



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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and
John Rottschaefer PhD
Certified Life Coach
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Reconciliation

In the early days of our world's existence, as the creation story relates, man lived in perfect harmony with God, nature, and the other creatures. Yet, it was "not good for man to be alone", so Eve soon joined Adam, revealing clearly the relational nature of the human race.

Sadly, our ability to relate, like our heart itself, became flawed as evil joined good in this world. Soon, relationships became not only a place to flourish, but also a place where every weakness of character could be played out. Jealousy, rage, disrespect, cruelty, hatred, deceit, selfishness ... they all had an intimate stage on which to wreck havoc and inflict pain.

As a result, our relationships today are often tested and wounded, strained to the breaking point. Sometimes they die. Parents abandon children, and vice versa. Marriages deteriorate into separateness and indifference. Families fall apart. Races, religions, and political parties attack each other. Churches divide. Nations go to war. In the end, everyone loses.

Yet, there is hope! In the midst of brokenness, reconciliation offers

individuals and groups the opportunity to re-establish some form of healthy relationship, and to unload the emotional baggage attached to conflict. What baggage? Baggage such as anger, resentment, bitterness, fear, anxiety, revenge, and living as a victim. All such baggage robs us of the peace and relief so necessary for healthy and joyful living.

So what is reconciliation? Let's start by noting what it is *not*. First, reconciliation is not a requirement. It is an opportunity available to those who choose it. It is a requirement only in the sense that it is a necessary process for the rebuilding of a relationship, if that is so desired. It is also a key element for people seeking mutual peace. But, it is only for those who desire it and who are willing to work through and experience the process.

Second, reconciliation is neither simple nor easy. It can be, however, *incredibly rewarding*. It requires the open acceptance of truth and the taking on of responsibility - challenging tasks for most of us. Yet, like childbirth, the benefits of this process far outweigh the "discomfort" involved (as my wife would say).

Third, reconciliation is not simply the re-establishment of the old relationship. The old form of the relationship didn't work. Change is needed in the nature, style, or intensity of the relationship. For example, couples who split up may choose not to be married, but instead establish a healthy, cooperative relationship of co-parenting. Those who choose to stay married establish a different, healthier relationship designed to enhance each of them.

Fourth, reconciliation is not just for married couples. It covers the whole range of human relationships. Some of us may wish to reconcile with our own bodies, or with our past. Some of us may desire to reconcile with our parents, or siblings, or children. Neighbor may choose to reconcile with neighbor, church member with church member, victim with perpetrator, race with race, nation with nation. Some of us may even want to reconcile with our God.

The opportunities are endless. The payoffs are huge, both personally and corporately. If the idea appeals to you, a qualified coach can assist you through the steps. So go ahead - check out your own relationships. Where can reconciliation bless *you* with relief?



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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.

You can contact me at:

John Rottschafer, PhD

Free to Be Life Coaching

4519 Cascade Rd SE Ste 18

Grand Rapids MI 49546

phone - (616) 949-9925

e-mail -

john@freetobelifecoaching.com

www.freetobelifecoaching.com



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The P.E.A.C.E. of Reconciliation

Reconciliation is not a single act, but rather an interactive dance of elements. When these pieces come together, the ultimate result is PEACE. So let's briefly list these elements in a way that will be easier to remember.

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

Each of these elements is of equal importance, since without any one, reconciliation fails. Each deserves to be understood and valued for the contribution it offers.

The next several issues of Pause With Purpose will focus on these key principles and how they ultimately work together to give us the gift of unburdened peace.



"The heart of Easter is really not about bunnies and eggs. It is about reconciliation - being loved back into relationship with our God."

-JVR