

FORGIVINGNESS
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Christianity is a movement of forgiveness. Jesus was the proclaimer of God's forgiveness for humanity. Based on his teaching, the church was established and has continued to herald the good news of forgiveness. When asked about the uniqueness of Christianity on the Duke campus, Houston Smith, an eminent scholar of world religions, replied that the Christian emphasizes *forgiveness* as the way of God and that no other faith places forgiving as the focal point of God's attributes and the central requirement of its discipleship.¹

According to William Klassen, a New Testament scholar, forgiveness is a pervasive motif in the Bible. In the Hebrew Bible, forgiveness is chiefly an action of God toward an Israel that breaches the covenant relationship. Contrary to the common view, the Hebrew Bible gives more explicit attention to forgiveness than the New Testament. The New Testament depicts Jesus as the one who brings God's grace to forgive sins down to earth and leaves it there in the church, the forgiving community.²

Recently the topic of forgiveness has emerged as a major theme of research in the fields of psychology and sociology. These studies highlight "forgiveness" from the perspectives of physical health and mental health. Their discoveries are informative and helpful for the Christian understanding of forgiveness.

Most people experience forgiveness often. "Forgiveness is the way to set yourself free" to get on with life," says psychologist Bernie Zilbergeld, "People have to understand that holding a grudge is one of the most self-destructive things you can do. If you want to have a happy life, you have to move on and let go."³

Forgiveness is very close to our daily life. To forgive or to be forgiven is very important for everyone in the dramas of life, yet it is difficult to be at ease with either of them. Forgiveness is the "gift you give yourself," says Bonnie Weil." If you don't forgive a grudge, there is a part of you that dies inside. You lose your optimism, your enthusiasm, your zest for life."⁴ The purpose of this lecture is to delve into the meaning of forgiving from the viewpoint of the sinned-against.

The New Testament teaches the offended to forgive the offender, based on God's unconditional forgiveness toward him or her. The noteworthy point is that human forgiveness is closely connected with divine forgiveness. While the Hebrew Bible emphasizes divine forgiveness, the New Testament focuses on human forgiveness built on divine forgiveness--the unlimited forgivingness of the offended for the offender in line with God's unconditional forgivingness.⁵

The Content of Forgiveness

In her book *The Fall to Violence*, Marjorie Suchocki interprets forgiveness as willing the well-being of an offender instead of having ill-will toward him or her. It is not a once-for-all event, but a time-spent event. Although forgiveness does not require feelings of love or acceptance, it can make room for warm feelings or acceptance for both the victim and the violator. The foundation of transformation is to forgive.⁶

Pastoral counselor John Patton shifts our concern from the definition of forgiveness to the perspective of forgiveness. He recounts forgiveness not as something we do, but something we discover. To forgive our injurer, we need to discover ourselves in the injurer: "I am like him or her."⁷

Some injured persons use forgiveness as the power to wield defensively. Authentic forgiveness is an act of surrendering one's own power to forgive rather than holding on to the power. He warns the injured of any attitude of superiority to the injurer. In the humble process of forgiveness, the injured can overcome the pain of rejection.

Ernest Kurtz and Katherine Ketcham in *The Spirituality of Imperfection* define forgiveness as letting go of the feeling of resentment and of the seeing of self-as-victim. It is the readiness to accept one's own accountability instead of blaming his or her problems on someone else and start cleaning oneself up. Then forgiveness and healing, not only by God but even of God, can take place. One cannot, however, generate forgiveness by himself or herself, since it is a gift (*for-give-ness*).⁸

The Phases of Forgiving

Both pastoral theologians and psychotherapists have described the phases of forgiveness. While psychotherapists commonly stress the healing of the injured, pastoral theologians generally extend their interest to the reconciliation between the injured and the injurer. It is natural that psychotherapists focus on the well-being of their clients and that theologians are more concerned about the biblical principles of reconciliation beyond forgiveness.

