

# **How to Forgive**

## **Even When You Can't Forget™**

**Heal Your Heart, Free Your Attention and Move On.**

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# HOW TO FORGIVE Even When You Can't Forget

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powerful Lessons And Exercises To Help You Master The Art Of Forgiveness And Integrate It Into Your Daily Life



# FOREWORD

When I first had the idea to develop a subliminal audio CD for forgiveness I had no idea how big the topic would turn out to be. I realized that, especially when it comes to fulfilling your goals and dreams in life, most people will never get there because they've focused their attention on incidents from the past. It's human nature to live in the past – or the future – and we all could benefit greatly from living in the present, because that is where forgiveness actually takes place.

Digging further into the topic of forgiveness, I soon understood that this is an area that many of use have completely either downplayed or forgotten entirely. Somehow, we really don't know how to deal with it. Some people are lucky and they learn to forgive early on in life, but for most people, being unable to forgive leaves a wound that reopens every time an incident happens in their lives that triggers something similar to what caused the wound in the first place.

Forgiveness has a bad aftertaste for most people – somehow, they associate it with being weak. After you finish reading this book you will have come to the understanding that it's quite the opposite – forgiveness is an act of maturity, bravery and intelligence; most importantly, it is a direct connection to your heart. In essence, it is love itself.

For many, the topic of forgiveness has religious connotations. Some religions have actually been concerned with the philosophy and practice of forgiveness since their beginnings. Many people have been helped. However, as religions have evolved, there is often a shift from the inner Truth of the heart to the outer necessity of conforming to social standards and protocols. Forgiveness in these cases has usually turned into a set of rules, a methodology of doctrine that no longer serves to speak directly to the heart. Indeed, many people have left their religions as they have come to an understanding that universal spirituality is replacing doctrine. This opens the door to a world-wide agreement and alignment of what's essential spiritually for every human being.

Forgiveness is one of the most important tasks we can undertake in our lives. Without forgiveness we are stuck in the past with little hope for the future. Even worse, we are stuck with our own resentment and anger for an entire lifetime.

There are many people that are, for whatever reasons, not willing to forgive, and they take their blame to the grave. They never learned how to forgive, and so were powerless to deal with their resentment, anger and blame towards themselves and others. The key to forgiveness is this: one must be willing to learn how to forgive in order to reap the benefits of its operation in one's life. It's the first step, and it is vital to the entire process.

We can choose our actions and by executing our choices, we change our own reality and that of others. But our choices may not always be in alignment with the choices of others. This simply leads to conflicts. It is part of human nature to experience these conflicts, otherwise we would never learn a thing and never grow up. Maturity in this way comes from learning how to eliminate conflict within ourselves as we experience conflict with others. The conflict is canceled out, within and without, and the stage is set for true forgiveness.

You can learn to forgive and you can learn why forgiveness is easier than you think. When you come to understand how an incident in your life causes you to be resentful and angry, you can switch your behavior almost like a light switch. Instead of continuing to blame, you can start the forgiveness process.

If you want to experience true happiness in your life, look no further on the outside. Happiness is achieved internally, not externally. You can achieve true happiness by eliminating any stories you keep alive from the past that may haunt you. You can confront these ghosts directly and when you face them, they evaporate into nothing – they simply disappear and you will no longer be haunted by your past, you will be more fully present in the now.



Thomas Herold

Founder & CEO, Dream Manifesto

# INTRODUCTION

The 18th century poet Alexander Pope coined perhaps the most famous quote ever written regarding forgiveness when he wrote:

**“To err is human, to forgive divine.”**

Since we’ve all mastered the human tendency to err, this book will focus on the far more elusive divine art of forgiving. Although everyone is familiar with the concept of forgiveness, it can be extremely difficult in actual practice. Very few will learn how to overcome the obstacles that prevent genuine forgiveness and move on to a place of true happiness and peace.

If you read this book with an open mind and a willing heart, you will come away with the tools that you need to see through the deception of bitterness and ego to come to the point where you can genuinely forgive those who have hurt you. Once you are able to forgive, you are able to release the pain and hurt that can cling to you.

## WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

Forgiveness starts with the act of forgiving or pardoning. Forgiving is not confined to one single act in as much as it is the cessation of ongoing negative patterns, such as being angry or resentful. Anger, resentment, and bitterness are powerful emotions that can seize control of a person with strongly negative effects on your attitude, relationships, and even your physical well-being.

Often, these negative feelings overwhelm us. It can feel as if we are drowning in our own negativity. Bitterness and resentment feed upon themselves, creating an ever widening circle of despair.

The good news is that there is a way out. You can break free of these negative emotions. When we forgive, we release the anger and give ourselves permission to be happy. Happiness is our natural state of being. When we are at harmony with our surroundings and ourselves, we will naturally tend toward happiness.

While external circumstances may cause a temporary interruption of our happiness, our reaction to the circumstances has far more control over our happiness in the long run. We can't control the actions of other people. If we are honest in our assessment, we have to acknowledge that people are often mean, rude, thoughtless, and self-absorbed.

Given that we have to live among these thoughtless and mean creatures, it is a virtual certainty that we are going to be injured by their actions at some point. (Just as certain that we, being of the same type of self-absorbed creatures are going to injure others on occasion.) The surest road to overcoming circumstance and moving back to our intended state of happiness is through forgiveness.

In the chapters that follow, we will walk through some of the primary obstacles to forgiveness, the major results of holding onto our grudges, and the general process and many benefits of forgiveness.

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# CHAPTER 1

## MY PERSONAL STORY

### ***Betrayed! . . . I Thought I Would Never Trust Anyone Again***

Several years ago, before I started my own business, I was working with a friend in Palo Alto. It was the golden age of Internet start-ups around the year 2000. My life was a mess at that time and I hardly had any money.

