

The Peacemaker's Virtuous Cycle

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**New experiences demand
new perspectives and skills
throughout a lifetime.**

**My first time around:
Looking outside for the
peace found inside.**





“I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6)

“Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit,
and you shall have peace in me.” (D&C 19:23)

Principles of Peace

It is hard to give what we do not experience.
Yet peace is still possible amidst ongoing conflicts or “bumps.”

We have often been hurt so we avoid making ourselves vulnerable. When we don't share what we really feel, we miss out on a fundamental sense of belonging.

Our native spiritual environment is love, so our soul longs to experience real love.

We have core needs as children of the most Creative Being in the Universe (See Elder Uchtdorf, 2008) that are planted within us to motivate us toward eternal progress.



Understand
Myself

Receive
Tutoring
from God



Seek
Connection
with Others



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Emma Smith, in her final request for a blessing from Joseph:

“I desire the spirit of God to know and understand myself that I might be able to overcome whatever tradition or nature that would not tend to my exaltation in the eternal worlds.”

<https://josephsmithjr.org/emmas-last-blessing/>



1. UNDERSTAND MYSELF

Observe my thoughts

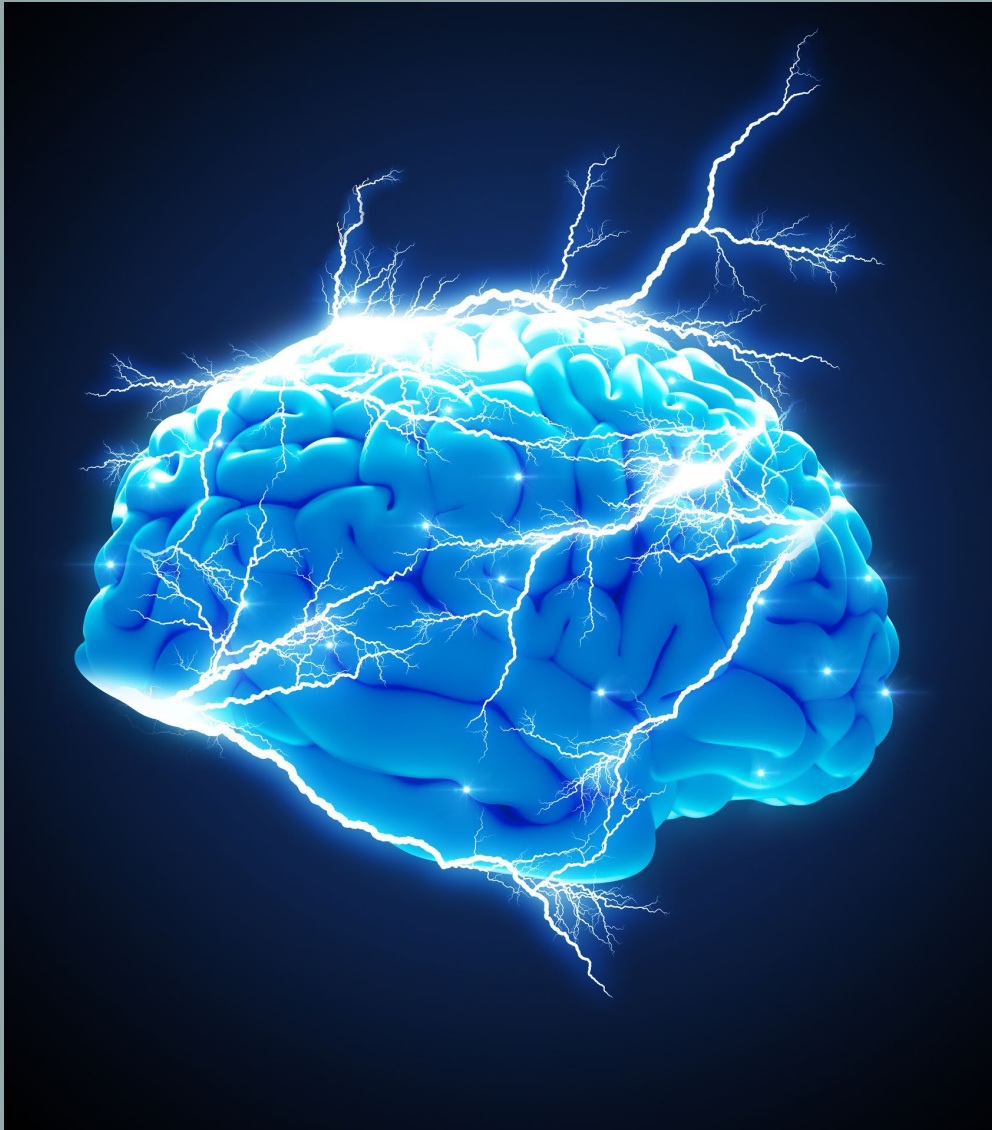
Recognize the different parts of myself: body, mind, & spirit

