

Forgiveness

By: Cameron Mangal

Introduction

Have you ever shown forgiveness? Well, in this essay I will talk about genuine forgiveness, the flaws of “Forgive and *forget*” and why forgiveness can be used in *any* situation. Forgiveness is the key to life, respecting faults, and helps us move on to become better people. Quotes from several important people suggest that forgiveness is a very important part of our life-and without it, society would be nothing compared to today. In this essay, you will learn important stories of inspirational forgiveness from breathing-taking fates. Hopefully, you learn several key things to showing forgiveness and learn important morals of the important qualities regarding forgiveness. In my opinion, my favorite part of this important trait, is the love and affection that goes behind everything you do when showing forgiveness.

What Does it Mean to Forgive Genuinely?

Forgiving genuinely is moving past someone else’s mistakes and not holding a grudge against them. When people offend you, they most likely feel guilty looking down on their mistakes and faults. Forgiveness relieves them of that guilt because they know that you are willing to move on and not hold them responsible for what they’ve done. Like positive viruses, forgiveness spreads from one person to another. Marianne Williamson said, “The practice of forgiveness is our most important contribution to the healing of the world.” Meaning, that forgiveness helps forge us together; as it spreads from one person to the next, it is basically a solder for our worlds’ faults. “When you hold resentment toward another, you are bound to that person or condition by an emotional link that is stronger than steel...” Catherine

Ponder said, "Forgiveness is the only way to dissolve that link and get free." This means that when you hold a grudge against another person, you get stuck with them like a curse.

Forgiveness is a get out of jail free card and helps break the bond you have with that person.

Forgiving genuinely is not easy whatsoever. It requires you to make hard decisions and relieve the grudge developed by a certain person. Forgiveness is asking you to release the harm someone else has done to you, no matter how big or small the offense. From stealing your pencil to hacking your computer, forgiveness can always be an option. Like Martin Luther King said, "Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude." Meaning that forgiveness isn't just there once or twice in certain situations but, it is always there no matter what happens. How to forgive genuinely is by first, identifying who needs to be relieved of your grudge against them or who you want to forgive. This can be a friend or maybe even an adult such as a parent or teacher. Once you know who to forgive, acknowledge what was offending you and work to release the emotions that come with it. This is the hardest part of forgiveness because of how emotionally painful it may be. Just know that when you forgive someone you not only relieve others, but you also relieve yourself. Lastly, you have to choose to forgive the person identified. You have to choose because if you really want to forgive someone, you have to prove that you want to forgive.

An example of genuine forgiveness includes Samereh Alinejad, who was an Iranian mother who had claimed to The Associated Press that "retribution was her only thought" after her teenage son, Abdollah Hosseinzadeh, was murdered in 2007 by a close friend. Balal, the guilty murderer, played football with Abdollah. Sadly, this was Samereh's second child's death as her first one died in a motorbike accident. After the incident, Samereh started having dreams that she would forgive the man who had killed her second child. "Ten days before the execution was due, I saw my son in a dream asking me not to take revenge, but I couldn't convince myself to forgive..." She told the Guardian responsible for the execution. But, right before Balal was executed, forgiveness shined as she pardoned the man for his devilish deeds. People were

shocked, as though she would never forgive the man. Now, she is considered a hero across all of Iran-and the world. Samereh proves that no matter how big the offense, you can always forgive.

Is it Possible (or Even Advisable) to Forgive an Offender Who Doesn't Apologize?

Yes, it is always possible to forgive someone for their actions even if they don't apologize. Like in our previous example, Balal didn't apologize for what he had done yet, Samereh still forgave the murderer for his assault. Forgiveness isn't entirely about what happens physically or verbally between one person and another. It is mostly emotional and mental, since it's your emotions you need to pass against that offense or person. To elaborate, if someone punched you in the face and meant to hurt you, you can still relieve your anger and yourself from that position using forgiveness. American Motivation writer, William A. Ward describes it, "Forgiveness is a funny thing. It warms the heart and cools the sting." and if you don't forgive them, "...who and whatever it is will occupy a rent-free space in your mind." -Isabelle Holland. Forgiveness is like a wrecking ball, destroying every emotional obstacle in its way. "To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you." Lewis B. Smedes put it.