I wanted to have a piece of that same cake that was making others so rich. I called my friend and asked if I could work for him. We quickly came to an agreement on my salary and I booked a ticket with the last few dollars I had in my bank account.

Two weeks of hard but optimistic work zoomed by and I asked my friend for my paycheck. No such luck – he told me that he couldn't pay me until his funding package came through, about \$2M.

Another two weeks passed, and the excuse given this time was that he'd found a better option, about \$5M waiting for final approvals by the angel investors. By the end of another month, I had not yet seen a dime. I was upset and discouraged, and felt betrayed by my friend.

I scraped together a few bucks and booked a flight back to my home in Hawaii, immediately beginning a program of constant phone calls to my friend, determined to collect what was due me. I talked to him several times, and then found out that he was on vacation in Hawaii.

Guess what? Now I was really pissed off! I hired a lawyer and tried to get my money back. It turned into a huge no-win situation in my life that ate up every ounce of joy and faith I once had in success. Every day I woke up and felt miserable.

**My mind was like a magnet – stuck on loss and betrayal.**

A few months later, another, wiser friend said something strange to me: "Can you forgive your friend?" For a moment I was puzzled.

*Forgive . . . why should I? He should apologize and send me my money.* My wiser friend added, "Nothing will ever change until you forgive him!"

Again, I felt all the hurt and pain well up. It felt like I was being slapped in the face. Then I asked the question, "How do I forgive?" I had no idea . . . I needed help.



Forgiveness can be difficult when the person who wronged us doesn't seem to deserve our forgiveness – it's hard to remember that forgiveness benefits the forgiver more than the one who is forgiven.

Three weeks later and \$2100 lighter, I finally understood what my professional mentor wanted me to understand: *forgiveness of others starts with ourselves – we have to find that place of forgiveness in ourselves that allows us to move through our pain and hurt*. As soon as I started to forgive my friend, my anger and frustration miraculously began to dissolve, and . . .

**I was finally free to move on with my life.**

You would not believe how many people hold on to their resentment. My wife, Aviva, and I see this happening every day when we speak to people on the phone giving them a consulting session. Yes, I went on to help others with their own forgiveness challenges, and Aviva and I continue this service to this very day.

As you may know most of our customers want to fulfill their dreams by using one of our products – the [\*\*Dream Manifestation Kit\*\*](#) – to accomplish this. Aviva and I believe that most dreams begin with a simple act of forgiveness, and the the Dream Manifestation Kit is the perfect tool accomplish this.

People sometimes take their anger and resentment to the grave. What a waste of the wonderful life such persons could have had if they'd only known how to forgive! The grave is pretty final in many ways, both to the deceased and to the living. Friends and relatives that are left behind no longer have the chance to resolve their issues in person with the person who passed away.

Why not practice forgiveness while alive? Why not bestow that particular kind of grace on those who need it the most – *while they are still alive and hoping for your forgiveness*? The Dream Manifestation Kit provides a perfect way to begin your own practice of forgiveness today.

# CHAPTER 1

## THE BENEFITS OF NOT FORGIVING

"If we say that monsters [people who do terrible evil] are beyond forgiving, we give them a power they should never have...they are given the power to keep their evil alive in the hearts of those who suffered most. We give them power to condemn their victims to live forever with the hurting memory of their painful pasts. We give the monsters the last word."

- Lewis B. Smedes

There are so many benefits to forgiveness that one might wonder why it is so difficult for people to practice. Yet, we all struggle with it at times. The lure of choosing not to forgive is rooted in the perceived benefits of being a victim.

Taking the long-term view, there is little reason to not choose forgiveness. The alternative to bitterness and despair is really nothing that anyone would want to choose. But the long term view is sometimes hard for us to clearly see. It can be obscured by the hurt and disappointment of the present moment.

If we ignore long-term consequences, playing the wounded and innocent victim may seem like the superior option to our injured pride and selfish ego. In the short term, playing the victim gives us the illusory comfort that comes with being in the right. The victim gets all the sympathy, stands on the moral high ground, and basks in the righteous anger of a person wronged.

### Sympathy

Sometimes we just want to have someone tell us that it's all OK, that we're completely right, and that the other person was totally wrong in what they said or how they acted. A little sympathy can be a salve to emotional wounds, but it is not a cure.

Relying on sympathy when you are hurt is like continuing to take pain medicine for an infection when what you really need is an antibiotic. Sympathy, like the pain medicine, will dull the ache caused by your wound, but it won't ever make it go away. It will never treat the root cause of the pain. The antibiotics will treat the actual cause of the problem and eliminate the pain that it causes you once and for all. Forgiveness is your emotional antibiotic.

## Moral High Ground

It feels good to seize the moral high ground, to know that you are right while your opponent is an agent of evil. No one wants to be the bad guy. In fact, the worst person you meet today probably thinks that he's a swell guy. Demonizing the person who offended you is a way of seizing that high ground and feeling good about yourself.

But, just like you learned in kindergarten, you can never build yourself up by putting others down. In this case, you cannot be a better person by casting the other person as being bad. You may feel that way for a while, but it won't last long. The short-term benefit of being a victim never lasts.

## Righteous Anger

Sometimes, in the moment, anger just feels good. It inspires us and puts a fire in our belly. In that short term, we fail to see that trap into which that anger pulls us. Instead of working through the hurt, we dwell in it, giving the anger control over our hearts and our actions. Soon, we live in that angry place because we cannot remember how it felt to be happy. Soon, anger may begin to feel more natural to us than happiness, and we may do little, if anything at all, to change this state of affairs into a healthier one.

The anger fuels us. We forget how to function without it and we even embrace it because it keeps us going. But if anger is the thing that keeps us going, we are going in the wrong direction. Movement does not always equal progress. We lose sight of our intended state of happiness and find ourselves drifting farther and farther from it. If anger becomes the compass by which we direct our lives, it is time to turn the ship around.