Beverly Flanigan wrote *Forgiving the Unforgivable* for those who want to transcend deep and unforgivable injuries. To her, forgiveness is a journey. It requires a process--picking a place to go, outlining an itinerary, and packing the luggage and setting off. She suggests six steps toward a journey of healing our injury:

1. Naming the injury—to admit our woundedness, to construct the meaning of the wound, and to talk to others to validate our feelings.
2. Claiming the injury—to give up the struggle to fight off the changes that will result from

- the unforgivable injury
3. Blaming the injurer—to identify the injurer whom we must forgive
 4. Balancing the scales—to see all the methods of balancing the scales—punishing, loading the scales,⁹ mock punishment
 5. Choosing to forgive—to choose to release the injurer from debt and move forward
 6. the emergence of a new self—to become more relaxed, less defensive and brittle¹⁰

This journey is a rational process, a self-conversion, and a reconceptualization of our belief system.¹¹ A profoundly personal journey is forgiving.

Recent research shows that forgiveness boosts people's self-esteem and lowers their blood pressure and heart rate. Forgiveness also helps people sleep better at night and increases a positive change in their attitude. "Forgiveness is an intellectual decision you make to give up your anger and feelings of revenge," said Dr. Richard Fitzgibbons, a psychiatrist. He offered several tips on how to forgive:

1. Admit your anger.
2. Decide to forgive.
3. Do no harm. Do not act negatively against the person who hurt you.
4. Consider the source. It may help you to forgive if you understand the background of the offender that could explain his or her behavior.
5. Put yourself in the other person's shoes. Empathize.
Consider what was going on in the offender's life when he or she hurt you.
6. Give yourself some time.¹²

This forgiveness is a rational decision based on practicality and experience. These processes of forgiveness take weeks, months, and sometimes years to get over anger and bitterness.

The Stanford University Forgiveness Project, one of the largest and most noted studies on forgiveness ever conducted, shows that gaining knowledge of how to forgive improves our

emotional and physical health. Dr. Fred Luskin, the cofounder and director of the Stanford University Forgiveness Project, suggests nine steps to forgiveness in his book *Forgive for Good*.¹³

1. Understand how you feel about what happened, and be able to articulate what about the situation is not okay. Then tell a couple of trusted persons about your experience.
2. Make a commitment to yourself to do something that will make you feel better.
3. Know your goal. Forgiveness does not necessarily signify reconciling with the person who upset you or condoning their action.
4. Obtain the right perspective on what is happening. See your primary distress as coming from the hurt feelings, thoughts, and physical upset you are suffering now, not what offended you or hurt you two minutes—or ten years—ago.
5. At the moment you feel upset, practice the Positive Emotion Refocusing Technique (PERT)¹⁴ to ease your body's flight-or-fight response.
6. Stop expecting things from other people, or life, that they do not choose to give you. Acknowledge the unenforceable rules you have for your health or how you or other people must behave.
7. Pour your energy into looking for another way to get your positive goals met than through the experience that has hurt you.
8. Bear in mind that a life well lived is your best revenge.
9. Alter your grievance story to remind yourself of the heroic choice to forgive.¹⁵

So far we have dealt with psychological approaches to forgiveness. The approach below is Lewis Smedes' position. He is a theologian who has devoted his energy to advancing the Christian concept of forgiveness. His approach is different from the psychological because he includes the dimension of reconciliation. His six steps for forgiveness are:

1. *Forgiveness is a redemptive response to having been wronged and wounded.* This is simple but important. Only those who have wronged and wounded us are candidates for forgiveness.
2. *Forgiveness requires three basic actions.* First, we surrender our right to get even. When we forgive, therefore, we place the outcome of the matter in God's hands and often choose to live with the scales unbalanced. Second, we rediscover the humanity of our wrongdoer. When we forgive, we rediscover that the person who wronged us is a complex, weak, confused, fragile person, not all that different from us. And third, we wish our wrongdoer well. We not only surrender our right to revenge against him or her; we desire good things to happen to him or her. We bless him or her.
3. *Forgiving takes time.* God can forgive in a single breath. But we need time.
4. *Forgiving does not require forgetting.* Does God not remember that Peter denied his teacher?

