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# Relationship Starts With You

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

# Relationship Starts With You

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How do you find inner peace? What is it that brings true happiness? If you're ready to find the source of true peace, contemplate the principles outlined in the following articles and you'll discover how to have the peacefulness you crave.

## **The Sin Factor**

Has it been difficult for you to find inner peace? There is a reason why so many people are unhappy, why there is so much conflict between individuals. Isaiah pinpointed the trouble long ago: "We have turned, everyone, to his own way" (Isa. 53:6). [\(read more\)](#)

## **The Good News About Sin**

Isn't it amazing that Jesus Christ came into this world to die for our sins? But it seems that in our society today the word "sin" has disappeared from our vocabulary, hasn't it? Nobody knows what sin is. We think it's a bad word. People have got enough trouble without making them sinful on top of it! But being aware of our sins is one of the most important lessons we can learn if we want to experience peace. And that's actually pretty good news, because sin is easily dealt with. [\(read more\)](#)

## **Transformation through Spiritual Birth**

How can you be born spiritually and begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? It is easy to stumble over the simplicity of what God offers us through His Son. You are born again or saved when you believe Jesus. He said that you have access to the peace of God through Him. The starting point is when you ask Him to invade your life...when you open the door and invite Him in. [\(read more\)](#)

## **Power Through Spiritual Breathing**

Many Christians would name Galatians 5:22-23—the passage about the "fruit of the Spirit"—as among their favorite verses in the Bible. But are you aware that Galatians 5 refers not to one kind of fruit but to two? The Spirit produces love, joy, peace, and all the rest, surely enough, but before that our old nature produces a welter of shameful sins. [\(read more\)](#)

## **Confront Your Problem**

Do you want to be at peace with yourself? Once we accept the fact that wrath or fear or guilt is in us, we can deal with it. And that is the good news for everyone filled with anger and malice and bitterness. The people in your life may never change their ways.

Circumstances may be beyond your control. But fortunately you can do something about yourself. ([read more](#))

## **Responsibility for Your Inner Life**

To get out of the gloomy pit of despair, bitterness, hostility, jealousy, and the accompanying aches, pains, and misery, and to be at peace with yourself, you must take personal responsibility for your own character, no matter what someone else does—or did. If a person is miserable, it is his or her choice. Our woe is not the result of our background, or the people around us, or our environment, but of a choice, either deliberate or vague, to continue in the direction that we have been heading. ([read more](#))

## **Emotions Affect the Body**

There is a relationship that exists between the mental/emotional state of a person and the workings of his body. For a better understanding of how this relationship functions, we must turn to the physician. ([read more](#))

## **Peace through Repentance**

Are you angry or frustrated because of other people's behavior, trying to act the way you think a "Christian" should act, hiding your true feelings, agonizing on the inside?

Maybe you're spending hours talking your problem out with a professional or a trusted friend. They listen, and you feel some peace of mind because you have talked things through, but you don't really experience lasting peace. ([read more](#))

## **Freedom from Others**

Does your serenity, peace of mind, and joy depend upon a choice another person makes?

Think of your favorite person. They have good points and faults. You don't have problems with their strengths, but when they won't do something that's important to you, you have a choice to make. One of your options is to resent them, become bitter, and/or dwell on the fact that there's some little thing this person isn't doing that you want them to do, and it can ruin your relationship. [\(read more\)](#)

### **Choose the Right Response**

Are you troubled by things you've done, by what you've said to people, or by what people have said to you? Are your words typically supportive, or do you find yourself often critical, caustic or hostile? [\(read more\)](#)

### **Facing Your Shortcomings and Failures**

What is your reaction when a friend confides, "I'm going to be very frank. There's something about you that I wish were not true"? If he has a compliment, you are only too glad to have him say it; you don't even draw him apart from the crowd to hear it. But how hard it is to have your faults pointed out. We all have a built-in resistance to seeing our shortcomings. [\(read more\)](#)

### **Constructive Speech**

How would you describe the way you talk? Are your words positive, constructive, comforting, supportive, and uplifting? Or are the words that come out of your mouth most often cutting, negative, and hurtful? [\(read more\)](#)

### **Choose to Forgive**

Have you suffered emotionally and perhaps physically at the hands of others?

Have emotions such as anger, resentment, hate, hostility, bitterness and revenge entered your heart and mind? Have you become filled with an unforgiving spirit? [\(read more\)](#)

### **Building Your Self-Respect**

If your goal is to maintain good physical health, you pay attention to some important details:

- Diet
- Sleep
- Exercise

You need knowledge about these areas so you provide time and expend energy to inform yourself of what is involved. Your interest is to act according to your knowledge. ([read more](#))

## **Dealing with Stress**

What difficulty are you currently experiencing in your life: a relationship, a financial burden, job insecurity, unhappiness with your circumstances, a difficult child, an aging parent, conflict in your church or with your neighbor? ([read more](#))

## **Examples From Case Histories**

Dr. Henry Brandt shares insights from various counseling situations. The names and certain details in these true case histories have been changed to protect each person's identity and privacy.

### **Consistency**

Matty and Todd had been having trouble for several years. The trouble was not fights or noisy arguments, but playing cat-and-mouse over Matty's changing moods. The couple would plan to go to a church home group party or a family gathering, but Matty would beg off at the last minute. She just wasn't up to socializing. Todd would feel sorry for her, change the evening's plans and stay home. After several weeks of staying home, he would become blue. Then she would feel guilty for causing him to give up his social life and she would start going out. But he knew she was doing it just for him, so he would feel guilty and stay home more. It was a vicious circle, actually a battle of wills, his versus hers. ([read more](#))

### **A Desperate Act**

Eric Green lay in a pool of his own blood on the bathroom floor. He watched the red stream spurt from his slashed wrists and trickle along the masonry grooves that separated the little squares of tile. Powerless to stop it, he saw the blood crawl steadily onward and spill into more grooves. He had started this flow. It was something he had wanted to do—to end his life. But now the horror of his choice overwhelmed him. What a mistake he had made! ([read more](#))

## **Is it Really Sin?**

This town was surrounded by beautiful, rolling hills and lush, productive farmland. The air was fresh and clean. There was lots of sky, and we enjoyed glowing sunrises, spectacular sunsets, and beautiful moonlit nights. There were prosperous farmers who lived in large, lovely homes with all the conveniences anyone could ask for. They looked out of their picture windows at their oil wells pumping black gold 24 hours a day. Everyone had several big cars in their driveways and we ate sumptuous meals. The people were elegantly dressed. The church was beautifully furnished.

You would think if there were any place in the world where people would be content and satisfied, it would be in this town. No doubt these people could teach me a thing or two about mental health.

To my surprise, I was swamped by people who requested counseling. There were many troubled hearts in those beautiful homes. ([read more](#))