# CHAPTER 2:

## THE BENEFITS OF FORGIVING SOMEONE

**“Forgiveness is almost a selfish act  
because of its immense benefits to the one who forgives.”**

- Lawana Blackwell

When we move past the temptation of playing the victim, we can begin the process of forgiving the person who caused the offense. There are many different types of situations that will cause hurt and require forgiveness. The types of offenders needing forgiveness generally fall into three distinct categories: contrite, unrepentant, and unavailable. Reaching the point of forgiving each comes with its own special benefits.

### Contrite Offenders

Sometimes good people do bad things. Sometimes bad people turn good. In either case, there are occasions in which a person does something to hurt you and afterward feels genuinely sorry for his actions. When the offender is contrite, forgiveness is easier to come by. A contrite offender will many times actually ask for forgiveness, or at least leave an open door. In these cases, you benefit by bringing closure to the incident and letting go of all ill will toward the person who hurt you.

The offender benefits when you forgive him as well. He knows that he did the wrong thing and your forgiveness gives him permission to release his own guilt and focus on the future, rather than his past indiscretion. A contrite offender recognizes his own need to be forgiven and gains immediate rewards when he overtly receives that forgiveness.

## Unrepentant Offenders

Other times, the person who hurt you did so intentionally, or simply doesn't care that she caused you harm. She may not feel that she did anything wrong and will have no part in asking for your forgiveness. Trying to forgive that person is more difficult, because unless handled properly doing so face to face may cause more harm than good.

Unrepentant offenders may not know that they've done you wrong, but you need to forgive them just as much as the more contrite variety of offender. You need it, because the benefits to yourself when releasing that pent-up anger and resentment are just as great, regardless of the disposition of the person who hurt you. Forgiving those who don't want to be forgiven is freeing to your own soul and relieves you of the burden of resentment.

The unrepentant offender benefits as well. If you can forgive her face to face, she will see in you an attitude of forgiveness that she may lack. Seeing that kind of light in another person can only buoy your own spirit. Even if the offender or situation is such that you are unable to offer a verbal apology, forgiving her in your heart will lead to a different attitude toward her as a person.

If you're holding on to resentment and bitterness, it will certainly color your interactions with that person, causing disharmony. When you have forgiven her in your heart, whether you announce so to her or not, it will be clearly visible in your relationship and will lead to decreased tension and increased happiness for you both.

## Unavailable Offenders

The third category of offender is those who just cannot be reached to offer your forgiveness. It may be someone you are unlikely to ever encounter again, like the angry woman that cursed you out at Wal-Mart. It may be someone you've never seen at all, like the anonymous driver who dinged your car in the parking lot. Or it may be someone who was important to you, but is now deceased or has moved away and cannot be tracked down.

In these cases, the offender will never know if you maintain a grudge or if you forgive him completely. This person will never receive any direct benefit from your forgiveness. Truly, he may never realize his own wrong doing. But that does not relieve you of the need to forgive, because as we've seen, the opposite of forgiving is holding on to bitterness and resentment, which will harm you, regardless of the status of the offending party.

You will benefit from forgiving him even if he never knows and you never see him again. Your friends and family will benefit when you release your negative emotions and let go of the incident. Forgiving those who hurt you is ALWAYS good for you.

# CHAPTER 3:

## THE BENEFITS OF FORGIVING YOURSELF

**“The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.”**

- Mahatma Gandhi

There is an offender who does not fit into any of the above categories. This is the one person who can cause you the most harm, be the most oblivious to your best interests, and the hardest for you to forgive: you.

By virtue of being human, you carry within you the potential to do self-destructive and foolish things. You can hurt your loved ones and yourself. You may be hurting right now because of something that you did in the past. Forgiving yourself is in many ways more difficult than forgiving others. Because you know your heart, you cannot get away with partial or false forgiveness.

### The Dangers of Self-loathing

When you are unwilling to forgive yourself, you turn the force of your bitterness and anger inward. 2,000 years ago, a wise man wrote that a house divided against itself cannot stand. So too, you cannot function properly if you resent yourself. Your relationships, your work, your physical health and your emotional well being are all likely to suffer significantly if you are in a state of unresolved conflict with yourself.

You may be able to get by for a time, you may be able to fool those around you, but in the end you cannot be untrue to yourself. Being bitter against your own soul for the mistakes of your past will lead to only one thing: self-loathing.

If you are harboring an unforgiving pain within, it is nearly impossible to forgive others. Pain piles upon pain, and your heart becomes hardened. In a tragically short amount of time, your self-loathing will turn into an angry, seething loathing of everything and everyone around you. When you reach that stage, you become very hard to love. The loathing that you broadcast will be returned to you – until you forgive yourself and begin restoring a healthy sense of self-worth.

## The Joys of Self-forgiveness

Self-forgiveness brings about a corrected self-image. Free from blame, we can see our true potential and feel good about ourselves again. When you stop flagellating yourself for the sins of your past, your future looks much brighter.

Forgiving yourself is not easy. There can be no tearful confession, no heart to heart talk because all is already known and there is but one heart – a heart broken by a war that can have no winner. Forgiving yourself requires a conscious effort to let go of the past and take an active step toward a happier and healthier future.

There can be no falsity, no deceit. If you are going to forgive yourself, you've got to go all the way. Let the mistakes of your past stay in the past. Push them away as if they never happened. When you can honestly do that, only then can you earnestly forgive others, only then can you begin to move away from bitterness and toward your true goal: happiness.



# CHAPTER 4:

## DOES FORGIVENESS GUARANTEE RECONCILIATION?

“When I was a kid I used to pray every night for a new bicycle. Then I realized that the Lord doesn't work that way so I stole one and asked Him to forgive me.”

