



# 4 WAYS TO BE A GENERATIONAL BONDAGE-BREAKER

*Don't want to pass on dysfunction to your kids? Read this.*

DYSFUNCTION DOES NOT HAVE TO BE YOUR LEGACY. YOU MAY HAVE BEEN BORN INTO IT, MARRIED INTO IT, OR CREATED IT YOURSELF, BUT IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE YOUR DESTINY OR YOUR IDENTITY. VICTORY IS ALWAYS ON THE TABLE.

SARAH MAE, *THE COMPLICATED HEART: LOVING EVEN WHEN IT HURTS*

**A COUPLE NOTES FIRST:**

## What We Can and Can't Control

We can't control what our children will choose as they grow up, but what we can do is surrender our own dysfunction to God, face it, and work through it so we don't put it on our children as much as we would if we didn't deal with it. We are not responsible for our children's responses to us, but we are responsible for our part – our choices and willingness to follow God even when it's hard.

## We Will Fail

“But *when* you unwittingly fail and do not observe all these commandments, which the LORD has spoken to Moses...” Numbers 15:22 (NASB, italicize mine)

Y’all, *when* we fail, that’s what the Scripture says, *when*. This is why need Jesus! We will fail, we will mess up, make mistakes, and make the wrong choice sometimes, *but* we have the throne of grace to approach, and we can approach it with confidence.

“Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16 (NASB)

Help in time of need? That’s me, every day, and yet God’s mercy doesn’t wear out. Thank God!

## Our Kids Will Fail

See above and apply. :)

# 4 Ways to Be a Generational Bondage-Breaker

## Deal with Your Core Lies

We all have lies we believe about ourselves and others and God.

One of my mentors, and the creator of the core lies concept, Dave Bowman, says, “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.”

Our core lies are not something we are consciously choosing, but they are a very powerful influence over our life. Here’s an example:

I don’t believe I’m good enough (***deeply rooted belief, not necessarily conscience of it***), therefore I compensate by having to be perfect (***this is a subconscious goal I make***). In order for me to accomplish my perfectionism, I have to be in control, and I become controlling (***behavior***). When I am not in control, when someone blocks my goal of being in control or takes my control, I get angry (***emotion***).

**BELIEF • GOAL • BEHAVIOR • EMOTION**

The key to discovering your core lie/s is to pay attention to your emotions and what sets you off; what are the landmines of your heart? When are you sad or anxious or depressed? When are we fearful? These are all clues to help you discover and deal with your core lie/s.

### **Be Alert to These Three Key Emotions:**

Anger/Frustration – Blocked Goal

Anxiety/Fear – Uncertain Goal

Depression – A feeling of failure and hopelessness (we are not talking about a chemical imbalance) – Unattainable Goal

When you experience these emotions, write down what preceded them. Keep a journal of the circumstances or words that seemed to cause the emotion. You will soon begin to see a pattern and begin to gain an understanding into a deeper truth of what is really going on in your heart.

Ask God to help you and show you what the truth is under the emotion. Listen and watch for him to show you. Once you've identified your beliefs, your core lie/s, you can begin the process of repenting where needed, healing, replacing the lie with the 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), and walking in freedom.

Remember, the enemy wants to steal and kill and destroy us but Jesus came to give us life to the full (John 10:10). The enemy wants us bound up and plundered, but if we let Jesus unbind us, if we surrender to the work of facing our pain and lies and sin, we will no longer be able to be stolen from. Truth will reign.

**“No one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house...” Mark 3:27**

*“Deal with and repent of your own core lies so you don’t demand from, and damage, your children as much.”*

*-CATHY BOWMAN, DAVE’S WIFE AND WISE MENTOR*

## **Forgive and Ask Forgiveness**

There are so many examples I could give you of the **many** humbling times I’ve had to ask my kids for forgiveness. **Oh so many**. But in my effort to encourage you to forgive and ask forgiveness, because it is a key to bondage-breaking, here’s just one example:

I blew up at my daughter.

I was already on my last nerve with her not listening to me.

“Did you do what I asked?” “Yes.” You did this, this, and this?” “Yes.”

And then I check, and she didn’t actually do the thing. She meant well, but she wasn’t tuning her ear to my instruction. She was distracted by what **she** wanted to do.

I was mad.

I yelled at her and I was harsh and **I was just so mad**.

I hadn't been feeling well, plus I was irritated in general, and her not listening tipped me over. But really, my anger had been building. She just happened to be the one to get my wrath.

I went and sat and calmed down and felt kinda awful for losing it on her. **"Lord, help me."**

I thought the situation over in my mind and it occurred to me that I showed her zero grace. Yes, she did something wrong, and that needed to be addressed, but I was too harsh. I could have handled it better. Do I ask forgiveness so quickly after being the yelling mom?

