

The forgiveness process

‘Forgiveness is setting a prisoner free. The surprise is, once you have forgiven, you discover that the real prisoner who has been freed is yourself’

Steps to Forgiveness

Part One: Thinking and feeling about the situation/ the person you need to forgive

- Acknowledge how hurt you are. Forgiveness is NOT condoning the wrong behaviour. Forgiveness is NOT forgetting about it. Forgiveness is NOT denial, pretending it didn't happen. Forgiveness does NOT mean the pain has gone away.
- Get in touch with your own humanity and frailty. Think of times in your own life when your wrong actions have hurt others. We also owe a debt we can't pay
- Remember how much you have been forgiven.
- If possible, gain some understanding of the other person.

Part Two: The decision

- Decide you will bear the burden of the person's wrongdoing. Whatever has happened is causing you tremendous pain, that's the burden. Decide you will face that pain, rather than attempting to escape from it
- Remember that doing good sometimes includes confrontation. Doing good is not tolerating injustice.
- Be sure to accept your part of the blame for the offenses you suffered, where applicable.
- Make a decision to forgive. May want to be really specific, and may also want to write it down. I forgive... ..for.....which has made me feel...

Part Three: Letting go

- A process.- recommitting, faithfully, to your decision.
- Let God hold the future
- Do not expect that your decision to forgive will result in major changes in the other person.
- Expect positive results of forgiveness in you.
- It sets you free from the past.
- It significantly reduces vulnerability to physical and mental illness in you.

‘Forgive, as the Lord has forgiven you’ Colossians 3: 13