

# FAQ's on *The EH Discipleship Course*

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## 1. Why does *The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Course* need to be done as a centralized Course and not a Small Group curriculum?

The answer in one word is *quality*. For years the material in *The EH Discipleship Course* was used in small groups. We found, however, that people only did parts of the Course (e.g. 4 weeks instead of 8 weeks), skipped the more difficult parts (e.g. developing a first-hand relationship with Jesus with silence/stillness and Scripture twice a day through the Course), and were being led by people with little, if any, experience in the material. While this approach introduced people to some new ideas about Jesus and discipleship, it was not transformational. Moving it to a Course has proven to bear enormous long-term fruit around the world. Remember, small groups are critically important to church life, but their purposes are connection, pastoral care, and light discipleship (depending on the leader). *The EHD Course* is meant to equip people in a discipleship that *deeply* changes lives. That requires time, commitment, and trained leaders.

## 2. I just bought the EH Discipleship Kit. What are my next steps?

- a. Review the content in the Kit
- b. Begin reading the book - *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*
- c. Watch this video found on YouTube that gives a 9-minute overview: [What is Emotionally Healthy Discipleship?](#)
- d. Attend a Live Training “*Start a Revolution! Lead the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Course for Maximum Impact*” held monthly and experience a Course session with Pete.

## 3. I notice *The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship* sessions are 2-hours long. How can I best do it in 90 minutes?

There are a number of ways to do this:

- You can skip the break time.
- Not all the questions in each Session have equal weight. As you become familiar with the material, you should be able to do this.
- You can summarize the Bible study time in *The Emotionally Healthy Relationships Course*.
- You can break up the Table Groups more into smaller groups of 2 or 3 people more often, thereby shortening the time from larger discussion groups at tables of 6 to 9 people.

Be sure to look at the sample schedule on our website in the Coaching Network (<http://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/coach>) to help you with this. A two-hour, or even a two-hour and fifteen-minute block of time builds a relaxed break into the evening. This is a great community builder, especially for the Table Small Groups. Our experience is that once people start the Course they want to meet for more time, not less.

**4. What do I do with SG Table leaders who have not been through the Course? Should I do a pilot group with them first?**

If you can meet with them and do the entire Course, that is great. In many cases, however, that will not be possible. What is more feasible in most settings is to have each of your SG Table Leaders go through the materials on their own *before* the Course and then meet with them before the Course actually begins. At that point, you do a Small Group Table Leader Training in a one-hour block of time. (This can be found under Free Resources in the Coaching Network <http://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/coach> ) I think it is important to frame your work with Table Leaders as leadership development in their lives, as you are giving them more focused time and training throughout the Course.

Give yourself a lot of grace the first time you do each Course. It took me 2 to 3 times, with each Course, before I really felt like the Table Small Group quality was high (along with my leadership as the Point Leader).

Remember, this is your first time as the Point Leader and it is very different than teaching a class or leading a small group. Moreover, the content is probably very new and challenging to your church and the people attending.

**5. What do I do if my Senior/Lead pastor is not into it? How involved should the Senior Pastor be?**

If your church is over 75 or 100 people, it is highly unlikely the Lead Pastor can spearhead *The EH Discipleship Course (Part 1 & 2)*. Why? It requires too much time, focus, and attention from the Point Leader. What you need is permission to bring this level of discipleship into the church. This material is going to deeply impact people, especially if you do a high-quality job with it. The Lead Pastor needs to say “ok” for this. But we recommend you begin by calling it a Pilot for the first year – doing both Courses – and then evaluating the fruitfulness. You may want to even call this Pilot for a second year before deciding you want to make this a permanent part of your church discipleship. See the image below for the 4 levels of church engagement. Moving to “Continue” on Level 3 below is a powerful means to help build an on-going discipleship culture out of which the church does her mission.



**6. How do I overcome some people’s resistance to “contemplative spirituality” as talked about in the *EH Spirituality Course*?**

A contemplative spirituality is about a slowed down spirituality of being with Jesus, focusing on surrendering our wills to His love in any and every situation, to practicing the spiritual disciplines of silence, solitude, and unceasing prayer, to resting attentively in the presence of God, and to understanding our lives as a journey of transformation to greater and greater loving union with Jesus. The roots of this tradition go back to Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist and Jesus in the desert. While both parts of *The EH Discipleship Course* are deeply rooted in the evangelical tradition with a passion for mission, Scripture, and the priesthood of all believers, a slowed down spirituality with silence and solitude as core spiritual practices is not a strength within our tradition. Thus, you will notice we draw from a deep well going back 2,000 years in church history. For an excellent overview to understand church history, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79Y8L5RwkVY&t=16s> where I give a 20-minute understanding of church history from the book of Acts thru the last 2,000 years and the importance of learning from the global church.

