

Hurt people hurt  
people by dr. sandra  
wilson essay sample



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1 Corinthians 11: 13 (NIV) states, “ When I was a child, I talked like a child; I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.” This verse, and its implications for our lives as Christians, is the theological foundation of Wilson’s (2001) theory as presented in her book. By examining our “ hidden parts,” we are able to locate and put away our childish ways, thus realizing that we are God’s children and belong to Him (John 1: 12, 1 Peter 2: 9). This essay will attempt to discuss the effects of abuse and review the biblical counseling methods of Sandra D. Wilson. The main research is centered on Wilson’s book “ Hurt People Hurt People: Hope and Healing for Yourself and Your Relationships” (2001). This was both a challenging and emotional topic and text to read for this student. Having come from a background of severe physical and mental abuse and having been a foster parent of over 60 children whom the majority has come from the same background, the material, examples and teaching is both familiar and refreshing to read and to comprehend and apply to our lives. This author only wishes he could have read this book twenty-five years ago, life would have been so much simpler. We will learn from this book that there are many different actions that influence us at an early age and stay with us throughout adulthood. A favorite scripture this author has leaned on for over fifty years is John 16: 33, “ I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble.

But take heart! I have overcome the world.” From the time we are babies until we die we will experience hurt, trouble, tribulation. Many times deep wounds and deep hurts affect the person’s life in negative ways. Wilson

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points out by the title of her book hurt people hurt other people because they have experienced hurt. Hurting people have the natural reaction to isolate or close themselves off to those that reach out to help them including God. Sandra Wilson strives in her counseling techniques and writings, to help us to understand that all of us are hurting people who need encouragement and hope from a loving Savior. In this book she gives us a plan to understand and overcome or manage these hurts as we turn to loving, caring God.

Author

“ Sandra D. Wilson is a seminary professor, certified spiritual director and retired family therapist. She is an international speaker and the author of six books: Released from Shame, Into Abba’s Arms, Hurt People Hurt People, and The World According to Me, Shame-Free Parenting and Counseling Adult Children of Alcoholics.” (Wilson, 2013). Summary

This author will write a brief statement answering the ten required segments that will summarize and explain Wilson’s book and her theory/methodology and foundational constructs and implications of her theory as presented in her book and include a brief rationale behind the responses. Primary goal

Sandra Wilson provides biblical counseling model that could be classified as a self-help model for dealing with past hurts. Wilson points out that “ when people try to function in areas that affect their untended wounds and unhealed hurts of their childhood, they inevitably hurt others. Often they wound others as severely as they were hurt, and in remarkably similar ways. While most hurting is relatively mild, deeply wounded people deeply wound others.” (p. 10). Through managing and changing the patterns we have

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learned from childhood, we may break the dysfunctional generational behaviors that are passed on from one generation to another. The title of Wilson's book, *Hurt People Hurt People*, serves as an appropriate summary for this work as well. Everyone bears wounds or scars from past hurts which are not always physical, but are emotional, verbal and spiritual (p. 9). These scars may have been inflicted intentionally or unintentionally, but nevertheless they exist, affect the way one thinks and feels, and have an impact on one's future relationships. These hurt people will, in turn, hurt others thus causing a perpetual and continuous series of hurts. The goal of counseling, then, is to break this sequence of hurts which will then create healthy, loving individuals, thus destroying the generational series of dysfunctional and hurtful behavior. Biblical integration

Wilson has great balance and one to the aspects of this book is the biblical integration that is included in every chapter and throughout the book. At the end of each chapter she includes a section titled, "Pause to Ponder and Pray". In this section she includes relevant scriptures concerning the content taught in the chapter as well as a prayer to back up the scripture and content of the chapter. In this manner the book can almost be viewed from a devotional standpoint. In addition, Wilson includes some very helpful appendixes that include biblical integration. Appendix A is titled, "Discovering Your True Identity" and includes bible verses that help us see ourselves as God sees us. Appendix C includes biblical principles of relating to God and others. Appendix D is titled, "Some Attributes of God" and includes scripture backing up each attribute of God.

## Formula for Change

Dr. Wilson lists some specific change strategies in chapter thirteen. They are as follows:

1. Receive God's forgiveness: When we commit ourselves to God and receive His forgiveness through Christ, then we can begin to focus on God's grace instead of our sins. (p. 212)
2. Learn more about forgiveness: Scripture is the best source of information on forgiveness. (p. 212)
3. Adopt and structure an 'event and process perspective on forgiving: develop a plan and procedure of forgiving others and yourself. (p. 212)
4. Relabel those you have forgiven. (p. 212)
5. Get help to process the intense and painful emotions that accompany forgiveness. (p. 212)
6. Consider confronting the people you have forgiven. (p. 212)

## Balance of theology and spirituality

This author's opinion is reading this text Dr. Wilson uses a good balance between theology, spirituality and psychology in her teaching and methodology. The theme throughout the book is the first step to healing is a strong relationship with God. Wilson (2001) teaches that, we learn about God from our parents, and our view of our parents will influence our view of God, and thus, distort the truth about who and what God is, and what He expects or wants from us. As adults, we must "correct the distortion by learning the truth about God (pp. 179)." This includes learning the truth about grace and about who we are in Christ. As we recognize, accept and acknowledge that all of us are flawed and that we are not perfect and never will be, it is only <https://assignbuster.com/hurt-people-hurt-people-by-dr-sandra-wilson-essay-sample/>

then we can truly learn to live in God's grace. Jesus does not waste pain. Just as He suffered and died on the cross for a purpose, there can be a Godly purpose in our pain. This illustrates another dimension of Jesus' statement that as His followers we will suffer. We will not experience a pain-free life, but we can experience a healthy, grace-filled life. (pp. 123-125). Human personality (development and structure)

