

Creating a Haven of Peace: When You're Feeling Down, Finances Are Flat, and Tempers are Rising

By Joanne Fairchild Miller

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“SANCTUARY! SANCTUARY! SANCTUARY!” yells Quasimodo (The Hunchback of Notre Dame) as he enters the cathedral to escape his tormentors. Sanctuary: A place of asylum and immunity. A place of peace and unconditional love. A place to escape from the everyday stressors of life. An attainable retreat accomplished through intentional living.

"Creating a Haven of Peace" provides a formula for creating Sanctuary in your own home. An escape from the busyness and chaos surrounding our families today. Here are very attainable steps to creating the life you desire.

How incorporating the five senses can turn your home into a Sanctuary of peace and love that supersedes the “security” you think money can provide.

How relationship trumps all in building a foundation for peace.

How “being your own boss” isn’t all it’s cut out to be. The myths and realities of living the unpredictable entrepreneurial life.

How The Ugly Year turned into success and unexpected life change and how you can change your own life story.

When the business failed, the IRS was knocking at the door, the kids were hungry and we had borrowed a beat up car from a friend, I assumed this was the beginning of poverty and embarrassment. Instead, it turned out to be the wakeup call for our greatest and most successful adventure.

“Our family never had ‘problems’. We always had ‘Opportunities for Solutions’

and we could get mighty creative with figuring out the solutions!”

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Editorial Review

Review
“You embody this message more than anyone I can think of. And not just to family or house guests. You create a haven of peace, love, acceptance, and fun wherever you go. In your home. At your events. On your property. Out and about. Wherever you are. The world needs this message. The world needs you.” --- Gail Hyatt

“Joanne shares a powerful combination of high points and struggles from her nearly five decades of marriage in "Creating a Haven of Peace." This book will be a go-to resource for me as I strive to continue to improve my relationship and lead others in doing the same.” -- Nick Pavlidis, author Confessions of a Terrible Husband www.aterriblehusband.com

“In a world that is often too fast and preoccupied, Joanne Miller not only unfolds how to create “A Haven of Peace,” she offers one to us in the midst of reading her delightful book. With artistry and authenticity, Joanne encourages us to pause and ponder our priorities, and gives practical ways to create a home where family and friends will long to linger. Joanne doesn’t just talk about peaceful havens;she is one, exuding peace, warmth, and grace! We need this book to remind us of what really matters and how to stay true to our best selves, regardless of circumstance.” -- Susie Miller, MA, MDiv, Author/Speaker/Coach www.susiemiller.com

About the Author
Joanne Miller is an artist, speaker, author of five children’s books and co-author (with Dorsey McHugh) of "Be Your Finest Art." She is wife of author Dan Miller (48 Days to the Work You Love) and is a speaker in his events, on his podcasts and blogs. She is a speaker for Launch, Escaping Shawshank, Innovate, Coaching with Excellence and has been interviewed by Moody Radio, ReLaunch, Biz Chix, A Terrible Husband and many others.

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It would be hard to write a book on how intentional I have been in creating a Haven of Peace without first giving a prelude to what, perhaps, made this life-long quest high on my list of life goals. No one comes into marriage without some baggage. Some have such heavy baggage that it takes years of therapy to unload it all. Interestingly, I wasn’t even aware I had much baggage till long after I was married, had children and faced empty nest. At that point, in my early 50’s, I really took time to evaluate who I was; what I brought to the table as a human being. I hadn’t had much time to think about it before that because I was far too busy taking care of everyone around me; feeling if I wasn’t strong for everyone and making their lives easy and happy, I was not doing my job properly. Through some intense therapy and soul searching I discovered I didn’t know how to be happy except when I made others around me happy. I didn’t know how to just be me. Be happy on my own.

On a trip to Chicago soon after our last child left home for college, my husband, Dan made a statement revealing a truth that hit me like a sledgehammer. I love Chicago at Christmas. It is truly magical. But everything I saw. . .the twinkling lights, the carolers, the window treatments, the light-falling snow. . .found me exclaiming, “Oh, I wish the kids were here to see this!” Finally, Dan asked me, “Can’t you enjoy anything without the kids? Can you enjoy it for us? For you?” I realized he was pointing out a very valid

fact. I simply didn't know how to enjoy my life without seeing it through the excitement of other people's lives. It was a pattern I had a hard time breaking and took a few years of introspection, counseling, reading and a concerted effort to discover who I truly was and how God had uniquely prepared me for the life I was to live.

So a little personal history might give a bit of insight into why this quest for creating peace and harmony in my home became so important to me. From the first year of my married life I knew I didn't want to emulate the chaos, anger and unrest I had experienced growing up but I don't think I realized till well into my marriage that I had this relentless desire for Creating a Haven of Peace no matter how hard it seemed at the time. I wanted so much more than I had experienced and I hope this insight will help you look at yourself and your life with new eyes and gain a new perspective.

Will The Real Joanne Please Stand Up?

