

Why It's Difficult to Forgive

When someone we love and trusted has treated us with disdain the last thing on our minds at first is forgiveness. Our dreams have been shattered and we usually become angry and want revenge. Forgiveness isn't on the horizon.

If you're infused with anger and resentment toward another person, your thoughts are likely full of negative or blaming another. You may also have guilt for how you contributed to the situation or think that forgiving is only for the weak – and you never want to forget the transgression so it will never happen again.

Being judgmental is also a reason why it's so hard to forgive another. If you perceive the other person as not appreciating you or all you've done for them or the love and trust you've put in the relationship, it becomes even more difficult. You're so disappointed by the other's behavior that you refuse to accept what happened and put it in the past.

It's important to remember that forgiveness doesn't automatically let the person off the hook for what they've done. Even if they apologize or make reparations for the transgression, you may think they need to continue paying by being non-forgiving and casting them out of your life for good.

You can make the choice to forgive and still not reconcile or accept what they've done. But, when your harshness of judging begins to permeate your own life and make you bitter and resentful, forgiveness can be a gift that you give yourself so you can pick up the pieces and go on in a healthy manner.

Think of a time when you needed forgiveness for something you thoughtlessly did that hurt another person. How did you feel about how the other person reacted to the transgression? What would have made you understand the action you perpetrated better and help you see how hurtful it was?

Chances are, you reacted to the anger of the other person by making up excuses that it wasn't really your fault. But, if that same person forgave you in a calm manner, it's more likely you were better to see the error of your ways and sincerely apologize to the other person.

Resentment and anger can imprison you for the rest of your life and impede your ability to form other relationships. When you forgive (without condoning) you'll be able to walk away from the prison and let go of the pain that had you locked in to negative feelings and thoughts.

Forgiveness isn't something that suddenly washes over you when you least expect it. Instead, forgiveness is a process that must be worked through, beginning with a commitment to let nothing stand in your way.