

# DO YOU ENABLE OTHERS?

Enabling is doing something for someone that they  
can and should be doing for themselves.

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## **A SPECIAL THANK YOU**

**To Tina for the lovely picture she took that made  
the cover of this book look great.**

**Hoping to work more with her in the future.**



**Tina Skinner Gichard**

## DEDICATION

This Book is Dedicated to all those who feel they have to do for others. Do we enable others when we know they are quite capable of doing things for themselves.

This Book will explain some of the decisions that we make may just be harming others and yet we keep doing them over and over again.

## INTRODUCTION

For many years I was one of those people who actually thought that I was helping others. Even before I was in Ministry, I felt a desire to do for others and not really taking care of myself. To me I didn't matter that much and would often find myself saying that my JOY came from doing for others.

It has only been these last few years that my eyes have been opened to many of the mistakes that I made in the past and decided to find out what the Bible had to say about this topic. This Book will cover some stories and scriptures that I pray will help you grow in the Lord.

Blessings to you as you read these pages.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ENABLE?

Looking back over my life I never even thought that I was an enabler, only thought that I was helping others and it made me feel good about myself.

Have you ever thought about yourself and how you feel when you do for others?

See, I was raised in a good Christian home and was always taught to put others first before myself.

There were many times when as a young kid it bothered me that I had to let my friends ahead of me in different situations and I always wondered why it was so important to do that. I was taught that we were Christians and we took a back seat and God would bless. Now part of that is true, but over the years I see where there are other parts of situations that we have to look at too.

What do you think it means to enable? I am sure you are saying "I am certainly not an Enabler, I love helping others and that is just what we are supposed to do, is help? Am I right?"

## What does enabling mean?

Enabling is doing something for someone that they can and should be doing for themselves.

As a follower of Jesus' teaching I really thought that I never enabled anyone at all and that every person really appreciated every thing I did for them.

Years ago I was a Foster Mother and had 4 foster children, one day I took them all shopping and when we got home I laid everything out on the kitchen counter and started to divide everyone's treats up. There was some for Tina, she was 9, there was some for Debbie, she was 7, there was chocolates for my husband, and the two little ones got a few little toys and suckers. I was so happy that day as I went through the bag and put each persons little gifts in a pile. Then Debbie grabbed my arm and said "MOM, where is yours?" my reply was "I didn't get anything for myself Debbie and it is ok". I looked at her little face and she looked up into my face and said "But Mom, that is not right, you are important too". My heart sank that this little girl cared enough to think of me and yet I seemed ok with the fact that I didn't get myself anything. Nothing bothered me back then I was just happy in giving, now don't get me wrong, GIVING is a great thing but there is so much more to this.

So enabling others can be said in what we do for others, that they could do for themselves. Right? But in this case with the shopping spree that I took the kids on, I was only thinking of others and not myself. Like I said at the time it didn't bother me but as time went on I started to see something in me that just wasn't right at all.

## WHAT ABOUT US?

One day my husband wanted to go out for dinner, just the two of us. We went into this nice restaurant and the waitress brought the Menu. I opened it up and just couldn't make up my mind, there was so much to choose from. I turned to him and said "What are you ordering?" he smiled and told me the big Hamburger with double cheese and French fries smothered in gravy. He looked at me and said "What are you having?" I said I guess I will take the same, and then I saw his face. See, we had been out many times to the restaurant and each time I had said the same thing. He looked at me and said "Can't you order what YOU WANT?" in a loving way of course. My reply was "It didn't matter". Oh yes it does was his answer to that and once again I thought about what I was doing and saying. See, every time we went out I always ordered what he was having. WHY?



For many years I had been in an abusive relationship and had got to the place where what I wanted to eat didn't matter that much but as the years past I could see that I needed to change, and change I did.

Many times we often do this because we don't feel worthy enough to even order the food that we would like to eat, or if we go shopping we don't think of ourselves at all it is always of others and that is not right either.

The Bible tells us to do unto others as we would have them do to us, but if we don't think of ourselves at all how are we going to know what to do to others? We won't. This makes some sense doesn't it?

Low self esteem comes in many forms and I began to realize that my life was all about others and not about myself. I used to feel guilty if I had to go buy a new pair of shoes and would always buy the cheapest ones and yet if someone else needed shoes I would hand them the money or take them to buy the best pair of shoes possible. Can you relate? For a long time I used to just think I was doing for

others but then it started to sink in. Was I really helping them or just doing for me in a weird sort of way. More and more I started to see that what I was doing was not the way God wanted it to be. He loved me so much as He does you and He wants us to know that, He wants to spoil us and show us His love, but so many times we don't let Him.

