

Title: Starting a Campaign of Immanuel Stories

November 24, 2011 (Happy Thanksgiving!)

Greetings all,

We are starting a campaign of Immanuel stories. I will eventually add a whole section about Immanuel stories to the “Immanuel Approach, Revisited” essay on the Immanuel approach website (\*\*Note: this is now a chapter in the big lion book\*\*), but the very short summary is that Immanuel stories are good, and they should be included as a regular part of the Immanuel approach (to emotional healing and to life). When you have a healing encounter with the living presence of Jesus, formulating the experience into a coherent narrative, and then sharing the story with others helps to deepen and consolidate the beneficial effects for you. The specific traumatic memory still gets healed, whether or not you formulate the experience into an Immanuel story and then share it with others, but formulating and sharing the Immanuel story helps you begin to think differently about how to respond when other traumatic memories get triggered in the future. Formulating and sharing the Immanuel story actually increases the beneficial brain changes associated with Immanuel healing, causing memory “updates” in the parts of your brain that carry information about how to respond to different situations that you might encounter. If you formulate and share the Immanuel story after each healing encounter, when you get triggered in the future you will become more and more likely to immediately think, “Hey, I’m triggered, but I know what to do about it! Instead of being miserable and fighting with the triggers, I’ll do that Immanuel thing, connect with Jesus, and get healed.”

Furthermore, it is beneficial to the listener to hear others share about their Immanuel encounters. Not only do these stories provide encouragement, build faith, and fulfill a Biblical mandate (“Remember what I have done for you,...tell your children about My faithfulness...” etc), but it is also it also produces beneficial brain changes. Just as with *sharing* Immanuel stories, *Hearing* others tell stories about how they respond to triggering with the Immanuel approach to emotional healing, and how they respond to other situations with the Immanuel approach to life, also causes memory “updates” in the parts of your brain that carry information about how to respond to different situations that you might encounter. Good Immanuel stories actually provide a form of modeling. When you encounter a similar situation, the “What do I do now?” part of your brain will remember the story, and respond with something along the lines of, “When Dr. Wilder encountered this situation, he did that Immanuel thing with Jesus, and it turned out pretty well. Let’s try that plan, instead of just fighting with the trigger.”

All this to say that we will be sending out a steady flow of Immanuel stories. Hopefully this will model a behavior we want to encourage (getting in the *habit* of *routinely* sharing with each other about our encounters with Immanuel), provide examples of what Immanuel stories look like, provide encouragement, and provide narrative modeling with respect to “this is how you might respond if you encounter the kind of situation described in this particular Immanuel story.”

Blessings, and have a happy Thanksgiving,

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