



A MULTI-WEEK JOURNEY EXPLORING
FATHERHOOD & FAMILY LINES

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

WWW.FAMILYLINES.ORG

3 POSSIBLE PATHS FOR YOUR JOURNEY

PATH ONE

3 SIMPLE QUESTIONS

Answer the following three questions after each episode (6 weeks):

1. What scene or statement most impacted you? Why?
2. Did you hear any messages loud and clear that were not being spoken?
3. What does this say about our Heavenly Father?

Complete the **Take-Home Assignments** provided for each chapter.

PATH TWO

FOLLOW THE GUIDE

The standard path (6 weeks).

PATH THREE

EXPAND THE JOURNEY

SESSION I SCREENING

Watch the entire Film series in one session.

Contact Family Lines for an optimized screening version (info@familylines.org)

SESSIONS 2 - 7

LOOK BACK

Go through one episode per week using the facilitator questions. The focus of these weeks is to allow your own stories and thoughts to rise to the surface. Intentionally avoid moving to action steps. As men, we have a strong desire to fix things. This practical focus, while good, can prevent us from looking deep enough into our own stories to allow the deeper layers to be revealed.

SESSIONS 8 - 13

MOVE FORWARD

It's time for your conversations to connect with home. As a result of what's been revealed about your past story, what needs to happen now? Be intentional and write the next chapter of the story. Focus on the Take-Home assignments.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

SILENCE IS OKAY.

It's the sound of processing, and this journey requires it.

SLOW DOWN.

Let the story sit with you. Don't rush on to the next question.
Story takes time to process – commit to spending time with it.

NO PRESSURE TO GET TO THE POINT. (FREEDOM TO PROCESS)

Don't feel compelled to conclude each story or response you make.
It's okay to not be sure of why you shared what you did. Lean into the discomfort.

BE HERE FOR YOU.

This sounds selfish, but it's vital that this journey get personal for *you*. If you're here for someone else, do them a favor and focus on you. Your life in-process speaks loudly.

DON'T SETTLE FOR A YES/NO ANSWER.

You will barely scrape the surface if you stop at "yes" or "no."
Consider the next layer.

LEVERAGE THE SPRINGBOARD.

You are not alone on this journey. May the stories shared and questions asked
by the group reveal new layers of opportunity.

SHOW UP.

See the journey through from beginning to end.

TAKE IT HOME, EVENTUALLY.

If it only stays in the men's club, it loses its power. Don't rush it, but lean into
writing the next chapter of your family line.

INTRODUCTION

THE PUT-IN

Men,

Welcome to the Grande Ronde River...almost. Over the next few weeks we invite you away to an intentional space to look deeper into something priceless, but is easily neglected in the perpetual pace of life: your relationship with your children (or father). Entering this space won't necessarily be easy, or even always fun, but can be extremely worthwhile.

The Mending Lines series will arguably be unlike any men's small group you've ever experienced. Instead of an author/speaker laying out a clear, outlined path forward, we offer you the stories of six men. Three dads. Three sons. Raw. Unscripted. Broken. Messy. Six episodes where we encounter fathers and sons looking back into their past to write a new chapter for their story ahead.

We challenge you to engage with the story. Step into the minds and shoes of the guys you're watching on the screen. You may or may not feel it fits with your story, but whatever your initial impression, keep persevering. If you stay engaged through this six-episode journey, we firmly believe their story will impact your own.

The stories don't necessarily resolve: you only get a bit of context from each one. This is intentional. We want their story to serve as a precursor for yours to be shared.

You don't need to study, read or be familiar with any previous content to be involved in this series. There is one choice you will need to make as you experience Mending Lines, and that is at what level you choose to engage. We call it "challenge by choice," and that decision lies solely in your hands.

Remember as you walk through this series that your own family line hangs in the balance. There is more to be written in your story, both now and in your lineage ahead. Our prayer is that the Mending Lines stories you engage with will invite a new level of healing and hope.

May God bless your journey today and for generations to come.



MENDING

In fishing, “mending” is moving your line before or during the drift to achieve a specific presentation of your fly to the fish. Learning why, when and how to mend greatly increases your success as a fisherman.

CHAPTER I

UNFINISHED

OPENING QUESTION:

What brings you here?

MENDING METAPHOR

Just thinking about what's happening downstream is not the whole picture. The attention you've given to the current and your line upstream will directly impact your effectiveness downstream.

Play Chapter ONE
(video length 9:13)

Question 1: At the beginning of the chapter, Micah makes the following statement about vulnerability: *"Vulnerability has always been something that I've struggled with, as far as just opening up and the complete transparency...so I'm a little bit nervous about that, but at the same time I'm very much looking forward to being nervous and confronting all that and getting over it."* With that in mind, how would you answer the following questions:

- What makes you nervous about being vulnerable?
- What do you look forward to about being vulnerable?

