

Rock Solid

The Emotionally Healthy Leader

BLOG

September 2013 – The math is simple. A handful of grandkids + water hazard + ball retriever = instant fun!

A few weeks ago, Pattie and I spent a couple days with our sons and their families in Palm Desert, CA, and while it can get a bit toasty (115—but it's a dry heat, right?), there's nothing like some vacation time. Not to mention that packing is a breeze: board shorts, flip-flops, and sunscreen and you're out the door!

One night after dinner, after the final foursome had made their way around the local golf course, I rallied the grandkids and my all-too-often-used golf ball retriever and trotted out to the nearest water hazard. From there, we trolled for golf balls. Basically, it's the summer version of hunting for Easter eggs and each grandkid gets an extra scoop of Chunky Monkey if they find a Titleist ProV1 for me!

I love looking for golf balls with my grandkids, but there is something else I love looking for. As a student of leadership, I love trolling for people who, in their writings, have captured what it means to lead from the inside out—what it means to lead with their lives. I'm always on the hunt for someone who brings a new level of understanding about the reality that first God works IN you, and then THROUGH you.

Our activity for God can only properly flow from a life with God. We cannot give what we do not possess.

Several years ago, I read a book that took me to that place, that new level of understanding. The book carries the moniker *Emotionally Healthy Spiritually*, and in its pages, Peter Scazzero argues the vital link between spiritual maturity and emotional maturity.

Here are a few verbatim quotes. I believe they are worth some reflection—both for your sake and for the sake of those who look to you for leadership.

- Christian spirituality, without an integration of emotional health, can be deadly—to yourself, your relationship with God, and the people around you.
- But work *for* God that is not nourished by a deep interior life *with* God will eventually be contaminated by other things such as ego, power, needing approval of and from others, and buying into the wrong ideas of success and the mistaken belief that we can't fail.
- Emotional health powerfully anchors me in the love of God by affirming that I am worthy of feeling, worthy of being alive, and lovable even when I am brutally honest about the good, the bad, and the ugly deep beneath the surface of my iceberg.
- One of our greatest obstacles in knowing God is our own lack of self-knowledge. So we end up wearing a mask—before God, ourselves, and other people. And we can't become self-aware if we cut off our humanity out of fear of our feelings.

- Our fear of bringing secrets and sin into the light, however, drives many people to prefer the illusion that if they don't think about it, it somehow goes away. It doesn't.
- There is no greater disaster in the spiritual life than to be immersed in unreality. In fact, the true spiritual life is not an escape from reality but an absolute commitment to it.
- As emotionally mature Christian adults, we recognize that loving well is the essence of true spirituality.

Potent stuff, huh?

Perhaps we share a common prayer: *God, raise up a generation of leaders who walk openly and honestly about who they are and the places that are still works-in-progress, allowing the weight of their ever-transformed lives to bring Christ-honoring influence to their spheres of leadership.*

What are you discovering about leading from the inside out?

Join the conversation. Post your comments [below](#).