### WHY DO WE DO WHAT WE DO?

For many many many years I have watched others give in to situations, that they should have never give into. When I ask them why they do this, some say it is to keep the peace, others say it is because they love that person and they want them to have the best. Some also say especially if it is their child that they want them to have what they never had when they were growing up, but Is this right? Not at all.

**FIRST** we must love ourselves, after loving the Lord of course, then we can reach out to others and really give them what they need. See a child or teenager who has everything done for them becomes

lazy, does not want to work and these days just wants to watch TV or play games and a lot want to smoke weed or other drugs. They have the attitude that they deserve it from you their parent. They won't walk anywhere, but demand a ride and I could go on and on. Is it their fault? Well when they get to the age of 18 years and still act like this it sure is partly their fault but where did they learn it from? You are right... Mom or Dad. So it boils down to it is your fault for teaching this behavior to your child. Life is tough enough for kids these days with the way the world is going so they need to be helped instead of enabled. If you are doing things for your child so they don't have a temper tantrum, yell and scream then you are in the wrong.

We should never, ever do anything to keep the peace, and doing for love is not being a door mat for anyone. Especially when raising a child, giving in to what they want is just ruining them right to the core and we do it all in the name of LOVE not ENABLING. I have spoken to some and told them it is the wrong approach and yet they get mad at me for saying that. Just today I spoke to a lady about one of her children, she actually got pretty quiet and said she had to go. She knows what is right and yet she can't seem to do it, so for her it is easier to run, rather than face facts and do what is right.

People who enable others definitely do it because of fear, peace, etc., but they also do it to make themselves feel good that they could do something, it gives them a satisfaction that they accomplished something and made someone else happy even at their own expense. Lets talk about the teenager for a minute living in your home.

If your teenager is over 18 years old and is not working, looking for work or in school then something is wrong. If they sleep in till noon every day and then complain cause you didn't buy them the food that they wanted, then something is wrong.

It seems the teens rule the house, they get what they want, when they want and are allowed to do things and go places that they want. Now they never think of riding a bus when parents have a car that mom or dad will drive them to wherever they want to go. Christmas comes and they tell the parents what they want and it usually is a large TV, one of the Game machines or a bunch of videos and designer clothes, something is wrong. Now what do you think happens? You are right, they are given everything they asked for. This makes me so sad as an onlooker I see who rules the home and who tells the parents what to do. Homes are just not

supposed to be like that and certainly God didn't intend for them to be like this, but they are. If you speak to the parents about the situation (especially when asked) they will make up excuses why the teen needs the ride, or likes certain foods and I could go on and on. My heart breaks for the parents because I can see the end result. Family members do the same thing too and if you are not strong enough to put your foot down, YOU will be stepped on. YOU are enabling them to be spoiled brats living in your home that you pay the bills and buy so that they can be warm in the winter. I know many families that live like this and it really makes me think of why this is allowed to happen. If we could only look at our situation as an outsider looks at us and see what we are doing to that person.

First they are not growing up at all. Second, they feel pretty special that they can run the show and not do anything to contribute to their family life.

Third, will it change? Only if we change it.

See we are responsible for US and also for the way others treat us. We can blame them and say they shouldn't have said that or done that but the truth is that it is our own fault as they lost respect for us a long time ago. WHY? Because we enabled them to do so. We gave over our authority to them and

they took it willingly and used it against us.

God never meant us to be a door mat for anyone and if we don't respect ourselves no one will ever respect us. We wonder why we get into relationships that fail and fall apart or why our kids are disrespectful to us. **IT IS YOUR FAULT!**

See we have to love ourselves first, then others will love us in return the right way. To be respected is to learn not to enable anyone. We can pray all we want about change but if we don't do it, we will be in the same situation for years to come.

I remember this lady years ago who had a daughter in a wheelchair, she couldn't talk much except make a few sounds, but certainly knew how to have temper tantrums if she didn't get her own way. Family members and friends would tell this dear woman to change and yet she just couldn't, every breathe was about this girl, who grew up to be a lady that run the show even from the wheelchair and not being able to talk. It was sad to see, the mom grew older and much more haggard above her years for the work she had to do and then one day passed away. The girl was put in a great home for disabled adults and loved it. I remember the mother well and my heart would break for her, she had given her

whole life to this child of hers, enabling her to be an invalid and run the show while she did without many things. Sadly, it caught up with her one day and her heart gave out. See, some things we do is because we feel guilty and think that if we give and give and do and do that it will make us feel better. You can fool yourself if you want but if you do not love yourself you will never be able to love others in the right way.

