

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Volume 2 Issue 15

May 15, 2022

Off Balance (Larger Windows)



Larger windows let in more light and expose more scenery. Pets prefer vantage points with plenty of viewing areas to keep watch on their domain. Our dog, Duke, likes the backyard view mellowed. But a groundhog still gets him on his feet and vocal.

Our fight, flight, or freeze response gets activated whenever threatened. This response is as automatic as hitting the break when we see the bright red lights come on in the car ahead of us. And it happens before we consciously recognize that it's happening.

Squirrels no longer get Duke's attention because they're no longer perceived as a threat. So he remains calm and barely

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Attached (It's Complicated)



In a post on pairedlife.com, Jeannie Marie writes that while social media has done a lot to help couples find that special someone, the "relationship status" option found on Facebook adds unnecessary drama and complication to dating.

In her article, Jeannie navigates the complicated process of choosing a Facebook status that best reflects and communicates your particular circumstances regarding your relationship with a special person. She shares an evident frustration when she writes, "Unless you are 12 years old, there shouldn't be so much drama behind it, but yet there is."

My favorite among relationship status options, and status, we find this morsel of

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Please continue to wear your masks when in the building. If you don't have one, let us know we will provide one for you.

DONATE

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brutal honesty — "I need counseling, but instead, I air my dirty laundry on Facebook. It is therapeutic for me."

Relationships are a form of attachment with another person or thing. Attachments are a necessary and sometimes messy part of life. Nevertheless, the most basic building blocks of reality are relational. And we come out of the womb dependent upon other persons for survival. And this reliance that we had on our caregivers for food, water, safety, and dry diapers helped shape the Facebook status we chose decades later.

Sasha Jackson and Kristen Fuller write, "Emotional attachment is a normal part of development. You are driven to connect to those that provide a sense of protection, comfort, and validation." But there is a balance. "Attachment can become toxic if you rely too much on others to satisfy emotional needs."

Psychologists categorize how we approach relationships based on responding to others with whom we're emotionally attached. There are four basic attachment styles, and we generally fall into one of them.

A slight majority of us are said to be securely attached. In other words, for the most part, we're okay with relying on and getting close to other people. And we're comfortable that others depend on us.

However, this also means that we don't freak out when another person is not around.

It's comforting to have a close association with a person secure in their attachments. Unless I'm not secure. For example, if I'm anxiously attached, I constantly worry whether my friend really cares that much about me. And I am easily hurt or scared if I don't get enough attention. In fact, any separation feels like rejection or abandonment.

But what if I avoid closeness altogether instead of clinging to someone I care about? What if I avoid getting close to others and have an extreme need for self-reliance? What if I'm distressed by any thought that I'm dependent on someone else? The good news is that there is a name for this style — avoidant attachment.

And what if I can't make up my mind about the idea of being in a relationship? I feel secure on my better days, but I'm not really sure how I feel about my relationships? Therapists call your primary style disorganized attachment, which often occurs due to trauma.

Regardless of your dominant attachment style, Aundi Kolber reminds us that help is available, provided we decide we're willing to put in the effort. She calls this pursuit "earned secure attachment" because we'll need to do some work to reprogram how we respond to signals that are otherwise interpreted as threats.

Our attachment style comes out of our stories. Not the fictional stories we tell ourselves and others that keep our secrets away from scrutiny. Rather the non-fiction stories of our actual lived experiences, including those experiences that happened before we had any say in our relationships.

Content on the internet in general and social media, in particular, is more fiction than non-fiction. Setting intentional fraudulent statements aside, there may be more misinformation on the world wide web than helpful content. Nevertheless, who doesn't google "Who is Jeannie Marie" before making an important decision based upon her latest post?

While "fiction" is by definition not real, it is often based on stories of actual persons. And when Jesus told stories, His stories were likely based on actual persons as well. Fiction is most enjoyable when we find ourselves in the story. This is often the case with the stories told by Jesus because His stories are based on you and me.

