

---

# When We Stay but Disappear

*Hidden Ruptures and the  
Hope of Church as a  
Healing Community*

Christina L. Kim, Ph.D.

Rosemead School of Psychology

---



# Rupture

- A breakdown, strain, or disruption in a relationship or relational connection
- Typically involves mis-attunement, misunderstanding, emotional disconnection
- Temporary failure of emotional attunement

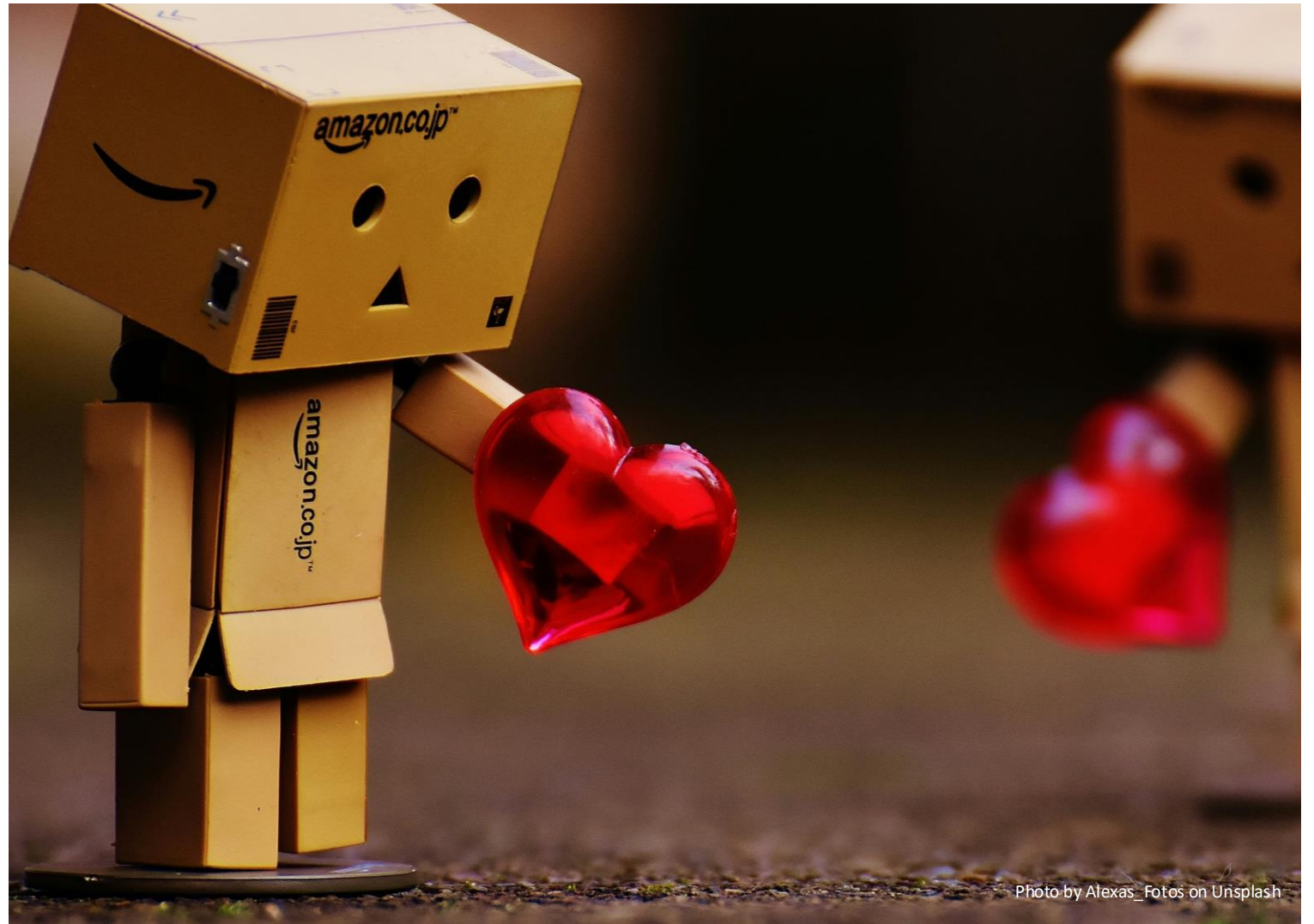


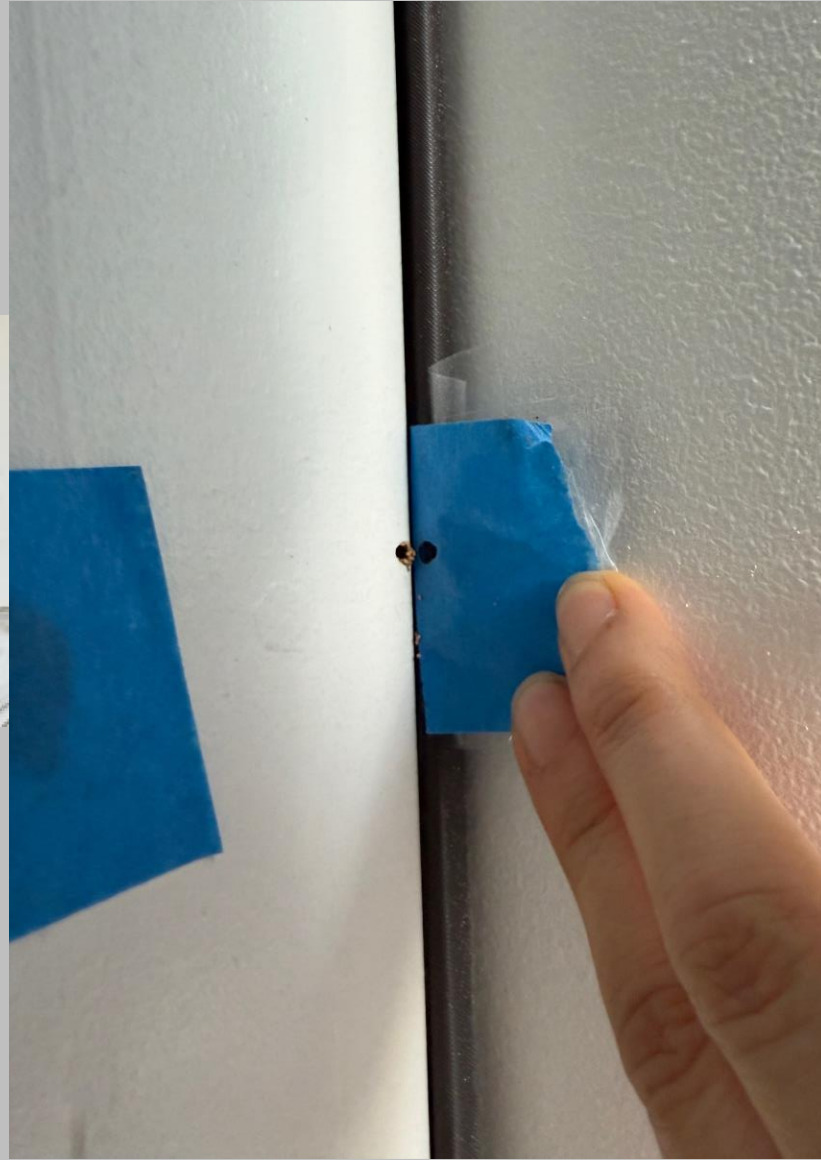
Photo by Alexas\_Fotos on Unsplash



Photo by David Gilbertson on Unsplash

# Hidden Rupture

- Relational disconnections that are not openly expressed or addressed
- Can be masked by continued participation, politeness, spiritual language



