

FORGIVENESS IS CONFUSED WITH HEALING THE PAST

You are hurt badly. Do you forgive? Is that the answer? Or do you move on?

Moving on is not about the person who hurt you at all. It is about the situation and trying to stop it hurting you any more. It is self-centred. Forgiving is about the person who hurt you. It is offering mercy and good to them. It is a different focus entirely.

Moving on is moving away from the person who hurt you and forgiving is, in your heart at least, moving close to that person.

You can move on without forgiving. Ceasing to care about the person who hurt you is the total opposite of what forgiveness is about. That accentuates how the two can - not be related but co-exist as two separate things - but are not the same. You can have one without the other.

Somebody said, "Forgiveness does not heal the wounds or wipe away the misery ... forgiving him has allowed me to burst the chains that bound me to him and prevented me from living." Forgiving is a painful choice to be made as often as the hurt returns. The notion that forgiveness is about getting rid of pain is tripe. In fact that is not forgiveness. It is warped how religious people promise hurt people they will feel better if they forgive for the love of God. That is just cynical manipulation and offering fake forgiveness which often backfires and feeds hypocrisy.

We are commanded by Jesus and advised by therapists to forgive for its best way to avoid the agony of a festering grudge which is alleged to be a way of letting the bad person continue to hurt you. The person may not be bad now but that is not the point. The problem is about when they were. We all sense something suspect about this "forgiveness". We see that it is not moving on but self-protection. Thus it is not forgiveness except in name. It is passive aggressive to refuse to see that the grudge is your creation not theirs. You judge your pain as being their fault and as them continuing to hurt you. No wonder it keeps festering. It is nonsense. You are the one using the grudge to trap and hurt yourself. You blame them. The forgiveness you instil in yourself is not forgiveness but denial and lies and hypocrisy. If you get the chance to hurt the person without anybody knowing you will soon see how far from forgiving them you really are and always have been. You will take the chance with relish.

Religion claims you must forgive and love the sinner but hate the sin.

It calls itself good because of that teaching. But it is aware that some people have to feel a murderous hatred for the evil person before they can start moving on. That takes the sheen off. That shows the hypocrisy.

It also lies that moving on from the pain is the same thing as forgiveness. It is not.

The God of the Bible at 2 Samuel 12 refutes the idea of forgiveness being about comfort and avoiding hurting yourself over what somebody did to you. It says David was forgiven but because of his sin his repentance could not stop his child dying. God told him he would forgive but take the child's life over David's sin.

Christian: What is evil is often serious when it happens. But once it is done it ceases to be serious. Forgiveness and "emotional healing of past hurts" involves letting go of the past. It is freeing yourself from the bad things that people did to you. What they did cannot hurt you anymore. But you keep hurting yourself over it if you do not forgive. You do not hurt them by failing to forgive. You hurt yourself. When you do not forgive, when you do not move on, you are pronouncing and affirming the past to be more powerful than the present. This is totally incorrect. The present brings the opportunity to decide to let go and accept healing or at least work towards being healed. We must take the opportunity to forgive.

Atheist: Inability to forgive or to accept "emotional healing of past hurts" is caused by your desire to be right. For many people, the desire is so strong that it is actually a need. They cannot survive if they abandon their grudges. Remember, what is right is that you should be happy and at peace. That is the being right that matters not winning an argument.

Those who do what we call wrong are not all wrong. There is a lot of right and good even in acts that we call evil. If we see that we will be unable to hate them. Hate is very harmful to those who hate.

The Christians are confusing forgiving with emotional wellbeing. Forgiving would be refusing to hurt somebody even if you feel hate for them. It is an act of the will.

Forgiving is not the same as healing yourself of the anger and hurt. We want people to feel good about us so forgiving is not

going to achieve that at all.

"Emotional healing of past hurts" makes you able to enjoy your life and frees you from the desire to see another suffer for having done some wrong. It is an indicator of healthy self-esteem.

Neglecting to accept the healing of wounded emotions, does not hurt the non-forgiven person at all. It only hurts you. If somebody says they are upset because we have not let go of the hurt they caused us they are not making sense. What they could say is that they let themselves feel upset. It is an excuse to be upset for we are not the cause of how they feel. They are.

This is not being harsh. It is not helpful to tell people that they don't have the ability to accept "emotional healing of past hurts" . That is encouraging them to put up with their pain.

