



Contraction versus Expansion

If I had to say to you, “Trauma makes one contract”, you might look at me and ask what does that mean?”

So, we have discussed how often trauma is used to reinforce strongholds in our lives. Those strongholds often all seem to diminish who we are or could be if we realised our potential, our purpose and our destiny in Christ.

The meaning of contraction is “to make smaller”. One evening in prayer, the Lord gave me a simple visual of a person starting out confident and bold; they stood tall and warrior-like. It looked as if they had control over their circumstances. But as things happened to them in life, they started to diminish in appearance and instead became weak and bowed over. They looked back at the figure of who they used to be, but it was like a distant memory they could hardly see anymore.

We must remember that trauma will make the space you take up smaller. If it is a single episode of trauma, you may feel that in that area, fear comes in, and you develop anxiety to do a certain thing. Like a car accident - it may take time for you to be able to drive again. This affects the quality of life and lessens the space you can move in. Or a home invasion - it will compromise your view of feeling safe in the world, and you may stop going out or reinforce your home, and it could become your prison. You are always in hyper-vigilant mode. It lessens the space you move in.

Complex trauma, more than one incident, will make small the space you take up, and so consequently make bigger and bigger the space others take up in your life - often, it's totally out of balance. What do I mean by this?

The more things that happen to us that we experience as bad or traumatic, the more it will reduce our potential in life if we don't deal with it. It will stop us from feeling good enough, it will stop us from feeling that what we need for love and belonging is not that important. It can make us believe that others should always be more important than us, therefore diminishing our value and worth. It will cause us to judge ourselves in a negative way.

Yes, we must love our neighbour as ourselves (providing we know how to love ourselves and accept ourselves) and do unto others as we would want them to do unto us. We are to love those that are often hard to love. But in the process, we are not supposed to diminish who we are - who God created us to be and that we need to take care of what God gave us, including our spirit, soul and body.

If we are not well in those areas, it diminishes our capacity to function effectively. It gives us a limited view of life and of what we can do and accomplish. It gives us a limited view of others and the world.

Contraction versus Expansion

Mark 12v30-31 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

Matthew 7v11 "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets".

Luke 22v26-27 "But it is not to be this way with you; on the contrary, the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest [and least privileged], and the [one who is the] leader, like the servant. For who is the greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves." AMP

Being the least is fine if it is from a healthy view of other. We should not be the least in order to get the love and attention we need, we should not be the least so someone can abuse us or tell us who we ought to be. Our identity is supposed to be tied to who God says we are. We should not be the least if it means we have to compromise biblical morals and standards we hold dear. So being the least can become a distortion of the true meaning of this scripture. And limit who we can be and our influence in this world.

Expansion upon healing

Now, let us look at the opposite of contraction. This is expansion. Expansion means "the action of becoming larger and more extensive". Healing our past trauma and hurts, forgiving others, repenting and allowing God to come in and touch those wounded places in all the different areas allows us to become larger, take up more space, and become more expansive in our authority as believers and in the influence we have. It also helps to expand our view of ourselves and others to see the truth and not be caught up in the lies, fear and distortions that the enemy brings into our lives.

We can come out of the miry clay so God can set our feet on solid ground. We can come into a broader place. Jesus never made Himself small - He often confessed who He was but people would not accept it. They tried to diminish who He was and tried to make Him smaller through their sin and arrogance as well as ignorance. They had a view of Him as a man, and in His own hometown, He could not do many miracles, for they knew in the natural who He was - the son of Joseph and Mary, a carpenter and a brother with brothers and sisters. They did not see how He could potentially be a saviour or as a solution to their problems. Jesus could not be expansive in that environment. But He did not let that stop Him from doing other works in places where He was received. He never let them define Him. He continually took up His space until His death and then He expanded beyond what they could ever imagine. He knew who His father was, He knew where He came from, He knew this earth and its circumstances and all the views that man had, was only a temporary thing. He knew soon enough it would all be revealed and it did not compare to what He was going back to.

Remember - whatever this world throws at you cannot compare to where you are going as a believer. And remember where you came from when you are tempted to diminish your capacity and take up less space.

Those that are giving the impression of being expansive in a negative way, do not concern themselves with others and are often abusers, controllers and corrupt in leadership. They often lack empathy or compassion. They carry pride and arrogance and have a very narcissistic view of life. They take up a lot of space but will use others to get what they need and pave the way for their success. Others are there for them, but they are rarely there for

Contraction versus Expansion

others. They will gaslight you into thinking the problem is always you. Yes, we need to examine our thoughts, attitudes and behaviours toward others - but again, this has to be a healthy self-reflection to bring positive changes in our lives. It is not to feel worse about ourselves or always be made to feel like we are “bad” and have no value or worth in the light of that person. We want to appease them and make it better for them so we don't bear the brunt of their rage instead of seeing it for what it is. They are taking up our space to increase theirs.

We need to realise that this “expansion” is actually a contraction. They hide all the insecurities, fears and other issues under the exterior presentation of having expanded.

So, dear children of God, let us expand into all God has for us so we can take up our space as influencers for Christ. As examples of the true picture of who we were created to be. Let us not betray who we are in Christ for this temporal life. Get healing, Grow in the Word and in the spirit, get to know your Father to understand who you are and, where you came from and why you are here.

The Holy Spirit is the one that needs to expand in us, and this is the only way we are supposed to take up less space. Because if He can expand and have His way in our lives, we, in return, take up more space. As you expand, you draw further away from yourself, and you stop seeing only yourself and your circumstances. You can then move outside of that and have an expanded view instead of a limited one.

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