The image of God is central to developing a solid view of personality.

- Our sinfulness is our biggest problem (not how we’ve been sinned against)
- Forgiveness (not wholeness) is our greatest need
- Repentance (not insight) is the dynamic in all real change.

Note from me, the notetaker:
Much of this outline is directly quoted from the book. Some of the Scripture references and also the prayer ideas section I added in because they fit the topic. In my outline, I chose to use the term “offender” to reference the person who has hurt others. The book uses the term “abuser” because the book specifically addresses sexual abuse. For my purposes here, the broader term “offender” works, because the notes I gleaned from the book are meant to be useful for all types of hurt that we experience in life. Portions of the book which are unique to sexual abuse, I skipped over.

You may be reading this outline because you are a wounded heart and someone has hurt you. We are all wounded, to some degree or another. As you read, you will find that some of the information about the person who wounded you fits you perfectly, too. It may bring to mind different circumstances and someone you yourself have wounded. Use the information as going both ways – you, the wounded heart, and you, the offender. In other words, the understanding and advice goes both ways. As you know, we take care of the log in our own eyes so we can see clear to help our neighbor remove the speck from his.

I. The Healing Process

A. The best path is through the valley of the shadow of death.
   1. The crags of doubt and the valleys of despair offer a proving ground of God that no other terrain can provide. The journey involves bringing our wounded heart before God, a heart that is full of rage, overwhelmed with doubt, bloodied but unbroken, rebellious, stained and lonely. (p.19)
   2. Peer deeply into the wounded heart. The work of restoration cannot begin until a problem is fully faced. (p.14) This focus is neither negative nor should it bring despair. Rather, it sets the stage for the dramatic work of God. (p.105)
   3. The process of entering the past will disrupt life or, at least, the existence that masquerades as life. The fabric of life will need to be unraveled piece by piece as the Master reweaves the cloth to His design. (p.44)
   4. One might wish that the process of sanctification was merely a stroll down a gentle country lane. In fact, the path is through the dark valleys and into the seemingly impenetrable darkness that eclipses the light of the Son of God. The horror of change is that it appears to involve a death that resurrection cannot restore. Therefore, the only apparent hope is to live in denial and to believe that God wants us to be complacent, spiritualized automatons. I view this as a diabolical coverup. (p.45)
   5. God’s perspective and path often seem absurd: we are called to give up life in order to find it, the promise that the poor in spirit will be blessed. These things turn our world upside down and violate our natural understanding. (p. 73)
Isaiah 55:8 – “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” declares the Lord. Isaiah 55:8

B. Quick cures never resolve the deep damage. (p.18)
   The hunger for a quick cure is as deep as the desire for heaven. The tragedy is that many take the cheap cure and miss the path to a lasting taste of heaven. (p.19)

C. Why pursue firm hope and lively joy?
   1. To live out the gospel.
      a. Pursue a crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8)
   2. To live significantly less than what one was made to be is as severe a betrayal of the soul as what your enemies have done. We are meant to live a passionate life. Passion is the deep response of the soul to life; the freedom to rejoice and to weep. (p.209)
   3. The longing to see our life count or matter, the passion to make a dent in the world, to influence another person because of our presence, is a God-designed passion built into every man and woman. (p.58)

D. Beware of the enemies of healing
   These self-protective defenses that operate largely outside of our awareness, guiding our interactions with others, determining the spouse we select, the jobs we pursue, the theologies we embrace, and the fabric of our entire lives. (p.20)
   1. Shame
   2. Contempt: The Great Masquerade
      a. Contempt “serves” four purposes for us (p.79)
         i. Diminishes our shame (or so we think)
         ii. Deadens our longings
         iii. Makes us feel in control
         iv. Distorts the real problem by deflecting the focus from our own depravity and need for a Savior to attacking someone else. (p.83)
      b. Contempt is a major stumbling block against the humbling work of God. It is condemnation of the perceived cause of our shame. (p.74)
      c. Contempt uses rage; it can be loud and violent or quiet and insidious (p.79) Rage does not heal the wound or satisfy the soul. In most cases, the rage will lead only to deepened despair. (p.198)
      d. Violent thoughts, words, or images are like a slashing knife that bleeds the soul of life. (p.76)
      e. Other-centered contempt: a haughty disregard of others. (p.75)
         i. Ignores one’s own depravity
         ii. Can masquerade as righteous indignation
      f. Self-contempt
         i. It’s more than just a poor self-image. Satan uses this tactic to have people destroy themselves, so don’t do his dirty work for him.
         ii. It is Satan’s counterfeit conviction for sin. (p.82)
   3. Independence from God: a determined, inclination to pursue false gods, to find life apart from dynamic, moment-by-moment relationship with the Lord of life. (p.57)
      False gods can be: people, objects, or ideals
4. Motives matter, so don’t disregard or ignore them
   a. To know *the why* opens the door to the possibility of seeing the enormity of the problem and the need for something more than mere behavioral alteration. At best, awareness of the motivation behind behavior reveals the web of our fallen desire and creates a desperate need for God’s intervention to rescue us from such a dark maze. (p.78)

