronged; me too.

But we are still wrapped in flesh, and the sin-disease still bleeds in our veins. Until glory, it will persist.

We are flawed. We need God.

We try to bleed out the ugly, striving to do better and be better, but we can't. Only One can bleed out ugly and cover it with beauty.

Jesus Christ.

He bled and He makes you beautiful and perfect and free when you say “yes” to Him. When you bow your spirit to His, and you let His spirit wrap around yours, covering, intertwining, you have only to claim your freedom.

Your worth and value is in Him alone.

### **Unraveling the Lies – Binding with Truth**

As you pay attention to your emotions, and you begin to see a pattern, ask God to show you very specifically what your lie is and exactly when that lie took hold. Pray against the darkness, and see what God brings to mind. For each lie, ask God what the truth is and then, in prayer, nail the lie on the cross of Jesus or give the lie to God. Ask Him to replace it with His truth.

You will be in awe and your spirit will fill with gratitude as you witness God’s faithfulness in helping you reveal and deal with your lies. The power of the Holy Spirit at work in you is, literally, awesome.

### **Repentance**

All of our beliefs and behaviors are rooted in pride. We think we can take care of ourselves; in fact, we vow to (we vow to do this for our children as well). But until we surrender all of ourselves to our good, faithful, loving Redeemer, we will struggle with bondage. It is in the act of repenting, in letting go of our false control, that we can honor God and find healing. We must repent of our pride. We don’t do this to avoid pain (“I’ll do anything to feel better, even repent”) because that isn’t true repentance, it’s self-focused. We repent because we sinned against our Bride-groom.

*“Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.” 2 Corinthians 7:10, NIV*

*"But He gives us more and more grace (power of the Holy Spirit, to meet this evil tendency and all others fully). That is why He says, God sets Himself against the proud and haughty, but gives grace [continually] to the lowly (those who are humble enough to receive it)." James 4:6, Amplified*

Now, let your knees hit the floor, feel the sorrow, and let His spirit fill your broken places.

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*"Jesus knows already who I am in the depths of my soul, my wounds, my lies, and He has allowed things to happen so that I would come to Him. I do not need to wear the mask of a false self, or carry goals that are not worth the anger, anxiety, and depression when they are not attained. Because of His love, God sent His Son so that through Jesus' blood you and I can relate to Him in a personal and intimate way. I can now be filled with His love and with His strength to be who I really am in my interactions with God and others. While I strive to achieve my goals in order to validate my worth, Jesus has already achieved the goals for me! He already sees me as valuable as evidenced through His death as payment for my sins." -Dave Bowman*

## A Word on “Good Enough”

I want to pull back the curtain on the main lie I hear from women, the “I’m not good enough” lie; the idea that your worth and value comes from being good enough/perfect enough.

What a stronghold “I’m not good enough” has on us! And I’ll tell you why, it’s because we all want to be loved, and somehow we think being good enough will get us unconditional love.

Here is the simple, freeing truth:

Friend, **Jesus never asks us to be good enough.**

Can you just camp on that for a moment?

If you know the Son, you are being sanctified. You are perfected for all time. Now you just walk it out in faith.

Is it sinking in? YOU are not asked to be good enough or perfect enough or smart enough or capable enough or strong enough or...

No.

Jesus asks that we believe Him, recognize our need for His sacrifice for our lives, and be willing to walk faithfully as the new creation that we are in Him.

*“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” Micah 6:8, ESV*

And furthermore, when we are His, He changes us from the inside out according to His timetable and good will. We cannot strive enough, or do enough to sanctify ourselves. He does the work, we faith step it one day at a time, being open to His Spirit and faithful to His call and His Word.

We are already perfected for eternity. The work, ultimately, is done. Our worth and value is in Christ alone.

*"For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified." Hebrews 10:14, ESV*

And *perfect* blows "good enough" right out of the water.

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My hope is that you have begun to unravel some of your core lies and the goals you have made because of them. My prayer is that you will deal with and repent of your goals and renounce your lies so that you can live authentically and be used in mightier ways by God...so that you will mature and not pass lies on to others.

God is the *only* one who has the authority to tell you who you are...the only one.

He is faithful; He will *a/ways* come through.

# “Not Good Enough for God” – One

## Woman’s Story

*By Arabah Joy, <http://arabah.wordpress.com/>*

They started when I was a young child, the lies. But I didn't know of their existence for a very long time. I was serving God in full time ministry and thought I had dealt with hurtful things in my past. But I learned that until you deal with the lies, and very specifically, you haven't dealt.

My life was like a bicycle wheel, going, rolling, taking me places. As long as the path was clear, I didn't question a thing. But when things got mucky- parenting a wounded child, 3 kids in 23 months, living overseas in isolation- I realized my "wheel" was in trouble. It was getting stuck in the muck of life and the wheel of "me" wasn't sufficient to get me out.

