

MOVING UP HIGHER

with
Joyce Meyer

The secret to great relationships

Relationships are an important part of life. Healthy relationships have the ability to bring us great joy and satisfaction; however, unhealthy ones have the power to make life miserable!

Throughout my life, God's Word has taught me so many great lessons about how to get along with people, something I wasn't very good at. But I think the greatest lesson was this: choose to live in peace with others.

Simply put, it's God's will for us to live in peace and harmony with one another, and his word offers clear instructions

on how to get along with people in our daily lives.

First Peter 3:11 (AMPC) says, "Let him search for peace (harmony undisturbedness from fears, agitating passions and moral conflicts) and seek it eagerly.

Do not merely desire peaceful relations with God, with your fellowmen and with yourself, but pursue, go after them!"

Notice how this verse says we can't merely desire peaceful relationships, we have to pursue them!

Now, this doesn't mean we won't ever disagree. People are naturally going to have disagreements, and it's okay to disagree if we can do it respectfully. But we must avoid strife.

What is strife? The dictionary defines strife as "bickering, arguing, a heated disagreement, or an angry undercurrent."

Strife is one of the greatest threats to the body of Christ, and it has the ability to destroy marriages, personal relationships and even churches. Like a seed, strife can get planted through something we say or do, then eventually grow to become a major problem.

God's word tells us that it's the "little foxes" that sneak into the vineyard and spoil all the grapes (see Song of Solomon 2:15). I believe this is true when it comes to strife. Left unchecked, even minor disagreements or frustrations can eventually destroy a relationship. So, how do we keep strife out of our relationships? Here

are a couple practical tips:

- Maintain a Humble Heart

Where there is contention and strife, there is also pride. That's why it is so important for us to practice humility.

We all like to be right, whether it's an argument about a major issue or something trivial. However, humility insists that we give up our "right to be right."

I can't tell you how many times my husband, Dave and I went round after round, arguing about the same thing. But even when I "won," I still really lost because I damaged our relationship and gave up my peace in the process.

I challenge you to adopt an attitude of humility. If you're having an argument, be the first to make peace or apologize even if you know you are

right! It may be painful in the moment, but you will reap the rewards long after it's all over.

- Let Love Be Your Guide

Strife isn't just a 21st century problem. In fact, the apostle Paul wrote to the early church, encouraging them to avoid strife and stay away from petty arguments.

In Philippians 2:2 (AMPC), he writes, "Fill up and complete my joy by living in harmony and being of the same mind and one in purpose, having the same love, being in full accord and of one harmonious mind and intention."

Where there is unity, there is also blessing and anointing (Psalm 133). And God's Word tells us there is power in agreement (Matthew 18:19). However, we can't truly agree and walk in unity if there is bitterness, offense, or unforgiveness in our hearts.

I can put a big smile on my face and say all the right things, but if I'm still purposefully harboring all sorts of negative thoughts and feelings about Dave or a friend, I'm not really walking in love or unity. It's not just the outside that matters even more important is what's going on inside.

First Corinthians 13:5 (AMPC) tells us that love "is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the

evil done to it." Verse 7 goes on to tell us that love believes the best of every person.

Wow! Can you imagine what would happen in our relationships if we simply followed these two verses?

I encourage you to truly love the people in your life. Make a decision to stay unified no matter what tries to get between you. Because, after all, "love never fails" (1 Corinthians 13:8).

- Seek the Prince of Peace

The very best relationship advice I can give you is to develop a personal, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. I encourage you to spend regular time with him through prayer and by reading and studying his word.

As you do, he will literally change you from the inside out, causing you to think differently and act differently. It is only when we receive his peace and his love that we can truly give it away to others!

I am so grateful for the peace of God in my life. The Lord has not only changed my relationships, but He has changed me. And He will do the same for you. It is possible to enjoy stable, joyful, fulfilling relationships. And it all begins with a simple decision to pursue peace.

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FUUF to discuss 'whitespaces' of life

Sunday, Dec. 4, from 10 until 11 a.m., the Rev. Marcia Pearce will lead the Florence Unitarian Universalist Fellowship's worship service titled: Courage to Trust the Space.

Rev. Pearce says, "In the printing industry there is an important and expensive commodity called 'whitespace'. It is the unused space between texts and pictures."

Using "whitespace" as a metaphor for life, Pearce will discuss creativity, love and trust as a joyful means to heal the past and prepare for

the coming year.

The UU Fellowship is located at 87738 Highway 101 at Heceta Beach Road and is wheelchair accessible.

Each service concludes with refreshments and a dialogue circle to explore the questions that come up during each service. For YouTube videos of past worship services, please visit FUUF's website at florenceuu.org.

Also see their Facebook page and call 541-997-2840 with any questions or concerns.

Spirituali-Tea to meet Monday eve

On Monday, Dec. 5, at 6:30 p.m. everyone is invited to join a group of friends from varied spiritual paths to discuss a comfort prayer.

O God! Refresh and gladden my spirit. Purify my heart. Illuminate my powers. I lay all my affairs in thy hand. Thou art my guide and my refuge.

I will no longer be sorrowful and grieved; I will be a happy and joyful being.

The main goal of the

Baha'i Faith will always center around one ultimate aim, the peaceful unification of the entire human race.

The gathering will end at 8 p.m. with prayers for the requests left in the Prayer Pole in the garden of the Florence Playhouse and those shared by the group.

The Heintz home is located at 875 Seventh St.

For more information call Suzanne Mann-Heintz at 541-590-0779.

Third Annual

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