But we can refuse to let a harmful incident control our lives. We can detoxify the memory; we can purge its poison from our souls.

5. *Ideally, forgiving leads to reconciliation.* But we often have to put up with less than the ideal. Sometimes the forgiven person will not want to be reunited with us. Forgiving happens in our hearts. There *can be* no reunion without forgiving, but there can be forgiving without reunion.

6. *Forgiving comes naturally to the forgiven.* Nothing enables us to forgive like knowing in our hearts that we have been forgiven. This is probably why Jesus taught us to pray: "Forgive us our debts, [but only] as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12).¹⁶

Notice that Lewis Smedes' steps incorporate reconciliation while psychotherapists do not mention it. A Christian approach mandates a full cycle of restoring forgiveness. Another point is that Christian forgiveness counts heavily on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that makes the wounded able to forgive.

Conscious and Unconscious Forgivingness

Forgiveness is a free discretion to allow room for error, sin, or failing. This means that we keep the good images of offenders intact, separating sins or mistakes from their personalities. If we truly forgive offenders, we do not attack their personalities but focus on issues. We respect them as persons but deal with the issues of sins, injustice, or mistakes.

Forgiving at a conscious level is one thing, and forgiving at an unconscious level is another. Our rational decision to forgive may provide peace of mind for a while, but it may be helplessly trapped in the unconsciousness of unforgiving as its vortex whirls. How can we forgive the offender at the unconscious level? To do that, we need to change our images of the offender. The world of unconsciousness is governed by images, feeling, or intuition while the world of consciousness is ruled by words or reason. Images or feelings touch our unconscious mind while reason deals with

the conscious mind. By bringing up redeemed and fresh images of the offender, we can finally forgive him or her at a deeper level. As we often forget most incidents in detail, but remember our feeling toward these incidents, our unconscious portion lasts longer. Although we say that we have forgiven our offender, we may feel negatively towards him or her. Subsequently, whenever we are going to meet him or her, we try to avoid seeing him or her. This is not full forgiving. To forgive our offender more fully, we need to change our images of him or her from bad, negative, or damned to good, positive, and redeemed. When we change our images of him or her, our unpleasant feeling toward him or her fades away, we can relate to him or her pleasantly again. Thus, it is necessary to forgive others at the levels of both feeling and image, if we want to forgive them fully.

Internal and external Forgivingness

One of the urgent issues is when and how we forgive our offenders. Do we forgive them before or after they ask for forgiveness? Some argue that we should forgive our offenders immediately while others contend that we should not forgive them unless they change their wrongs and ask us to forgive them. In response to the issue, it is necessary to develop two phases of forgiveness: internal and external.

Internal Forgivingness: An Intrapersonal Dimension

Joram Graf Haber argues that we should not forgive offenders unless they repent.¹⁷ Otherwise, forgiveness betrays a lack of self-respect in the absence of repentance.

My position differs from his. The offended needs to internally forgive the offender as soon as possible. But the offended does not have to declare his or her forgiving until the offender repents of his or her wrong. The offended has the task to work toward the repentance of the offender.

Internal forgiveness is to forgive our offenders or enemies before they ask for it. This type of forgiveness is agreeable with theological and psychosomatic practices. Theologically, as God has forgiven us, we forgive them unconditionally. Jesus forgave his own killers before they asked his forgiveness: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Lk 23:34).

Peter asked Jesus how many times we should forgive the offender: "As many as seven times?" The Jewish tradition stipulated that the offended should forgive the offender three times. Peter was very generous in suggesting seven times. Jesus, however, said to him "Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times" (Mt 18:21-22). This means forgiveness beyond reckoning. It is Jesus' mandate that the forgiven (Mt 18:23-35) ought to forgive the offender.

