



## Session 2: Reactivity vs Response

### **The Rider and the Elephant:**

The human mind is like a person riding an elephant. The person represents the rational higher parts of our brain and the elephant represents our emotions and desires.

The rider, representing reason, can do his best to attempt to direct the elephant, but the elephant is far more powerful and has its own will; it will only comply with the rider's commands if those commands are not in conflict with its desire. Thus, the rational part of ourselves can advise and guide our emotional core; but in a pure contest of wills, emotion will nearly always defeat reason.

### **The Old Man:** (Romans 6:6; Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9)

The old man is theologically synonymous with “\_\_\_\_\_” (Romans 8:3-9), which stands, not for bodily organism, but, for the whole nature of man (body and soul) turned away from God and devoted to self and earthly things.

When Haidt says, the rider cannot overpower the elephant, He is right because He is not a Christian. He has not been given by God a new heart with new desires. He does not have the Holy Spirit. Therefore he will be governed totally by the Flesh and cannot expect much growth or victory.

### **Galatians 5:16-25:**

For the Christian, the metaphor changes a bit. It is not just the old man and the elephant. It's not just our fallen rationality vs our fallen emotions and desires. No, God has given us a new heart, with new redeemed desires. The Father and Jesus has also sent the Holy Spirit into our new hearts to lead us and guide us. To accomplish things in us and through us that we could never do on our own.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is spiritually and emotionally immature and sinful. v. 19-21 Look how reactive these behaviors and sins are. They are “natural”, our desires override our self-control.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is spiritually and emotionally mature and Holy. v. 22-23 These are all thoughtful, governed, measured and responsive behaviors.

Spiritual and emotional maturity is going from level 1 \_\_\_\_\_ to level 2 \_\_\_\_\_.

Less \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ mature people will be at greater risk of sinful and destructive behavior that can hurt them and bring chaos into an MC or Family.

### **Two Factors in Play:**

The level of Spiritual and Emotional Maturity

The level of \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Illustration of the Cup:**

### **1 Peter 5:6-11: Cast your Anxieties on Christ**

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In the space there is the power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.” Viktor Frankl