By the time I was four years old my mother had been divorced twice. I had two younger sisters whom I was expected to help raise. . . I became like a surrogate spouse, fulfilling many household duties, rarely having time to pursue activities I wanted to do. I would escape in the pages of a book as often as I could get away from the continual chores and duties I was forced to do. We lived in poverty and on welfare much of my growing up years. I was expected to clean, cook, iron, and babysit from my earliest memories. My mother was independent, domineering and hated men. All extended family members were also divorced so there were no male influences in my life except for a step-grandfather who was distant and often drunk. My mother took out much of her frustration and anger on her children by abusive beatings and hair pulling, foul language and threats. . .yet her puritanical morals, were strictly enforced, thus I was very limited in what I could do socially and outside the home. We did not attend church or clubs or other community events. We moved often so I rarely had long-term friends. My world was very narrow.

When I was seventeen my mother remarried my father to use his money in order to save her home from foreclosure. Then she divorced him again after much fighting and drunken episodes in front of us children. When I was eighteen my boyfriend (now my husband) moved me out of the house and into a rented bedroom in the home of an elderly lady because he felt my mother had become so angry and abusive I was in harm's way. I was chronically ill with colitis and anemia due to the stress. For ten years after I married at age nineteen, my mother would make me so ill by her rages when I would visit that we vowed never to live in the same state with her. When I wanted to share the joy and excitement over the birth of our first baby, she returned my letters and pictures unopened which crushed my heart and wounded me deeply. I longed for her approval and love.

What you have just read is one version of my story. It is true and would be a good excuse for giving up, settling for a mediocre life and becoming a life-long victim. But here is another version of my story. I like this one better. It, too, is true. It shows a perspective I prefer to embrace and has defined my adult life far more than the prior story.

I grew up experiencing homemade clothes my grandmother lovingly put together for me and Christmases with beautiful handmade gifts and dolls. When I was entering fourth grade my mother decided she wanted to get off welfare so she applied to college and was accepted even though she only had a tenth grade education. We were privileged to live on the college campus and I was able to use the library often. When my mother

took classes I often studied along with her and learned about geology, English literature, science, classical music and art. I was able to go to a small private grade school with the children of the professors at the college. I learned French in fourth grade. I had an extensive geological rock collection that I was able to put in shows. I learned how to make beautiful rock gardens. I was introduced very early to the advantages of learning and avid reading that transported me to places I had never known about before and longed to visit. I learned to make things beautiful by being creative and striving to keep my world clean of clutter and filth. I would transplant the flowers from the woods to our small patch of dirt around the Quonset hut we lived in. I learned to cook, clean, iron and be a good housekeeper from the time I was old enough to hold a broom. I learned how to improvise and can fix just about anything with Scotch tape, rubber bands and thumbtacks!

Because we moved often I learned to make friends easily and be flexible. Being the oldest in a single family home, I learned to keep house and nurture my younger sisters when my mother was too busy. My history set the stage for teaching me what I wanted for my future and what I knew I didn’t want to emulate. My upbringing gave me the determination to create a Haven of Peace as it set the stage for my enjoyment of mothering and being a homemaker; to be proud of the strength I derived from not having everything given to me easily.

You can determine who you want to become and what will define your life. You can use your past as an excuse for failure or you can use it to draw a line in the sand and change your family tree.

Here’s a challenge for you: Write two versions of your own story. It is a great exercise and will make you think about your own perspective and what defines you. Be as complete and descriptive as you can. Which story do you most want to continue? What legacy do you want to leave for your children that will give them a good beginning for their own story?

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lenora Dryer:

Playing with family in a park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with good friends is thing that usually you could have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try factor that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition of knowledge. Even you love Creating a Haven of Peace: When You're Feeling Down, Finances Are Flat, and Tempers are Rising, you could enjoy both. It is good combination right, you still would like to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its known as reading friends.

Rachel Glidewell:

Do you have something that you enjoy such as book? The book lovers usually prefer to choose book like comic, quick story and the biggest an example may be novel. Now, why not trying Creating a Haven of Peace: When You're Feeling Down, Finances Are Flat, and Tempers are Rising that give your entertainment preference will be satisfied by reading this book. Reading behavior all over the world can be said as the way for people to know world a great deal better then how they react to the world. It can't be mentioned

constantly that reading practice only for the geeky individual but for all of you who wants to become success person. So , for all you who want to start reading as your good habit, you are able to pick Creating a Haven of Peace: When You're Feeling Down, Finances Are Flat, and Tempers are Rising become your current starter.

Yolanda Nitta:

In this period globalization it is important to someone to acquire information. The information will make anyone to understand the condition of the world. The healthiness of the world makes the information quicker to share. You can find a lot of recommendations to get information example: internet, newspaper, book, and soon. You can see that now, a lot of publisher this print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended to you personally is Creating a Haven of Peace: When You're Feeling Down, Finances Are Flat, and Tempers are Rising this guide consist a lot of the information from the condition of this world now. That book was represented how can the world has grown up. The dialect styles that writer make usage of to explain it is easy to understand. Typically the writer made some analysis when he makes this book. This is why this book suitable all of you.

Vincent Espinoza:

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