

25 March 2018

Hurting People Hurt People

Scripture: Proverbs 17:22

"A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones."

What does it take to build healthy relationships and where do we start?

Let us start by answering the second question first: Where do we start?

"To thine own self be true," says Polonius in Hamlet. You start with yourself. It is true that the first relationship we have is with ourselves. If we are unhappy with ourselves consistently, it will have a *ripple effect* on others near to us and eventually to those far from us.

1. The first person I need to love is me: That is why the Bible quotes Jesus as saying, "*Love thy neighbour as thyself.*" Loving ourselves starts with the truth - that we were created to be unique and special. The Bible teaches that God's first response to us in relationship was to love us in spite of us messing up because of sin. (2 Cor.3:4-6 & 1 Pet 2:9)
2. The first person I need to forgive is me: Have you ever messed up, made wrong decisions, and felt the burden of regret? You remain the only person to pronounce the pardon, to absolve yourself and move on. The best thing that we can ever do is to forgive ourselves. The next best thing we can do is to forgive others. If the first thing that God did for us in relationship was to love us, then the next one was to forgive us. (John3:16 ... 1 Jn 1:9 ... Romans 5:6-8)
3. The first person I need to accept is me: You see, people often confuse confidence with acceptance, but confidence comes because of acceptance. The more accepting we are of ourselves, the more confident we become. (Pro 3:24-26)
4. The first person I need to take care of is me: This may sound egotistical, almost vain, however, if I do not feel the need to invest in my own life, I will never really be able to invest in others. (2 Pet 1:2-11)
5. The first person I need to respect is me: Respect is an *attitude we adopt* and then it becomes an attitude we, *project*. *If we cannot respect ourselves, we most definitely will not respect others.* Respect is a choice we make. (Phil 4:6-9)
6. The first person I need to believe is unique and special is me: As a Christian, I believe that God made us unique and special. (Ps 139:14-17)

Psalm 139:14 "I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are your works, and my soul knows very well."