Recognize my needs

Be honest with myself, God, and others = present my authentic self



YOUR BRAIN



PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS

~3 lbs., made up of water, fat, and cholesterol.
2% body mass, 17% of body's energy



WHAT DOES MY BRAIN DO?

Interprets senses, initiates body movement, and controls behavior.



HOW DO THOUGHTS WORK?

Our brains are thought generators. 12-60,000 thoughts per day. 95% repetitive, 80% negative (NSF, 2005).

We can learn to differentiate where our thoughts, feelings, and ideas are coming from.

AGENCY WITH OUR MINDS

“Your mind is how you, uniquely, experience life. It's responsible for how you think, feel, and choose. And your physical brain merely responds to these unique experiences.

Knowing your mind and brain are separate puts you in the control seat because you can learn to manage your thoughts and actions. Ultimately, it means you can choose what you build into your brain and how you choose to change what's already built in.

When you learn how to manage your mind, you can make feelings of depression, stress, anger, and anxiety work for you instead of against you. You can bring balance back into your brain and life.”

Dr. Caroline Leaf, Neuroscientist



CHALLENGES WITH OUR THINKING

“The law is that the things which we think and the things which we harbor generate our feelings, and these feelings result in our acts which produce the harvest.”


Robert J. Parsons
BYU Speeches




Oversimplifying people & situations




Avoiding painful things.



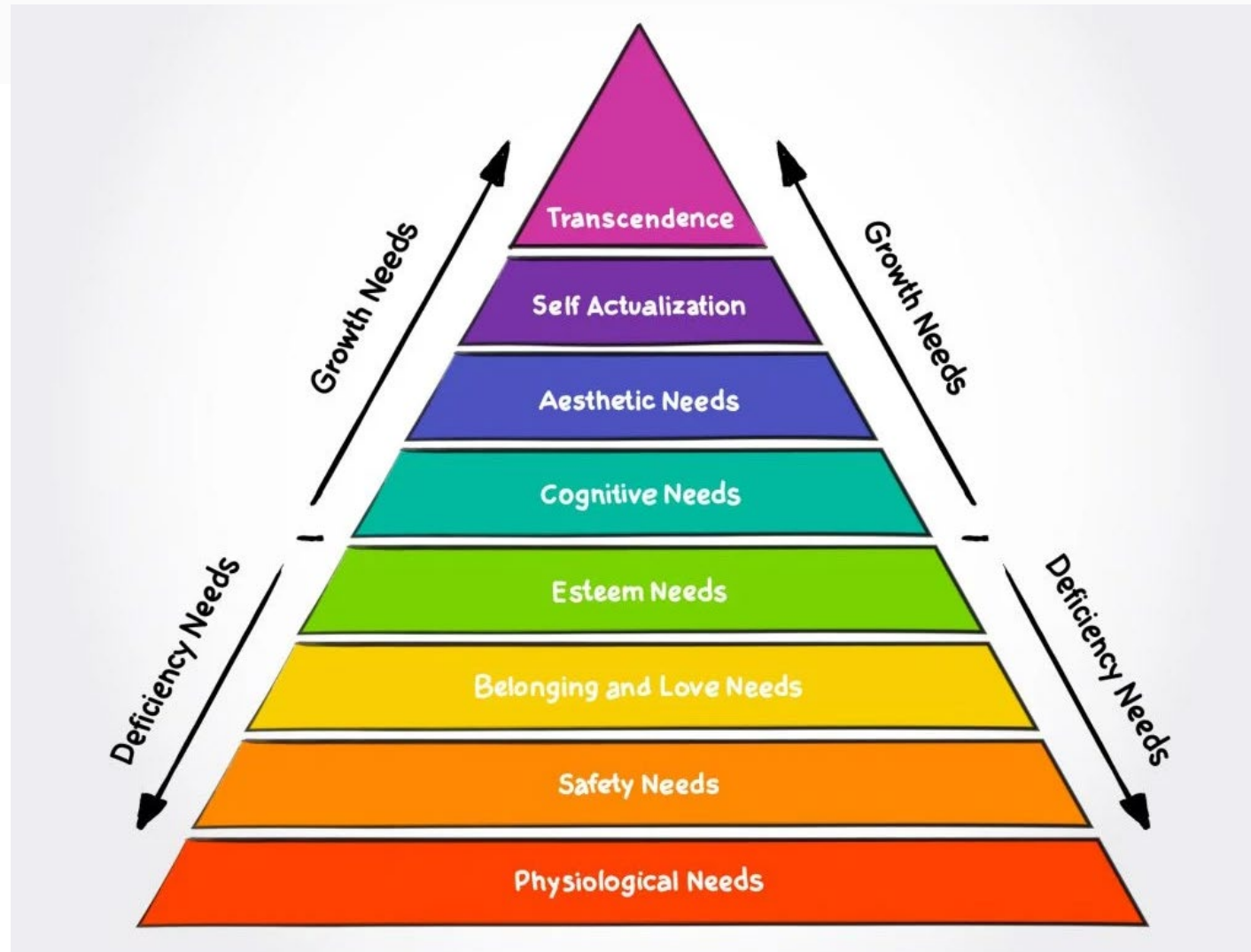
Leaning into fear rather than courage and trust.