Consider the story named for its main character, the prodigal son. The main characters are the father, the older son, and the younger son, who leaves home searching for adventure. While the gender of the characters is irrelevant, their roles are significant.



In Our Prayers

Kevin Croom
 Sylvia Pittman
 Shirley Craig
 Richard Oram
 Chris Freeman



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE
HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

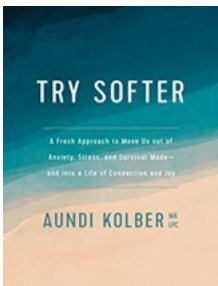
Nancy Elston Elaine Lamoreaux
 Norma Buzzard Mary Nations

PASTOR BOOK CLUB NEWS

Pastor Book Club is still meeting via Zoom. Please call the Church Office for more info 810-235-0016 as it changes.

Meanwhile, as a lot of you are already aware, sharp increases in new infections of COVID are pushing us back into isolation. While our regular attenders are vaccinated, we realize that a large number of persons are not vaccinated.

Therefore, we reinstated our policy to require masks in our building for all persons when not eating or drinking. If you don't have a mask, we can provide one for you, just ask the office.



This month's book series is called, "Try Softer", by Aundi Kolber.

Thank you and everyone stay safe!

COMING UP THIS WEEK
 - MAY 16-22 -

- May 16 Mon 6:00pm Leadership Team
- May 17 Tues 10:00am-12:30pm
Food/Water Distribution
- May 18 Wed 12Noon Pastor Book Club
Angel Closet at South Flint Soup Kitchen
(Appointments are needed 239-3427)
- May 19 Thu
- May 20 Fri
- May 21 Sat 12Noon Food Not Bombs
- May 22 Sun 10:30am
New Beginnings
Contemporary Worship

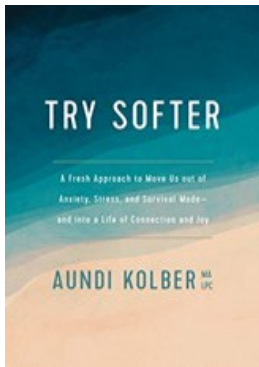
(We are live on [Facebook](#) and our newly launched [YouTube channel](#). You can find these links along with more information about us on our website at [FlintAsbury.org](#).)

Asbury Worship Series "Masterpiece"



In Psalm 13 we find questions that everyone feels at times. "How much longer will you forget me, Lord? Forever? How much longer will you hide yourself from me? How long must I endure trouble? How long will sorrow fill my heart day and night? How long will my enemies triumph over me?" (Psalm 13:1-2).

Book Club News



We began reading and discussing *Praying with the Church* by Scot McKnight as the Season of Lent started in March. We

plan to finish our study next week and turn our attention to Easter. ¹

We chose this book as a study during the Season of Lent because of the importance of Prayer in the

lives of nearly every person on the planet. Even persons who don't believe in a God may turn to whatever power that may be greater than their circumstances in search of comfort, protection, and forgiveness.

On the Wednesday after Easter we start a new adventure into the slow but rewarding process of self-discovery.

In parallel to a new worship series, *Masterpiece*, our Book Club digs deeper into the process of self-discovery. But not as a burden to be endured. Rather, as an exciting exploration of who we are behind our layers of protection. Let's call it our un-doctored selfie.

We're in search of that divine image that reflects our Creator. We know it's there beneath the layers

of past disappointments, hurts, and abandonments.

Whether you're a regular on Sunday mornings, only attend on an occasional holiday, or don't cross the threshold of a church building without coercion, there is something for everyone in this conversation.

