

This group is meant to facilitate discussion and meaningful conversations. The information below is derived from this week's outline.

Weekly Discussion Theme: Sense of Self

- **Leader shares:** A healthy sense of self is essential for emotional well-being, shaping relationships, decisions, and overall happiness. Without a strong sense of self, it becomes easy to fall into unhealthy or even harmful relationships, as a lack of self-awareness and self-worth can lead to dependence on others for validation or acceptance. This can result in poor boundaries, emotional instability, and vulnerability to manipulation. Cultivating a healthy sense of self is especially important in friendships and relationships, as it fosters confidence, resilience, and the ability to form deeper, authentic connections.
- **Example:** Let's say someone gets into a relationship with a person who has unhealthy habits or troubling behavior. Desperately wanting connection, this person ignores the warning signs and even starts picking up some of those same unhealthy habits. When the relationship becomes hurtful, they feel unappreciated and overwhelmed. They may even experience emotional distress and feel like they've lost control. This highlights how important it is to know and value yourself to avoid harmful situations. Even if this hasn't happened to you, understanding these situations can help you build healthier relationships in the future and support others who may need help with their self-esteem.

Group shares:

- What are the risks of relying on someone else for validation?
- How can building a strong sense of self help you avoid unhealthy relationships?
- How can ignoring red flags lead to harmful habits or behaviors?
- **Acknowledge:** THANK YOU for sharing!

Verse: Proverbs 4:23 (NIV): *"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it."*

Scriptural Application: Guarding your heart means being mindful of what shapes your thoughts, emotions, and choices. It's about staying connected to God's love and guidance, which helps you nurture relationships that bring peace and joy. When you value yourself as God does, it becomes easier to set healthy boundaries and surround yourself with people who support your growth. Protecting your heart is an act of love for yourself, allowing you to stay grounded in faith and make decisions that honor both your well-being and your relationships.

Group shares:

- How does neglecting to protect our hearts lead to stress or hurt, or please share if anything else comes to mind?
Acknowledge: THANK YOU for sharing!

10 Simple Ways to Build a Stronger Sense of Self

1. Reflect on your thoughts, values, and emotions.
2. Learn to say no and prioritize your needs.
3. Celebrate your skills and positive qualities.
4. Build relationships with supportive people.
5. Explore hobbies and activities you enjoy.
6. Take ownership of your decisions and learn from them.
7. Understand your feelings and how they influence you.
8. Replace negative self-talk with affirmations.
9. Set small, meaningful goals to build confidence.
10. Reach out to a counselor or mentor for support.

Group Shares: Which step feels most important for you to focus on right now, and why?

Acknowledge: THANK YOU for sharing!

Leader shares: Developing a strong sense of self helps us make better choices and handle challenges with greater clarity and peace. It enables us to trust our instincts, identify what aligns with our values, and confidently walk away from what doesn't. This foundation nurtures emotional stability, helping us respond to setbacks with resilience instead of panic. A strong sense of self also fosters deeper connections with others by encouraging authenticity and mutual respect. By investing in this growth, we cultivate a life rooted in purpose, confidence, and meaningful relationships.

- **Leader shares:** An email will be sent shortly containing today's outline, along with a request to share resources discussed today. Additionally, you'll find essential links for joining the group, as well as links to join our Facebook group or follow us on social media to stay connected.
- **Closing:** As we close our group meeting, I encourage everyone to share anything else in your hearts and minds or to ask for prayer requests.
- **Stay connected:** imperfectpaths.com

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