Seeking validation horizontally (earth) rather than vertically (heaven)



Using energy to judge ourselves rather than construct the life that we want for ourselves.



A MODIFIED HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Meeting Two Competing Needs

People have two competing identity needs (Brewer 2011).

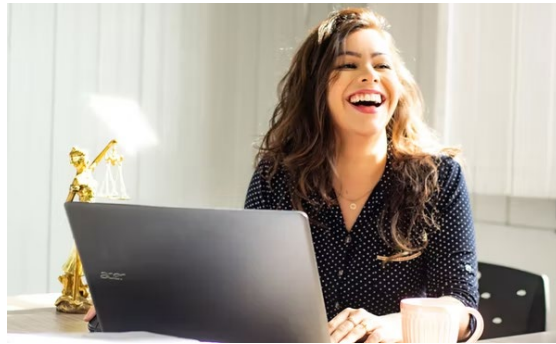
1. **FITTING IN:** A need to belong to a group and feel included.
2. **STANDING OUT:** The need to feel distinct.



Myths about Meeting Human Need



That you (or a special someone) can meet all of your needs alone.



“That anger ever persuades. Hostility builds people up. Contention leads to inspired solutions.”



That material blessings or accomplishments will satisfy the deep cravings for the real belonging we desire.



“I’m just a girl, standing in front a boy, askin him to love her...”

That people don’t share the same basic needs to belong and have a personal sense of identity and mission.