The write-up found on Amazon has this to say about our next book:

In a world that preaches a "try harder" gospel—just keep going, keep hustling, keep pretending we're all fine—we're left exhausted, overwhelmed, and so numb to our lives. If we're honest, we have been

Leadership in Worship & Service

Tony, Mirium	Welcome Team
Anthony, Jim	Ushers
Jonathon, Terrance	Production Team
Miriam	Children
Cyndi	Worship Leader
Christine & Norma	Cafe

Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel	Pastor & Exec Dir
Connie Portillo	Office Manager
Sylvia Pittman	Empowerment Arts
Jim Craig	Board & Leadership Chair

Kevin Croom	Exec Chef & Dir Opers
Matt DePalma	Farms Manager
Chris Freeman	South Campus Bldg Mgr
Israel Unger	Finance Director
Kim Sims	Connections Suprv
Terrance Williams	Arts Center Mgr



“Masterpiece”... Asbury Worship Series ...cont from pg 4

More often than not, we feint humility to cover up our feelings of despair. We wonder if God made some sort of horrible mistake while creating us. Perhaps a part was left out or a piece cross-threaded during our assembly.

Other times, we hypothesize that it isn't God's fault. It was our parents or caregivers that dropped the ball. Maybe it was that horrible thing that happened. That thing that we don't want to talk about lest we condemn ourselves by our own testimony.

The most damning theory of all is that we're somehow irreversibly flawed. It all started with a wrong decision that we can never take back. And no matter how hard we tried, we never really recovered. For years, denial worked best and would still work if it weren't for those voices that won't stop reminding us. "You know what you are!" they shout.

Welcome to our new series, *Masterpiece*. A series about you and your struggle for loving yourself as much as God loves you. Not just through rational logic or because the Bible says so, but because you actually believe you are a masterpiece.

Masterpiece is conceived as a trilogy. The first two parts are based on a book by Aundi Kolber. A licensed therapist who shared her own struggles and dedicated her life to helping others deal with their own brokenness. Her book is titled *Try Softer*.

John Li joins our series design team as a content expert. With advanced degrees in Psychology and Sociology, John brings academic rigor to this intersection between faith and science.

As Psalm 13 continues we read a recognition of God's saving grace at work. The Psalmist sings out to God "I rely on your constant love; I will be glad, because you will rescue me. I will sing to you, O Lord, because You have been good to me (Psalm 13:5-6).

I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am. We share our weekly episodes on our [YouTube channel](#). We go live at 10:30 am. You can find these links along with more information about us, or join our live broadcast on our [website](#) at FlintAsbury.org.

Pastor Tommy

² Aundi Kolber. *Try Softer: A Fresh Approach to Move Us out of Anxiety, Stress, and Survival Mode--and into a Life of Connection and Joy*. Carol Street, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020.

Off Balance (Larger Windows).... *cont. from pg 1*

notices them feasting on or storing walnuts. But a groundhog snacking on plants in the yard puts Duke into attack mode. He can't help himself.

On the other hand, fireworks or thunder send Duke into an interior hiding place.

But what if the threat isn't immediate or mostly imaginary yet the anxiety associated with real danger persists? Perhaps we have an upcoming appointment with a doctor or a meeting that creates fear.

If the feelings associated with this state of alarm persist, some of us may discover we're agitated, anxious, or angry. We start to feel overwhelmed. Psychologists call these symptoms hyperarousal.

On the other hand, some of us may experience numbness, disassociation, or exhaustion or notice that we lack energy. We may feel depressed. Psychologists call these symptoms hypo arousal.

When feelings associated with hyperarousal or hypo arousal occur, we're out of balance. In other words, the amount of anxiety falls outside our window of tolerance. Our ability to handle the stresses our body associates with perceived threats.

Dr. Dan Siegel first developed the idea that each of us has a particular window of tolerance. According to a brochure for parents and teachers published by the Island of Jersey Psychology and Wellbeing Service, "the Window of Tolerance describes

the best state of 'arousal' or stimulation in which we can function and thrive in everyday life. When we exist within this window, we can learn effectively, play, and relate well to ourselves and others."

However, whenever we're pushed outside our window of tolerance, our reaction isn't pretty and quite unhealthy for ourselves and everyone around us.

We all have different 'windows' due to factors such as significant childhood experiences, our Neurobiology, social support, environment, and coping skills. Our windows change, but the wider we can make our windows, the less likely we'll experience anger, frustration, or feel flat, low, and lacking energy.