– Emo Philips

You've done everything that you're supposed to do. Even though you were in the right, you took the initiative to purge the anger from your heart and earnestly forgive the person who wronged you. That should automatically reconcile you with the other party, right?

Not so. Forgiveness is only one part of reconciliation. Just as it took two people to disagree, it takes two to repair the damage. No matter how genuine your forgiveness, no matter how sincere your desire to restore the damaged relationship, you cannot do it alone.

### When Forgiveness Can Bring Reconciliation

Reconciliation depends in large part on timing. We all mature and develop in our own time. You may be ready to forgive before the other person is ready to be forgiven, or to forgive themselves. The time for you to forgive is now and the other person will accept it when he is ready.

In the majority of cases, forgiveness does lead to reconciliation. As we saw in previous chapters, the offender will frequently be contrite. In those instances, he will recognize his need to be forgiven and embrace your offer of forgiveness. If you sincerely forgive and he genuinely accept that act, reconciliation will begin immediately. As with bones, relationships that are broken and then restored are generally stronger than those that have never been broken.

## When Forgiveness Cannot Bring Reconciliation

Unfortunately, it isn't always the case that we find the other person ready to receive our forgiveness. Sometimes you will have to deal with an unrepentant or unavailable offender. In the former case, he may be unwilling to reconcile your relationship. In the latter case, he is unable to.

When the person is unrepentant, he is not yet ready to restore the relationship. He may need more time to accept the blame and therefore the consequences of his actions. When you forgive this type of person, you are beginning a process of reconciliation.

There is no guarantee that the process will ever come to fruition, but you are doing all you can to foster an environment that will allow the relationship to heal. What is guaranteed is that you stand a better chance of reconciliation if you do forgive than if you don't.

If the person is unavailable, for whatever reason, the relationship simply cannot be restored in the traditional sense. You can, however, cleanse yourself of the bitterness that the severed relationship caused. While the actual relationship will never be restored, the memory can be untarnished; restoring in retrospect the merits of your past relationship and the joy that it brought you.

# CHAPTER 5:

## WHY DO WE HOLD GRUDGES?

**“To carry a grudge is like being stung to death by one bee.”**

— William H. Walton

When we get hurt, our natural reaction is to either flee the situation or fight back and try to hurt the person who hurt us. Fight or Flight. When the pain is emotional, our fight or flight response turns from the literal to a more figurative reaction.

Whether we choose to fight or flight in the heat of the moment, the prolonged continuation of the response becomes a grudge against the source of the attack. Holding a grudge leads to increasing resentment and, ultimately, an unforgiving attitude.

When we become unforgiving as a trait, the cycle begins anew with the next offense, and the next, and the next. Increasingly minor offenses trigger our natural fight or flight response and grudges come more easily, last longer, and are harder to release.

**If the end result of holding a grudge is so unappealing, why do we do it?**

Everyone wants to be right. We all enjoy the feeling of righteousness that comes with the assurance that our cause is just. When we indulge our own grudges, we create an atmosphere in which our own standing is beyond reproach. Our “enemy” is so thoroughly wrong that we can only be right.

When we hold a grudge, in reality, we are demonizing the offender. The worse we can make her out to be, the better we can position ourselves as the hero. But once again, the high you get from putting someone else down lasts only a short time, followed by a crash that spirals ever deeper into resentment and anger.

The bottom line is that we hold grudges as a means of protecting ourselves, but the actual result is exactly the opposite. We trick ourselves into believing that holding this grudge is righteous retribution for a harm done to us and that we are defending ourselves from pain. But instead we are indulging the pain, letting it take control of our attitudes and actions. Holding a grudge deepens the divide between ourselves and our offenders at precisely the time when we should be moving closer to reconciliation through forgiveness.

***[I recommend Chapter 5 be deleted. - TT]***

# CHAPTER 6:

## HOW DO WE KNOW IT'S TIME TO EMBRACE FORGIVENESS?

**“The day the child realizes that all adults are imperfect, he becomes an adolescent; the day he forgives them, he becomes an adult; the day he forgives himself, he becomes wise.”**

– Alden Nowlan

If you are asking yourself whether or not it is time to forgive someone, then the answer is undoubtedly yes. When your emotions have quelled enough for you to think clearly and question the need to forgive, then the time has come to move forward.

That does not mean that you should necessarily wait until you feel like forgiving someone. That could take a long, long time. You may never feel like forgiving the person who hurt you, but that is not a license to hold a grudge forever.

Your feelings are not to be trusted as the determinant of when to forgive. If anything, your feelings are an obstacle to true forgiveness. It was your feelings that got hurt, your feelings that told you to retreat from that person, and your feelings that are basking in the joys of playing the victim.

If you are still alive and capable of free thought, if your injury was not uniquely heinous in its depth and breadth among all humankind, if you have ever done a wrong to someone else in your life – it is time for you to stop indulging your anger and bitterness. It is time for you to forgive.

### What If You're Not Ready?

There are those who will tell you that you need to “cool off” and let your anger run its course. But do you want to let your anger run you, or do you want to run your anger off? A waiting period before you begin the process of forgiving is tantamount to intentionally putting off the right choice so you can wallow in being the victim for just a little while longer.

It is true that you must be emotionally ready before you can forgive, but do not put the emphasis in the wrong place. Do not wait until the anger has left you before you forgive. Each of us wards off anger by initiating the process of forgiveness in a very personal way and on our own terms. But the process must be begun, the sooner the better. Anger, enticing as it may seem, is not your friend; it is not good for your emotional or physical health in the long run.