Yes, because **it is grace that always changes me and gentleness that encourages me to be better and to keep on.**

I called her to me after she was finished doing a job I had set her to do as a consequence for her not listening. I asked her if she would sit with me. She did. I wrapped my arms around her and I said, "What you did, not listening to me, was wrong, but I shouldn't have yelled at you; I was too harsh. I hated being yelled at as a girl and it never helped me or made me want to change. You know what helps me? Grace and gentleness. In fact King David said to God in Psalm 18, **"It's your gentleness that makes me great."** Will you forgive me for yelling and over-reacting?"

"Yes", she said, "And I was wrong and I'm sorry too. Will you forgive me?" "Yes!" I said emphatically. Her big eyes grew wide and sweet, and then she squeezed me. "I'll be right back!" She hopped off me and a minute later I got a text with pictures saying she loved me so much and forgave me.

It was the most perfect thing, and when I say perfect, I mean the most **complete**. We forgave each other and all was well.

I love these moments and I don't know why I ever doubt them. When I obey God, when I tune **my** ear to His ways and His instruction, there is good fruit.

Sometimes I think, "I can't possibly ask forgiveness again. They'll get sick of it." No. No they don't. Because I mean it when I say it and we all work together to be better.. to treat each other with love and respect. We don't ask for forgiveness just to move along and say the right thing. Our spirits compel us to love and forgive and be gracious and gentle because God is that way with us, and His Spirit is in us. We change, we mature and get better at loving because He is doing that good work inside us.

**"You have also given me the shield of Your salvation, And Your right hand upholds me; And Your gentleness makes me great." Psalm 18:35 (NASB)**

**"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)**

## Share the Hard Parts

The truth will set you free...**and help set others free.**

Sharing the hard and vulnerable parts of our lives with our children can be intimidating, confusing, and scary. But it's worth it.

I'll never forget when I felt compelled by God to share my abortion story with my 12-year old daughter. ***What? How on earth do I do that?*** But then I remembered that my mom never shared her abortion stories with me, so when I ended up pregnant at 16 years-old, she checked-out. She didn't know how to handle it or me; she'd never dealt with her pain and therefore couldn't let me into it in a healthy way.

So with trepidation and a shaky stomach, obeyed.

I sat with her on my bed and had her read my abortion story (it's on my blog). After she read it, she cried, and we hugged and we talked and it was hard but now there's freedom.

Being so vulnerable with her was so tender for the both of us. But now, she gets to join in the ministry God has called me to, speaking and writing about what God has done and what He does and how gentle and relentless and passionate and kind He is.

And if she ever comes home and at 16 tells me she's pregnant, we'll put our arms around her and tell her just how much we love her, and how our love never changes. We'll tell her she's brave, and we'll tell her how much God loves her. And we'll support her and be there for her. And if she were to choose an abortion, we'd be there still. We wouldn't support it, we'd grieve and lament, but we'd love her still. Our arms are forever open to her.

The hard stories, the truth of our lives once faced, will open the doors of freedom to our children and future generations. When we deal and then heal and then tell, we come out of the dark and into the light.

There is no more secrecy. Living in the Light is what we are called to, and it changes everything.

## Pray to See Your Blind Spots

Have you ever been driving and you go to pull out or change lanes and you nearly get hit by another car because you didn't see them? They were in your blind spot, and because you didn't look carefully, you almost got pummeled. This is how it is with our personal blind spots, if we don't pay attention and ask God to help us see them, we could get hurt and we'll certainly hurt others.

The reason I didn't put discovering your blind spots with core lies is because you can be pretty emotionally and spiritually healthy and still have blind spots from time to time, it's just human. But if we want to be bondage-breakers, we need to be on the lookout for our blind spots, and the thing is, we can't do it alone. We need God to show us.

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart;  
Try me and know my anxious thoughts;  
<sup>24</sup>And see if there be any hurtful way in me,  
And lead me in the everlasting way.”  
Psalm 139:23-24 (NASB)*

“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 7:5 (NASB)

I can’t search my own heart well because when I try, I get neurotic. Asking God is a grace and a relief because He knows every piece of our hearts, every crevice and crack, and He is the only one who knows how to rightly navigate it.

Ask Him. He will show you as needed.

## BONUS: Pray!

At the end of it all, we must pray. Pray for God to break generational bonds. Pray to be shown where there is healing and repentance needed. Ask Him. He wants to heal us and set bound up places free. It’s why Jesus came to earth and died and rose again, to set the captives free.

So pray.

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free...” Luke 4:18 (NIV)*

## Want to go deeper?

Read the story of how Sarah learned to love and forgive her alcoholic mother **and** learn more about the process of generational bondage-breaking, dealing with core lies, setting boundaries, and more in *The Complicated Heart: Loving Even When it Hurts*.

Get it on Amazon [HERE](#), Barnes & Noble [HERE](#), or wherever books are sold.

## About the Author

Sarah Mae is the author of several books, including *Desperate: Hope for the Mom Who Needs to Breathe* (with Sally Clarkson). She resides in Lancaster County, PA with her husband and her three children.

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