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Forgiveness

**Everyone thinks forgiveness is a lovely idea...
until they have someone or something to forgive.**

Paraphrase, C. S. Lewis

**“The stupid neither forgive nor forget,
the naïve forgive and forget,
the wise forgive, but they do not forget.”**

Dr. Thomas Szaz

Forgiveness is not forgetting, giving up or giving in, condoning, or overlooking

Forgiveness is not reconciliation

Forgiveness is a decision to forgive—not a feeling; the feeling may come later

**Forgiveness is a decision to let go of the past, to not be a victim, to not hold onto or live in
the past, but to let go and move on with our lives...**

Paraphrase summary, Dr. Sid and Suzanne Simon

Forgiveness, Making Peace with Your Past and Moving on with Your Life

**To forgive...involves wanting to be healthy...refusing to be controlled by the past... letting
go of resentment...involves letting go of our identity of “self as victim”...it also involves
knowing we are imperfect, and need to be forgiven for our mistakes...we can hold the
offender accountable**

Paraphrase summary, Dr. Ernest Kurtz

The Spirituality of Imperfection

Forgiveness is a path to freedom

Forgiveness has positive effects on physical and mental health and relationships

**Forgiveness is a process, requires motivation to be healthy and let go, and is not easy—it
requires hard, sometimes painful work**

Paraphrase summary, Dr. Robert Enright

Forgiveness is a Choice

Forgiveness Process Worksheet

1. How my life may be better if I forgive:

Physical

health_____

Emotional

health_____

Relationship

health_____

2. I need/want to forgive:

3. What happened? How was I hurt?

4. How I feel toward that person/institution who harmed me (angry, resentful, afraid, ashamed, sad, grieving, vengeful, confused, disappointed, etc)

5. Understanding/empathy/not condoning ("Before you judge a person, walk a mile in their shoes"): what was going on with this person/institution that may have led to them hurting me?

6. How I may have contributed to my being hurt/Willing to forgive myself?

7. Resources I need to successfully forgive (study recommended books; guidance and support of a mentor, friend, counselor, minister; meditate; pray; healing ritual; letter to offender; etc):

8. What I am learning about myself and life from this experience of being hurt/forgiving:

9. I understand this is a process and though I make the decision to forgive and do the work, fully letting go and moving on emotionally may take time. Yes _____ No _____

Forgiveness is a Choice, by Robert D. Enright, PhD

The Forgiving Life, Robert D. Enright, PhD

Raising Above the Storm Clouds, (a book for children), Robert D. Enright

Forgive for Good, Dr. Fred Luskin

Forgiveness: Making Peace with Your Past and Moving on with Your Life, Dr. Sid and Suzanne Simon