II. The Structure of Personality

A. Our style of relating to others is our personality
   1. It’s like an x-ray that tells us the condition of our heart. (p.155)
   2. Are we focused on self-preservation or on loving and serving others?

B. Raw Elements of Personality (p.59)
   1. Dignity: God-given, built-in to our design
      When our dignity is ignored, we feel undesirable. (p.64)
   2. Depravity: our tendency toward sin
      a. Exposure of our wrongs leads to shame. Like Adam and Eve, we have the propensity to hide, blame, and attack when caught. (p.62) Note: Adam didn’t repent; he just covered up. (p.71) BTW: the issue was *not* whether Adam was accurate in his analysis (it was Eve’s idea and God’s the One who made her!), but whether he was willing to accept the consequences of his own rebellion. (p.82)
      b. Legitimate shame exposes depravity (p.63) We should feel shame when we hurt someone because we violate our relationship with them and the Lord. (p.65)
      c. Take care not to justify or deny your wrongdoing. Let legitimate shame do its work. If the Spirit of God lives in you, you will be nudged into the light of His presence and seared by His penetrating eyes. It is God’s kindness to orchestrate the events of our life so that our heart will be tested and then humbled. (p.66)

C. Enemy of Personality: Illegitimate Shame
   1. It’s a silent killer, like high-blood pressure
   2. “a hemorrhage of the soul” says Jean-Paul Sartre. It is an awful experience to be aware that we are seen as deficient and undesirable by someone whom we hope will deeply enjoy us. (p.61)
   3. Illegitimate shame shines a light on some element of dignity. (p.63) Rejection is a by-product of being seen as deficient. (p.67)
   4. Counter illegitimate shame with this:
      Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame. He who vindicates me is near. Isaiah 50
III. What is love?

A. The love of God and the fear of God.
B. Love is a movement of grace to embrace those who have sinned against us. It is the offer of restoration to those who have done harm, for the purpose of destroying evil and enhancing life. (p.216)
C. Love must be sincere. Love is to be without hypocrisy; it is to be unfeigned. Romans 12:9
D. I Corinthians 13

IV. What does it mean to love one’s enemies?

A. God’s Directives
   1. Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. Matthew 5:44
   2. But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in doing so you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:20-21
B. Forgiveness
   1. A hunger for restoration
   2. Bold love (to be detailed later)
   3. Revoked revenge
C. Clarify the boundaries with the offender. Offer kindness, grace, and respect. (p.223)
D. Wrong way of dealing with enemies
   1. Love does not mean minimizing or “forgetting” the pain. (p.215)
   2. Be nice, do not cause conflict, and pretend that relationships are fine as the evil charade unfolds. (p.17)
      a. This feels safe to some victims, but it’s a dead way of living.
      b. **This is soulless conformity that never leads to life-giving change.** (p.17)
   3. Opting for an emotionless act of the will to be nice and inoffensive is **not** love, because love is never weak or lacking in passion. Love must be sincere. If we hate what is evil and cling to what is good (Romans 12:9), then we should not be “avoiding and pretending” at all costs.
E. Right way of dealing with enemies
   3. If we are to hate what is evil and cling to what is good, we are constrained to detest all that is consonant with evil and bind ourselves to whatever is good. Therefore, love is not anemic unconditional acceptance that ignores evil in others or ourselves. (Matthew 7:3-6) It is not contradictory to love someone, desire their good, and equally work toward destroying their cancer through bringing them to repentance and faith. (p.218-219)
   3. Love is not an absence of anger: The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate. Proverbs 8:13
E. Prayer Ideas: Ask God to give your enemies the mind of Christ, to place their feet on paths of righteousness, and help them to make godly decisions and have godly motives. Ask for deliverance, salvation, blessings and a revelation of the perfect love of God. (from my journal)
F. Some days the taste of life will be bitter. Other days it will be sweeter than any honey and more intoxicating than any wine. Drinking from the water that wells up to eternal life will satisfy the soul more deeply than words can express. (p.231)

