

## DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS



**“Something happened to us a long time ago. It happened more than once. It hurt us. We protected ourselves the only way we knew how. We are still protecting ourselves. It isn’t working anymore.”\***

Dysfunctional Characteristic	Result of Dysfunctional Characteristic
<b>Difficulty with Healthy Conflict Resolution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don’t know how to handle conflict in a healthy way.</li> <li>• I believe conflict is a form of rejection/hate/abandonment rather than differences of opinion.</li> <li>• I know something is wrong with me, but I don’t know what it is, and as a result, I am unable to fix it.</li> </ul>
<b>Difficulty with Intimate Relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I don’t know how to develop close, personal, &amp; intimate relationships with parents, siblings, spouse, children, co-workers, neighbors, etc.</li> <li>• I don’t know myself and others don’t know me.</li> <li>• No one knows me on the inside, because I don’t trust anyone.</li> <li>• I have friends, but I am still lonely.</li> <li>• I am unable to connect with others emotionally.</li> <li>• I unknowingly express my anger from past problems on the innocent.</li> </ul>
<b>Seeking Approval/Affirmation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Love was conditional in the home I grew up in. It was based on performance, behavior, and success.</li> <li>• I have sacrificed my sexual integrity and personal dignity so that others would accept me.</li> </ul>
<b>What Is Normal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal is the dysfunction I grew up in, I have no other example.</li> <li>• My idea of morality (right &amp; wrong) was determined by the home I grew up in.</li> </ul>
<b>Difficulty with Change</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am afraid of change.</li> <li>• There was no structure or predictability in the home I grew up in.</li> </ul>
<b>Perfectionism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am never comfortable with myself in the presence of others.</li> <li>• I have unrealistic expectations of myself and others.</li> <li>• I compare myself to others – I don’t measure up.</li> </ul>
<b>Difficulty with Impulsiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I fail to think about the consequences of my actions or think about other possible choices.</li> <li>• I have no model for Christ centered decision-making processes.</li> </ul>
<b>Poor Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am unable to communicate wants/needs/feelings/ideas/opinions without fear of ridicule, shame, or condemnation.</li> <li>• I have very little self-expression.</li> </ul>

\* For further information on this subject see also *The Quest For Purity Book 1: How to Reclaim God’s Perfect Design for Sex & Relationships*. Chapter 2: Temptation Can Lead to Sin.

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<b>Abuse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I have experienced physical/emotional/mental/spiritual/religious/sexual abuse.</li><li>• I use and abuse others and/or I continue to allow others to use and abuse me.</li><li>• I struggle with addictive, compulsive, and dysfunctional behaviors that one generation has passed down to the next.</li><li>• I struggle with co-dependency – I care for others, but not myself.</li><li>• I am unable to function because of the past, I feel anxious about the present, and I have no hope for the future.</li><li>• I blame others and complain about my circumstances.</li></ul>
<b>Life</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I don't know the meaning and purpose of life.</li><li>• I look good on the outside, but I am dead on the inside.</li><li>• I am survivor, but not a thriver.</li></ul>
<b>Authority &amp; Religion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I hate religion.</li><li>• I hate authority.</li><li>• I am afraid of authority.</li><li>• As an authority figure, I frighten others.</li></ul>
<b>Family of Origin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I grew up with all or many of the characteristics listed above.</li><li>• I had no parents due to divorce, death, or illness.</li><li>• I resent my parents, but I elevate them to the status of a saint.</li></ul>