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Relationship First Aid - Are you receptive to constructive criticism

By Ma'at Seba
SUN COLUMNIST



Have you ever thought in terms of your life as being a book? That each day of your life starts a new page and each year begins a new chapter? When you were born, you were given blank sheets of paper in which to write your life's book upon. Every day, every experience that

you have from the sights, to the sounds, to all interactions that you have with others are written on this book. This includes all your thoughts, feelings, emotions and reactions, which are the ingredients that make up your character, personality and the image that others see and form about you.

As with any book, before it can be printed and published, it has to be edited, and the Creator in all its infinite wisdom provides us with "Proofreaders". A proofreader reads the text and notes any errors or needed corrections. The proofreaders are anyone in your life and daily interactions that point out any weaknesses or flaws within your personality, behaviors and /or character. Your proofreader could be your mate, children, parents, siblings, co-workers, friends, neighbors, strangers or "enemies". Most people are so self-absorbed into their own book that all they choose to see is a perfect text, and if there were any flaws they feel that they would be so minuscule that no one will even notice them, but the proofreaders do!

Most people feel hurt, upset or even enraged if, and or when someone (their proofreader), "tells them about their self" (or edits their book). When this happens, unfortunately, they have missed the whole point of experiencing the experience of life. Part of the point is to learn to embrace the "bad" along with the "good", the painful experiences as well as the pleasurable ones, for there will always be both, and they both are encompassed in the experience.

As a writer, it would terrify me to have my book published, mass produced and distributed, full of misspelled words and grammatical errors. I would want my book to be perfect. I want it to look exactly the way that I envisioned it, and for the reader to read receive and comprehend the information in my book exactly as I was trying to convey it.

For an author to release an unedited book would be a costly mistake on their part. Imagine for a minute that you bought a novel. It was filled with misspelled words, one paragraph did not flow evenly into the next paragraph, the illustrations were unclear and the text seemed jumbled up and confusing. What would you think about that book? What

would you think about that author?

Now, either this author did not use a proofreader, or they did not accept the corrections or editing of the proofreader. Regardless to the author's choice, I'm sure that is one book that will never make it to the bestseller's list.

The people in your daily lives, your proofreaders, sometimes point out behaviors that you exhibit that might anger or hurt you (such as being judgmental, egotistical, selfish, impatient, controlling, jealous, angry etc.), but try to see your proofreaders as a blessing, not a curse or an enemy. We NEED proofreaders in our lives to help us to see ourselves, for "The eyes can see everything in the world except for themselves". Once the proofreaders have made their notations in your book (because a proofreader could not point out a mistake if it was not there), the next step is for you to do honest self-analysis. Every person seeks to find and experience peace and happiness in their lives but lack the tools to achieve it.

Self-analysis is one of those tools, and if honest self-analysis is applied daily, the results will become evident almost immediately.

So, the next time that a proofreader needs to edit your book, don't get angry with them, begin to:

1. Accept the proofreaders notations of any errors (acknowledge the fact that the person pointing out flaws in your behavior, might be telling you the truth)
2. Revise your text to reflect an edited version (change your attitude or behaviors)
3. Re-read your manuscript (practice honest self-analysis daily)
4. Prepare for a best-seller (begin to receive the blessings, compliments and happiness that will start to manifest in your life)

Now when you have successfully done these things, you will have spiritually grown to the point where instead of saying "How Dare You Edit My Book!" you will say, "Thank You For Editing My Book!"

Relationship First Aid offers topics that encourage self-reflection and the opportunity to dissect how one relates (or not) to themselves, life, other people, nature, God, their body, their spirituality etc. Relationship: the way in which two or more concepts, objects, or people are connected, or the state of being connected, to relate.

Goddess Ma'at Seba is the founder and facilitator of RELATIONSHIP FIRST AID, a program which uses spiritual principles as the tools to identify and resolve the causes of unhealthy, toxic or stressful relationships, whether it is with your mate, children, friends, co-workers as well as yourself. Ma'at can be reached for speaking engagements, classes or lectures at: Relationshipfirstaid@yahoo.com or Maatseba@gmail.com

How kids can make a difference by including others

(StatePoint) Bullying among kids continues to be the number one social issue facing this demographic, according to YouthBeat research. This is why Cartoon Network, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center and 826 National are taking action to promote inclusion, acceptance and kindness to unite communities and help keep kids safe.

One in five students report being bullied in a recent survey commissioned by Cartoon Network in consultation with the Making Caring Common project (MCC) at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

The good news is that the research also suggests that with encouragement and guidance, kids themselves can take action to stop bullying: among its findings -- 58 percent of kids ages 9-11 who have seen someone getting picked on or being left out say that one of the reasons they sometimes don't help those kids is that they don't know what to do or say. Moreover, 77 percent say it would help if there was someone who could give kids ideas about what to do or say in tough situations.