That's when I had to stop and really take a look at my wheel, at what made up "me." I found many different spokes on my wheel, different expressions in my life that caused me concern: anger towards my kids, a sense of powerlessness in parenting my adopted child, fear- a nearly constant drone in my life, and a lack of energy, sluggishness.

Through a very painful process, God helped me trace each of those spokes back to their origin and I found they all were connected at the middle, the core. They all, though spiking in different directions, were rooted in the same thing: core lies. The combination of childhood sexual abuse and a religious-but-dead brand of "Christianity" embedded lies deep in my makeup and my life began to be built around them, spoking out like weeds and forming a "wheel" on which I operated. The worst part? I wasn't even aware of it.

As I dealt with the spokes and got closer to the core, God exposed more and more lies. Lies I believed about Him, like He desired my obedience more than anything. The final

breakthrough came when He revealed to me the core lie that spawned all the others: "You're not good enough."

Because I had believed this lie, I thought I wasn't good enough for God. So I turned to performance, people pleasing, and perfectionism. I turned to self-reliance and self-righteousness. I tried to justify myself because I didn't deem myself good enough for Grace. I turned to using things like condemnation and shame to keep myself in line. Is it any wonder I couldn't help but parent my children the same way, even though I longed for something better?

I knew that if my family was going to avoid destruction, I had to deal with the root. I was tearing down my own home, block by block, against my will. Until I realized this, I wasn't ready to do the hard work of tearing down the lies.

Jesus said, "If you continue in My word...then you will know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free." Continuing in God's Word told me the truth: relationship with God is not dependent on "goodness." Being "good enough" is not even part of His equation! My whole life had been set up around a lie.

Tearing down strongholds and systems that Satan's lies erect requires consistent and specific practice. We must know the Truth and be armed with it at all times. I learned to stand on what God said as opposed to what I felt. I gathered an arsenal of scriptures for when the lies showed up. I also learned to identify thoughts, emotions, and expressions of those lies in my life so that I could quickly claim victory over them. I even made a chart and on one side, I listed the negative emotions that would creep in and on the other side, I wrote the truth from scripture to combat it.

During the day, when I felt overwhelmed or hopeless or wanted to use anger to get results, I would recognize it as being rooted in a lie, go to my sheet, and review the truth. This is part of spiritual warfare and it isn't easy; but victory is guaranteed and Jesus is there to help in our weakness.

I don't think any of us ever reach a point where we are immune to lies. That is why we need one another to encourage and exhort and to remind that the promised land is something we journey TOGETHER. We are not alone. We have

Jesus and we have the whole army of Israel who stands with us.

# How to Work Through Your Core Lies

By Dave Bowman

1. **Remember events.** Look back to the events in your life where you can pinpoint shame, embarrassment, or hurts. These events often involve people who were or are important (parents, friends, coaches, teachers, relatives, siblings, authorities, etc.). Write or verbalize about them as much as you can remember...the words, thoughts, emotions.
2. **Recognize that you have been sinned against** (you might not be totally aware of it). Acknowledge that another (or others) have wronged you through their own sin and lack of love toward you and it did hurt. Come to a point where you are willing to admit your disappointment in relationships with your mother, father, brother, sister, coach, etc. Romans 8:18-24
3. **Response.** How did you respond to the event(s) and /or to the relationship(s)? With anger? Withdrawing? Helpless feelings? Embarrassed? Feeling abandoned? Feeling controlled? Recognizing your past responses may help you see why you now relate to and respond to people the way that you do.
4. **Realize your emotional response.** Look at your present day painful events and how you responded to them. What were your emotions? What recent situations, conversations or thoughts caused you to feel angry, anxious or depressed? Keep a journal, record whatever it is that promoted such feelings, consider these questions as you consider the event(s): What was said in the situation? What did you see? What were you concerned/afraid would happen? Were you concerned or afraid that something would not happen? Did you feel threatened at all? If so, what felt threatening? What part of you felt threatened (your intelligence, your character, your appearance, etc.)? When you were feeling angry, anxious or depressed, what judgment or conclusion of you were you concerned people would make? Was there

a concern in you that people would view you in a certain way if this didn't go well? What were you concerned they would see you as?