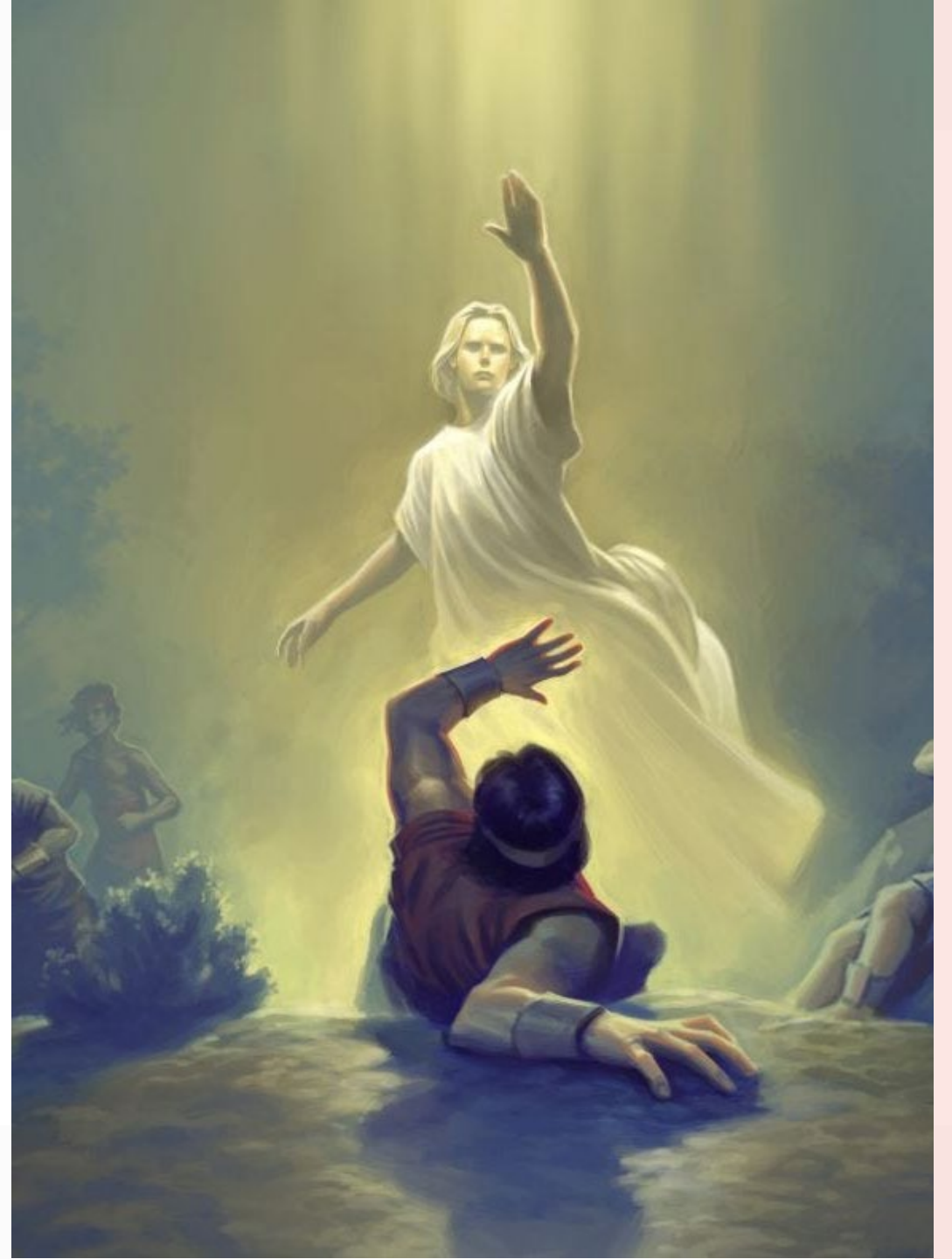
Scriptural Examples of Expressing Personal Need

- Alma praying for his son Alma to come to himself again.
- King Lamoni's father saying he will give away all of his sins to know Christ.
- Abish sharing her testimony when an opportunity presented itself.
- Mary in the Garden—asking the supposed gardener where they have laid the Savior.
- Mary, the mother of Jesus, asking Jesus to perform the miracle of the water into wine.

The woman of Canaan pleading with the Savior for mercy on her daughter:

“And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.”

Matthew 15:22-29



I feel like my basic needs (i.e., food, sleep) are being met.

I feel physically and emotionally safe on regular basis.

I can make and keep friends who accept me as I am.

I get along with most people in my life.

I feel confident and good about myself.

I feel like my life has meaning and purpose.

I feel like I am fulfilling my life mission.

I feel like Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are with me.



Results of the Needs Assessment

What core needs are being met in your life right now?

What needs are not being met in your life right now?

How are you trying to compensate for your unmet needs?

What's holding you back from meeting your needs?





What's something meaningful you're doing in your life right now?