Most of the people I know who have put themselves in situations of enabling others cry a lot. The pressure of taking care of someone or keeping the peace all the time takes its toll on them. They have found that they are not their own person anymore, they don't have a life outside of what the other person may say and they have just given in and accepted it; making excuses all along about how things will change one day, sadly that one day may not come because for many it never does.

## MINISTRY WORK

When one goes into Ministry Work there really should be training for a few months and also on hands work too. It is learning the real needs of the people and taking time to learn how to deal with them. So many who have been raised on the streets, have Street Smart and they know how to use it to manipulate others to get what they want.

I know of one woman who works the streets and has had 6 kids that are with family members. She is still at her game using good hearted people to give her money and things and many Christian people feel they are doing her a service and actually help her, but they aren't as she takes what is given to her and heads to the crack house to get her next hit.

The people who try so desperately to help are really only enabling her to keep doing what she wants to do. They people on the streets will give a sob story of how their life went the way it did, blaming drugs, alcohol etc. and yet it is a game. They are collecting Disability checks each month or Social Service money along with food stamps (which they sell half price) and benefits, like dentists, eye Doctors etc and Medicaid are all FREE.



I remember once talking to this lady who used to come into the soup kitchen, I always felt so sorry for her. She was a little lady not more than 4 feet tall and seemed so feeble. One day I saw her on the street and she asked if I would like to come and see where she lived. I was curious and agreed. Off we went to this apartment building and up a flight of stairs. Now honestly I was thinking I was walking into a cockroach infested apartment with a mattress on the floor, but it was the exact opposite. A nice clean apartment and then she opened a door off the kitchen that was full of canned goods, and baskets of fruit, potatoes and baking supplies. Honestly I was shocked and asked her where all the food had come from. She showed me a paper that told her which days the food pantries were open and she would make it a weekly job to go each day to different pantries and collect food. She said occasionally she would help out people who needed food.

Walking away that day I was shocked but my eyes had been opened to see yet another part of street life. I knew so many who would look at her just like I had done and give money, food etc. but here was a woman who didn't need it. She was enabled to live like this and it was the hard working people who made her this way.

Now when it comes to children of course it is a different story, the children do get hungry but yet many times I have given out food to the families and the little ones didn't get any of the candy, pastries or meat. Sad isn't it? I really believe that just sandwiches and fruit and a juicy should be given out and if people really are hungry they will be grateful for that and definitely will appreciate it.

See we have been programmed to think that everyone who says they are hungry or homeless are and that isn't the case, if we don't have the knowledge to understand the way people are we will fall into that trap, especially if we are they type of people who love to give and not really care if we have anything or not. So now what do we do to change things?

**WE CHANGE**

So what can be done to get help? Yes God is there, and He certainly doesn't want you crying all the time and praying that things would change. What does He want you to do? I have heard many say "I am just praying for some answers, and then I will do this or that". WE must take the first step, see we PRAY but if we don't do anything about that situation the person who is being enabled will manipulate the situation and either keep you in a state of guilt or make you feel that you are not doing the right thing and it is your fault they are like the way they are, therefore nothing changes and we usually blame God in a simple way saying that we haven't heard from Him about the situation yet.

We may keep giving, keep doing for others and if we were really honest we would see that we are the one being manipulated. Now there are definitely some who are in real need, but you know I have found those in real need will usually say they are ok or they will accept a sandwich and be so grateful and even share with others who are hungry. It is a fine line for sure that is why we need to see change come and it starts with us.

It starts in your home, work place, church, play ground. Stop and think for a minute, how do you look at yourself? Do you find that you order what everyone else is eating at a restaurant like I did or

can you make a choice of what you really want to eat. Now that might not be your case like it was mine, but it sure opened my eyes to the person I was. Do you cater to your kids in your own home? Once I had a step daughter, she was age 6 and had come to visit her dad and I for the weekend. I got up early and made bacon and eggs for breakfast. The table was all set and we sat down, then I looked at her face. She turned to me and said that her eggs weren't scrambled like she wanted and she was not going to eat them. I smiled and said she was as they were just done a different way. Her father (my husband) stood up, grabbed her plate and threw the eggs in the garbage and went to the stove to make scrambled eggs for her. I was so upset I couldn't eat. Some of the fact was I could see why this beautiful little girl was so spoiled, she got all her own way and the other was that I was disgusted that a parent would do that teaching her that it was ok to turn down a good meal. She smiled as she got her scrambled eggs and honestly I was glad to see her go home that afternoon.