Psychosomatically, the sinned-against suffer the agonies of anger and resentment as long as they brood over them inside. Kathleen Lawler, a psychologist at the University of Tennessee, traced the blood pressure and heart rate of victims as they discussed being betrayed by a friend, lover or parent. To her surprise, burying the hatchet seemed to ease strain on the heart, but blood pressure shot up for all participants when interviews started. One noticeable fact was that the levels of blood pressure for those who had forgiven soon returned to normal while the readings of the unforgiving stayed high. "Carrying around resentment can take a physical toll," says Lawler.¹⁸

Regarding a time line for forgiveness, the sooner the better. However, we cannot force anybody including ourselves to forgive offenders prematurely. In other words, before forgiving them, we need to sort out issues and work through our hearts and souls. This form of forgiveness involves an internal process.

There are several steps in forgivingness: brokenness with sorrow and grief, joy in God's

providence, the courage to envision a fresh image, and actions toward the fresh image.

1. Sorrow and Grief

The wounded cannot easily forget their deep pain and grief. Forgiveness involves an angry and sorrowful period. According to the nature of the offences, some people undergo this phase for a long time; others for a short time. It is necessary for the wounded to express sorrows or wail over their tragic events of injustice and evil. In the parable of the lost son (Lk 15:11-31), the father grieved over the son who went away and longed to see his son return (Lk 15:20). It is the courage to acknowledge our wound and pain. The process of forgiveness starts when we take the courage to put ourselves in a vulnerable position by acknowledging our wound and weakness and undergo sorrow and grief over it. This spirit of grieving over it opens the process of healing by transcending its own helplessness.

2. A Willingness to let go

Forgiveness means to let go our woundedness. However, we know how difficult it is to let go of our sorrow and anger. Some psychologists suggest that we let go through breathing deeply in and out from the belly to relax and to visualize a time when we felt cared for and loved.¹⁹ This is a wonderful way to deal with our hurt. However, a more fundamental way to let go of our woundedness is to be connected to God. When prayer, meditation, and contemplation link us to God, who knows our depths, we can let our woundedness go. God also gives us the strength to envision something positive about our offenders beyond letting the hurt go.

Willfulness is different from willingness. Willfulness is an uncontrolled state of the will,

whereas willingness is a controlled state of the will.²⁰ With the former, people seek to take revenge, while with the latter, they let go of someone's offence. Anger is "only useful for getting attention," says psychiatrist Frank. "It is not very helpful in healing. Deciding that the relationship is more important than the anger is a crucial step," he says. It is easy for the betrayed "to fall in love with their anger," Pittman continues, "to let it become a way of life." More helpful, he says, is "to figure out what you might have done to contribute to the betrayal and correct it. It is up to the person who has been betrayed to hold the relationship together while the betrayer gets sane and gets honest."²¹ By letting go of our holding on to a painful event of an offence, we experience the energy that heals our body, mind, and spirit. Forgivingness enables us not to dwell on the pain of shame, but transcend it for good.

Forgiving others is forgiving ourselves. Retaliating against others is injuring ourselves again. Only by releasing the power of controlling our own forgivingness do we become free from its dungeon. Forgivingness is our own forgiven-ness. Without forgiving our offenders, we become the captives of the destructive force. We need to forgive others seven times seventy. Otherwise, we never learn how to forgive ourselves. In this sense, forgivingness is not our choice, but a must. Every unforgiving moment is the time of damaging our cells and ourselves. This does not mean that our forgivingness is cheap and easy. On the contrary, it is costly. The father in the parable of the lost son could not hold on to his frustration and anger too long, and let go the son and his bitterness.

3. A Redeemed Fresh Image

Even after the son left home for a far country, the father did not give up on him. He did not disown him but waited for his son to come home. He never gave himself up to despair or the bad image of a lost son, but clung to the good image of his son who would return to him.

We have a tendency to demonize or dehumanize our offenders when we are injured. By separating persons from their sins or errors, we need to focus on sins or wrongs while affirming their personalities. All sinners deserve human dignity and respect. Forgiving our injurers means finding scared, vulnerable, fragile, confounded, and struggling human beings--like ourselves--in them. We need to restore their humanity in our thinking and remember that God redeems them, too.