The go-to approach that is readily available is simple. Avoid anything and anyone that causes us to move outside our window of tolerance. But unfortunately, this approach will likely lead to isolation or at least a more complicated life.

And we can try to help one another. Children, in particular, need help in learning awareness of their own window of tolerance. But hear this clearly: You must be sure that you're operating within your own window of tolerance before you consider supporting someone else. If you are outside your own window, focus on your lack of balance first rather than project your problems on someone already struggling.

A better approach is to expand your window of tolerance. First, it's essential to be self-aware of what triggers your hyperarousal or hypo arousal. Knowing your triggers makes it easier to manage your emotions when they appear. This also helps you remain within your window of tolerance.

The amount of stress that we can tolerate is affected by both factors that we can't control and some that we can. For example, traumatic experiences from childhood affect how well we handle stress, and we can't undo what already happened. But we can do something about how we respond.

Other factors that affect our window of tolerance include the amount of sleep we get. And our responses may be more intense after using mood-altering substances that offer temporary numbness.

Lord, you have examined me,
and you know me. You know
everything I do.

Psalm 139:1

The younger son asks his father for his share of the family estate while his father is still alive. Jesus wasn't big on details, leaving us to fill in the blanks as we make the story ours. I'm not sure how such a request for his estate share even works. Families, at that time, were centers of production, and this particular family was successful enough to employ additional workers.

Family businesses are not usually that liquid. Making it difficult to write a check representing a substantial percentage of the total operation. Most of the estate was land, with perennial crops and livestock. A younger son's portion is substantially smaller than the oldest son's share. Somehow it works, and the younger son leaves town with his share.

What happens to the younger son's portion is mainly left to speculation, which biblical translators love to weigh in on. Perhaps based on their own stories or a fictional story they tell themselves. Nevertheless, the money runs out, and the younger son is left penniless and homeless.

The parable of the prodigal son is a rich to rags story that many entrepreneurs recognize and live through. As have numerous young adults. This is where you and I fill in our own details about finding ourselves, mistakes and mishaps, and trials and tribulations. The adventure we set out on when we chose to strike out on our own.

We're left to speculate on the differences between the two brothers in temperament and personality. Unfortunately, Jesus doesn't tell us about their attachment styles, although we can guess with the details we're given.

And what about their relationship with their mother, father, or other nearby caregivers who influenced their childhood? Was either of them securely grounded in their relationships? Were they "securely attached" as children and capable of healthy relationships? Again, this is a reasonable assumption since it's estimated that over half of us are fortunate enough to be in this category of relational health.

Perhaps neither brother benefited from a near-perfect childhood. A successful business demanded time from their parents, which pulled them away from their children. How many years separated their arrivals? I imagine the older brother as loyal and sticking close to home.

Author and therapist Aundi Kolber shares that she entered adulthood hindered by an "anxious ambivalent" attachment style. Shaped in large part by her parents' dysfunction, Aundi shared her suspicions that other people would eventually let her down. Fortunately, through therapy, she found the healing that helped her develop secure, healthy relationships with those closest to her.

Where are you in this story? In what ways is this your story? Are you feeling like you lost your course or your motivation to keep looking for where you fit?

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Jeannie Marie. "The True Meaning Behind Face-book Relationship Status Updates." © pairedlife.com, Feb 3, 2022.

Sanjana Gupta. Medically reviewed by Rachel Goldman. "What Is Emotional Attachment and Is Yours Healthy?" © verywellmind.com August 19, 2021.

Sasha Jackson and Kristen Fuller. "What Is Emotional Attachment & When Does It Become Unhealthy?." © choosingtherapy.com, February 12, 2021.

Life Group Questions & Notes:

Lord, you have examined me and you know me. You know everything I do; from far away you understand all my thoughts.

