



# From Abuse To Love



Pamela Penrose

By Pamela Penrose

Violence in the home is an all-too-common problem in this country.

We attract people and energies into our lives when we have opposite, matching patterns, like a key fitting into a lock. We might attract an abuser into our lives if we, at some level, feel guilty, think we deserve to be punished, or don't love ourselves. There are other possibilities and so we have to go through a deep self-examination to understand the likely roots of our pattern of attracting abuse.

You must look inside yourself for the answer. Gandhi called Satyagraha, meaning Truth, Power, Soul Force, or the Power of Love. This truth and power can only be found within. When asked where the kingdom of God was to be found, Jesus said it is "within you."

By undertaking this self-examination, you take responsibility for your actions and attitudes. While you stay in blame, putting all the responsibility for the situation onto the abuser, you stay tethered to the abuse energy. Even if you break free of that individual

you are likely to attract another abuser into your life.

The solution at all levels is love. Martin Luther King said, "Everybody wishes to love and be loved. He who feels that he is not loved feels that he does not count. Much has happened in the modern world to make men (and women) feel that they do not belong."

To really accept love from others, you must first learn to love yourself unconditionally. Learn to love the wonderful person that you are; the way Our Lord loves you. Then you will attract people into your life who love you just as you are — without any conditions whatsoever. "You have been created in the image and likeness of God. God loves you just the way you are. Your love of self should be no less than God's love for you," and St. John says, "God dwells in us and his love is brought to perfection in us."

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How do you go about loving yourself unconditionally? There are many ways. The first and most important step is that you set your intent to do this. Ask for help. Our Lord loves you and will be delighted that you asked! There are abundant forms of healing and spirituality available on the planet today. One simple method you can use immediately is to monitor your language: especially the things you say to yourself.

Separate your intentions from your actions. At the deepest level we all intend good things. We sometimes have limited ways of achieving or expressing our intentions. If you acknowledge your positive intention, and make that your focus, you appreciate and acknowledge yourself at a very

deep level. You can then look for ways to express that intention even more fully.

Continually think about solutions, rather than dwelling on problems.

Communication is another key: share your feelings with openness and peace. This way your children will learn to share theirs. It is easier to be macho and hide out than to open up and share your innermost thoughts and feelings.

For many people in our society, especially men, even recognizing their innermost thoughts and verbalizing them to themselves can be difficult. However, the release that occurs by this simple process is often profound. It is fear that keeps these walls around you. The fear dissolves as you let others help, and share your load. Amazingly, the load will often seem to disappear as you do this.

You can best teach by "walking the walk", by doing and being the example: in your speech, in your body language, and in listening and honoring life. Know how

blessed we are that Our Lord gives us all the tools we need to do this. We have to trust and not be afraid to open our hearts so we can receive and give love unconditionally. As Jesus said, "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is there will your heart be also."

When you change your patterns and habitual responses in these ways, know that you are changing not just your own life, but the lives of generations to come. Patterns of abuse often extend backwards many generations, and may continue forward in a similar fashion if you do not choose to change them now. By changing your patterns of response and loving yourself, you are giving a wonderful gift to your children.

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