

RICK WARREN


A GUIDE TO  
*Awesome*  
RELATIONSHIPS



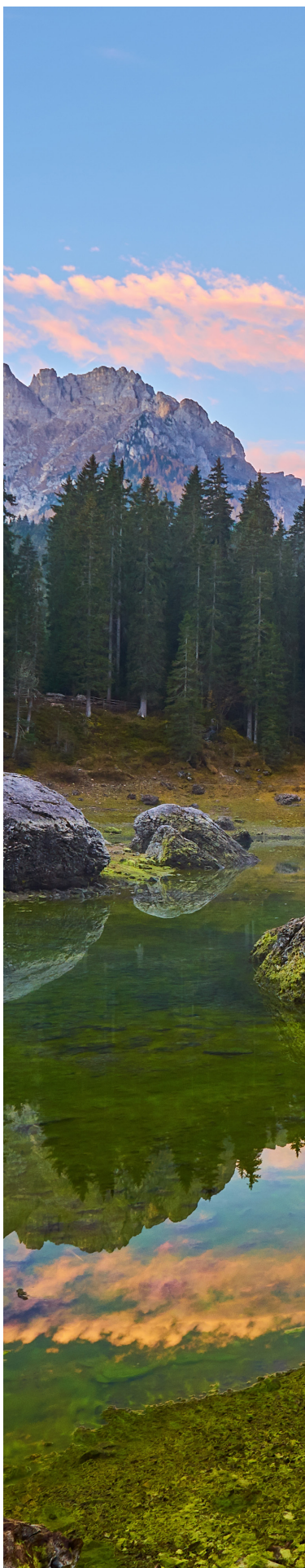
# How to Grow *Great Relationships*

Everyone wants to be in great relationships—to have strong families and supportive friendships. But great relationships don't happen naturally. They take lots of hard, thoughtful work. One mark of an awesome relationship is this: People in awesome relationships help each other grow.

But how can you be the kind of person that helps your friends and family grow? Here are two things you shouldn't do and two things you should do if you want to grow—and help the people around you grow—through great relationships:







## To grow *great relationships ...*

### **Don't criticize.**

Nagging, condemning, complaining, and criticizing don't help a person grow! That's because they focus on the negative rather than the positive. The Living Bible paraphrase gives parents this advice, which you can apply to other relationships too: *"Don't keep on scolding and nagging your children, making them angry and resentful. Rather, bring them up with the loving discipline the Lord himself approves, with suggestions and godly advice"* (Ephesians 6:4).

### **Don't compare.**

Every single person is unique. So it's unhelpful and unfair to compare people to each other. Galatians 6:4 teaches, *"Each person should judge his own actions and not compare himself with others. Then he can be proud for what he himself has done"* (NCV). Instead of comparing, God's plan is for you to be proud of your friends, your family, and yourself for doing the best you can with the unique gifts God has given you.





## Do set a good example.

This is one way Jesus helped his disciples grow. In John 13:14-15 he says, *"Since I . . . have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you"* (NLT). It's the same for the people around you. They don't want to hear a sermon; they want to see one in your life.

## Do have meaningful conversations.

We grow when we talk with other people about the things that really matter. Deuteronomy 6:7 tells what that can look like for families: *"Repeat [God's instructions] again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up"* (NLT).

Want to see your relationships grow? Stop criticizing and comparing. Instead, lead through your example and through meaningful conversations.








# *Protecting* Each Other through **Life's Storms**

No one should walk through hard times alone. In the storms of life, we all need to be a shelter for each other. Here are ways you can take care of your friends and family during three of life's most common storms.







# The Storm of *Change*

You probably know what it feels like to be driving down the road and hit a pothole that throws your wheels out of alignment; to get back to smooth driving, you need to take your car to the shop for a realignment.

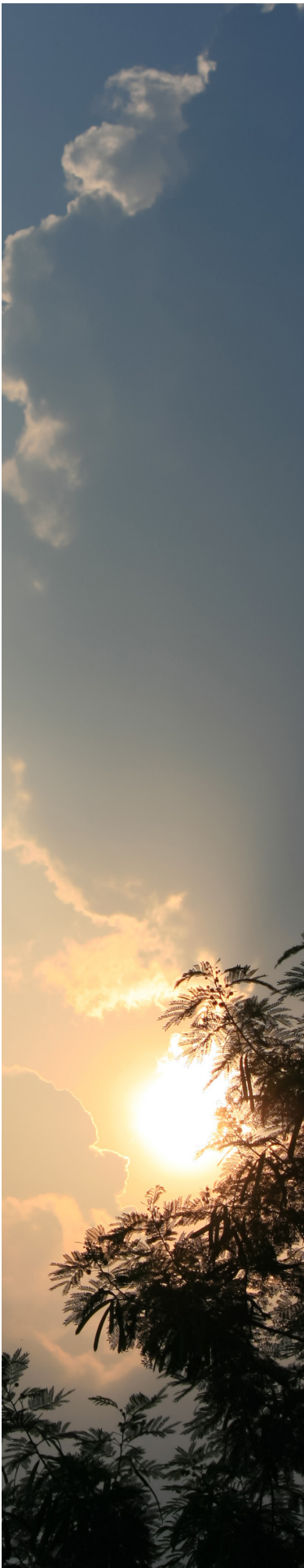
Changes in life can feel the same way. You're going smoothly down the road of life when, suddenly, you hit a hole and it throws everything out of line. It can be a major change or a minor one, but you're probably going to need support to start feeling like yourself again. Sometimes it's enough for family members or friends to support each other through these changes, but sometimes you need to call in the professionals. As Proverbs 12:15 says, *"Fools think their own way is right, but the wise listen to others"* (NLT). When a life change feels too big to handle with just friends and family, seek out a good counselor who can give you strategies to get back on track.

# The Storm of *Harmful Influences*

Many of us protect our bodies but not our minds. By the time a child reaches adulthood, they've amassed thousands of hours of screen time, where they've seen violence, murder, sex, and damaging depictions about how life should work. Parents may be very careful about the foods their children put in their bodies, while letting their minds feed on junk.

Instead, we need to protect ourselves and the people around us from the storm of harmful ideas prevalent in many entertainment sources. Proverbs 4:23 teaches, *"Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life"* (NLT).





# The Storm of *Rejection*

Rejection is often the most painful storm of all. Your child is cut from a sports team; your best friend loses a job; your sibling is betrayed by a friend. During storms of rejection, family and friends can serve as a raincoat for the person who's hurting. One of the best things you can do during a storm of rejection is to follow the advice of the apostle Paul: *"Weep with those who weep"* (Romans 12:15 NLT). When someone is rejected and hurting, they need the protection of people who love them and will sit with them in their pain.

You—and the people you love—will face many storms during life. But you don't have to face them alone. When you see someone facing a storm of change, harmful ideas, or rejection, don't let them face it alone. Be the protection they need to get through the storm and to peace on the other side.







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Pastor Rick offers encouragement each day through Daily Hope—his trusted Bible teaching ministry. You can read, watch, or listen anytime at [PastorRick.com](https://PastorRick.com).