



## PUT ON THE RIGHT ARMOR

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When we get scared and afraid, anxious or overwhelmed, we tend to put on emotional armor to protect ourselves. This may help us to feel safer emotionally, maybe even bigger and stronger, but it often gets in the way of our closest relationships.

Back in the late 1800's, Sigmund Freud noted several ego defense mechanisms which he believed served to unconsciously protect an individual from anxiety. Particularly as they relate to relationships, these include repression/suppression of emotions, denial of problems or refusing to face difficult dynamics or conflict, projection of our distressing emotions (such as anger) onto others, displacing our need for attachment with something else, or even regression towards immature coping skills.

It is human nature to want to protect ourselves, but are we putting on the right armor?

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power....Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

*Ephesians 6:10-18*

God does not want us to be defenseless. In Psalms 59:1 God reminds us we can look to him to be our shield, our refuge, our protection and our armor. "O God, be my fortress against them that are attacking me. In fact, God encourages us to put on HIS armor, the full armor of God so that we can stand our ground when we are shaken by life events.

Rather than putting on emotional armor that gives us an illusion of strength and protection but creates a barrier between our spouse, our family, or our friends, let's be open and vulnerable with them and put on God's armor, the *right* armor, leaning into his strength and protection.