When we forgive others, we must not hold on to bad images of them, but we need to restore the original good images of them. Most sinners suffer from bad self-images, but the forgiving need to refuse to internalize the denigrating self-images of the offenders. A forgiving heart foresees the redeemed, good, and accountable image of the offenders, while not forgetting their past.²³ With forgiveness, we keep our hope for offenders. In other words, we give up on the feeling of resentment against them and portray them with constructive and changed images. To forgive means to work on our resenting (re-sent) what the offenders have done and to stop regurgitating it. It is the courage to transcend the hurtful images of the injurers and to envision their new images.

As a parent, I have experienced the power of the positive and negative images of my young sons, when they do wrong. When I forgive them, I have to face up two areas of negative images: one is mine, the second my children's. On the one hand, when I see their wrong behaviors, I can easily conjure up negative images of them: "Here he goes again. What's wrong with him?" Against this, I try to keep up with fair images of my children in spite of their shortcomings. Those good images "in spite of" negative acts are redeemed images. On the other, before I judge them, they judge themselves: "You don't have to tell me. I know I am a bad boy." When I say something about their inappropriate behavior, I need to remind them of the fact that they are my great sons. Forgiveness involves a good image of the wrongdoer. As long as my sons perceive of my good images of them, they can take my challenging words at their wrongs without conjuring up bad self-images and try to

live up to my good images of them. Forgiving is to keep renewed images of the offender.

Here is another feature of Christian forgivingness. A Christian approach to forgivingness presupposes the forgivingness of God and our debt to God in the distribution of forgiveness. Its essence is to regard the offender as redeemable.

External Forgivingness: An Interpersonal Dimension

So far, we have discussed the forgivingness that happens inside the injured. This internal forgivingness can be done whether the injurer asks for forgiveness or not. From here on, the injured needs to be engaged with the injurer in a relational act of forgiveness, which can be called “external forgivingness.”

If the injurer recompenses his or her wrong and asks for forgivingness, this is ideal. If the injurer asks no forgivingness, the injured need not forgive externally for the sake of him or her. Only when the injured cares about the injurer, will he or she challenge the offender to repent of his or her sin. If the injured forgives without the injurer’s asking, that is like offering a dinner to a person who just had one.

External forgiveness is to pronounce forgivingness to the offender who asks for forgivingness. This external forgiveness leads to reconciliation.²⁴ When the offended and the offender come to settle their discord through forgiveness, they begin to reconcile with each other. Ideally, the offender is supposed to seek reconciliation with the offended. If the offender has no intention of seeking forgiveness, the offended needs to initiate the process of external forgiveness with the offender through resistance.

There are several steps to take in the course of resistance. Let us briefly review them.

First, the offended has to challenge the offender to admit his or her wrong. This is the stage of confrontation.

Second, the offended has to guide the offender to repent of his or her wrong. Repentance brings both parties back to neutral ground and prepares a full relationship again.

Third, the offended needs to engage the offender to recompense whatever damage he or she has done to the offended. Without repentance and recompense on the part of the offender, apology is cheap and forgiveness is empty. Dietrich Bonhoeffer calls forgiveness without repentance “cheap grace.” Forgiveness proper transpires after recompense.

Fourth, external forgiveness restores a mutual relationship again. Forgiveness alone cannot bring reconciliation. While forgiveness is entirely within the power of the victim, reconciliation can happen only if both parties agree to restore their relationship. Reconciliation makes the offender a family member, a friend, or a community member again.²⁵ As time goes by, the offended will resume a good feeling toward the offender. In its ripe state, reconciliation may reconstruct a relationship beyond the state of the previous level.

In the parable of the lost son, when the son returned home, the father has the compassionate heart to embrace and kiss him. A forgiving heart does not condemn returning sinners, but accepts them as they are. A forgiving heart restores the dignity of the sinner. The father did not treat the lost son as one of his servants although his son asked for it, but restored him to his precious status again. The son in turn truly respects and loves his father. Reconciling means restoring the offender to his or her dignified state and solidifies the relationship between them again.