Psalm 139:1-12

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS


- 1 Read Psalm 139:1-12. Are you comforted by these verses? What does it mean to you that God knows you? What does it mean that God knows you better than any person knows you — even better than you know yourself?
- 2 Read this week’s article titled *Off balance*. How large is your window of tolerance? What happens when events set you off balance? Do you retreat and look for solitude? Do you get angry and want to attack? What can you do to expand your window of tolerance? If you’re not spending time with a therapist what step can you take to begin this process?
- 3 How can the members of your group help you this week and on-going to help you to be more receptive to hearing and understanding the Word of God? Pray for each other to have the Holy Spirit bless you with more courage.

“Feed Flint”



“Feed Flint”

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A meal goes a long way for a senior living alone, a family struggling to make ends meet, or a child fearful of empty shelves at home. But for the residents of Flint who carry the effects of lead-tainted water, nutrition is critical. Feed Flint provides locally grown, chemical-free, fresh produce to residents living in and around Flint. And we're hoping that you can help us provide 10,000 meals this summer.

Feed Flint includes takeout meals, produce boxes with recipes, and home deliveries as part of our work to guide and support families in moving to sustainable abundance. The reality is that Michigan's food insecurity levels got worse during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this summer's recovery is leaving behind those at the most risk of having to miss meals.

Flint families continue to struggle with the ongoing effects of the water crisis.

We're bringing together the resources of the Asbury Community Development Corporation. This includes Asbury Farms, the South Flint Soup Kitchen, the Asbury Community Help Center, multiple food pantries, and our Sizzling Culture Mobile Food Trailer. Our plan is to care for our neighbors when they need it most. We accept all people as they are, and our doors are always open to anyone.

Asbury Farms provides locally grown produce used to create fabulous and nutritious meals. Our seed-to-table approach is community-based. This not only helps families make it through emergencies and crises. We help move families towards sustainable abundance.

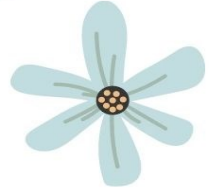
Our Sizzling Culture program provides jobs and new skills to our city's youth. This includes year-round employment. Our staff and most of our volunteers come from the neighborhoods we support. We call this sustainable abundance because families move from need-based on scarcity to enough based on community-generated abundance.

Our work is also about food and justice. Our vision is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions for the common good, where children grow into active citizens. And all residents can enjoy safety, good health, and a culture that fosters life-long learning and satisfying lives. This summer, help us address food insecurity and strengthen Flint's budding local food system by supporting the Feed Flint campaign. Thank you for taking the time to see what we're doing and considering how you can help.

**Donate to our Feed Flint Campaign by visiting:
flintasbury.org/feed-flint-donate**



**SOUTH FLINT
SOUP
KITCHEN
MAY
GIVEAWAYS**



**Angel Closet: May 4th & 18th,
Appointment needed! One client at a time
in the closet. Call 810-239-3427 for an appt!**

**Food Giveaways: May 11th & 25th,
No Appointment needed! 11am-noon**

**South Flint Soup Kitchen
3410 Fenton Road
3 Blocks North of Atherton Road
Flint, MI 48507**





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Select what goes in your box from each week's harvest. Get \$5 off your next order when you fill your box with \$15 of produce.

WANT US TO DECIDE FOR YOU?

Choose Veggie Box Subscription and we will fill your order with a variety of each week's harvest. Pay when you pick up your box. **A \$15 VALUE FOR \$10.**

*** CONVENIENT PICKUP AT ASBURY OR AT THE SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN ***

Most important, even though our emotions are uniquely our own, we're never completely alone. The author of Psalm 139 writes, "Lord, you have examined me, and you know me. You know everything I do, and you understand all my thoughts. You see me, whether I am working or resting; you know all my actions. Even before I speak, you already know what I will say" (Psalm 139:1-4).

God knows your window of tolerance and has seen every tantrum and burst of anger. And we're reminded by the Psalm that God sees us when we're hiding. "You are all around me on every side; you protect me with your power" (Psalm 139:5).