This does not mean walking up to the person you are arguing with and apropos yelling out, "I forgive you!" Forgiveness requires a calm demeanor and solid conviction. It also does not happen in an instant. You need to extract yourself from the situation before you can move past it. Pulling yourself away from an altercation may be the first step in your path to forgiveness. As you will see in the following chapters, forgiveness is a process, not a single act.

## Time to Forgive

Long ago it was said, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Another old saying tells us that "There is no time like the present." Both are appropriate in a discussion of when to let go of resentment and embrace forgiveness. None of us know what the future holds. We cannot know what we may lose by holding onto bitterness for one more day. Tomorrow may be too late. One more day may rob us of the opportunity for reconciliation.

**Don't take the chance. Now is the time to embrace forgiveness. The only question is: how?**

# CHAPTER 7:

## HOW DO WE REACH A STATE OF FORGIVENESS?

**“You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well.”**

– Lewis B. Smedes

Forgiveness is not something that can be achieved by simply wishing it. Merely saying that you forgive someone is far from actually doing it. Forgiveness is an art, a discipline, and an attitude.

Since you are reading this book, you are obviously on the right path – you want to forgive. By embracing the precepts taught herein, you will learn the art and achieve the discipline necessary to foster the proper attitude. With time and repetition, you can make forgiveness an innate part of your psychic makeup.

### The 5 Steps to Forgiveness

#### #1 - Acknowledge the Offense

The first step in the process of forgiveness is recognizing that there is an offense that needs to be forgiven. As we will see in a later chapter, ignoring the problem will not make it go away. Resentment will linger if you pretend that the problem does not exist.

#### #2 - Recognize that You Need to Forgive

It is tempting to focus on the other person's need to be forgiven. In truth, you need to forgive as much, if not more, than the other person needs your forgiveness. The anger that you are holding is hurting you more than it hurts anyone else.

#### #3 - Release the Negative

When we refuse to forgive, we invite negative emotions into our lives. When you begin the cleansing process of forgiveness, you must release the negativity – the anger, the hurt, the resentment – that has attached itself to you. Letting go of the hurt and the emotions that go with it is a key element in moving toward happiness through forgiveness.

#### **#4 - Stop the Blame Game**

Forgiveness must be without blame. You cannot reserve the right to blame the other person and still genuinely forgive. That sort of false forgiveness is an open door to lingering resentment. A forgiving heart keeps no record of wrongs committed against it.

#### **#5 - Be Sincere**

Don't try to force forgiveness by going through the right motions and saying the right words. Simply repeating words of forgiveness without meaning doesn't make you forgive someone any more than playing Annie Oakley on stage makes you a sharpshooter. True forgiveness is genuine, sincere, and selfless.

#### **#6 - Move On**

Once you have forgiven, don't look back. Do not linger on the hurt, do not relive the offense, and do not reconsider the blame. Let it go. That is when you have truly reached a state of forgiveness and opened the door to happiness.



# CHAPTER 8:

## WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU CAN'T FORGIVE SOMEONE?

**“Dwelling on the negative simply contributes to its power.”**

- Shirley MacLaine

There will be times when you find it extremely difficult to forgive someone. This happens most commonly when the person who offended you is unrepentant, but it can happen any time that the hurt is still deep and new. When you think you can't forgive someone, you need to pull back and understand why.

Going deep into your own psyche can be frightening. Understanding our own hidden feelings is a scary prospect. But unless you look under the surface, you will not know the real reasons behind your inability to forgive. Without that understanding, your path to happiness is obstructed by a roadblock of bitterness.

### Reasons You Don't Forgive

You may be unable to forgive because you just don't know how. If that's the case, rejoice! By the end of this book, you will know the ins and outs of forgiveness and should be able to forgive those who have caused you pain.

Even those who have studied forgiveness and recognize it as the path to happiness struggle at times. If the person who hurt you is remorseless, or even continues in his or her pattern of behavior toward you, you may very well find it far more difficult to forgive even the minutest offense that is piled on top of the growing mound of hurt.

In such a case, you need to remove yourself from the situation. You cannot always reach harmony with someone who is unwilling to accept it. This does not absolve you or your responsibility to try, but it does mean that you may have to withdraw from the person and forgive them in your heart without continuing your association with her.

## Can't vs. Won't

It is important to recognize the difference between being unable to forgive and being unwilling to forgive. It is all too tempting to cast the other person as a remorseless jerk who doesn't deserve forgiveness. In reality, it may be your own stubbornness or ego that is keeping you from opening your heart to forgiveness. Always remember that if you think you can't forgive someone, you will convince yourself that it's true. Your mind will easily find ways to justify what you've already decided.

Open yourself to the idea of forgiving that difficult person. Visualize a life without the bitterness and anger that clouds your current perspective. You'll be amazed to find that your capacity for forgiveness is far greater than you may have realized.

***[I recommend Chapter 8 be deleted. - TT]***

# CHAPTER 9:

## HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU'VE TRULY FORGIVEN SOMEONE?

**“Sincere forgiveness isn't colored with expectations that the other person apologize or change.**

**Don't worry whether or not they finally understand you. Love them and release them. Life feeds back truth to people in its own way and time.”**

**- Sara Paddison**

Forgiveness is not a magic cure-all. There is a discipline and a process to forgiving. As with most learned disciplines, people often ask, “Am I doing it right?”

There is no obvious physical manifestation of forgiveness, at least not immediately. There are, however, certain key elements that indicate you have earnestly forgiven.

### Restored Relationships

Ideally, forgiveness is met with repentance and any damage to the relationship thereby is restored. If you can honestly look at the relationship that had once been broken and now say that the damage has been completely repaired and the relationship is now back in harmony, you can easily see that you have legitimately forgiven the other person.

But a lack of restoration does not necessarily mean that you have not forgiven the person. Recall that sometimes the offender may be unrepentant or unavailable. It takes two people to restore a fractured relationship, but only one to forgive. Your attitude is not bound by the attitude or actions of the other person. It is quite possible that, while you have forgiven and now seek restoration of the relationship, the other person is unwilling to restore things on his end.