**7. How is spending time in silence different from Eastern meditation, New Age practices, or secular programs on mindfulness?**

We should not be surprised that other religions utilize the practice of silence and solitude. God created all of us with a longing for Him, and for a spirituality that includes those classic practices. Many other faiths also have communal worship, sacred texts or scriptures, and spiritual disciplines, etc. The significant difference between Christian meditation and other kinds of meditation is that we are not attempting to empty our minds into nothingness or to achieve an altered state of consciousness. Instead, we practice silence to focus our minds on God and to spend time in His presence. This type of prayer is not new or New Age. Its roots extend as far back in Scripture as Moses and Elijah,

continue into the New Testament with John the Baptist and Jesus, and have persisted throughout more than 2,000 years of Christian history. In silence, we are simply being with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moreover, this kind of prayer is part of our larger prayer life that includes worship, intercession, confession, etc.

**8. Are the Courses suitable/appropriate for youth groups?**

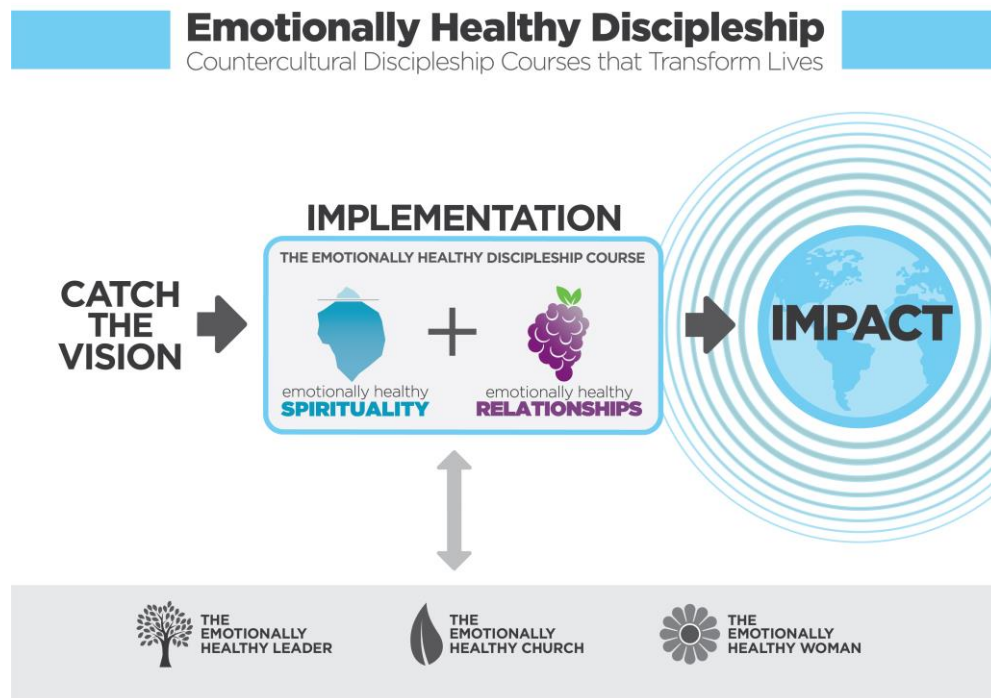
Yes. They have worked very well at our own church here at New Life when the Youth Pastor and/or Adult Youth Leaders formed tables with youth between 15-18 years old. Surprisingly, young people connect deeply with the weighty themes of *The EH Spirituality Course* (e.g. Go Back to Go Forward, Journey through the Wall, Grief and Loss). They are well acquainted with pain and brokenness. And they find the 8 Skills in *The Emotionally Healthy Relationships Course* immediately applicable. What you find is after the youth go through these Courses, they will bring their parents. Just be sure parents and their teens sit at different tables. Why? So they can talk freely!

