

Title: "From Anxious/Distracted Attachment to Secure Attachment"

October 6, 2025

Greetings all,

A participant from one of my mentoring groups recently sent me a copy of the testimony she just shared with a group of women learning about the Immanuel Approach. I think she does a beautiful job of describing her experience of steady healing/transformation from anxious/distracted attachment to secure attachment (especially with Jesus). Thought it would encourage and bless the rest of you. (Shared with permission.)

"Fear regarding relationships gripped me a lot of my life. Most of the time, I could mask it fairly well. At least I thought I could. Who knows. Fear reared its ugly head especially when there was someone I hoped I could be close to. Someone I hoped would love me back, be a close friend, be there for me.

I remember as a teen, there was another girl in the youth group who had befriended me the first Sunday I had visited the church. I have this memory of hoping to talk to her in church one day. I would carefully plan out what I hoped to say if only I had the chance. I would break into a cold sweat just hoping to be able to actually have the courage and the opportunity to connect.

Fear plagued my friendships in many ways. It could cause me to pull away, but it could also cause me to cling. To try to make sure someone would be there for me, to try to pour out my love on them and love them enough to make sure they'd love me back, that I'd be worth loving, worth caring about, worth mattering to them.

As I grew into adulthood, I'd like to say my fears dissipated, but sadly, they didn't. Maybe I got even better at masking some of them, but I was still terrified. I'd still write out extensive notes about all the things I hoped to say in a given conversation, especially to certain friends in certain contexts. I would write extensive e-mails, trying to explain myself, to make sure I was worth loving, to make sure my internal thoughts and feelings would be understood and valued.

As you can imagine, my coping mechanisms to deal with my fear didn't work that well. They were often counterproductive, leaving people feeling overwhelmed, trapped, swamped, unsure, and sometimes even manipulated. Not that I set out to do these things or leave people feeling these ways. In fact, one of my greatest sources of pain was that I couldn't figure out how to not do them, how to not swamp people with my thoughts and feelings, with e-mails, with fears, with curating my thoughts into exactly what I wanted to say to try to forge a perfect connection. What made things even worse, is, the more I longed for connection with someone, the more these tendencies would be stirred up. That is, the more I wanted to connect well with someone, the more fear and junk would get in the way. It was

infuriating and devastating. That bothered me to no end, because try as I might, I couldn't make the fear go away, and without the fear going away, all that was left was to try to give it what it wanted/demanded so it would stop growling at me and attacking.

Fast forward till about 3 or 4 years ago--I had begun to find a bit of healing. I had attended a little therapy, and some healing groups and story workshops. There were small-but-marked differences. It sometimes felt like big differences to me, but still the underlying fear was very strong.

Then one day, my mom introduced me to a book called *The Other Half of Church*, which mentioned a book called *Joyful Journey*, which mentioned a book called *Outsmarting Yourself*, which I definitely thought sounded intriguing. I'm the kind of person who never wants to be duped or outsmarted, and how much worse if you're duped by yourself and not able to see through it.

So I read it. It was profound and VERY insightful, helping me understand why some things had such strong pulls on me. It was especially impactful because it introduced me to the Immanuel Approach.

As you saw today in our live demonstration, the Immanuel Approach is very powerful because it involves interacting with Jesus' living presence. In my own sessions, after I established an initial connection with Jesus in a positive memory, I would go back and explore painful memories. Jesus is so much better than the best therapist, because he knows every nuance of our soul. He can see every bit of our pain and what caused it, and he's so kind and doesn't shame. He's willing to be close.

Since then, I've spent 100s of hours, I'd say, interacting with Jesus, taking my triggers back to him to let him help me with them – to let him heal me on the inside. I've seen his face smiling at me, radiant to be with me. I've felt him hold me close. I've learned to trust him, to know that He will always be there and always provide me with what I ultimately need, even if people may fail me at times. He always knows the truth, never deceives, never is finicky, and always has my best interests at heart, as well as the best interests of those around me. Furthermore, he always sees others with compassion too, even if what they do makes him cry or even angry.

Interacting with Jesus like this has brought about huge shifts inside of me. I feel way more internally secure, way more sure that I am loved. Out of that love, it is a lot easier to reach out to others. I don't have to be gripped by fear. I can open my heart and know that even when people fail, Jesus won't.

As I have learned to facilitate Immanuel sessions for others, I've seen him walk people through even the worst situations. Even our sins or those of others, Jesus knows how to handle. He knows that He already paid for all of it, and can point us back to himself. The worst and most confusing situations aren't too much for Jesus, and I've seen him walk

people through really hard things and leave them feeling satisfied with his presence, even when the situations are still incredibly painful.

With all of this, it makes life a lot less scary. Whatever happens, Jesus will be able to get me through it. With my internal security higher, it's easier to give and receive love, which tends to spiral in good directions, as people are more likely to want to be friends when I'm not terrified. The friends who have known me over the years have told me I'm much more confident and joyful now than I used to be, and that even the tone of my voice sounds less afraid!

Connecting with Jesus this way has been the biggest blessing of my life, and I hope that each and every one of you here can know Jesus' living interactive presence and that you can find this type of deep love and change also."

Blessings,

Dr. Lehman/Karl

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