

An Exercise in Forgiveness

When we are holding unforgiveness in our heart, we are stuck in the past. We usually go over the story again and again in our minds justifying our hurt and anger. When we do so, we close ourselves off from allowing the Holy Spirit of God to move through us. Our light grows dim. We are stuck in the past.

Now is the time to move past this unforgiveness. Are you willing? Can you do this? Are you ready now?

Write down the name of the person you are needing to forgive:

Step One

Now it is time, the very last time, to go through the event and allow ALL of the feelings and emotions to come to the surface. On a separate piece of paper, write a letter to the person you need to forgive. Let this person know exactly how you feel. Get it all out. Don't hold anything back. Write until you feel you have spent all of your energy. Give yourself plenty of time for this part of the exercise.

Only after you have completed this letter should you move on to the next step.

Step Two

Are you willing to release all of this old emotion? Can you do it?
Are you ready to do so now? If so, now is the time to move on.

As you think about the event, write down all of the things that you learned about yourself through the circumstance that happened. Need help with this? Look at the list of positive qualities and circle each one that resonates with you as something you learned through this event within your life.

Now write down each quality here:

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Look at these qualities. Can you find a place of gratefulness for having discovered this about yourself from this circumstance? Once you find that you are willing and able to feel a sense of gratitude, move onto the next step.

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|---------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Strength | Acceptance | Resourcefulness | Adaptability |
| Compassion | Assertiveness | Sincerity | Ambition |
| Patience | Candor | Talent | Calm |
| Perseverance | Creativity | Tolerance | Caring |
| Understanding | Empathy | Wholeness | Competence |
| Confidence | Fair Mindedness | Carefulness | Cooperation |
| Clarity | Gentleness | Faith | Enterprising |
| Courage | Open Mindedness | Health | Inventiveness |
| Determination | Independence | Humor | Lightheartedness |
| Freedom | Hopefulness | Individuality | Moderation |
| Growth | Spiritual Growth | Love | Non Judgment |
| Honesty | Reflection | Optimism | Organization |
| Maturity | | Responsibility | Inner Peace |
| Tactfulness | | Trust | Versatility |

Step 3

Are you willing to surrender to forgiveness? Can you do it? Are you ready to do it now? Then let's move forward. There is no need to ever go through the emotion that you experienced when you wrote your letter. It is time to release yourself, and the one whom you need to forgive, from the past. You do not need to send the letter; you simply need to let it go. One way that you could do so is to burn the letter. As it burns, imagine all of the emotion dissolving into nothing and floating away with the smoke.

Now it is time to hold the other person in forgiveness. This four step process comes from I of the Storm written by Gary Simmons.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray from them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Matthew 5:44

1. Love-to love means to accept, to embrace and to value. The person that you are forgiving is a child of God. The spark of the divine is within them. You can not see it as long as you are stuck in unforgiveness. When you forgive, you see the good (GOD) within them. Are you willing? Can you do it? Are you ready?
2. Bless-to bless means to endow this person with the capacity to be good in your life. You have already discovered the inner qualities of goodness that came from this event. As you recognize and appreciate those inner qualities that you discovered within yourself, you are blessing the person you need to forgive. Are you willing? Can you do it? Are you ready?

3. Do Good-To do good means that you choose to do the right thing. In this moment, you have the opportunity to be the avenue through which God's love flows into the relationship. Focus your attention on how you can let the Christ light shine. Take the step to do that which is right in this situation. Are you willing? Can you do it? Are you ready?

4. Pray-Move your attention to your spiritual center where you can experience your oneness with God and your oneness with the person you are now forgiving. Lift yourself and the situation into the peace and serenity of God. Are you willing? Can you do it? Are you ready?

Finally, know that forgiveness is a process. If feelings of unforgiveness arise, remind yourself that you have chosen to forgive. Go through the four step process above. This will align you with your choice to forgive.