### The Test of Forgiveness

There is a more encompassing way to evaluate whether or not you have truly forgiven someone for an offense. Forgiveness means acting and feeling as if the affront had never even occurred. If you find yourself

continuing to dwell on the incident, or you are resentful or bitter toward the person, then the process of forgiveness is not complete.

If you find yourself in this position, it does not invalidate the steps that you have taken, it simply means that you have not yet arrived at your destination. If you have dealt with the individual and offered your forgiveness, but still feel the pinch of resentment and bitterness, you may just need a little time to properly file away the negative emotions that you had been harboring.

But do not make the mistake of thinking that they will fade away on their own if you do nothing. You must actively pursue forgiveness until you can honestly look upon the person as if the offense had never occurred. Until it is fully integrated, forgiveness is an internally active process, not a passive one.

Ultimately, this is how you can feel assured that you have forgiven someone. Furthermore, you will find that you have free attention to devote elsewhere now that you are free from fixating on your emotional wounds. Lingering bitterness and anger will dissipate, improving your relationships with those around you.

If you were holding on to resentment toward the person, that too should fade quickly away; allowing you to think of her with fondness, and interact harmoniously with her in as much as she will permit.

Regardless of external factors that can influence whether or not the relationship can be fully restored, your attitude toward the other person should reflect that you have honestly and completely forgiven.

# CHAPTER 10:

## WHAT IF THE PERSON YOU'RE FORGIVING DOESN'T CHANGE?

**“If you hate a person, you hate something in him that is part of yourself.”**

- Hermann Hesse

When it comes to forgiveness, you need to focus on what you can control and let go of the things you cannot. An important facet of forgiveness is recognizing that you are not responsible for the other person. You cannot make someone accept your forgiveness. You cannot make him worthy of your forgiveness. You cannot expect to change someone else's behavior by forgiving him.

Many times, forgiving someone will have a profound effect on his behavior. Often, a repentant individual will gratefully accept your forgiveness and earnestly seek to avoid the offending behavior in the future. This is the optimal result, but it is not guaranteed and it is not necessary to your act of forgiveness.

### Toxic Relationships

When the individual in need of your forgiveness is either apathetic or antagonistic toward you after you have forgiven him, it should not in any way negate the fact that you have forgiven the offense. Don't let his attitude alter the choice that you have already made. Remember that when you have truly forgiven, it is as if the offense had never occurred. Allowing the offender's subsequent actions to pull you back into your state of bitterness means that you have not completely forgiven him.

If a person displays a pattern of continued behavior that is toxic to your happiness, you need to consider your relationship with that individual. There comes a point at which it is better to withdraw from an unhealthy relationship. But even when a relationship becomes so toxic that it must be severed you still need to forgive the offender, or else bitterness will follow you long after your interactions with the person have ceased.

## Forgiveness is an Attitude

Ultimately, the other person's behavior after you have forgiven should not be a factor in your attitude toward forgiveness. The Christian Bible tells of a disciple who asked Jesus how many times he should forgive someone. "Up to seven times?" he added, hoping to impress his teacher with his willingness to forgive.

"No, up to seventy times seven times" was the teacher's response. The point was not to force the poor, uneducated fisherman to do the mental math. The point was, and remains, that forgiveness needs to be an attitude ingrained within us, an attitude that is not limited by rules or doctrines.

Forgive easily and move on. Let the offender worry about his actions. You focus on what you can control.

# CHAPTER 11:

## WHAT IF YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEEDS FORGIVENESS?

**“Much unhappiness results from our inability to remember the nice things that happen to us.”**

– W. N. Rieger

What if you are on the other side of the equation? No matter how you try, you will play the role of the offender at some point. What can you do when you are the one who needs to be forgiven?

The answer is staggeringly simple. Yet it has somehow become a lost art in contemporary culture. If you need forgiveness, you should ask for it.

Asking for forgiveness is not the same as saying, “I’m sorry.” Asking for forgiveness should incorporate the term directly, as in, “I know that I hurt you. Will you please forgive me?” Or the even more powerful, “I was wrong. Will you please forgive me?”

This simple phrase is amazingly effective at cutting through layers of bitterness and resentment. It is difficult for a reasonable person to reject such an overture, considering how infrequently forgiveness is actually requested.

The person may very well be left slightly shocked at the request. But the shock almost invariably turns to a genuine and heartfelt forgiveness. If you put this into practice, you will find that merely asking for it is a practical shortcut to receiving true forgiveness.

If you are the one who needs to be forgiven, you cannot demand forgiveness, nor can you ask with the expectation that you are going through a formality.

The sincerity of your request is what will move the other person to the point of forgiveness. A wounded person can see through insincerity quite efficiently. An insincere request will be more likely to cause further resentment and distrust.

If you make a practice of asking for forgiveness when you need it, others will notice and appreciate your attitude. Your relationships will improve. You may even lay the groundwork to make it easier for you to forgive a person at a later date, if he learns from your example the power of asking for forgiveness.

If you really ingrain this trait as a part of your personal make-up, it will be that much easier for you to achieve a more encompassing attitude of forgiveness in general.



# CHAPTER 12:

## BREAKING FREE OF THE CHAINS OF THE PAST

**“Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future.”**

– Paul Boese

The hurtful things in our past can follow us around for years, even decades, haunting us like a ghost of pain past. It is extremely important to our overall state of happiness that we break free of the chains that bind us to past mistakes, failures, and injuries.

If we dwell on the past, we do not have the free attention that we need to manifest our dreams for the future. There are three main types of hurt in our past: self-inflicted, conscious, and forgotten.