PARTNER EXERCISE:

First person share for 2 minutes. Listener: just listen. No probing questions. After 2 minutes, summarize what you heard.

Switch roles and have the listener be the speaker to answer the same question.



2. RECEIVE TUTORING FROM THE LORD

- ♦ Share honestly with the Lord in your prayers
- ♦ Create an ongoing conversation with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ
- ♦ Listen carefully to what They communicate to you

Prerequisite Foundation



A pure and sincere heart.

No guile/ No masks.

Sincerity and honesty.

“And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication for mine own soul; and all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came I did still raise my voice high that it reached the heavens.”

Enos 1:4



Seeking Personal Revelation about and for Yourself



“Yea, behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart.

Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation.”

Doctrine & Covenants 8:2-3

He will tutor us in the sincere desires of our hearts and give us courage to live the lives we were meant to live.

Methods for Tutoring Us



Experiences of Contrast

“It must needs be, that there is opposition in all things.”



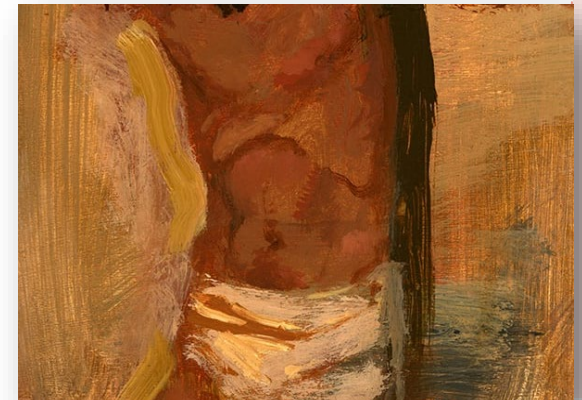
Moments of Peace & Joy

“Nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy.”



Challenges

“Help thou, my unbelief.”



Jesus' Life (An Exemplar)

“I thirst.”



Tutored by God with an Open, Honest Heart



3. SEEK CONNECTION WITH OTHERS

Love

Connection

Belonging

Purpose

Meaning in Life

Vision for Future

Seeking Connection with Others by Addressing Conflicts



Addressing Culture & Bias



Talking through Sins and Shortcomings



Eating with Public Enemies



Working through Family Issues



Addressing Doubt and Disbelief

1. All Difficult Conversations Begin with Listening

Listen to Yourself

- ♦ Get clear on what's going on inside of you.
- ♦ Take time to observe rather than judge yourself
- ♦ Translate what you feel into core needs

Listen to the Other Person

- ♦ Listen with curiosity for how the person sees the world.
- ♦ Reflect back what you hear the other person saying.
- ♦ Try to identify core needs that the person provides evidence for but doesn't necessarily share directly.

2. Am I sharing authentically?

What did I say?

1. What's the story I share with others?
2. Why do I share my story that way?
3. Am I telling real stories or just what I think others want to hear?
4. What parts am I leaving out?

What did I mean?

