
Would Forgiveness Give Us Good Feeling And Having Peaceful Mind?

Mahatma Gandhi once said, "The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong." We all need forgiveness, and we all need to give forgiveness. Forgiveness can transfer anger and hostility into peace and healing. Forgiveness can help people overcome feeling of depression and anxiety and help them to not prison themselves into what they've wronged to themselves or other. Many religious leaders around the world agree that forgiveness of oneself and others is the key factor to clear the mind and the soul and may result in harmony and peace. Forgiveness is a way to self-fulfillment. People who easily forgive themselves and others tend to have more inner peace than those who carry out the hostility during their life.

What makes self-forgiveness so difficult for people? People usually tend to punish and blame themselves over minor mistakes that they have done during their life. This attitude can lead people to have the feeling of regret and continue to have the sense of guilt and hate themselves as they move on their personal life. Some people tend to have easier dealing with their negative feeling. Self-forgiveness basically relates to the fact that a person must tend to change the wrong behavior. Therefore, people who are not ready to change their attitude might find it harder to truly forgive themselves. Those types of people have the mindset that they just justify their wrong action rather than engaging to self-forgiveness and courage to change their wrong attitude.

Research has shown that those who practice self-forgiveness have better mental and emotional well-being, more positive attitudes and healthier relationships. They have higher levels of success, productivity, focus and concentration. Petoskey said 'Learning to be self-forgiving is a skill that requires practice. Over time, you will notice that you are more relaxed, open and happy. You will be able to notice and appreciate how much pleasure can be found in a simple moment, how much there is to be grateful for in everyday life, and how much the world needs you and your special gifts and talents.'

A person who has the high self-esteem tend to forgive others easily, but a person with low self-esteem with a tendency to blame his/herself might find it much more difficult to achieve self-forgiveness and forgiving others. There are in fact 4 important key factors that play a role in stages of self-forgiveness. The first step of self-forgiveness is the ability to accept the responsibility of the action that a person has done. By taking the responsibility and accepting that a person has done an action that hurt others, he/she can avoid negative emotion such as feeling guilt or regret. The second step is that a person should feel remorse about her/his wrong action. Guilt is not always a bad thing. It allows the person to find him/herself and to find ways to improve the wrong action.

It is good for people to feel remorse without blaming themselves. The third step is a person should try to improve and correct the wrong action. One way to improve past mistake is to apologize to whomever a person has hurt and try to compensate the wrong action with good things to convince person who has hurt. The fourth step is that a person must find positive actions that motivates him/her to move on. Self-forgiveness usually requires that a person should learn from experience and grow as a person.

Forgiveness can be a powerful factor to healing, but the process is not the same for both genders. Men and women respond differently in the process of forgiveness. The study showed that men are more revengeful than women. (Miller, Worthington, and McDaniel, 2008). There is such a difference in socialization: in contrast to men, women usually focus on emotion and relationships. (Bakan, 1966; Tylor et al., 2000). Research has shown that women tend to be more empathic than men. Empathy is the main factor that leads a person toward forgiveness. Women have a greater capacity for understanding others' feelings and emotions. Therefore, women have the ability to forgive others more easily than men do. In different conditions, most men and women react differently. It is not completely right to say that because women are more empathic, therefore, they tend to forgive others more easily than men.

Forgiveness can be a challenge for several reasons. Sometimes forgiveness can be confused with forgiving what someone has done to a person. Even for people who understand the differences between accepting someone's bad behavior as 'okay' and accepting that it happened, forgiveness can be difficult because these two are easily confused. Forgiveness can also be difficult when the person who wronged the person doesn't seem to deserve the forgiveness.

It's important to remember that forgiveness allows a person to let go of a connection that has to do with those who have wronged him/her and help the person to move forward—with or without them. Forgiveness is challenging because it's hard to let go of what happened. Forgiving someone who has committed unacceptable behavior can be difficult when the person having trouble letting go of anger or hurt is around the event itself.

Some people see forgiveness as a sign of weakness, but Mason Turner, MD, describes forgiveness as a powerful act that can have lasting health benefits. Dr. Turner is Kaiser Permanente Northern California's director of Outpatient Mental Health and Addiction Medicine. In a recent interview, he said the process of forgiveness for a serious offense can be long and difficult, but research shows forgiveness can lower your stress levels, boost your immune system, and help you to be a better friend, family member, and colleague.