Another child I was baby sitting one day came just before breakfast and I started making bacon and eggs... LOL I guess that was my favorite back then for breakfast. He was around 7 years old at the time. I put the plate in front of him and he said, "Where are the grapes on the side?" I said what

grapes, he said “I always get grapes each morning” Well my answer to that was “This is not a restaurant and you get what is put in front of you” He sure didn’t eat much for breakfast that day.

Have you done what I did, or do you give them what they want? Always remember when we let the children tell you what they want, you are giving over your authority as mother or father of the house to them and they feel that they have the say at what they can eat or do. Be careful as it starts at an early age. I have known Moms who have cooked about 5 different breakfasts for each child each morning. Oh wow she regretted it when they grew up and said to me, “What did I do wrong” as they had all turned out to be really bad teens and adults. She enabled them to be that way by her actions.

Have you ever found yourself making excuses for the person you are enabling? I remember once one of the little girls that I raised, she was 7 ½ at this time and I loved her so much. I had an office at a church and the lady Pastor was a difficult person to like, she had her funny ways. We this little girl said something to me in front of the Pastor in a blun

t fashion and the Pastor turned to me and said “She is pretty spoiled and shouldn’t be talking with that tone” First thing I did was stick up for the child and made lots of excuses why she was talking that way. I justified the little girls words, but deep inside I knew the Pastor was right. Later that day I realized that I was wrong, but then I told myself she was just a little girl and didn’t know any better..... **I KNEW BETTER THOUGH...** But I had covered up this little girls actions and behavior and used the excuse that I love her. **DID I?** Not as much as what I thought, see love is discipline, telling the truth to a child, and letting them know that what they did was wrong. At that time I just couldn’t get myself to do it. After she was gone from my life I saw many mistakes I had made and I realized I was enabling her to be a spoiled child and not have respect for others. I write this book today only to help others and let them see how what we do as an **ENABLER** is wrong, wrong for us and wrong for the other person.

## **DON’T BE DECEIVED**

In Galatians 6:7 of the King James Bible we read:

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Now you may be saying what has this got to do with Enabling anyone? Well, stop and think about it. By enabling someone we are not helping them in anyway, therefore they are just taking advantage of us and maybe others too. But we are deceived, if we sow love for ourselves and put our foot down in certain situations we will reap what is right, we will gain respect from others. If we tell them the truth we will be helping them to be better people.

I remember getting engaged, the ring was lovely and I was so excited. When I went to church on the Sunday following, I showed the Pastors wife, she looked me straight in the face and asked if he was a Christian? I said, "No but he is a good guy" She kept looking at me and as she started to turn she said "Give him his ring back it will never work" my heart was broken but it wasn't long after our marriage that those words rung out so clear in my mind. She was right and she was not afraid to tell me the truth... **IF ONLY I HAD LISTENED!**

## **WALKING WITH GOD**

These days things are a bit different in my life, I don't foster children anymore and find myself writing more and more books along with making

essential oils. I love doing what I do, even though my life is on a different level. Looking back though there were many days that I would go to bed so tired after putting in some long hours reaching out to others with food and clothing, diapers and baby furniture. Some care but very few, there was those who would look in the bag of food and say “WHAT NO MEAT?” I find it funny now as I look back at all the work I did and have someone so nasty say that there was no meat in their bag.

Another time I was walking down an ally at night, it was freezing cold and the snow was blowing. I had just purchased a leather coat for \$400. It took a long to save up the money but I had done it and was pretty pleased with my purchase. Well walking up that ally I came across this young lady who only had a sweater on, she was freezing. We talked for a minute or two and she asked me if I could give her my coat. Guess what I did? You are right, I took off my coat and all the time thinking I had another one at home that I had got at the Goodwill store that would be alright for me to wear. I helped her on with my coat and walked away. I felt pretty good as I knew she would be warm that winter. Well, it was a few days later I was walking down that same



ally and here she came again with her sweater. I looked at her and asked “WHERE WAS MY COAT” she looked at me and said that she had went into this house and someone stole it. Now I found out later it was a crack house. Was I played or what? I couldn’t believe what she told me and I know instantly that I had made a big mistake. Enabling people was just not the right thing to do. Be careful that your emotions don’t get involved in a situation and you do something against what you may know is the right thing to do. I certainly learned a good lesson that night and have never done it again.

