



Sample Content

Location: Thoughts From Members

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Learning to love myself

I came across this post and feel like there is so much truth to it and it resonated deeply with me. The God of Love has started to show me how much He really does love me no matter no matter how much I "fail and fall short" and I wasn't taught very much about that in the meetings. I do feel thankful for parents who have taught us about love and for that I AM thankful. I'm also glad to be learning how to have a new relationship with myself (and God) that is helping me undo these teachings.

By Jim Palmer

Abraham Maslow wrote, "If the essential core of a person is denied or suppressed, they get sick sometimes in obvious ways, sometimes in subtle ways, sometimes immediately, sometimes later."

There are at least these five ways that toxic religion prevents a person from embracing their core, authentic and evolving true self:

1. Condemnation of one's inner self

Through the "original sin" doctrine, toxic religion teaches that human beings are innately bad, rejected by God and deserving of eternal conscious torment, which establishes shame as our primary sense of self.

2. Mistrust of one's natural interiorit

By misteaching Bible verses such as Jeremiah 17:9 ("the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked"), toxic religion convinces a person that what arises most naturally from one's inner self (deep feelings, intuition, introspection, critical thinking) is dangerous and untrustworthy.

3. Self-denial as holiness

Toxic religion teaches that true godly devotion requires a radical denial of self ("more of Him, less of me", including denial of one's humanity, autonomy, boundaries, individuality, personality and self-care.

4. Powerlessness as godliness

The crippling impact of religion involves the way it convinces people they are weak, incapable and helpless as we are. Toxic religion makes self-confidence and self-reliance sinful and an affront to God.

5. Human development deficits

Toxic religion walls people off from fields of knowledge, mental health resources, and the necessary human development mindsets, skills and tools for vital adulthood and cultivating a healthy relationship with oneself and the world.

All these effects of toxic religion can be addressed, and the fundamental work involved is cultivating a new kind of relationship with yourself.