**9. Where do the other EH books – *EH Leader*, *EH Woman*, and *The EH Church* – fit in?**

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality is a paradigm based on theological truths that have implications for every area of life – worship, preaching, recreation, art, music, marriage, sexuality, money, etc. For this reason, we want churches to set in place *The EH Discipleship Courses*. This provides the base of the detailed, expanded applications found in the other books. These books also reflect our on-going biblical reflection out of our local church context over this 21-year period:

- [\*The Emotionally Healthy Leader\*](#) (2015) – This book is the application of EHS to a leader’s life, touching on areas of planning and decision-making, culture and team building, power and wise boundaries, and ending and new beginnings. It also contains Pete’s latest, fullest treatment of Sabbath, the shadow, marriage/singleness and loving union with Jesus. The fruit of eight years of work, *The EH Leader* has become a standard text for seminaries and leadership training programs around the world. Leadership or teams, church boards, and many leadership development classes study this book – chapter by chapter – in 1-hour blocks. The Coaching Network has several resources including a free study guide. [www.emotionallyhealthy.org/coach](http://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/coach)
- [\*The Emotionally Healthy Woman\*](#) (2011)– This book provides an expanded theology of differentiation (“Know yourself that you may know God”) and an excellent companion to the *EH Relationships Course*. A number of critical themes are explored here that are essential for mature relationships - overfunctioning, faulty thinking, lying, blaming, dying to the wrong things, being afraid of what others think. At New Life, we recommend it to every leader, male or female. This material is studied in small groups and classes.

- [\*The Emotionally Healthy Church\*](#) (2003, Updated and Expanded, 2015). This book won the Gold Medallion award in 2003. Written for pastors and leaders, it provides the most comprehensive biblical treatment of emotional healthy spirituality as a strategy for discipleship that deeply changes lives. If you are a preacher/teacher, this book provides the full biblical treatment of numerous themes touched on in the other books – e.g. the gift of limits, enlarging your soul through grief and loss, making incarnation your model for loving well.



**10. I want to expose our whole church to EH Discipleship. What do you think about preaching a series on EH Discipleship to launch the Courses?**

This is a fine thing to do as long as you have a larger strategy for integrating both parts of the Course so that the message content can be worked into peoples’ lives. This is a slow process and training is necessary (see Question 1 about why *The EH Discipleship Course* was not written for small groups in homes). It is great preaching material. In fact, you can easily do sermon series on each topic! (See examples on our website at [http://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/media/sermons/.](http://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/media/sermons/))

**11. We are a small church and don’t have enough people to take different roles (Point Leader, Administrator, Table Leader, etc.).**

Collapse the roles. You as the Point Leader might be able to serve as the Administrator and overseer of the two or three Table Groups. Keep it simple.

**12. Which part of the Course do I need to start with first?**

You can choose. Both are fine. I prefer *EH Spirituality* with its emphasis on loving God

and strong emphasis on the Daily Office, yet the great felt need in the culture is relationships. And now that the Daily Office is so integrated into *EH Relationships*, many churches are starting there.

**13. We are a church plant. How do you suggest we integrate the Course?**

We would recommend you have your core group go through each part of the Course twice so that it gets into the DNA of your church before you begin. Then make it an expectation for each person as they come into your church, running the Course regularly, depending on the pace of growth of your community.

**14. What else do we do for discipleship after the two parts of *EH Discipleship Course*?**

It is important to remember that *The EH Discipleship Course* is an *introduction* to a discipleship that deeply changes lives. Yes, it is a serious introduction, but you will need to think through what you want to build around it to supplement your small group ministry. Consider the tree below as a way of framing your discussion:



I find the graphic helpful to frame how I look at the larger discipleship picture of our church and how EHS fits into that. It is not the only thing we do in discipleship, of

course, but it informs/impacts how we do *all* our discipleship.

**15. Does everyone need their own materials - *EHS book/Workbook/Day by Day for The EHS Course and the Workbook/Day by Day for The EH Relationships Course*?**

Yes. This is serious discipleship and a contrast with simply coming to a class to listen or a small group. The \$20-\$25 people will need to pay for the materials are minimal when we consider what people invest in their careers, educations, and recreation. It is also a one-time investment as some people may take the Courses more than once. We recommend you provide scholarships for those who are only able to pay part of the costs.

