



## Not Hurting Me or You

The best measure for deciding whether you should or shouldn't do whatever it is that you are considering is whether it will hurt you or another person. Romans 13:9-10 says, "Love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does no harm to its neighbor." If you are to love your neighbor as yourself, then it is obvious you need to care about yourself as well as others, and not harm either of you, if possible.

How can you hurt yourself in relationships? If your actions put you into financial, relational, physical, spiritual, mental, or emotional distress then they are causing you harm. If your actions are allowing you to be mistreated and disrespected, then they are causing you harm.

How can you hurt the other person? If your actions enable and allow harmful behavior to continue, then it is hurting the person. Conversely, if there is something you can do that will help the person, and withholding it causes harm, then you might want to consider doing it.

If it is giving money to help someone, and by giving them the money you will be taking money away from your family that is needed for necessities, then it is harming your family, even though it might be helping the other person. If you offer your time, and as a result you neglect your responsibilities and are overstretching yourself, then it is hurting you. But if putting your energies into someone else's life enhances yours and helps the person, then it isn't hurting either of you and you can consider doing it. If you let someone live in your home to help them, and as a result your spouse is angry with you, the marriage is strained, and the whole family suffers from the aftermath, then you are hurting your family and yourself by helping that person.

Difficult relationships are complicated. People will pressure you to do all kinds of things for them. You will have to decide how to react to all kinds of situations. It helps to have principles that guide those decisions. One of those is to ask yourself if what you want to do is hurting you or the other person.

By Karla Downing

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## Relationship Prayer

God,

Help me live in a way that doesn't hurt me or other people. Give me discernment to make decisions that may involve making tough choices.

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## Relationship Challenge

- ❖ Think about your current choices. Are they hurting you or hurting someone else?

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## Scripture Meditation

### **Romans 13:10**

*“Love does no harm to its neighbor.”*

### **Matthew 22:39**

*“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

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If you have any questions you would like to ask Karla, please feel free to email her at [karla@changemyrelationship.com](mailto:karla@changemyrelationship.com).

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