

# The Weekly Skillet

Serving Up New Choices For Your Life!

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## The Main Course



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### When Needs are Not Fulfilled...

Have you ever noticed that the common denominator for most of our problems in life is that we lose control of ourselves emotionally? How many times do we get angry and say or do things we later regret? Or, how many times are we afraid to say what we really need to say to people and then our silence eats away at us? These are examples of not exercising Emotional Self-control.

We all come into the world with five basic needs that must be fulfilled. These needs are for:

- Survival
- Freedom
- Usefulness
- Love
- Self-Identity

The fulfillment of these needs is not optional if we are to live healthy lives. In other words, if these needs are not met, we don't feel right and we don't act right.

When these needs **are not fulfilled**, we feel fear. This fear often turns to some form of negative behavior. We may try to cover up our real feelings by trying to control how we react, but we begin to notice that we either erupt in anger or slip into negative feelings about ourselves and act depressed.

As a teenager, these mood swings are confusing. It's like something has control of us. We don't really know how we got to feeling this way in the first place and we sure don't know how to get out. The grown ups around us don't seem to have it all together either.

Adults have simply learned how to **manage** these negative feelings that come from not meeting our basic needs for survival, freedom, usefulness, love, and self-identity. We have learned how to compromise these basic needs by changing the order of their priority. For example, if we are afraid of LOVE because we have been rejected and hurt in the past, we think the answer is to stay **"in control"** of love.

Controlled love is conditional love and is never really satisfying. Nevertheless, we will sometimes change the priority of our needs and settle for being useful.

We make "love" less important and make "being useful" more important. This seems appropriate because we have **incorrectly** learned that we have to "earn love." We measure being loved and being useful in the same way. These are both measured in terms of how much attention, respect and appreciation we receive.

But there is one major difference between love and usefulness. Real LOVE is based on who we are. Being USEFUL is about what we do. Being loved for "who we are" is a basic need that cannot be replaced.

As we accumulate experiences of "settling for being useful," we notice an empty hole in our gut and an ache in our bones. When we replace love with being useful, we begin to feel "used." We begin to feel and think that nobody really cares about us and that we are only wanted based on what we do. Sooner or later neither our need for "love" nor "being useful" are fulfilled.

#### Excerpt from: Passage To Adulthood

These feelings can be resolved, see the next column for an upcoming class!

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