

Groups

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality by Peter Scazzero

Overview: This group is designed for a 10 week semester. Summer groups can combine 2 weeks at a time to fit into the 6 week semester. Since this group has eight sessions of content, start content on week 2. Week 1 should consist of a meet and greet and week 10 should be a celebration.

Week 1: The Problem of Emotionally Unhealthy Spirituality

Chapter 1

Summary:

Peter Scazzero opens the book with a bold and honest assessment: you cannot be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature. He shares his personal journey as a pastor who experienced burnout, conflict, and relational tension—all while appearing spiritually strong on the outside. This disconnect between emotional health and spiritual practice is the root issue he addresses throughout the book.

Scazzero identifies symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality, such as using God to run from God, ignoring emotions, dying to the wrong things, and living without limits. These behaviors mask deep issues and prevent true transformation. Many Christians stay busy with religious activity but avoid the inner work of emotional healing.

He emphasizes the importance of self-awareness, emotional honesty, and confronting the past. Emotional health isn't a detour from spiritual growth—it's essential to it. Scazzero introduces the core idea that integrating emotional and spiritual maturity leads to a deeply transformed life.

This chapter invites participants to slow down, reflect honestly, and begin a journey toward wholeness in Christ. It sets the stage for exploring how emotional health can no longer be optional in Christian discipleship.

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you most about Peter's personal story?
 2. How have you experienced a gap between emotional and spiritual maturity in your own life?
 3. Which symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality resonated with you?
 4. Why is emotional honesty difficult for many Christians?
 5. What fears or hesitations do you have about doing the "inner work"?
 6. How would your relationship with God change if you embraced emotional health?
 7. What do you hope to gain from this study?
-

Week 2: Know Yourself That You May Know God

Chapter 2

Summary:

In this chapter, Scazzero explains how knowing yourself is foundational to knowing God. He challenges the notion that deep spirituality is just about outward activity. Instead, spiritual maturity begins with self-awareness—understanding your emotions, motivations, and wounds. As you learn to understand and accept yourself, you grow in your understanding of who God is and how He uniquely relates to you.

Scazzero draws on church history and theology to demonstrate that self-knowledge has always been a core part of spiritual growth. He quotes Augustine and Calvin, showing that introspection and reflection help reveal the false selves we often present to the world and to God. These false selves hinder our intimacy with Christ.

He encourages readers to pay attention to their emotions—not as distractions, but as pathways to deeper understanding. Emotions reveal what's going on beneath the surface. By bringing our true selves to God—including our doubts, fears, and pain—we invite His healing and truth into every part of our lives.

This chapter invites us to engage our interior life with courage and curiosity. As we know ourselves more deeply, we can love others more authentically and receive God's love with greater clarity.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why is knowing yourself essential to knowing God?
2. What are some “false selves” you’ve worn in different areas of life?
3. How have your emotions been treated in your spiritual life—welcomed or ignored?
4. What emotions do you tend to avoid or suppress? Why?
5. How does understanding your past help you relate better to God?
6. In what ways do you sense God inviting you into deeper self-awareness?
7. How can knowing yourself improve your relationships?

Week 3: Going Back in Order to Go Forward

Chapter 3

Summary:

Scazzero emphasizes that emotional healing involves looking at our family of origin and past experiences. He explains that “Jesus may live in your heart, but Grandpa lives in your bones.” Patterns from our family’s history—whether healthy or dysfunctional—shape how we live and relate today.

He introduces the genogram as a tool to trace family patterns over three generations. Through this exercise, readers can identify inherited behaviors, roles, and emotional scripts that impact their spiritual lives. These insights help break cycles that hinder growth.

Going backward isn't about blame—it's about awareness and transformation. Scazzero shares his own story of discovering how his family background influenced his leadership, relationships, and emotional reactions. As he processed these patterns in light of the gospel, he began to experience real freedom.

This chapter encourages us to face the pain of the past so we can move forward in wholeness. When we bring generational brokenness to Christ, He redeems it and rewrites our story.

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you about the concept of family shaping spirituality?
2. What family patterns have you noticed influencing your life today?
3. How do you typically respond to pain from your past—ignore, relive, or reflect?
4. Why is it important to honor your family history without being defined by it?

5. How can your story be a part of your spiritual growth, not a hindrance to it?
6. What healing might God want to do through your past experiences?
7. How can you support others as they reflect on their family story?

Week 4: Journey Through the Wall

Chapter 4

Summary:

In this chapter, Scazzero discusses a spiritual phenomenon called “the Wall”—a point in your journey with God where faith feels dry, confusing, or painful. At the Wall, our usual ways of relating to God no longer work, and we feel stuck or disoriented. While uncomfortable, the Wall is an essential part of spiritual growth.

The Wall exposes illusions and forces us to wrestle with our limitations. Scazzero identifies common responses to the Wall—denial, escape, spiritual busyness—but these only delay the deeper work God wants to do. The Wall is not punishment but invitation.

He shares personal stories and biblical examples of people who encountered the Wall, including Abraham, Job, and Peter. Each found greater intimacy and maturity on the other side. The Wall strips away self-sufficiency and leads us to a deeper trust in God's presence—even when He feels absent.

This chapter encourages perseverance, honesty, and surrender. Going through the Wall reshapes your soul, purifies your love for God, and prepares you for greater depth in the spiritual life.