---

# Unfulfilled Need

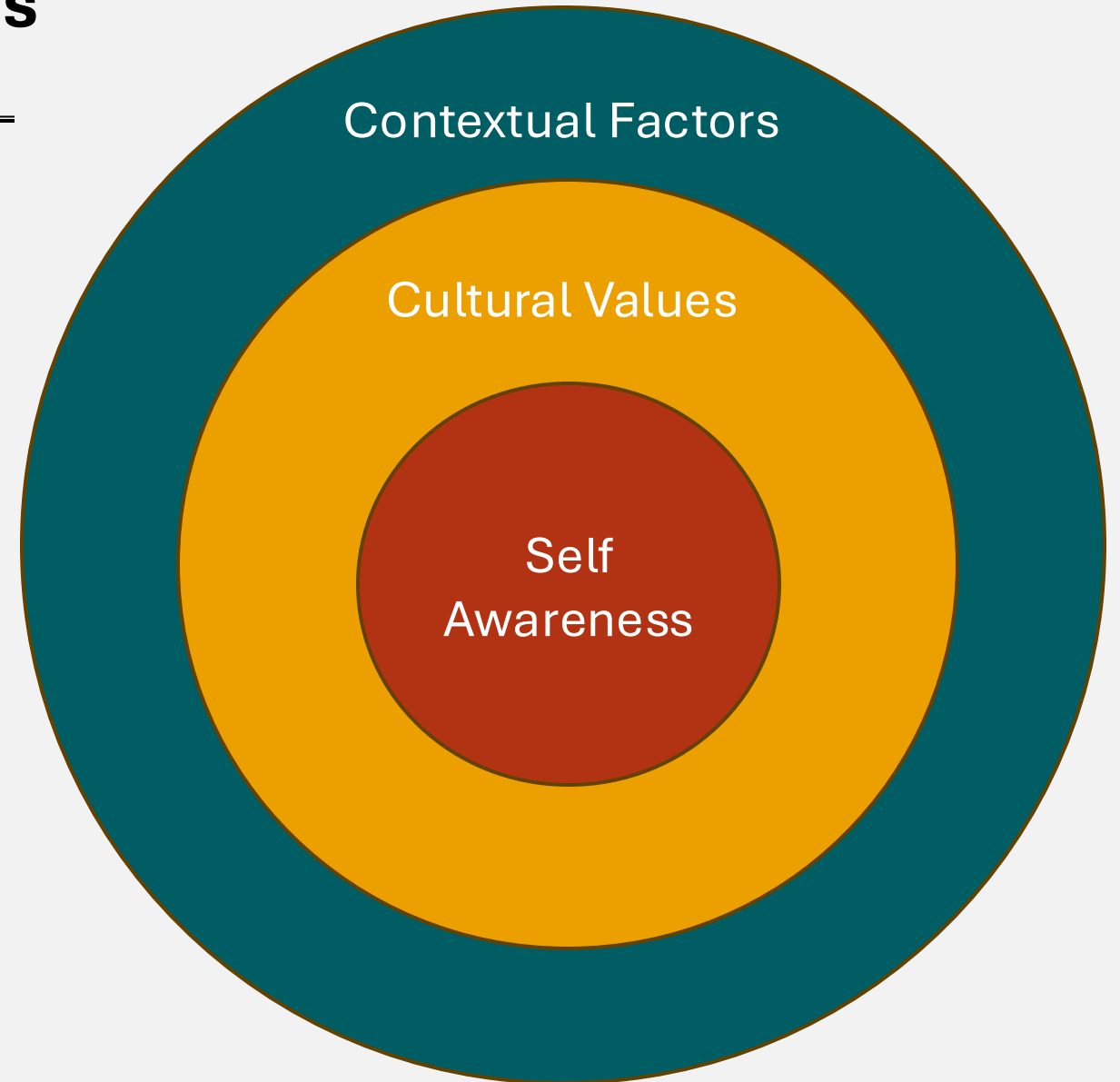
- **For value** - to feel you matter
- **For security** - to feel safe, secure
- **For belonging** – to feel accepted, connected, you have a place there

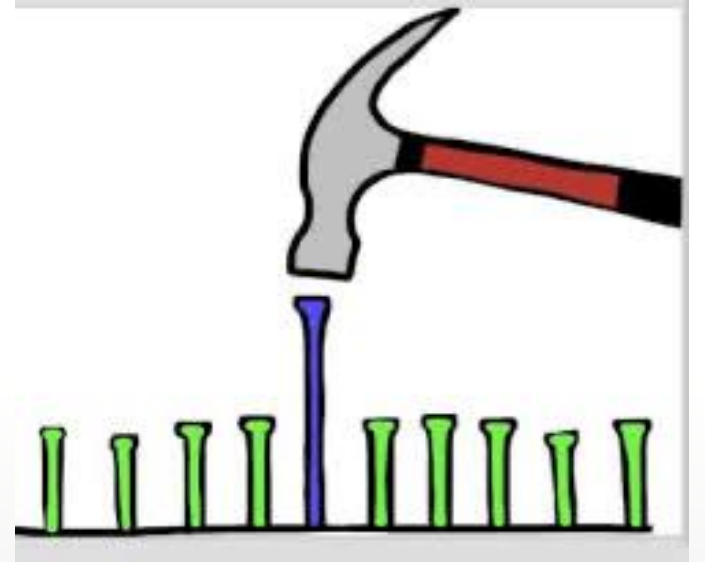
Consider a rupture you've experienced.  
Can you identify the underlying need?