Suppose someone hurts you. The faster you can deal with it the better. If something is eating at you for long enough, it will grow wings. Time feeds it and its destructive power.

Start with wanting emotional healing of past hurts so that you may be free. Act as if you have made great progress and the healing will be magnified. Don't force it. Just let it happen. The healing starts from that moment on.

When you learn to overcome the hurts you feel, you make yourself feel more secure in life. Our worst fear is not somebody hitting us or getting us sacked from our job or making us unhappy if we marry them. It is how we will feel about what they did. If we can let the hurt go and heal ourselves we will be free.

We must not heal our hurts because we are thought to be bad people if we don't. That is fear. The result will be a short-term sense of well-being. You have to heal yourself out of self-love not fear.

Thinking of yourself as bad never helps. Thinking of yourself as somebody that can turn mistakes into good is better.

Marcus Aurelius said that every day we will meet the people who live lives that poison the lives and wellbeing of others. The solution is to respond in such a way that they will see the attractiveness and wisdom of goodness. This is what they need to see so that it will help them. It will always speak to them even if they seem not to be taking it in. The solution is most effective if we make the decision to harbour no bad feeling towards them in advance. This does not mean that you assume that the so-called bad people you meet will be bad today but that you are prepared for it if they will be.

Forgiveness is less important than "emotional healing of past hurts". The "emotional healing of past hurts" is one of the greatest acts of self-worship you can make and it makes you a saviour in the world. Forgiveness is the cornerstone of Christianity because that faith teaches that it is what God wants that matters not us. Emotional recovery from the hurt done to us in the past is about us and our neighbour not God. God is only a distraction from the issues.

People generally have a tendency to nurse grudges. They find forgiving and especially accepting the healing of the past difficult. This is humankind's greatest flaw. Religion makes it worse by creating unnecessary rules about right and wrong such as don't receive communion in a state of sin and so on. There is enough to forgive without somebody making up additional so-called wrongs and creating strange taboos. Religion also tries to exaggerate human wrongdoing by accusing wrongdoers of insulting such a good god and of deserving Hell. Religion puts barriers in the road to forgiveness and healing from past hurts. Be liberal. Be understanding.

Heal Your Past Hurts Forever

Not forgiving people can do damage to you. But feeling hurt and anger and hate will do even worse. They can persist as you forgive. For your own sake, learn to deal with those feelings and everlasting healing will be yours.

Do not try to move forward with the person who hurt you. Just see how mistaken it is not to and it will happen. Don't try it - just let it!

The four steps to healing of ill-feeling are these:

1. You need to understand the hurt you have caused as much as possible. You cannot say you are sorry or ask forgiveness if you don't understand why and how the other person is hurting. If you do, then you only imagine you are sorry or are ready to ask for forgiveness. If you apologise, then it is a front.

2. Accept that you caused the hurt even if it were unintentional. You have to admit you were wrong. You do not use excuses. If you have to explain why did you what you did try and make sure they are only stated for clarification and not to excuse yourself.

3. Ask, not for forgiveness but for the chance to move forward, that means you want the relationship restored.

4. Decide that you will no longer punish yourself either.

Remember as well that hurts have to be healed even if they were not inflicted in malice. To apologise for hurting somebody does not mean you admit you did wrong. Sometimes you have to admit it. But only admit it if it is true.

Some say it helps not to think of forgiveness as ceasing to judge somebody. They say what you must forgive is the experience of pain and suffering and not the person who caused it. But that is really trying to cope by ignoring the person's role. It will be dangerous.

Many Christians like to gossip and slander and hit their partners and defraud the state and the tax man because they feel that God will forgive them. Playing up because God will forgive is actually in violation of the humanist principle that religious faith or belief is never an excuse for feeling good about hurting others or not caring enough. If faith is to be endorsed, it can only be endorsed when it is about people and serving people. Faith must leave God out or it is bad.

Forgiveness is often facilitated as a form of therapy for the person who is consumed in anger and hurt (Baskin & Enright, 2004; Wade et al., 2014). But if you make it chiefly or solely about yourself that is not forgiveness. What about the person you are forgiving? The fact is that "forgiveness" does help even when it is divorced from any big concern for the person who has caused your anger and pain. Religion thrives on this fake forgiveness but it ends up self-righteous and arrogant for it is not about others or the person who did you wrong.