

## HEALING JOURNEY DECEMBER 27, 2021

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### TESTIMONY NIGHT

#### **Gary Thomas: TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS**

Everyone at some point in life experiences a toxic relationship. It may be with a friend, a family member, a co-worker or a life partner. It doesn't matter so much what the relationship is. The importance is in recognizing what is a toxic relationship and what to do about it. Left unchecked, may cause you to repeatedly find yourself in toxic relationships – relationships that rob you of true happiness, of living the life you desire.

What are signs of a toxic relationship? Think of a person in your life whom you either presently suspect has toxic effects on you, or someone from your past you did. As yourself, how many of the following toxic traits are evident in that relationship:

- They are destroying who you are
- They take the energy right out of you when you're together and/or in your thoughts
- They are ruled by selfishness and spite
- They drain you rather than encourage you
- They use people, instead of loving them
- They are seemingly addicted to self-righteous rash judgment, therefore frequently fighting with people instead of enjoying and appreciating them.
- They may be jealous of other people's peace, lifestyle, family relations, and friendships.
- They spend much of their time and effort trying to bring people down to their level of misery, rather than blessing others with joy and encouragement.
- They often want to control you, and it may feel like they basically want you to stop being you.
- They drain you and distract you

Take note of what Gary Thomas says about such people and what your response should be toward them.

#### **GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. How important is it to you to have healthy friendships in your life?
2. Have you ever experienced, or are you presently experiencing, a toxic relationship based on today's teaching? If so, describe what that is like for you.
3. What response should you take toward such relationships? How did Jesus respond to such?
4. Is that response easy for you to adopt? If not, what keeps you from taking the steps you know you should take?

Check out this quiz: <https://www.loveisrespect.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/HR-Quiz-final.pdf>