One of the first steps in the development of the healing process is to admit that we have a problem. This is nothing new. In order for an alcoholic to get the help they need, they have to admit that they have a problem. The famous phrase in an alcoholic's anonymous meeting is " My name is (—), and I am an alcoholic." We have to admit and take personal responsibility for the choices that we have made, as we can only change our choices not the choices of others. This will help to put an end to the vicious cycle of hurt. Wilson teaches that part of this change comes from the process of inviting Christ into our lives and allowing Him to control and guide the process of change. This change can be both painful and scary. " Letting go of old ways before we firmly grasp the new is terrifying." (p. 96) The Holy Spirit brings comfort and security because one no longer has to feel left alone, abandoned and unworthy of love. God is the only person that has the ability to give true love. He is the truth and brings life to those who seek Him.

The second step is for the person to " purposefully" identify, engage and extend their support system into a helping network. The enemy likes keeping hurting people isolated and alone but it is vitally necessary to be part of a community of what Wilson calls " sincerely struggling changers". (p. 118)

The person needs to see their body as clean from all past abuse and allow  
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the blood of Jesus to cover all their sin. The third suggestion Wilson teaches is to begin treating the body with respect by getting enough sleep, proper nutrition and sufficient exercise and scheduling “ me time” that involves self-care (119-120). The fourth suggest in finding a safe place to heal emotional wounds is essential. Individual counseling and group work that allows for healthy emotional expression can bring health and healing to all involved. The process of change is a lifelong and sometimes arduous journey that is oftentimes painful. In order to know where one is on this journey, Dr. Wilson developed a chart called the Healing Overview and Progress Evaluation (H. O. P. E.) chart. This chart is designed for identifying ones progress through the three stages of recovery (p. 122).

#### Counselor’s Function, Role, Relationship, Contributions and Classification

Wilson teaches that the counselor’s function, role and relationship is to guide the counselee into recognizing their hurts and wounds and then be able, with God’s direction and guidance, find solutions to those behaviors that causing harm to ourselves and others. “ Each one of us has been hurt to one degree or another. As the damage causes us to become defensive and self-protective, we may lash out at others. Hurting then becomes a vicious cycle.” (back cover). Limitations of this counseling theory

This author finds few limitations with Wilson’s counseling theory. She writes from experience of the abuse she has suffered throughout her life. Coming from a similar background, and from parenting children who have a similar background, this author found that at times when reading this book, he was reading about his own life, the life of some of his children. Chapters three through six include teaching on childhood hurts and how to manage those

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hurts. Her theory can be beneficial in counseling with both children and adults. Wilson not only tells us to be healthy, but also tells us how to achieve that health. Wilson teaches the idea of ruthless realism by looking at life from a realistic view, so that nothing is excused or denied, everything is laid bare in order that it may be resolved. In conjunction with this, Wilson also discusses breaking generational cycles, not only for ourselves, but also for our children, which I believe is an important aspect of the changing and healing process. One of the ideas this author did not understand concerns Wilson's ideas about choosing our parents. How do we get to choose our parents? God chose them for us. For those in the foster system they also do not get to choose their foster parent, they are placed in the most compatible and available home. We have no choice but to accept our parents as they are and work through the problems as they come.

But then it was made clear in chapter thirteen pages 210. No matter what our parent have done to us (intentionally or unintentionally) we have to choose to forgive them and choose to accept them as our parents, sins and all that entails. We choose them because God choose them. Until we emotionally accept, receive, and yes, choose our parents, we are rejecting the instrument and genetic endowment. This is symbolic, emotional choice in no way negates the reality of our parents' behavior toward us. Remember, God never asks us to choose denial of pain and terrible truth. God asks us to choose to trust Him to heal the pain and transform the truth. (p. 210-211).

Personal application and impact of the counseling movement

This book was not easy reading for this author. Each section contained

psychological and spiritual information that took time to digest and  
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understand. On a personal note, this author has a twenty-four year old daughter who is adopted and has not been able to forgive her biological mother for the abandonment of her and her sister. She has battled this torment all her life. When this author explained some of the theories of Wilson from this book along with the theory of forgiveness, boundaries and reconciliation, we had a breakthrough for the first time. We are now no longer stagnating but we are now are once again moving toward a goal of acceptance and forgiveness and freedom. This is just one example of how this book has a personal impact on lives of those hurting for abusive pasts. This book will be an excellent source and model to use for those who are dealing with abuse and the majority of negative behaviors that can be traced back to Wilson's teaching and biblical counseling model.

### Conclusion

The author set out to write a book that teaches why people have the negative emotions and behaviors and need to “ break free from the bondage of unhealed personal hurts.” (back cover). She offers freedom from the hurts so we can stop hurting those we are in contact with. Her solution is “ God can help us break the hurting cycle. God offers healing and hope.” (back cover). Hope that we will see more clearly how our wounding experiences fit God's design for our lives. (back cover).

Hope that our scars will one day sing the praises of our living and loving Savior, even as we embrace the reality of choice, change, and transformation.

Hope that sees in the splinter fragments of broken lives the reflection and triumph of Jesus empty tomb.

Jesus Christ is the only all-sufficient healer for hurt people.

He graciously uses human instruments in His healing work.

#### References

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