



NOTE STARTERS FOR DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIPS

EXTENDING KINDNESS & GENEROSITY

Difficult people are often hurting, overburdened, and under-encouraged, leading to impatience, anxiety, short tempers, loneliness, depression, and emotional isolation. If we're honest, we are all difficult people sometimes.

Proverbs 25:22 (*For you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you.*) is a Biblical invitation to reach out with the kindness and generosity of Jesus to those who:

- hurt us
- mistreat us
- disbelieve us
- challenge us
- anger us
- make life difficult

...for it is only *the love that flows from the heart of God* through His children that can soften life-battered and world-hardened hearts.

Everyone we encounter is created in the image of God, and He loves each of us without hesitation or condition, calling us to love one another *as He loves* — not an easy calling.

#PENTOPAPER NOTES - A GREAT PLACE TO BEGIN

In times of greatest stress and pain, it's easy to hurt those we love the most. I'm so sorry I lashed out in frustration. What can I do to repair the damage? "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." (Romans 12:10)

Our last conversation may have left a bitter taste in both of our mouths. I'd love the opportunity to talk again, and hope we can be a source of encouragement for each other. "... that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith." (Romans 1:12)

I am so sorry we had a misunderstanding. I would love to work with you to make things better. With God's help, I will do my best to help heal our relationship. "Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone." (Romans 12:18)

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NOTE STARTERS FOR DIFFICULT PEOPLE

Today, I'm praying the words of Numbers 6:24-26 over you: "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."

You know your father and I disagree with some of your choices, but we will always love you. The last time we talked, we didn't really listen to each other. Could we get together and try again soon? We don't want anything to keep us apart. "Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not irritable, and does not keep a record of wrongs." (1 Corinthians 13:4-5)

Your experience with church was hard and painful, and my heart aches for you, but I worry that not being in fellowship with other believers has slipped from "taking a break," into a habit. Would you be willing to come to church with me? "Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:23-25)

I've been struggling with resentment due to our recent conflicts. I want to take responsibility for my part in the struggle. Will you forgive me for allowing bitterness to come between us? "In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold." (Ephesians 4:26-27)

I need to speak with you about trust. I feel my confidence has been violated and it has hurt my feelings. I'd like to talk more about the situation and work towards restoring our relationship. Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11)

I want to say I'm sorry. In my hurt, I spoke too quickly. I want to hear what you have to say and pray we can try again. "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." (James 1:19)

Let's both take some time and then I hope we can continue to talk and work on our friendship. "Oil and incense bring joy to the heart, and the sweetness of a friend is better than self-counsel." (Proverbs 7:9)

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