Psychological benefits are the rewards of forgiveness for the person. People who tend to forgive others easily are less likely to be distressed and they are more likely to be happy. People should consider the cost of not forgiving others. Not forgiving others often leads to hostility toward the person and anger and sadness that could be deep-rooted into one's life. Hostility makes levels of the stress hormone cortisol raised in the body, which can have bad consequences such as high blood pressure, immune system disorders, and the ability to gain weight. Forgiveness is good for the heart. One study from the *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* found forgiveness has the correlation with lower heart rate and blood pressure as well as stress relief. This can bring long-term health benefits to the heart and overall health.

A later study found forgiveness to be positively related with five measures of health: physical symptoms, medications used, sleep quality, fatigue, and bodily complaints. It seems that the reduction in negative affect, strengthened spirituality, conflict management, and stress relief one finds through forgiveness all have a significant impact on overall health. A third study, published in the *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, found that forgiveness not only restores positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors toward the offending party, but the benefits of forgiveness result in positive behaviors toward others outside of the relationship.

Getting stuck in hostility might have mental and psychological results as well. It can give a person a feeling of the victim that could prevent a person from forgetting the bad experience and increase the level of anxiety and depression. A person who holds on to hostility might feel that his/her life lacks meaning and purpose. Research also shows that participating in forgiveness reduces the circulation of cortisol, which leads to many physical benefits, such as lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and heart attack risk, and having better sleep during the night. Forgiveness can increase happiness in relationships and leads people to have a better social life. When a person starts to regularly practice forgiveness, he/she can see the improvements in relationships with co-workers, neighbors, and managers.

Forgiving and forgetting might seem like difficult things to do, but having the true conception will help the person to accomplish forgiveness. In most cases, it might be easier to forgive than to forget, although both are not simple tasks. It might seem offensive to people to forget about the wrong that they faced during their life. It is literally impossible for people to completely remove the past wounds from their mind. Moreover, if people don't get their lesson from their past wounds, they might confront the same condition in the present that they can't deal with easily. There is a common phrase which says: "fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me". Many people don't forget the hurt they've experienced by others. However, when a person understands that not all humans are perfect, and there might be a situation that a person might not act properly, then it will be easier for the person to forgive the one who has hurt him/herself.

It is easy to forgive someone since it has been fixed into our mind from childhood, that it is okay to make a mistake. People are never taught to forget, like how they are taught to forgive. No one tells people that they should erase that mistake from their memory. Forgetting is a hard task that a person can accomplish. It doesn't matter how many times a person says it is fine and tries to continue, but still it will be at the back of the mind. Research shows that not forgetting can be a good thing. Even though it may seem painful to remember all the details of the time that someone hurt a person, but it is good to make sure that the painful feeling doesn't happen again. Moreover, how these things make people feel will help them to prevent others from experiencing the same way.

People are supposed to learn from their mistakes and all they have suffered through their life in order to grow and move on. However, they are not supposed to forget their mistakes and what hurt them. Learning from mistakes and setting up boundaries will help people to strengthen their feelings and they can better take care of themselves in the future.

It is still needed to discover how forgiveness can be better raised in society at large. It is important that schools, parents, and sports coaches work together in communities to promote cooperation and forgiveness instead of violence in society. Given the role of forgiveness in religious traditions, youth programs should be created to promote forgiveness at churches and mosques. Conflicts seem an inevitable part of human life, but a person can avoid the negative effects of conflicts by applying forgiveness to life and trying to ignore those conflicts. Political and religious figures, such as Nelson Mandela and in South Africa, have demonstrated the beauty and effectiveness of forgiveness in action. Through a harmony of research and practice, people can continue to promote forgiveness and continue to study the positive effects of forgiveness to bring health to individuals, relationships, and societies.

Forgiveness might be a different journey for each individuality. It is not something that can happen

over a night, but it has the power to help people to let go of many negative feelings and emotions that have destructive impact on their future path in their life. Forgiveness is the way to peace, freedom and greater ease in life.

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