### Self-inflicted Hurt

Self-inflicted hurt is pain stemming from our own mistakes and failures in the past. It is not the mistakes or failures themselves that actually cause the pain, it is our inability to forgive ourselves for those mistakes and failures. If you are haunted by something that you did wrong in the past, whether intentionally or unintentionally, you need to forgive yourself.

You cannot change the past. What you did or did not do last year, last month, last week – it does not determine who you are now or what you can achieve in the future. Recognize that the past is beyond your control and let go of your self-loathing and anger.

### Conscious Hurt

Conscious hurt refers to the pain that we carry around knowingly. A conscious hurt is right out on the surface, either due to its recentness or severity. Someone hurt you in the past and you are angry. It may be a decades-old grudge or a recent slight, but it is a consuming flame of bitterness.

These conscious hurts are the easiest to identify. In fact, they take up so much of your free attention that they often border on obsession. The solution, of course, is forgiveness. A single injury is multiplied a thousand times over if we dwell on it for years.

## Forgotten Hurts

Forgotten hurts are difficult to diagnose and remedy. Sometimes, an incident will profoundly impact you more than you consciously recognize. The incident itself may become lost in time, but the negative impact persists. This is particularly prevalent in emotional injuries stemming from childhood trauma.

An unfocused resentment or an undirected anger may be signs of a forgotten hurt. In these cases, it is more difficult to forgive because we don't really understand what we are forgiving. We may not even entirely grasp who we are forgiving. When the hurt is forgotten, forgiveness can take the form of a more general release, letting go of the bitterness and embracing happiness.

# CHAPTER 13:

## BREAKING FREE FROM RESENTMENT WITH FORGIVENESS

"Anger makes you smaller, while forgiveness forces you to grow beyond what you were."

- Cherie Carter-Scott

Resentment is a common emotion, though commonly misunderstood. We may not always be able to control our other emotions, but we at least understand anger, love, despair and the rest. Resentment is an emotion that we often feel without fully recognizing it for what it is, or even being able to properly put a name to it.

### What is Resentment?

Before we can deal with resentment, we need to understand what it is and how it affects us. Resentment is a feeling of displeasure or indignation that stems from an incident, real or perceived, that is hurtful. When you resent someone it will color all your future interactions, no matter how trivial, with that person.

Resentment can be open or concealed, immediate or delayed.

Sometimes resentment sits right on the surface. You may resent a coworker who gets ahead by taking undo credit for your work. You may resent a friend's patronizing attitude toward your hobby or maybe your ex's new beau. There is no end to the number of issues, large and small, that have fired a sense of resentment in people.

Resentment can sneak up on even the best of us. It is how we handle it that matters – how and how soon. The longer we let resentment linger, the more powerful it becomes. The key to handling resentment is to deal with it thoroughly and quickly. This allows you to forgive more easily.

## The Cure for Resentment

The cure for resentment, as with many other negative emotions, is forgiveness. The only way to get past resenting someone for something is to forgive that person for that very thing. As devastating as resentment is, if it is open and on the surface, it is usually relatively easy to correct once the resent-er acknowledges his need to forgive and deal honestly with the resent-ee.

Hidden or unrecognized resentment is a thornier issue. Resentment can be a subtle but devastating obstacle on the road to happiness and self-fulfillment. Unlike outright anger or contempt, resentment can linger in our thoughts and on our hearts without us realizing that it is there.

Because it is harder to spot, some people will harbor deep resentment toward others without any conscious knowledge that there is a problem. But when a situation becomes tense, those old resentments find their way to the surface, impeding resolution and fueling the fires of conflict.

If left unchecked, resentment can linger after the situation is seemingly resolved. Often resentment will still fester long after apologies are exchanged and all is superficially forgiven. This concealed resentment poses a real danger to our happiness.

The first step to releasing the negative emotion and moving toward happiness is recognizing that there is a problem. There are three common signs of concealed resentment: distrust, questioning motives, and bitterness.

Someone holding on to resentment will often demonstrate an unfounded distrust and suspicion of the other person, sometimes without consciously realizing it. It may be in matters completely unrelated to the initial incident.

## A Real World Example

Say two teenagers, Janie and Susie, have a conflict over who misplaced Susie's favorite hairbrush. They may make up. They may apologize. They may appear to move on completely.

But if Susie holds on to her resentment, believing deep down that Janie really did take her hairbrush, that resentment may boil over into other matters altogether. She may hold Janie accountable for more than her fair share of their homework project; she may think Janie is making

advances on Susie's boyfriend. Resentment often spills over into completely unrelated things in just this fashion.

If there is a lingering resentment, it could show up in any interaction between the two, even if it is completely unrelated to the original issue. In fact, many times it is more likely to come up elsewhere because Susie feels secretly ashamed for still resenting Janie after they made up.

## **Fixed Attention**

Another common sign of unsettled resentment is an unusual level of attention to the other person's motives in mundane actions. This is really a manifestation of projecting one's own feelings of displeasure onto the other person. Going back to the previous example of Susie and Janie, Susie may think that Janie is suddenly acting "fake". Susie finds herself questioning if Janie really meant it when she said she liked her earrings, or the real reason that Janie offered to drive them to the mall.

The motive behind the other person's actions becomes more and more suspect as time goes on. Soon, the offender is simply assumed to be duplicitous in everything. Resentment like this can ruin a relationship quickly if it is not dealt with properly.

## **Signs of Bitterness**

The third sign is simply a certain sourness or bitterness that shows itself whenever the other person is around, though it may not necessarily be overtly directed at that person. Many times resentment couples with the previously mentioned sense of shame when a person knows that they should not feel that way.

The result can be an unfocused, unproductive sense of bitterness every time the other person is around. Because the bitterness has become detached from the real issue that sparked the resentment, it has no real focus and we tend to lash out at anyone in the vicinity.