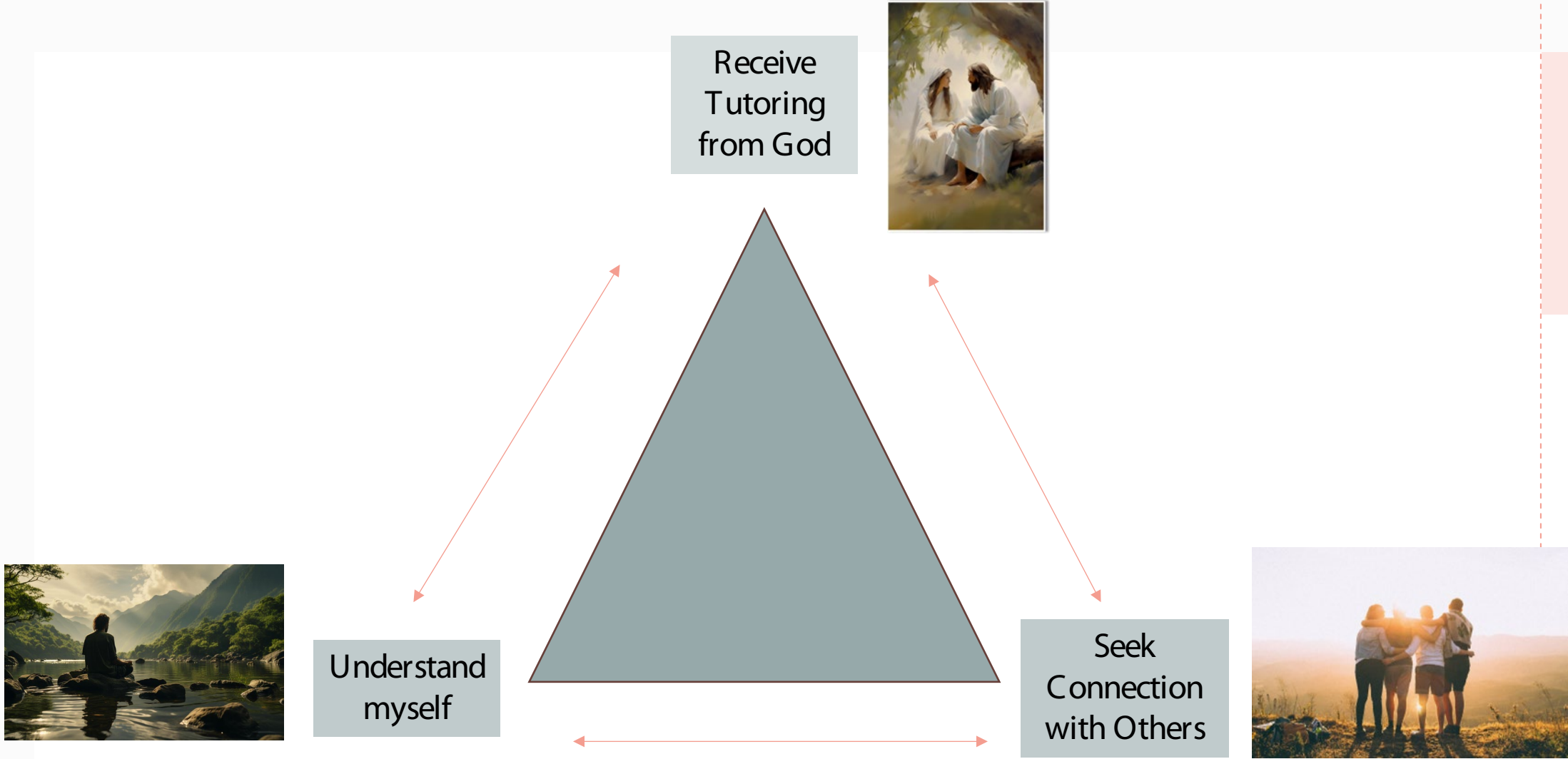
- ♦ What are the core needs embedded in my story?
- ♦ What am I afraid of? Proud of? Hurt?
- ♦ How can I share more authentically?
- ♦ What would help me become more comfortable sharing my own story and hearing others' true stories?

PARTNER EXERCISE:

What's something you want to work on in your life?

- Take turns sharing your answers to this question with your same partners. 2 minutes each.
- Listeners: Listen attentively. Paraphrase what you hear and ask clarifying questions. Do not turn the conversation over to your shared experience. Just focus on trying to understand the other person.
- Speakers: Speak from your own experience without blaming or accusing others for the hard things you've recently experienced.





The Peacemaker's Virtuous Cycle

Returning
Repairing
Renewing



“If you’re discouraged, look towards the Savior. Love others and lift them up. By helping others, you help yourself. You find strength by giving strength to others. Lend those around you your strength and your compassion.

Draw near to your Heavenly Father and He will draw near to you. I promise you this. He is real. Heavenly Father is real. His Son, Jesus Christ, is real.

Jesus Christ is your strength. He loves you. He helps you. He gives you strength. I know Him. He’s there. Jesus Christ is real. I bear witness of Him. He is real. He’s there. You can trust Him.”
-Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf

**“Finding Strength in the Atonement of Jesus Christ,”
Ensign College Devotional
November 14th, 2024**

