



Forgiveness

Remember, beliefs don't exist “out there” in the world; they exist only in your mind and only as long as you continue to believe.

There is no other way but forgiveness to clean the wounds of all the poison.

This can be some of the most difficult work you will do, so be gentle with yourself as you embark on this road, especially if you suffered greatly at the hands of others.

Rewriting history by forgiveness loosens the power of the bad events to embitter (and actually can transform bad memories into good ones).

Our firefighting negative emotions will trump the broadening, building, and abiding—but more fragile—positive emotions.

The only way out of this emotional wilderness is to change your thoughts by rewriting your past: forgiving, forgetting, or suppressing bad memories. There are, however, no known ways to enhance forgetting and suppressing of memory directly. Indeed explicit attempts to suppress thoughts will backfire and increase the likelihood of imagining the forbidden object (for example, try not to think of a white bear in the next five minutes). This leaves forgiving, which leaves the memory intact but removes and even transforms the sting, as the only viable rewriting strategy.

Here are some of the usual reasons for holding on to unforgiveness.

- Forgiving is unjust. It undermines the motivation to catch and punish the perpetrator, and it saps the righteous anger that might be transmuted into helping other victims as well.
- Forgiving may be loving toward the perpetrator, but it shows a want of love toward the victim. Forgiving blocks revenge, and revenge is right and natural.
- In the other column, however, forgiving transforms bitterness into neutrality or even into positively tinged memories, and so makes much greater life satisfaction possible: “You can’t hurt the perpetrator by not forgiving, but you can set yourself free by forgiving.”
- Physical health, particularly in cardiovascular terms, is likely better in those who forgive than those who do not. And when it is followed by reconciliation, forgiving can vastly improve your relations with the person forgiven.

You must forgive those who hurt you, even if whatever they did to you is unforgivable in your mind. You will forgive them not because they deserve to be forgiven, but because you don’t want to suffer and hurt yourself every time you remember what they did to you.

There is no use or glory in bearing the burden for other people's sins... or your own...

It doesn’t matter what others did to you, you are going to forgive them because you don’t want to feel sick all the time. Forgiveness is for your own mental healing. You will forgive because you feel compassion for yourself. Forgiveness is an act of self-love.



You will know you have forgiven someone when you see him/her and you don't feel anything anymore. You will hear the name of the person and have no emotional reaction. When you can touch a wound and it doesn't hurt, then you know you have truly forgiven. Of course, a scar is going to be there, just as it is on your skin. You will have a memory of what happened, of how you used to be, but once the wound has healed, it won't hurt you any longer.

You have all these reasons, all these justifications why you cannot forgive. But this is not the truth. The truth is that you cannot forgive because you learned not to forgive, because you practiced not to forgive, because you mastered not to forgive. That's not who we were as children.

The real problem is pride. Because of pride, because of honor, we add more fire to the injustice to remind ourselves that we cannot forgive. Guess who is going to suffer and accumulate more and more emotional poison?

We are going to suffer for all kinds of things people do around us, even though they have nothing to do with us. We also learn to suffer just to punish whoever abused us.

Take your pride and put it in the trash. You don't need it. Just let go of the personal importance and ask for forgiveness. Forgive others, and you will see miracles start to happen in your life.

We behave like a little child having a tantrum, just asking for attention. I'm hurting myself just to say, "Look at what I am doing because of you." It's a big joke, but that's exactly what we do. What we really want to say is, "God, forgive me," but we will not say a word.

Assignment

First, make a list of everyone you believe you need to ask for forgiveness. Then ask them for forgiveness. Even if there is not enough time to call everyone, ask for their forgiveness in your prayers and through your dreams.

Second, make a list of all the people who hurt you, all the people you need to forgive. Start with your parents, your brothers and sisters, your children, your spouse, your friends, your lover, your cat, your dog, your government, and God. Now, you are going to forgive others by knowing that whatever anyone did to you had nothing to do with you. Everyone dreams their own dream, remember?

The words and actions that hurt you are merely a reaction to the demons in that person's own mind. She is dreaming in hell, and you are a secondary character in her dream. Nothing anyone does is because of you. Once you have this awareness, and you do not take it personally, compassion and understanding will lead you to forgiveness. Start working on forgiveness; start practicing forgiveness.

It will be difficult at first, but then it just becomes a habit. The only way to recover forgiveness is to practice again. You practice and practice, until in the end you see if you can forgive yourself.

At a certain point, you find that you must forgive yourself for all those wounds and all that poison you created for yourself in your own dream.



When you forgive yourself, self-acceptance begins and self-love grows. That is the supreme forgiveness —when you finally forgive yourself.

Once we have cleaned the wounds, we are going to use a powerful medicine to accelerate the process of healing. Of course, the medicine also comes from the same great Master: It is Love. Love is the medicine that accelerates the process of healing. There is no other medicine but unconditional love.

Every time you find yourself falling back into self-judgment on this issue, repeat this statement of forgiveness again. Doing so is the act of bringing unconditional love to yourself. You have already paid the price for this self-judgment; you don't need to do so anymore.

Respecting yourself also means being honest with yourself. If you are not ready to forgive, that is your truth. Don't subjugate yourself with "I have to." If you are not ready, you are not ready; and the acceptance of yourself with this truth is practicing unconditional love. After all, it is about breaking the cycle of domestication. Take your time, if it's your preference, to become ready to heal. Forgiving is the final step of healing a wound.

Forgiveness represents a set of prosocial changes that occur within an individual who has been offended or hurt by someone else. When people forgive, their basic motivations or actions regarding the transgressor become more positive (for example, benevolent, kind, generous) and less negative (vengeful, avoidant). It is useful to distinguish between forgivingness, which is a readiness or proneness to forgive, and forgiveness, which can be thought of as changes vis-à-vis a specific transgressor and a specific transgression.