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever experienced a “Wall” in your spiritual life? What was it like?
 2. How did you respond—press through, avoid, or shut down?
 3. Why does God allow seasons of dryness or difficulty in our spiritual walk?
 4. What do you think God wants to reveal or reshape in you at the Wall?
 5. How can community help you endure and grow through these seasons?
 6. What are some unhelpful ways you’ve tried to “fix” spiritual struggles?
 7. What helps you trust God even when you can’t feel Him?
-

Week 5: Enlarge Your Soul Through Grief and Loss

Chapter 5

Summary:

Scazzero challenges the Western Christian tendency to minimize or avoid grief and loss. He explains that ignoring pain stunts our spiritual and emotional growth. God invites us to bring our sorrow to Him—not suppress it or move on too quickly. Through grief, our souls are stretched, deepened, and transformed.

He shares personal experiences of grief, including the loss of dreams and people he loved. Rather than offering neat answers, Scazzero encourages sitting with sorrow and asking God to meet us in the middle of it. Lament is presented as a biblical practice that honors pain and opens the door to healing.

The author points to Jesus, who was “a man of sorrows.” He didn’t avoid suffering; He entered it fully. As followers of Christ, we are called to the same. Allowing grief to do its work makes room for empathy, compassion, and spiritual resilience.

Grief is not a detour but a path to intimacy with God. This chapter invites us to trust that even in loss, God is shaping us and making something beautiful.

Discussion Questions:

1. How have you experienced grief or loss in your life?
2. What messages did you learn growing up about how to handle grief?
3. How does your faith shape your understanding of sorrow?
4. What role has lament played in your spiritual life?
5. Why is it important to allow space for grief rather than rushing healing?
6. How can we support one another through seasons of loss?
7. What has God taught you through pain?

Week 6: Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath

Chapter 6

Summary:

Scazzero invites readers to rediscover the ancient practices of the Daily Office and Sabbath. These are not religious rituals for the sake of duty, but spiritual rhythms

designed to keep us rooted in God's presence throughout the week. In a culture obsessed with productivity, these practices remind us that our worth is found in being, not doing.

The Daily Office is a structured time of pausing for prayer and scripture multiple times a day. Scazzero emphasizes that regular pauses allow us to re-center our hearts and align with God's voice, rather than drifting through our days on autopilot. It's about cultivating communion with God amid ordinary moments.

Sabbath, on the other hand, is a 24-hour period of rest and delight. It reflects God's design and His own example in creation. Scazzero explains that Sabbath is a radical act of trust—believing that God is at work even when we cease. It becomes a spiritual reset that nourishes our soul.

Both practices challenge our pace, priorities, and reliance on ourselves. They offer space for joy, rest, and reflection—key ingredients for emotionally healthy spirituality.

Discussion Questions:

1. What has your experience been with spiritual practices like prayer rhythms or Sabbath?
2. How does your current pace of life impact your spiritual and emotional health?
3. What does it mean to you to "stop, rest, delight, and contemplate"?
4. What might be the biggest barrier to embracing the Sabbath?
5. How can you begin incorporating the Daily Office in a simple, meaningful way?
6. What would your week look like if you truly rested for one full day?
7. How do these practices help reorient your heart toward God?

Week 7: Grow Into an Emotionally Mature Adult

Chapter 7

Summary:

Scazzero emphasizes that spiritual maturity must include emotional maturity. He identifies the characteristics of emotional infants, children, adolescents, and adults—highlighting how many people grow older but never grow up emotionally. These maturity levels affect how we love, respond to conflict, and deal with stress.

Emotional adulthood is marked by the ability to love well. It includes healthy boundaries, clear communication, and the capacity to handle disappointment without destructive behavior. Scazzero connects emotional maturity directly to the command of Jesus to love one another deeply.

He introduces tools like "speaking clearly, respectfully, and honestly," and outlines a model for healthy conflict resolution. Emotionally mature adults take responsibility for their feelings and actions while remaining grounded in their identity in Christ.

This chapter is a call to examine how we love and how we relate. Spiritual maturity is not measured by knowledge or activity but by how well we reflect Christ's love in our everyday relationships.

Discussion Questions:

1. How would you describe your current level of emotional maturity?
2. Which stage—infant, child, adolescent, or adult—do you most relate to?
3. What situations tend to trigger emotional immaturity in you?
4. How do you typically respond to relational conflict?
5. What does it mean to love others like Jesus in real, practical terms?
6. Which communication skills do you want to grow in?
7. How can emotional maturity help you live out your faith more fully?

Week 8: Go the Next Step to Develop a Rule of Life

Chapter 8

Summary:

In the final chapter, Scazzero introduces the concept of a "Rule of Life"—a personal framework for organizing your time, relationships, and spiritual practices in a way that helps you remain rooted in Christ. A Rule of Life is not a legalistic checklist, but a pathway to intentional spiritual formation.

He explains that without structure, we default to unhealthy patterns. A Rule of Life helps align our inner world with our outer actions. Scazzero suggests including areas like prayer, rest, relationships, work, and service in your rule, tailoring it to your unique season and calling.

This rule becomes a trellis—something that supports growth and keeps us connected to the Vine (Jesus). Rather than draining us, a well-structured spiritual rhythm fuels peace, purpose, and passion. It is a way to stay grounded and attentive in an overstimulated world.

This final session is an invitation to craft a sustainable way of life with God at the center. It offers a practical and hopeful next step to continue the journey beyond the group.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is your current rhythm of life—chaotic, balanced, or somewhere in between?
2. Have you ever created a Rule of Life before? What was it like?
3. What area of life needs more structure or intentionality right now?
4. How could a personal Rule of Life help you grow emotionally and spiritually?
5. What small changes can you commit to as you begin this process?
6. How will you stay accountable to the Rule of Life you create?