**16. Is there a way to watch the videos on-demand vs. a DVD? Is there a digital download? Can I make copies of the Course DVDs to distribute to leaders or my church?**

The video presentations for each session are available wherever books/DVDs are sold or by digital video through sites such as: CBD.com, amazon.com, vimeo.com, Gotothehub.com, and studygateway.com. We recommend you buy a few copies to share among your leaders. The rights to the DVD's are owned by Zondervan so, sadly to say, the making of copies is not legal.

**17. What do you think if we switch the order of the Sessions in the Course?**

Please do not! The Course order was developed very intentionally and thoughtfully over many years to meet our objective of *introducing* people in a broad paradigm of discipleship with a theology and language that enables you to build mature disciples and leaders over time. It is not the end but a beginning. Each of the 8 Sessions, in both parts of the Course, could easily be extended to 3-4 weeks. There is greater depth you can do with each theme and/or skill. Our purpose is the “Tree” graphic you can see in question 14. If you want to go deeper, for example, in the Rule of Life and provide a coach for every person in your class, make that a different class or group.

**18. How do we prevent being over saturated with “Emotionally Healthy” material?**

It is important to keep the vision focused on Jesus and the particular mission of your church. EH Discipleship is simply one means to help people deeply connect with Jesus and get moving in their relationship with Him. But like anything powerful, it can easily become a new idolatry. So, for example, be sure you to preach a balanced diet from Scripture – e.g. books, themes, etc. I would intentionally preach sermons on books such as Revelation or Psalms, and then on themes such as knowing the will of God, the life of Elijah. But as you probably now realize, a commitment to authenticity, brokenness, weakness, a deep inner life with Jesus, etc., impacts everything.

**19. What other languages are the 2 parts of the Course currently available in? What languages will *The Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Course* eventually be available in?**

The *EH Spirituality* books are available in fifteen languages. The *EH Relationships* will be available in Spanish (through Editorial Vida) in 2019, German (Brunnen Verlag), and Korean (Durrano Press). Eventually, we expect other languages who have already published different EHS books to request *The EH Discipleship Course*.

**20. Do you use the Course with new Christians? Or non-Christians?**

The Course is great for new Christians also but they are not intended for non-Christians. At New Life, we move them to the [Alpha Course](#) where they have ample time to explore a different set of questions (e.g. Is the Bible true? Is Jesus God? What is prayer?).

**21. We have difficulty running *The EH Discipleship Course* in consecutive years when most of the people went through it and there are few new people.**

You may want to move to every 18 months or 24 months, while at the same time, reinforcing the 8 *EH Relationship Skills* and *EH Spirituality* content into the culture of your church along the way.

**22. Where do I get marketing materials?**

Visit [www.emotionallyhealthy.org](http://www.emotionallyhealthy.org) and join the Coaching Network, which will be your hub for all support resources for leading the Course.

**23. What do I do if people don't read?**

All the materials are available in digital/e-book format. I also read *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* as an audio book, which is currently available on Amazon.

**24. Do we publicize it outside of the church and invite people from other churches?**

Absolutely, if you have enough trained Table leaders. We recommend that you run the 2 parts of the Course as a *Pilot* first and become more familiar with the material before publicizing it outside of the church. Once you feel you can offer a high-quality Course, begin publicizing and inviting other churches to join you. Opening up to groups outside your church is a wonderful part of expanding the kingdom of God.

**25. What resources do you recommend for further understanding contemplative spirituality and why it's important for evangelicals?**

Contemplative spirituality has been the term used throughout the history of the church to refer to a “slowed down spirituality.” Specifically, it refers to men and women who have sought God in the silence and solitude of the desert. We see this, for example, with Moses’ 40 years in the desert, Elijah the prophet, John the Baptist’s ministry and life, and Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness. The desert fathers in the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> century fled to the desert in great numbers when the Roman Empire became Christian in order to seek Jesus’ face and be cleansed from the idols of the culture which had become such a large part of the church. For the first 1500 years of global Christianity, a contemplative, or slowed down, spirituality was a large part of the church. The Orthodox churches in the Eastern part of the world along with the Roman Catholic church have strong monastic elements to them which supplement local churches in her mission. In the last 150 years, the Protestant church has rediscovered this richness (after the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century shut down all monasteries in Europe and Great Britain).

For a larger perspective on why learning from the global church throughout history is important for our discipleship, I have written a short e-book called [Why Church History Matters](#). A good reading list can be found there as well. You can download that [here](#).