Question 2: Mark shares about a phrase of life that was "extraordinary loneliness" (1:50). Can you identify with any of the following phases of loneliness?

- Lonely with a lot of people around
- "Where did everybody go?" loneliness
- Some other type of loneliness: _____

Question 3: What three words would you use to describe your relationship with your father? Or, for you fathers, to describe your relationships with your children?

Take-Home Assignment:

- **Step ONE:** One of Mark's descriptive words of his relationship with his son is "unfinished healing." What are some possible areas of unfinished healing in your relationship with your father/son/daughter?
- **Step TWO:** Purpose to pray over those areas and ask this question: "God, what would you have me do in this unfinished area?"

A WORD FROM OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

James 1:4-5

DISQUALIFIED

MENDING METAPHOR

Once your fly lands on or in the water, your line is often affected by the pull of many differing currents. Proactively “tending” your line as it drifts downstream will keep your fly in the correct current and on course to the target.

Play Chapter TWO
(video length 11:56)

Question 1: In the opening scene we experience a father and son enjoying the memories of the day. What’s one of your favorite memories with your father when you both just laughed?

Question 2: Mark, the father, talks about a season where shame overran his life and he felt “disqualified” (3:40). Can you identify with any of Mark’s sentiments?

- I’m done/finished.
- My best days are behind me
- I’m not loved.
- Some other type of disqualification: _____

Question 3: One of the guys around the campfire (7:10) shares the following words concerning the idea of posturing: *“If folks really knew and could see in and read this inner screen of my heart – see what was going on inside of me – they’d run away. There’s this idea in my at some level that says I really am a joke, I really am a poser, I really am a pretender. I spend most of my time posturing.”* By definition, posturing is behaving in a way intended to impress or mislead. In what ways are you currently posturing?

Take-Home Assignment:

At the end of Chapter Two, Mark is sitting on a remote hill with his son and asks him an important question: *“I think it’s good to check in and see where we’re at with, have you forgiven your dad?”* If you were sitting alone with your children or dad, what would *your* question be?

A WORD FROM OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

John 10:10

CHAPTER 3

A P A R T

MENDING METAPHOR

Just because your fly is drifting downstream connected to your line doesn't mean you are "fishing." Knowing where the fish is located, then tending to and adjusting the depth of your fly accordingly can make all the difference between a fish seeing what you have to offer...or not. Some scenarios won't require a lot of adjustment, while others may demand constant adjustment.

Play Chapter THREE
(video length 6:53)

Question 1: Who are the three individuals that have most influenced you? Or, if you are a father, who are the three that most influenced the way you parent?

Question 2: What do you think was going through Steve's head when he watched his dad walk away from the campfire circle at the beginning of the episode?

Question 3: Steve spoke about how his story is changing. He specifically mentions growing up thinking his dad had wanted him aborted, only to discover decades later this wasn't true. Where have you possibly filled in the gaps of your story with false conclusions, similar to Steve?

Take-Home Assignment:

- **Step ONE:** Share a "defining moment" – a moment that significantly shaped the man you are today – from your own story with your son or daughter, or your own father.
- **Step TWO:** Now ask them to share one of theirs with you.

A WORD FROM OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Psalm 90:12

CHAPTER 4

EARN IT

MENDING METAPHOR

A successful drift can be sabotaged once you've reached the point where you've let too much line drift downstream unattended. Any attempt to reposition your fly at this point feels minimal at best. In this case, the worst thing you can do is continue to let your line drift as-is. It's best to bring it back in and reset.

Play Chapter FOUR
(video length 8:41)

Question 1: What is your reaction to Ernie answering the question, "*Do you want to be forgiven?*" with the response "*I don't think so?*" (3:20)

Question 2: Why is it so difficult to forgive yourself?

Question 3: Ernie talks about how he can't forgive himself because he earned it (3:33). How does this belief cripple his ability to move forward?

Question 4: Is there something in your life story which you've struggled to forgive yourself for?

Take-Home Assignment:

Purpose to have this conversation with your son, daughter or father:

- **Dads:** If you could have a "do-over" in fathering your child, what would it be? Why?
- **Children:** If you could have a "do-over" in the treatment of your father, what would it be? Why?

Is there anything we need to say "I'm sorry" for?

A WORD FROM OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Ephesians 2:8-10

CHAPTER 5

ALL IN

MENDING METAPHOR

Once the fly lands on or in the water, you want to keep it “fishing” by moving the line without disturbing the fly. This takes practice. A half-hearted mend will not move enough line. Too much authority can pull the fly up and out of the water.

Play Chapter FIVE
(video length 11:12)

Question 1: Why is Anthony afraid of going “all in” (2:27) in his relationship with his step-dad (2:28)? Can you relate?