God does not want us to be door mats where others can wipe their feet on us, walking away laughing behind our back. We may walk away feeling good and yet we just got played and they didn’t get helped one little bit, all we did was enable them.

Many these days know how to play the POOR ME game, they tell you a sob story and if you are not careful you will fall for it. That is where Prayer and Reading the Word of God come in. We need to get built up spiritually to be able to see the tricks of the enemy. Satan is out to Kill, Steal and Destroy us .. Don’t let him get a foothold in your family or in

your life and allow him to take over. You will only regret it in the future. You won't be able to blame anyone else either for things you have done. You will be on your own.

You may be saying then how do I change, I have been praying and nothing has worked yet.

Prayer is great and God does answer prayer but a lot of the times WE have to do something, we step out in faith in a situation, get all the knowledge we can and start to renew our mind by the Word of God. Get to know what God expects of us and how He wants us to live. You will be so surprised at what you learn about yourself if you take the time to dig into the Word and find out.

See, we are made up of our Body, which is our flesh, the part that can soften up at a sweet word or an innocent smile. Soul, the part that we think with and our Spirit, the part that when we ask Christ to come and live within us. Our flesh is weak, satan plays with our minds all the time telling us to Love others as Jesus loved us, but many times REAL LOVE is saying : NO ... but so many can't say that word, they put up with the game of stories, lies, making us feel guilty cause we didn't help or give them their own way and then we go to bed

depressed and wonder why. Then we pray again asking God to change the situation or the person when the real person is US who has to change.

## WHY DO PEOPLE ENABLE?

Enablers have a desire to be needed and feel that the only way to get people to like or love them is to become. Enablers often get self-worth and self-esteem from their acts of giving and caring for others. They get the feeling of feeling important. Some feel loved by their giving which is a superficial feeling that only they feel. Some enable thinking they are doing a service and don't believe it is a need that they have.

Enabling can also be a sign of co-dependency. Someone who enables another person must realize that they are not helping that person at all, only keeping them in the same situation so that they cannot grow. They are making that person feel they should be enabled by others and somewhere down the road they find that not all people are enablers and they have a rude awakening one day which could have been avoided if things had been different in their past.

God wants us to help others, but He wants us to use wisdom when doing it. That is why a training or self help group should be there for those who feel they may have low self esteem and always want to help others instead of themselves.

Well I guess to sum this book up my final words would be .. **DON'T BE A DOOR MAT..**

Love others as always,  
Care for those who need you,  
Reach out to the hurting,  
Lend a hand when needed,  
Take care of the elderly,  
Love the Children

But **NEVER** be abused or think that what you do for others is not worth way more than what you have done. God sees your heart and knows that you genuinely care. Never give up and leave the door mat at someone else's house.

God bless You



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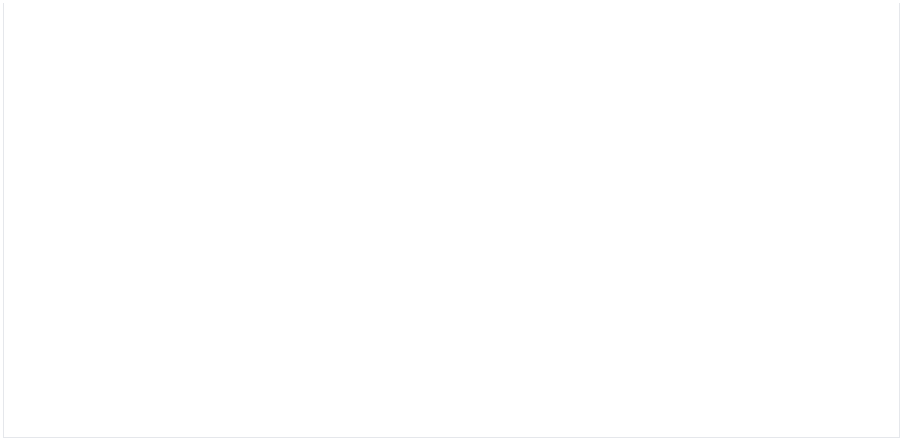




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