G. The point of living is giving, not getting. (p.201)

I. Your work of dealing with the damage is a death blow to our Adversary, the devouring lion. (p.234)

V. What is Trust?

A. Trust is a giving of our soul to another with the hope that we will not be harmfully used.

B. Biblical Trust (p.71)
   1. Level One – we rely on Him to keep our body or our world intact.
   2. Level Two – we rely on Him for what is most essential to our being: the intactness of our soul. No matter what’s been done to our body, our reputation, or our temporal security, we know we will live eternally with Him.
      a. Living at Level Two is more challenging, but far more rewarding.
      b. It is the essential core of biblical trust.
      c. If you believe the following, then you are ready to live at Level Two: God is a loving Father who is committed to my deepest well-being. He has the right to use everything that is me for whatever purposes he deems best, and I surrender my will and my life entirely to Him because it will bring me the deepest joy and fulfillment I can know this side of heaven. (p.174)

C. Honor: the opposite of betrayal
   1. Be honorable in intent and word.
   2. Trust is not built on the absence of failure as much as on the willingness of each party to own and rectify each harmful break in the relationship. Honor assumes the need for honesty and restitution. In the context of honor, failure opens the door to deepening trust as wrongs are righted and wounds are healed. (p.119)

D. Honor is more than “Have I been honest?” It’s “Have I been committed to the other person’s good?” (p.177)

VI. Life isn’t fair

A. Fairness is a “pleasant pretense” (p.81)

B. Inequity and inequality expose the well-manicured yards of our lives to reveal the sordid underbrush and squalid weeds of the Fall (p.81)

C. Raw Reality - life in this fallen world – is just too much for some people to endure. Consequently, they look for more acceptable, controllable explanations. (p.81)

D. Suffering is necessary for us because it strips away the pretense that life is reasonable and good, a pretense that keeps us looking in all the wrong places for the satisfaction of our souls. (p.179)

E. Betrayal
   1. Betrayal by an intimate, deeply trusted companion is almost too much for the soul to endure. (p.52)
2. Betrayal can bring shame. Shame comes from misplaced trust. If we trusted someone who betrayed us, we feel foolish.

VII. Change

A. A good model of change will deal with both the dignity and depravity of the offender. (p.237)

B. Change includes honesty, repentance, and bold love. (p.181) Love is at the core of change. (p.17)

C. Change is always a process. The assumption is that if God is involved, then the process will be brief and not too messy. If that were true, then why did God take forty years to teach Moses humility and leadership skills in the sheep fields of Midian? Deep healing, supernatural change, may take years of struggle, trial-and-error learning, and growing in strength... (p.174)

D. Real life requires death. Death involves the experience of suffering. Suffering is required for growth.

E. Honesty
   1. Honesty is the beginning of repentance. It is a precondition for life.
   2. Reflection
      Spend time in conversations with God and other people, ponder, pray, fast, journal, read the Bible and be open. (from the Honesty chapter)
   3. Dishonesty is denial. It is an attempt to become as God with the power to construct the world and reality according to our desire. A person committed to denying hard truths must construct an alternate world and, then, like Atlas, keep it spinning on their own power. (p.183) The work of keeping the gnawing dogs of truth at bay actually takes far more energy than admitting the awful reality. (p.183)

F. Repentance
   1. Repentance is an about-face movement from denial and rebellion to truth and surrender – from death to life. (p.197) It is evidenced by godly sorrow.
   2. Beware of false repentance: a sorrow unto death
      a. a death due to self-absorbed self-protection
      b. This is worldly, shallow sorrow – when the offender regrets his consequences and the fact that he got caught.
      c. Cheap forgiveness sounds like this: “I’m sorry for the past, but I am forgiven and your attitude is unchristian and unloving.” To receive the offender’s ‘I’m sorry’ as sufficient evidence of change is a disrespectful disregard of what his soul is capable of offering through true repentance. (p.230)
      d. Manipulating forgiveness
         Asking for forgiveness, or saying I’m sorry, looks so Christian, but in fact is often a demand on others that they be pleased with you. In that sense, your apologizing is self-centered and a burden to others who must continually reassure the “sinner” that you are still welcome and wanted. (p.163)
3. True repentance
   a. True conviction allows one to focus on others and to persevere
   b. A sorrow unto life: humbly crying out to God with all that we are for grace and strength to live the God-glorifying, other-centered life. (p.199)
   c. An internal shift in our perceived source of life. Now we see this source as God rather than our own self-protective means. (p.199)
   d. Repentance flows from the energy of being stunned, silent, and without excuse for the harm we’ve done to ourselves and others and for breaking the heart of God. (p.201)