With this in mind, the Cartoon Network's "Stop Bullying: Speak Up" initiative has joined PACER's National Bullying Prevention

Center and 826 National in order to inspire kids to make a difference by offering tangible strategies and resources to help everyone feel included. This collaboration has come to life through a joint campaign, called "Include Someone, Make a Difference," which has a goal of inspiring inclusive acts among kids in all 50 states.

To help kids get started, the campaign is sharing some ideas for including, valuing and supporting others in classrooms, on the playground and in the cafeteria, just to name a few:

- Notice if someone is alone at recess and ask if they want to join you.
- Invite someone looking for a place to sit to join your crew.
- Start a conversation and learn something new about a peer.
- Be patient with those who do things in a different way.
- Say "good morning" to someone walking to class alone.
- Ask someone how they're day is going and really listen to the answer.
- Introduce yourself to someone new.
- Give a sincere compliment about something well done.

Mom on the Rebound

By D. L. Gibson
SUN LIFESTYLE COLUMNIST



Oh no this fool isn't running toward my car and is going to act like Superman, leaping into my back window!

The crazy deacon had pushed the Bishop out of the way and leaped onto

my trunk. He grabbed the edge of my back window that had already been shattered by his crazy sister-in-law Marsha.

This fool was hollering and kicking his legs, while blood was oozing from his hands. He acted as though he was high on crack, because he wasn't feeling any pain.

I turned the keys and shifted the car into drive. Sister girl was yelling, "Pull off! Step on the gas!"

I tried to do a knee jerk maneuver, by taking off fast then suddenly hopping on the brakes. This seemed to only intensify the crazy deacon's craziness. He tried to pound out the remaining glass with one hand, while hanging on with the other.

I then pulled off fast and made a sharp turn onto the street. This caused the deacon to let go.

Sister girl turned around and said, "He's lying in the street. I hope he's not dead!"

Although I wanted the crazy deacon out of my life, I didn't want to kill him and have blood on my hands.

I didn't know if I should keep going or stop. I pulled over to the curve, hoping the Bishop, police or someone would come to our aid.

The Bishop walked over to him, and the crazy deacon sat up. He had only had the wind knocked out of him. I looked out of my side mirror and saw him waving his hands and screaming bloody mercy.

Police arrived on the scene. He kept pointing in my direction.

This was getting to be too much, so I made a U-turn and drove off. I was determined to make it to the safety of my home. Sister girl decided to go to my home to make sure I was safe for the night.

As we were driving, glass started flying everywhere from my back window.

I didn't want to drive on the freeway for fear that the glass would fly to the front of the car and strike me or Sister girl, so we took the long way on the street.

"Oh no," yelled Sister girl.

I looked out of my side mirror, and oh no look who's pulling up behind us. Lord...help us. Please let them go around us.

Mom on the Rebound is based on actual events.

Inspiring men to do good

(StatePoint) With so many negative messages about masculinity floating around these days, some say it's important to spend some time focusing on the positive. Doing so can help give men the confidence they need to be their best selves.

In fact, 91 percent of men agree that it takes more confidence to be a "good guy" than it does to be a typical alpha male, according to research from Men's Wearhouse, which is on a mission to encourage more men to be good on the inside and out. As part of its "Good on You" campaign, they are highlighting the good works of dads and gentlemen everywhere who have gone above and beyond to show they care about something that makes the world a little bit better.

"We believe that good guys everywhere are ready to stand up and be their best selves," says Tank Sinatra, who after getting sober at 22, decided to surround himself with only positive things. Involved with the nonprofit organizations, Hope House and Bring Change to Mind, he is a social media influencer and founder of Tank's Good News, which shares only positive news stories.

Already committed to identifying, spreading and celebrating acts of good, Sinatra is now serving as the facilitator of the Good On You Initiative and, in this role, is sharing an inspiring story of

a man making the world a little bit better in his own backyard:

In 2016, Rodney Smith founded a lawn care nonprofit, Raising Men Lawn Care Service, in his hometown of Huntsville, Alabama. Raising Men Lawn Care Service helps young men give back to their communities by mowing lawns or doing yard work -- free of charge -- for veterans, the elderly, the disabled and single mothers. Smith sought to establish a program that inspires young men to learn and understand their value in society, and acts as a true father figure to many young boys throughout the country. While founded originally in Alabama, the organization now has a presence in almost all 50 states.

To honor Smith's work, Men's Wearhouse is donating \$10,000 to his organization as a "thank you" for all that he's doing to help his community. He also received a custom-made jacket and lapel pin, as the brand believes that being your best self, and looking and feeling your best, go hand-in-hand.

To learn more about the campaign, which will honor men throughout the year, as well as to get gift ideas to honor the men in your life, visit menswearhouse.com.

"From activism to fatherhood, moments of good come in all shapes and sizes," says Sinatra.

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