

Title: Deeping the Relationship with Our Emotions

Daniel Stillwell, PhD, LMFT

BRIEF BIO:

Daniel Stillwell, PhD, LMFT is a systemic therapist seeing clients primarily in the Charlotte, NC area. He has been a professor and a supervisor, as well as presenter and scholar. He strives to ensure his work empowers people and systems to be congruent with their values and to align the abstract with the concrete. He was one of the final Certified Pastoral Counselors under the previous organization structure, and his desire to integrate theological reflection and meaning making both in and out of religious frameworks has been helpful to his clients.

Description: This presentation is at the intersection of emotional theory and clinical tools. The presentation will start off with an overview of what emotions are from a biopsychospiritual perspective: essentially the body communicating to the mind through sensations we call “feelings.” The metaphor of emotions as visitors will be used to articulate the 5 steps of emotional mindfulness: notice an emotion is occurring, recognize which emotion(s) are present, listen to the purpose or message of the emotion, demonstrate gratitude to the emotion, and let it go away. Since the purpose or message of the emotions is the least understood and utilized aspect of this process, the presentation will lay out a very useable chart participants can take with them to help clients grow in their emotional intelligence. The chart focuses on the primary and universal emotions of sadness, anger, joy, fear, and “I feel bad” feelings. They will all be unpacked on the dimensions of timeframe, catalyst, and message. The messages are then connected to human purposes/needs the self has and how the body participates in meeting those needs. Nuances such as feelings about feelings, the importance of perception, and the continuum of each emotion will be expanded upon. Avenues for how to channel each emotion’s energy will be discussed. While this tool has been honed over years with a variety of clients from a variety of backgrounds, cultural and contextual factors will also be addressed. Participants in the presentation will also be encouraged to discuss their own experiences in concert or difference with the

Learning Objectives:

- 1) Conceptualize emotions as the body speaking to the mind.
- 2) Interpret emotional messages as meeting core needs.
- 3) Facilitate emotional communication within relationships.