Aundi Kolber offers us an exercise to help us expand our window of tolerance. She suggests that we imagine a container strong enough that anything we put into it cannot escape. Now imagine that you're putting whatever is causing you anxiety into the container. Finally, if the container doesn't feel strong enough, imagine wrapping it in chains or watching it sink to the bottom of a lake.

As you imagine your anxiety is contained, rest in the knowledge that God is beside you and protects you. Whisper a prayer or softly read Psalm 139. Notice your breathing and take extra long to exhale each breath. Read or pray in rhythm with your breathing.

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Jersey Psychology and Wellbeing Service. "The Window of Tolerance: Supporting the wellbeing of children and young people." © Government of Jersey, May 2020. Retrieved from: [link](#).

over functioning for so long, we can't even imagine another way. How else will things get done? How else will we survive?

It does not have to be this way.

Aundi Kolber believes that we don't have to white-knuckle our way through life. In her debut book, *Try Softer*, she'll show us how God specifically designed our bodies and minds to work together to process our stories and work through obstacles. Through the latest psychology, practical clinical exercises, and her own personal story, Aundi equips and empowers us to connect us to our trust self and truly live. This is the "try softer" life.

According to her author biography, Aundi Kolber is a Licensed Professional Counselor (MA LPC), writer, and speaker in Castle Rock, Colorado. She specializes in trauma- and body-centered therapies and is passionate about the integration of faith and psychology.

If you prefer to avoid groups or live too far away, I encourage you to join us online for our Wednesday gatherings. Alternatively, you can call in by phone, be heard, and hear what others say by calling (929) 436-2866 -- enter the meeting ID, 282 039 5568#.

We are a diverse group, delighted when new people join us. I hope that you will join in on our discussion.

You can contact our office with questions, by phone or simply type your question on our website's homepage — FlintAsbury.org.

Pastor Tommy

¹ Scot McKnight. *Praying with the Church*. Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2006.

² Aundi Kolber. *Try Softer: A Fresh Approach to Move Us out of Anxiety, Stress, and Survival Mode--and into a Life of Connection and Joy*. Carol Street, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2020.

Providing a HOT MEAL and/or local, organic
PRODUCE weekly.



SATURDAYS starting around 12NOON

Asbury United Methodist Church

1653 Davison Rd, Flint (810) 235-0016



Food Not Bombs is a loose-knit group of independent collectives, sharing free vegan and vegetarian food with others. **Flint Food Not Bombs** believes that access of food among other necessities of life-should be viewed as a right, not a privilege. Yet in a nation with a military budget many times that of other nations, people continue to go hungry. This is immoral and unjust.



JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

Facebook.com/flintfoodnotbombs

Twitter.com/flintfnb

Email: flintfnb@protonmail.com

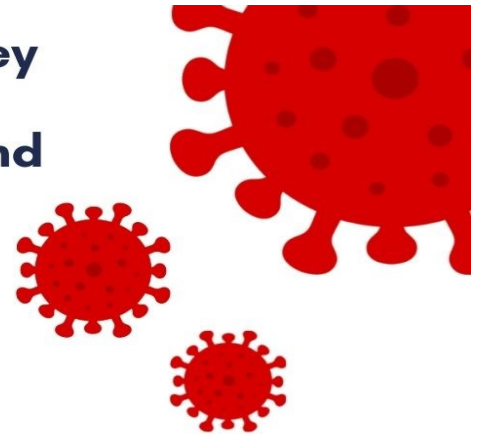
Website: foodnotbombsflint.wordpress.com

We're currently looking for volunteers so we can expand. If interested,
send us a message! Solidarity!

A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense
than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.—MLK



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Medical Center,
Michigan United and
Molina Healthcare



SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN COVID-19

VACCINATION & HEALTH EDUCATION CLINIC

FRIDAY MAY 27TH
10:30AM-NOON
VACCINES ARE FREE!

3410 FENTON ROAD
FLINT, MI 48507
CALL 810-239-3427 OR EMAIL
SOUTHFLINTSOUPKITCHEN@GMAIL.COM FOR
QUESTIONS