5. **Reveal your goals** (allow God to do this; look at your emotions). Consider what the red lights on your dashboard reveal and what prompted these feelings (your analysis above on #4). You have a goal that you are trying to reach. What is your goal? Are you demanding that others view you in a certain way (as competent, good, etc.)? Are you demanding that others treat you in a certain way? Are you pressuring yourself to present yourself to the world in that same way (you want to be seen in this way in order to avoid pain)? In order to achieve this goal, you have imposed an unbreakable law on yourself ("I must do..." and "I must be..." and on others ("You must view me as..." and "You must treat me as..."). This is not God's law, but your own, selfish law. What do you do? Recognize that you have chosen your response to the sin and the hurts you've experienced from others. Recognize and "own" (admit to yourself and God) your manipulative and self-protective behaviors. Identify and recognize that you have set up these goals for a purpose.
6. **Relating a certain way behaviorally.** Look for self-protection or manipulation strategies and behavior in your relationships. Ask yourself, "Why do I behave toward people a certain way?" Ask others what "pulls" do they feel from you? How do they feel they need to come through for you? If you feel pressure to behave a certain way, this is the time to ask, "Why am I doing what I'm doing?" We must see our sinful strategies of manipulation and self-protection as sin. We must repent of these. Self-protection ("abandon"): Abandonment/quitting, avoidance, going to something else (T.V., porn, eating, etc.), shy, silly. Manipulation ("abuse"): Flattery/charm, anger/bully, moodiness, performance/competitive, sarcastic, argumentative. These relating styles are chosen to avoid the hurt, pain and subsequent feelings – anger, surprise, helplessness, etc. you have experienced in the past. Some examples of styles of relating: bully, silly, charmer, shy, avoider,

loner, quiet, sarcastic, intellect, "one-ups-manship", debater, competitor, etc.

7. **Renounce vows, lies, and images.** Are there vows that you have made when you were hurt (e.g. "I will never be embarrassed like that again.")? These vows need to be brought before God and renounced. You need to discover the lies that you believe about yourself and the vows you made. These lies are deep within you, which is why we call them "core lies." You may begin to discover your personal core lie by considering what your main goal is. Also, going back to initial painful events, ask God to tell you what lie you believed in that painful event or negative conclusion about yourself. We need to have a changed mind (Romans 12: 1,2). We need to form ideas of who we are based on what God says in His Word. What do we do? Identify and articulate your core lies (a core lie forms a goal which affects behavior). Realize that these core lies control you. These lies dictate your relating style (your thoughts, words and actions) with everyone (to varying degrees) including God. Discover your image (how you truly view yourself. This is difficult to recognize at times, but it is often a type of person (wimp, loser) or animal (worker ant, baby bird, etc.). Look at the context in which your core lies were formed. Look at your vows – what you said you would never or always do.
  
8. **Repent of your goal** (false self/idol/demanding spirit). Acknowledge who you are in Christ and that only He will fulfill your deepest longings. Realize that the emotions, beliefs, behavior, goals, and images are slaves for you. They have put you in bondage. The focus of these areas is self and the Bible calls such self-focus, pride. One must choose to repent of these idols (goals) and choose to turn from them. This repentance is seen when one realizes he or she has a choice to depend on self (protect themselves or manipulate others) or to depend on God. When depending on God you are able to move toward another in love without the demands for them to come through for you in order to make your false identity secure. Ask God to forgive you for the pride that is in you as you have been driven to pursue your false self or goal more than your desire to know Him.

9. **Replace.** The lies must be replaced with God's truth. For each lie, ask God what the truth is and then, in prayer, nail the lie on the cross of Jesus or give the lie to God and ask Him to replace it with His truth.
  
10. **Reconcile/Restore.** There are relationships that have hurt you and you might need to thank God that He died for the sin they committed against you so that you don't have to carry that weight around with you or the emotional pull that it can have on you. Forgive those who have hurt you. Reconcile with those whom it is wise or possible to reconcile to.

## Helpful Scripture for Dealing with Core Lies

**'I want to be loved'** Jeremiah 31:3 "The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."

**'I want to belong'** Isaiah 43:1 "But now, this is what the LORD says- he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine."

**'I want my heart's desires met'** Psalms 37:4 "Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart."

**'I want to be loved by someone no matter what'** Romans 8:38-39 "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

**'I want to be comforted'** 2 Corinthians 1:3-5 "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows."

**'I want someone to carry my burdens'** 1 Peter 5:7 "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

*Passages that address specific goals and lies:*

I am...unworthy—Luke 15 Prodigal Son

I am...unwanted—Luke 15 Lost sheep

I must be perfect—2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 1:6

I must be good—Romans 3, Mark 10:18

## Resources

*The Bondage Breaker*, Neil T. Anderson

*Inside Out*, Larry Crabb

If this book was helpful to you, would you consider “Liking” it on Facebook? You can do that at [Facebook.com/coreliesbook](https://www.facebook.com/coreliesbook)



## About the Author

Sarah Mae has a past that would be her present if it weren't for Jesus; His wild saving grace and gentle leading keep her in awe. She is the wife of Jesse (her rock and super handy-man dude) and the mommy of two lovely daughters and one busy little boy. Her days are spent hanging out with her babes, indulging in dark cherry mocha's, homeschooling, admiring beautiful words, dreaming of wild blue skies, creating the sweet aroma of *home*, and messing up (only to fall into the arms of grace). She would love to have coffee with you.

She writes at [LikeaWarmCupofCoffee.com](http://LikeaWarmCupofCoffee.com), and [RaisingHomemakers.com](http://RaisingHomemakers.com). She is also the co-host of the Christian women's blogging conference, [Relevant](http://Relevant.com).

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