This presents a great danger to our happiness because it affects not only our already troubled relationship, but our other relationships as well. This can begin a downward spiral, or domino effect, that works its way through the resentful person's entire life.

Resentment does not always focus on a person. We can resent a pet, a company, a religion, even our own bodies. In order to get past the

feeling of resentment we need to look at the root cause of our resentment.

Do I really resent the dog, or do I resent my wife for buying the dog without consulting me? Is it the church, or the gossipy neighbor who goes attends services there? Not always, but usually, there is a person on the other end of our resentment, a person who needs our forgiveness just as much as we need to forgive them.

# AFTERWORD

## TRUE FORGIVENESS IS YOUR CHOICE

Forgiveness is the cure for anger, bitterness, resentment, and depression. The key is that in order for the healing catharsis to take effect, you must truly and sincerely forgive your offender. Mere lip service, repeating the words of forgiveness like some sort of mantra will do nothing but add an additional layer of guilt and disappointment on top of your anger and bitterness.

True forgiveness has little to do with words. Forgiveness is what is known as a "heart attitude". Heart attitudes are internal attitudes that radiate outward to external expressions. It is the attitude, not the expression of it, which heals a bitter and troubled soul.

Although many people feel a sense of closure in forgiving a person face to face, it isn't always necessary or possible. While offering your forgiveness to the offender is usually the ideal, you could truly forgive someone in your heart even if you never saw or spoke to that person again. The other person's disposition or attitude toward you does not dictate your ability to forgive. It is your heart; it is your choice.

There is no instant karma in this world. You cannot expect all ill feelings to flee your mind and an immediate sense of peace to wash over you upon forgiving someone. Though it may not happen in that moment, it will come. The bitterness in your soul that stems from the hurt will go away. It will. Truly, it won't even take very long. Very soon after you stop clinging to the anger, it will stop clinging to you.

Remember that no one else can take your happiness away from you. No matter how circumstances may buffet you, no matter what anyone else does to you; happiness, like forgiveness, is a choice.

If you make a conscious decision to choose to forgive, the choice to be happy will follow easily.

# YOUR NEXT STEPS

## SELF-ACTIVATE FORGIVENESS WITH SUBLIMINAL HEALING INVOCATIONS

### Don't Waste Another Day of Your Life – Enjoy Life Again!

Because Forgiveness is not an intellectual exercise – and you may understand now better what it is – you may still express the wish for a simple solution to get the process started. Intensive research on this topic shows that a certain form of music combined with strong word invocations can tremendously speed up the process.

From this research, we have developed a special audio CD, which will instantly help you to transform any negative emotions into free attention. And from there you can simply make a choice of how you want to feel again.

*The Choice of Forgiveness* mini course on CD contains subliminal sessions to help you master the art of forgiveness by consciously choosing to forgive.

*The Choice of Forgiveness* will teach you how the more free attention you have the more empowered you are, and the more power you can exert on daily life.

### Why It Works – Scientifically Proven Technology

The forgiveness phrases are spoken in the left and the right channels simultaneously. This binaural technology is the most effective way to disengage the conscious mind from analyzing the words themselves and letting the subconscious mind absorb 100 percent of their impact.

Listen to your session once per day when you can relax and tune out the outside world. Usually after just one session you will begin to release past negative experiences and feel released with a flush of positive feelings.

The soothing and gentle background music was especially created to help you get in touch with deeper feelings. There is nothing you need to do – simply listen and relax and the process will instantly begin to work for you.



The CD also contains a thorough introduction – using the power of forgiveness to release your past, free your attention, and move on with your life. This will prepare your mind for the following in-depth sessions. The introduction gives you profound insights into why forgiveness is so essential for a fulfilled life.

THE CHOICE OF  
**FORGIVENESS**  
HEAL YOUR HEART, FREE YOUR ATTENTION AND MOVE ON

POWERFUL SUBLIMINAL SESSIONS TO HELP YOU MASTER THE ART  
OF FORGIVENESS AND INTEGRATE IT INTO YOUR DAILY LIFE

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SUBLIMINAL  
AUDIO CD

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Production: 08.40  
- Female voice: 25.06  
2 - Male voice: 25.04  
Finish: 0.28

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**Please check it out by clicking here**

<http://www.dreammanifesto.com/forgiveness>

Founder & CEO, Dream Manifesto

# TESTIMONIALS

“Wow! That was a deep experience. While listening to the Forgiveness CD I had several deep insights into how I lock myself up and hold back because of my anger toward people in my life.”

*[Need attribute -TT]*

“The music helped my feelings become more accessible and the phrases went into my heart. What idea that forgiveness is beneficial to me and is a skill to develop. a powerful

– Warren Birnbaum, Portland, OR

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“If you are looking to find forgiveness in your life, go no further. This powerful subliminal CD will take you straight to a place of peace and acceptance. A very high quality product. Fantastic job - highly recommended!”

– Karl Moore, Durham, UK

“Remarkable! This CD is the best thing I have ever bought for myself in my life. Only if I could find the word for the depth of gratitude I feel toward Dream Manifesto.”

*[Need attribute -TT]*

“Yes, I am amazed at how this CD helps me release my core issues effortlessly and quickly. It directly dissolves my true cause. And it feels so liberating to be able to exercise my will power more and more and gain a sense of ownership of my life.”

*[Need attribute -TT]*

“I feel lighter and feel blessed to finally move forward. In short I feel so much happier. This CD is priceless. May you be victorious!”

– Wendy Chai, Union City 94587, CA

*[NOTE: The Testimonial section needs to have standardized formatting applied that matches, or is similar to, the earlier quotes found throughout the body; this includes the name of the person who is quoted (attribute), quotation marks around the quote itself, <br/> between any two quotes, etc. - TT]*