Another inspirational story of forgiveness, Matt Swatzell, a firefighter, fell asleep while driving and crashed into another car, taking the life of a pregnant mother and injuring a 19-month-old child. The husband of the unlucky mother, pastor Erik Fitzgerald, wanted to send Swatzwell to a "diminished sentence" after finding out at the hospital bedside that both his wife, and the baby in the womb, didn't make it. When he talked to prosecutors, he felt as if enough lives were destroyed, so he asked not to give Swatzwell the full sentence. "I remember somebody said this in a sermon — in moments where tragedy happens or even hurt, there are opportunities to demonstrate grace or to exact vengeance," Fitzgerald said. "Here was an

opportunity where I could do that. And I chose to demonstrate grace.” After the case, Swatzwel was only charged with a fine and community service. On the 2-year anniversary of the death of Mrs. Fitzgerald, Swatzwel bought a condolence card for the despaired family. He saw Fitzgerald sitting in his truck. The next thing you know, “He was just bawling.” Fitzgerald said. They would soon become close friends. “You forgive as you’ve been forgiven”

Is "Forgive *and Forget*" Possible (or Even Advisable) No Matter

How Grave an Offense May Have Been Committed?

First, “forgive and *forget*” shouldn’t define forgiveness because forgiveness is more like “forgive and *move on*”, since you aren’t forgetting what has happened to you, you are accepting and releasing the bad emotions that came with what happened to you. Forgetting what has happened to you is not forgiving the other person for their actions, nor helping yourself with what has happened. “Forgiving and forgetting” implies that you no longer care about the offensive act and draws people to do the offensive act again. “Forgiving and moving on”, shows the person that you care, but you are willing to put it behind you. It is completely different. The reason why people mistake themselves with “forgive and forget” is because people think that “putting stuff behind you” is forgetting about it and burying it in 10 pounds of dirt. But, “putting stuff behind you” means you are willing to put your angry and bad emotions out of the way, so you can start over. Sort of like a reset button capable of resetting a relationship in the hope of something good. Plus, if we forget what has happened, how will we learn not to make the same mistake again? As Mary Rose Sommariba from Verily put it, “[Forgive and forget] represents a romanticized sentiment more than actual helpful life advice. I believe it serves to smooth things over more so than it heals or amends wrongdoing.” But unlike forgetting what has happened, moving on allows you to heal and amend the wrongdoing of another person-or yourself.

And yes, “forgiving and moving on” is possible no matter how bad an offense is. It doesn't matter whether a family member gets killed or someone purposely trips you; it does not matter. A quote from Happier Human, “You’ll never know how strong your heart is until you learn to forgive who broke it.” This means that you can’t know that you are big-hearted until you forgive someone who has hurt you. Probably the most inspiring story of forgiveness happened to the author of *The Hiding Place*, Corrie ten Boom, was sent to a Nazi jail after she and her friend Betsie hid Jews when the Nazis took control of Holland. In jail, her best friend Betsie, sadly died. Years after she was released, she saw one of the guards who worked at the jail. The guard, recognizing her, came up to Boom begging for forgiveness. "I was a guard there. But since that time," he went on, "I have become a Christian. I know that God has forgiven me for the cruel things I did there, but I would like to hear it from your lips as well. Fräulein - again the hand came out - "will you forgive me?"-Justbetweenus.org

The author just stood there, frozen by the shock that one of the guards responsible for her best friend's death was just asking for forgiveness, with blood on his hands. The author stood there for seconds until she remembered a quote,“If you do not forgive men their trespasses," Jesus says,"neither will your Father in Heaven forgive your trespasses." She then asked God for help to forgive such a man. And, after what seemed like decades, she shook the man’s hand for forgiveness.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Forgiveness is what helps move our society forward and helps bring our lives into happiness and relief. The feeling of forgiveness is like the feeling when your mother hugs you sooo tight, that she never wants to let you go. It’s like sitting by a campfire and melting like a marshmallow. Doing the research for this article, really showed me how important forgiveness is and I hope that this article will help you believe in forgiveness as well.

“Forgiveness dictates your emotions. It will always dictate your emotions. So don’t lock yourself up, just turn the key and run towards it.”

-Cameron Mangal

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