



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Reconciliation: Start with the Truth

Reconciliation exists because we have the unfortunate ability to wound and harm those with whom we wish to have a relationship. While we have the power to break a relationship, we also can work to establish an improved relationship, if that is our choice. But to truly reconcile, we must first face the reality of the damage that exists and what caused it.

In reconciliation, the establishment of truth is the starting point of progress. We seek the truth about what was done by one party, and how that behavior affected the other party or parties involved. Briefly put, we seek "fact" and "impact". While this sounds like a fairly straight-forward process, it is often quite the opposite.

Consider, for example, how often we use words to change the image of truthful facts. We say we "party", when actually we get drunk or high. We "borrow long-term", when we actually steal. We use "colorful language", when we actually curse. We "share the news", instead of gossip. We "bend the truth", instead of lie. We "punish", when we actually abuse. We "protect", when we actually dominate. Words are powerful, and at times we use them effectively to hide from the truth.

Sometimes, we also fall victim to denial, using the same technique we learned as a child to rewrite history. Even our memory fails us, especially regarding our own behavior. And often, as we rush through life, we focus on our own wants and needs, unconcerned or unaware of the rights of those around us and the impact we have on them. This impact, however, is at the heart of the relationship break that now calls for reconciliation.

Establishing the truth about the impact of our words and behavior on others is equally as important as clarifying the actual facts. Frequently, we fail to appreciate the power of what we say or do. As a result, we sometimes act in ignorance or without thinking. Sometimes, we get so wrapped up in our own perspective that we assume every one else thinks or feels like we do. Sometimes, we forget that people are more than just objects, that they have hearts and souls. Whatever the reason, our words and actions can cause immediate and long-term hurt powerful enough to fracture even valued relationships. While the power of the impact is partly subjective, reflecting the strength or vulnerability of the person(s) affected, and the results are none-the-less very real.

To be clear about how our actions have effected another person, it is necessary to ask, listen, and accept.

Ask - don't assume; actively inquire

Listen - actively attend; don't interrupt, debate, or argue

Accept - honor what is said; don't judge or reject it

Only in this way can we obtain the truth about how our actions have harmed others. We don't determine the truth our self, since we can only assume. The full truth can only be given to us by those we have affected.

Establishing truth can be a painful process requiring more time than we care to give it. Yet, it forms the foundation for reconciliation, identifying what caused harm, what needs to change, and what is real in the relationship.

Such truth is a powerful gift. It frees us from the need to hide and honors us with permission to share our true self. It opens our eyes and broadens our connection with those we share life with. It is the start of new beginnings.



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to design, accomplish, and maintain healthy life change.

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Owning Responsibility

For truth to have personal meaning for us, we must step forward and own responsibility for our own actions and their impact on others. Otherwise, we rob truth of its power to motivate us toward change and to inspire us to seek new beginnings.

It is crucial for all of us who have wounded others by our words or actions, and have harmed or broken relationships, to own responsibility for *our* decisions and *our* behavior! We must embrace *our* failure and the brokenness it has caused before we can build a new normal.

"But it wasn't my fault!"
"I couldn't help it!" I didn't intend to" If only you had" "What else could I do?"
"But what about you?"

So quickly we run down the many paths leading away from ownership and responsibility! Why? I suspect it has something to do with fear. We'll look more at that next time.

For now, let's keep it simple. Discover the truth; declare the truth; dare to own responsibility for your part in it.

P - proclaim truth
E - establish responsibility
A - accomplish justice
C - commit to change
E - enact mercy

"No man remains quite what he was when he recognizes himself."

-Thomas Mann