

Forgiveness

Forgiveness means different things to different people. Generally, however, it involves a decision to let go of resentment and thoughts of revenge.

The act that hurt or offended you might always be with you, but forgiveness can lessen its grip on you and help free you from the control of the person who harmed you. Forgiveness can even lead to feelings of understanding, empathy and compassion for the one who hurt you.

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or excusing the harm done to you or making up with the person who caused the harm. Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that helps you go on with life.

What are the benefits of forgiving someone?

Letting go of grudges and bitterness can make way for improved health and peace of mind. Forgiveness can lead to:

- Healthier relationships
- Improved mental health
- Less anxiety, stress and hostility
- Lower blood pressure
- Fewer symptoms of depression
- A stronger immune system
- Improved heart health
- Improved self-esteem

How do I reach a state of forgiveness?

Forgiveness is a commitment to a personalized process of change. To move from suffering to forgiveness, you might:

- Recognize the value of forgiveness and how it can improve your life
- Identify what needs healing and who needs to be forgiven and for what
- Consider joining a support group or seeing a counsellor
- Acknowledge your emotions about the harm done to you and how they affect your behaviour, and work to release them
- Choose to forgive the person who's offended you
- Move away from your role as victim and release the control and power the offending person and situation have had in your life

As you let go of grudges, you'll no longer define your life by how you've been hurt. You might even find compassion and understanding.

The **Forgiveness Therapy** worksheet, begins with education, and then dedicating a page to each of the four phases of forgiveness (uncovering, decision, work, and deepening). This worksheet is not intended to be completed in one go, but as the person enters each phase, or as review for each phase.

Resources:

Forgiveness: Information Sheet

Acceptance and Forgiveness Worksheet

12 Steps to Forgiveness

What is forgiveness and how do you do it?

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/inviting-monkey-tea/201803/what-is-forgiveness-and-how-do-you-do-it>

How to forgive someone

<https://au.reachout.com/articles/how-to-forgive-someone>