
Forgiveness & Health

by G.A. Pettit

Unforgiveness, which often occurs as a result of having been hurt, humiliated, angered, or having suffered fear or loss, feelings of guilt, or envy, can have profound affects on the way your body functions.

Physically the body responds as it does to stress. Muscles tighten, causing imbalances or pain in your neck, back and limbs. Blood flow to the joint surfaces is decreased, making it more difficult for the blood to remove wastes from the tissues and reducing the supply of oxygen and nutrients to the cells. Normal processes of repair and recovery from injury or arthritis are impaired. Clenching of the jaws contributes to problems with teeth and jaw

joints. Headaches are probable. Chronic pain may be worsened.

The list goes on: blood flow to the heart is constricted. Digestion is impaired. Breathing is restricted. The immune system functions less well,

increasing vulnerability to infections and perhaps malignancy. Injuries and accidents through inattention are more likely.

The effects on relationships are just as plain: the stony silences, the rows, the violent physical or psychological abuse between adults, and from adults to children, the decreased productivity in the workplace. This list, too, could be extended. It represents dis-ease at all system levels, in the body, in the nation and indeed in humanity itself.

The common denominator is a block of the flow of love. Forgiveness is the key to restoring or maintaining health.

The forgiveness process is simply *the cancellation of all the conditions in the mind that are blocking the flow of love and life energy, independently of the behavior of others.*

This is a summary of the steps in the forgiveness process:

- Identify the people or incidents in your life that you need to forgive. Select one person at a time and apply the process to each in turn. Usually the primary love relationships with parents are the most important to work on first.
- Become aware that deep down you value health, freedom from negativity, love, creativity, dignity, and joy *more than* disease, holding on to resentment, joylessness, etc. Rigorously search out the negative beliefs that formed in your mind - conclusions that you came to at the time of emotional pain, but which now act against you. These include negative beliefs about yourself, the other person(s), relationships, life, sex, money, etc.
- Identify and express the values that were trespassed upon at the time. Despite the trauma, values can often be paradoxically strengthened at the time of the hurt to become a source of dignity and power.
- Stop demanding that the other person meet your preferences as a condition for you to practice unconditional love and goodwill towards them and yourself. This opens up the connections to your true Self. You also give back responsibility (not blame) to the person being forgiven for the effects of what happened or is happening. You are choosing not to take responsibility and punishment in your body for the wrong they did.

It is from here that you draw down the living energies of love into yourself, physically (to heal the body), emotionally (healing each memory in turn), and mentally (changing the negative beliefs that arose at the time of the painful incidents).

Giving unconditional love to the forgiven one causes a definite shift in the energy or qualities of love and goodwill.

Visualize how you will think and behave in this and other relationships in the future, as you now act with goodwill, free of the old beliefs and

conditioning. Continue to apply the process progressively in all areas of your life.

The inspiration for this work came from Dr. Edith Stauffer, author of the book Unconditional Love and Forgiveness, who brought the material to Australasia, Korea, Japan, Europe, and North America. Dr. Stauffer offers training for forgiveness teachers: Box 279, Ojai, CA 93024-0279.

Dr. Guy Pettit, of Whole Life Endeavors, New Zealand, has been teaching and working with individuals on the application of the forgiveness processes in New Zealand, Australia, Lithuania, Russia, Sweden, Holland, US, and England. He offers "Health, Joy, Love and Forgiveness" seminars. You can reach him at: 81, Cambria St., Nelson, New Zealand. tel. 64-3-548-4400.