Question 2: Anthony needed safe space to process out loud. As you listen carefully to Anthony, what do you hear him saying? What do you hear him *not* saying?

Question 3: Can you remember a time when you and your father were in a place where you each were safe to share and not fear someone overreacting? Fathers, where do you create this for your kids?

Question 4: Anthony shares about a time when his step brother told him, “*You’re not even my real brother.*” (7:22) While he goes on to downplay the memory a bit, there’s no denying the impact of that moment. Do you have a relatable “moment in time” where the weight of it still sticks with you to this day?

Take-Home Assignment:

- **Step ONE:** Can you remember a time when you and your father were in a place where you each felt safe enough to share without the fear of someone overreacting?
- **Step TWO:** Fathers, what would it take to create this safe experience for you and your child?
- **Step THREE:** Purpose to do this in the next week. If you’re not sure what to talk about, try the simple Questions Game: they ask you a question, you ask them a question, etc.

A WORD FROM OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

Psalms 68:4-6

CHAPTER 6

CLOSING DISTANCE

MENDING METAPHOR

Mending must be followed by gaining control of your slack fly line and watching your fly or bobber so that when the fish “takes,” you’re in a position to react. Be patient and anticipate with every dft that you will have a “take” from a fish. It’s often when we get distracted or discouraged and move our eyes off the prize that we miss the moment we’ve been working and waiting for.

Play Chapter SIX
(video length 14:21)

Question 1: Mark shares a story about his step-dad’s influence, which results in him carrying a bottle of mouthwash in his truck. What “mouthwash moment” memory still impacts you today?

Question 2: What do you think was behind Mark’s question to Anthony, “*Did I do right by you?*” (4:17) Can you relate?

Question 3: Amidst the tension, Mark pursues Anthony with a patient persistence. How would you describe your current pursuit of your child’s heart?

Question 4: Anthony mentions at least four times (8:05) taking his step-dad, Mark, for granted. Are there ways you now see that you took (or still take) your father for granted? When was the last time you verbalized appreciation for him?

Take-Home Assignment:

Anthony finishes the expedition with the statement, “*Sometimes to get to the next place, you have to step outside your comfort zone.*” As a result of this Mending Lines journey...what now? Some smaller questions that may help you answer this big question:

- When will I purpose to do it? (Chapter 1)
- Who do I need to speak with (in person or by letter)? (Chapter 2)
- Who do I need to forgive? (Episode 3)
- What do I need to hear from my Heavenly Father? (Episode 4)
- Where do I need to go further out of my comfort zone? (Episode 5)
- What action steps are required? (Episode 6)

A WORD FROM OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

1 Peter 5:6-11

CONCLUSION

THE TAKE-OUT

You made it. The take-out, for this journey, has arrived. We are pulling out the boats and de-rigging all the gear. Although this story is coming to a close, the next chapter of your story is waiting for its cue to begin.

First, well done in persevering to the end. There is incredible significance in simply completing what you started. These past six chapters have no doubt prompted more than just a subtle shifting in your family line. We hope you have recognized areas for growth and further conversation.

Now we encourage you to lean into the next chapter of your story: don't leave the conversation stranded in your men's group. It is critical that it makes the transition inside the walls of your family line, to your child or father.

We champion you, through the restorative power of Jesus, to go for it. Not that we have already obtained all of this, but we press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of us...for generations to come.

MENDING LINES

DEEPER WATERS

Questions for taking your journey to a deeper level.

CHAPTER 1

How can a father's loneliness impact their children?

CHAPTER 2

How does the false message of being disqualified affect your role as a father? What scares you about the knowledge that God knows all this about you and loves you still?

CHAPTER 3

Ernie talked about losing his son (1:15). When have you felt a similar feeling with one of your children? Take a second look at your current story: in the midst of obvious challenges, are there hopeful aspects that have potentially been minimized?

CHAPTER 4

Ernie spoke about intending "to be there for them all the time, forever, and I didn't" (6:11). How can your past intentions stand in the way of you and your dad/son/daughter and writing a new story for your family line today? Is there an ongoing posture of forgiveness and repentance? How is an ongoing posture of repentance different than shame?

CHAPTER 5

Anthony discusses his biological dad's lack of involvement in his life. Where did you experience lack of involvement with your dad? How would your children answer this question about you?

CHAPTER 6

Anthony speaks about how important it was for him to hear his step-dad share stories about his days in the military (7:15). In parenting, with all the information a parent needs to teach their children, we can run the risk of overloading them with information and neglect to share our actual stories. Is your parenting full of information or stories? What is the one thing you would like to know more about your dad's story?

For more information on other Family Lines video resources, or our father/child trips and workshops exclusively for facilitators and their groups, contact us at

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