

*Ps 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts.  
Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life. NLT*

## **Stages of Emotional Development**

from Emotionally Healthy Spirituality by Peter Scazzero

### **Emotional Infants**

- ✓ Look for others to take care of them
- ✓ Have great difficulty entering into the world of others
- ✓ Are driven by need for instant gratification
- ✓ Use others as objects to meet their needs

### **Emotional Children**

- ✓ Are content and happy as long as they receive what they want
- ✓ Unravel quickly from stress, disappointments, trials
- ✓ Interpret disagreements as personal offenses
- ✓ Are easily hurt
- ✓ Complain, withdraw, manipulate, take revenge, become sarcastic when they don't get their way
- ✓ Have great difficulty calmly discussing their needs and wants in a mature, loving way

### **Emotional Adolescents**

- ✓ Tend to often be defensive
- ✓ Are threatened and alarmed by criticism
- ✓ Keep score of what they give so they can ask for something later in return
- ✓ Deal with conflict poorly, often blaming, appeasing, going to a third party, pouting, or ignoring the issue entirely
- ✓ Become preoccupied with themselves
- ✓ Have great difficulty truly listening to another person's pain, disappointments, or needs
- ✓ Are critical and judgmental

### **Emotional Adults**

- ✓ Are able to ask for what they need, want, or prefer – clearly, directly, honestly
- ✓ Recognize, manage, and take responsibility for their own thoughts and feelings
- ✓ Can, when under stress, state their own beliefs and values without becoming adversarial
- ✓ Respect others without having to change them
- ✓ Give people room to make mistakes and not be perfect
- ✓ Appreciate people for who they are – the good, bad, and ugly – not for what they give back
- ✓ Accurately assess their own limits, strengths, and weaknesses and are able to freely discuss them with others
- ✓ Are deeply in tune with their own emotional world and able to enter into the feelings, needs, and concerns of others without losing themselves
- ✓ Have the capacity to resolve conflict maturely and negotiate solutions that consider the perspectives of others