3. The internal shifts of repentance
   The offender should move beyond mere sadness to grief and sorrow.
   a. Sadness – an experience of disappointment
   b. Grief – an intensified experience of sadness involving the loss of something deeply important that cannot be regained or replaced. Grief admits there are scars that can only be removed in heaven. (p.208)
   c. Sorrow – recognition of damage done to others. Sorrow breaks the heart as it exposes the damage we’ve done to others as a result of our unwillingness to rely solely on the grace and truth of God. (p.205)

5. James 4:8-10
   Wash your hands you sinners and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

6. Repentance is a process that is never accomplished once and for all. It is a cyclical, deepening movement that, like a snowball, picks up weight and speed as it rolls. (p.212)

G. Bold Love
   1. A commitment to do whatever it takes to bring health to the offender, to restore the man to life. (p.218)
   2. This might be through direct, frontal confrontation (Luke 17:3) OR patient, slow kindness (Ephesians 4:32) The goal, in either case, is restoration. (p.219)
   3. The capacity to act on conviction instead of fear enlivens the soul and allows it to soar above the petty attacks and jealousies of a fallen world. (p.181)

VIII. Specifics on How to Interact with Offenders
   A. IF the time is right for a peaceful confrontation (pray and fast first):
      1. Set consistent boundaries
      2. Give a gentle rebuke and invite offender to repent.
      3. Offer a relationship with certain criteria IF the offender agrees.
B. Sequential Steps of a Confrontation (if a step is not passed, discontinue process)  
1. Review a few details of the offense(s); the offender must agree they are true.  
2. Offender must accept complete responsibility – no excuses or blameshifting.  
3. Offender must give evidence of grief and acknowledgement of harm.  
4. Present the current details that inhibit an authentic relationship.  
5. Offender should express a willingness to pursue the path to health.

C. Procedure when the offender is unwilling to repent.  
1. Recognizing an unrepentant heart.  
   a. Arrogance is proof of the great distress in the soul – the soul of an image bearer (God’s) who was created to love but has instead destroyed. (p.226)  
   b. You may see the offender using vague, half-truths, distortion, minimization, and self-justification. (p.201)  
   c. Many people are simply not worthy of trust. The opposite of mistrust, however, is not trust, but care.

2. Trust is conditional; care is not. To care is to use all that we are for the good of others while not walling off the deep parts of our soul. By not writing others off, we tenderly and strongly offer relationship. (p.207)

3. Gentle acceptance and relentless pursuit. (p.209) What will give me the greatest opportunity to love? The goal is to build up and give life. Ephesians 4:29

5. You can forgive the offender if they are unwilling to repent, but the relationship cannot be restored. (p.228) A refusal to normalize a wicked relationship is a gift of excommunication that waits for the sinner’s return but does not offer deep relationship (based on repentance), in honest, open-hearted kindness, is living out the gospel, even if the offer is spurned and condemned. (p.229) This form of excommunication is actually a gift, a respectful choice to honor the abuser with the consequences of his own destructive choice. (2 Thessalonians 3:14-15)

E. How to respond to unrepentant offenders of various levels  
1. Low-level offenders (a grouchy sales clerk): set boundaries, grin and bear it. Our journey on earth was never promised to be hassle-free. ☺  
2. Medium level offenders (slightly off-kilter marriage issues, trust issues): set consistent boundaries, learn to sorrow and rejoice, and persevere in faith toward God’s redemptive plan for the offender. Regardless of whether your relationship with the offender reconciles or disintegrates, your passion for life will increase. Your tears will be deeper and your laughter will be richer.  
3. High-level offenders (betrayal from a close relationship, extreme destruction or loss): consider your motives before any decision is made to confront; we are called to live out the gospel with strength, dignity and care.