Behind the Behavior:
Understanding Extreme Conduct

The following are ideas, questions, and possible homework assignments:

1. What actions, attitudes, or thoughts are you experiencing/practicing that could be labeled as unusual or bizarre?

2. Do you feel as if your actions are sinful? Why or why not?

3. Examine what the following passages on physical sickness and sin:

- Job's friends believed Job was sick because of a sin he committed. Was this correct? (Job 42:7-9)
- Do bad things happen to good people and vice versa? (Matthew 5:43-45)
- What should the sick do? (James 5:14-16)
- Is it wrong to take medicine for sickness? (1 Timothy 5:23)

4. Circle any of the following medical factors you think may be contributing to your behavior?

- Brain Tumor
- Thyroid Gland
- Chronic Pain
- Extreme (Hemipoligic) Migraines
- Alzheimer's
- Eating Habits
- Seizures
- Stroke
- Blood Sugar Levels
- Side Effects from Medication
- Sleep Deprivation
- Other: _____

5. List any possible diagnosis you have received from your medical doctors:

6. Read the following quotation from Ed Welch: "When we have a disease we can still be growing in the knowledge of Christ, but addictions are incompatible with spiritual growth." (Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave, 41)

In order to help determine whether your behavior is the result of a medical condition or moral disobedience, write out your answers to the following questions adapted from Ed Welch:

- Is your behavior accompanied by the fear of the Lord?
- Do you have a keen sense of the presence and holiness of God during your behavior?
- Do you ever have a sense that you are spiritually growing in repentance, faith, and obedience while experiencing episodes identified as abnormal behavior?

7. Behind the Behavior Timeline: Walk through the minutes before your behavior and after your behavior. Write down each frame and put words to describe what you are thinking and feeling.

1 hour before the behavior:
Put words on your thoughts:
Describe your feelings:

5 minutes before the behavior:
Put words on your thoughts:
Describe your feelings:

30 seconds before the behavior:
Put words on your thoughts:
Describe your feelings:

During the behavior:
Put words on your thoughts:
Describe your feelings:

Immediately after the behavior:
Put words on your thoughts:
Describe your feelings:

30 minutes after the behavior:
Put words on your thoughts:
Describe your feelings:

8. After writing out a timeline, it is important to discover the logic behind any sinful action. What might be the root behind your actions? What are some desires taking place in your heart that would compel you to act in this manner?

9. Could any of these moral factors be contributing to your behavior?

- Feeling obligation to God or acting out of guilt - Philippians 3:2-11; Judges 11:29-36; 1 Kings 18:28
- Pride or Hardness of heart - Exodus 9:34-35
- An action that feels comfortable or controlling - Romans 7:13-19
- Fear - 1 Samuel 21:12
- Pressure from others – John 12:42
- Attempting to escape from something unpleasant - 1 Kings 19:9-10; 1 Samuel 21:10-15
- Lacking in understanding of how to make everyday decisions - Proverbs 22:3; 27:12

10. Do you believe it is possible to change your behavior? Why or why not? What does the following passages have to say about changing moral behavior?

- *John 8:34-36*
- *Romans 6:5-11*
- *Romans 8:1-11*

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