# Asian American Considerations

---

- **Self-Awareness**
  - Different from social awareness
  - Impacted by socialization
- **Cultural Values** (Asian; Christian)
  - Emphasis on emotional self-control
  - Maintaining harmony / unity





---

*Make every **effort to keep the unity** of the Spirit through the bond of peace. - Ephesians 4:3*

*Make every **effort to live in peace** with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. - Hebrews 12:14-15*

*I appeal to you... to **live in harmony with each other**. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose. – 1 Corinthians 1:10*

# Asian American Considerations

---

- **Self-Awareness**
  - Different from social awareness
  - Impacted by socialization
- **Cultural Values** (Asian; Christian)
  - Emphasis on emotional self-control
  - Maintaining harmony / unity
  - Saving face
  - Respect for elders or those in authority
  - Shame
- **Contextual Factors**
  - Acculturation variables / Dual systems
  - Immigration-related stress
  - Language barriers

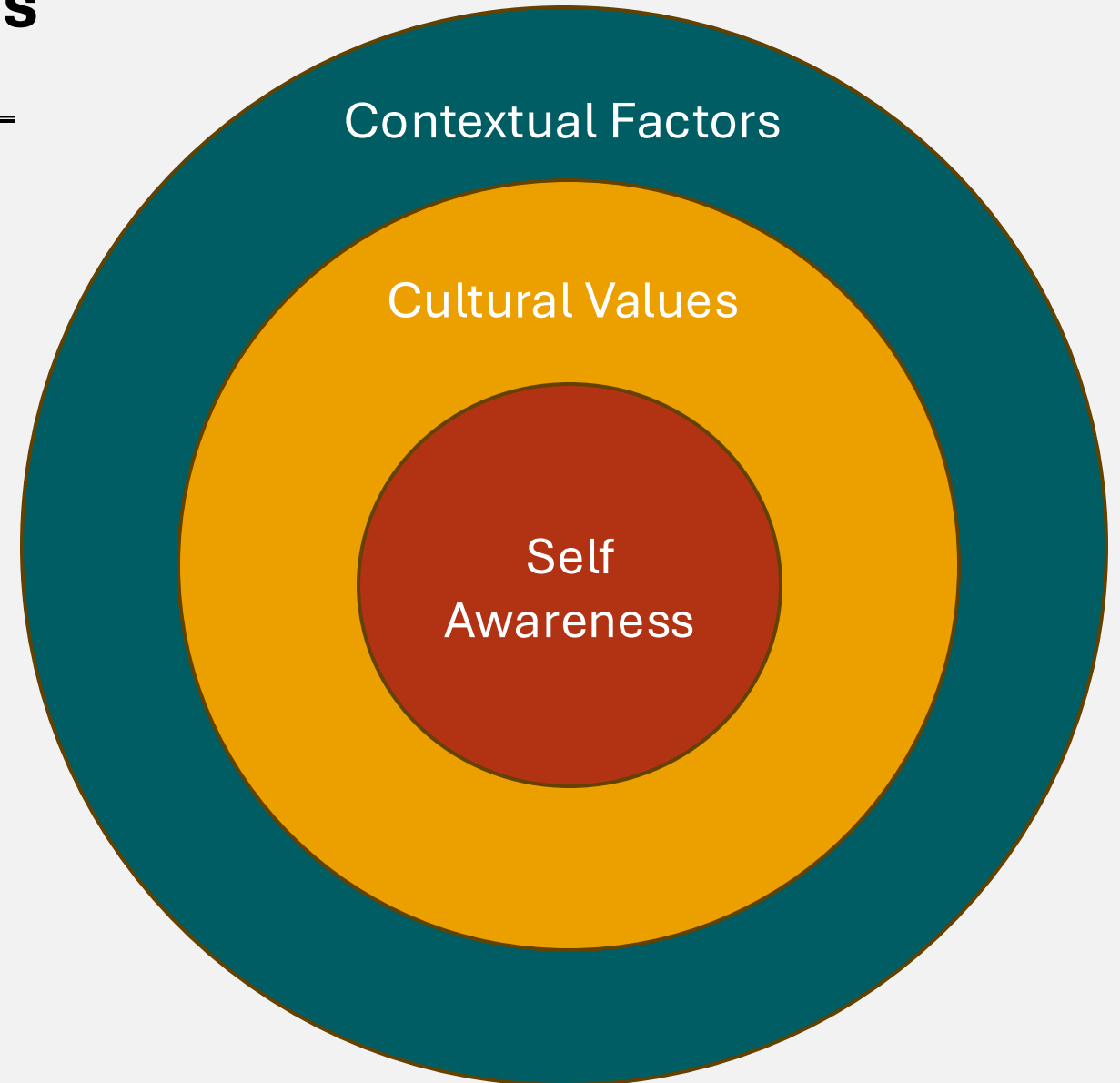






Photo by Maciej Zielonka on Unsplash

## **Additional Reasons We May Fail to Address Ruptures**

- Attributional ambiguity
- Response indecision
- Time-limited responding
- Impotency of actions
- Fearing consequences
- Denial

*Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord. – Leviticus 19:17-18*

*Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. – Ephesians 4:25-27*

## Psychological “leaking”

Irritability  
Passive aggression  
Sarcasm  
Cynicism  
Disengagement





Photo by Thi Nguyen Duc on Unsplash

# God has given us the ability to repair

- John 21 – Jesus reinstates Peter
- Other examples
- ”Repair” involves:
  - Confession
  - Repentance
  - Forgiveness
  - Restoration

---

# Growing in our Ability to Recognize Ruptures

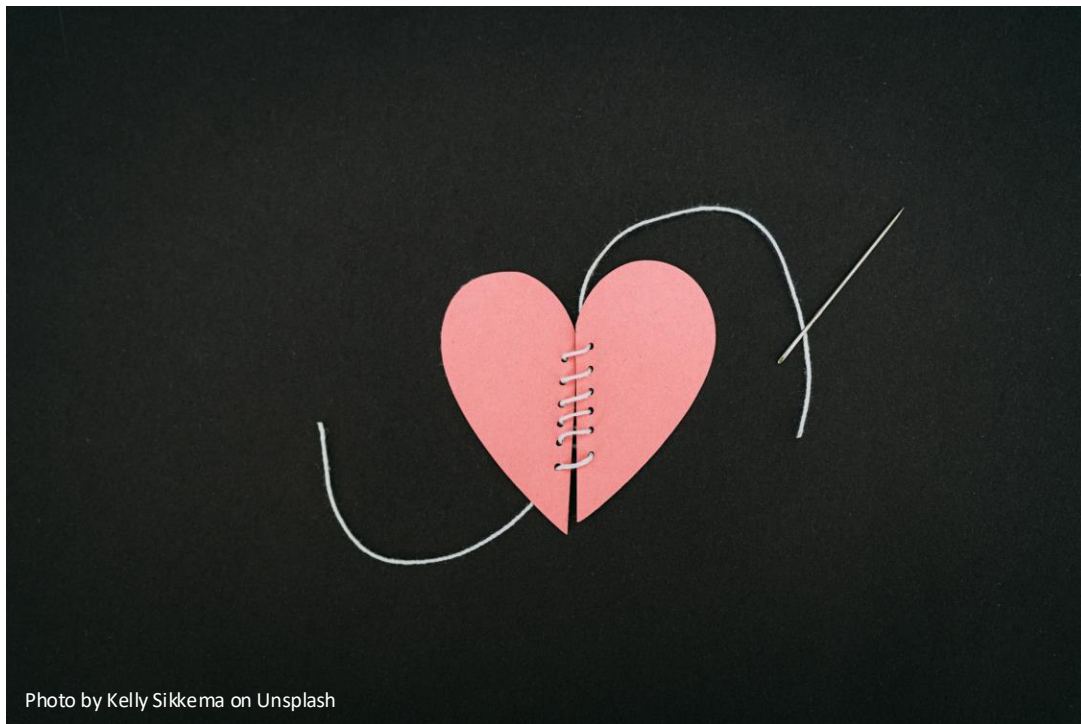
Both in ourselves and in others

Signs of hidden rupture:

- Polite but thinner interactions
- Decreased emotional risk or openness
- Subtle avoidance and disengagement
- Overcompensation with niceness
- Lingering tension
- Assumptions replacing clarity
- Third party processing



# Engaging the Process of Repair



## Self-awareness and self-clarity

- Psalm 139:23-24
- Proverbs 15:28
- Philippians 2:3-4

## Initiate gently

## Name the rupture

## Repair

## Deeply theological process

- Confession
- Repentance
- Forgiveness
- Reconciliation

---

# Rupture & Repair in the Church



Engage in discipleship and teaching that helps us grow, not only in God-awareness, but also in our self-understanding, self-awareness



Engage in discipleship and teaching that helps equip us to notice and respond to others well

*Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.*

*– Ephesians 4:15*



Photo by Chris Liu on Unsplash

---

# Discussion Questions

- 1. Consider hidden ruptures you or others have experienced in the church. Where have you seen people *stay* but quietly disengage? What were the underlying needs that went unfulfilled (e.g., value, security, belonging)?
- 2. How has your cultural background shaped the way you personally respond to hurt or conflict? How equipped do you feel to recognize relational rupture? How equipped do you feel to respond to relational rupture?
- 3. What makes it difficult for you to name hurt, whether to God or to others? What is one way you might unintentionally discourage honest expression of pain in your relationships? What personal or organizational factors contribute to difficulty addressing conflict in your church community?
- 4. Consider a time when you have experienced both rupture *and* repair in a church context. What factors helped to facilitate the repair (both in yourself and in the other party)?
- 5. Where in the church can we nurture ongoing self-awareness? Where in the church can we nurture an ability to respond well to others? What might this look like among church leadership? What might this look like in various ministry contexts?