If possible, we should aim for reconciliation, but the world we are in is not perfect. So we sometimes settle with a lesser ideal— external forgiveness. The offended or the offender may pursue their relationship to the point of forgiveness, no more. Either may desire to relate to the other no further beyond forgiveness. That desire should be respected. After forgiveness, they can go their own ways. The Christian way of forgiveness, however, does not stop there, but compels us to

reconcile with the opponent on the basis of the love of enemy. Even treating unrepentant sinners as gentiles or tax collectors is not to abandon them or to let them be ruined, but to gain them back to a Christian community by distancing them from our community temporally. True forgivingness is not to overlook the wrongdoing of offenders, but challenge them to change their ways and encourage them to rectify and recompense what they have damaged. In this sense, the internal forgivingness is interwoven with the external one. They are inseparable for a Christian.

When we forgive our offenders, we let them be as they are, and expect and help them to be what they can be through self-transformation in their own pace. It is not easy to help our offenders, for they hardly ask our help. However, patiently waiting for their change in prayer can be our true help for them.

Collective Forgiving

Can a group forgive another group? Does an individual victim have a right to forgive the group that victimized his or her group? Can an individual forgive an institution that injured his or her group? Can a victimized institution forgive another institution that victimizes it? These difficult questions beg us for answers, difficult as they are.

A group can forgive another, if the group of the injurer asks for the forgiveness of the injured group and compensates for its wrong. Donald Shriver in his *An Ethic for Enemies* provides rich insights on this topic.²⁶ Japanese Americans were unjustly interned during World War II. In response to the demands for redress for the losses and damage suffered by the evacuees during the war, the U.S. government in 1988 officially apologized for the internments and passed legislation (H.R. 442) offering partial monetary compensation to the approximately 60,000 surviving Japanese-Americans who had been interned. In October 1990 President George Bush

sent a letter of formal apology with a \$20,000 check to each survivor.²⁷ To this action, Japanese-Americans have responded with gladness and forgiveness. Grace Uyehara, president of the Japanese American Citizens League, saluted H.R. 442 with the following words: “Their votes show that civil rights violations are taken seriously, and that amends go beyond mere apology. . . H.R. 442 affects all Americans.”²⁸

Unlike the Japanese-American case, the apology of Germans to the Holocaust victims has not been accepted by the victims. Although the Germans have made public apology, large monetary restitution to individual Jewish survivors, to the nation of Israel, and to other non-Jewish victims of German aggression, the Jewish victims have not been able to forgive them yet, probably because of the magnitude of their han-ridden heartbreak. It takes time to resolve a deep han.

There are, however, many individual Jewish survivors who forgave Germany long ago. Frank H. Boehm, MD shared his father's conviction, a Nazi survivor: “He spoke of a need not to forgive those Germans who were responsible for the unbelievable crime against nature, but rather for a need to forgive the Germany that had evolved into a civilized nation and now lived within its borders.”³⁵ The new Germany that Dr. Boehm’s father depicted embodied the essence of forgiveness. Collective forgiveness is to invoke a fresh image of the corporate agent of injurers and treat its members with dignity.

An individual victim does not have a right to forgive the group of offenders or an institution in the name of his or her group. He or she has, however, an individual right to forgive the offenders or the institution. The question of whether one institution can forgive another is answered by Reinhold Niebuhr. For Niebuhr love was between persons, but justice is between institutions. The forgiveness between institutions is possible only when the institution of the offender restores justice.

Conclusion

In the life of the church, forgiveness is pivotal. The forgiveness of God, the theme of the Bible, has been the matrix of historical church movements including the Reformation. As the earthly agency of Jesus Christ and God, the church has been identified as the forgiving community--the community to proclaim the forgiveness of God and to foster forgiveness for one another. Thus, it is crucial for the church to lay down specific ways of how people forgive offenders without lowering in their own estimations and offenders'.

“The stupid neither forgive nor forget; the naïve forgive and forget; the wise forgive but do not forget.” Thomas Szasz

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¹ William H. Willimon, “Our Kind of Crowd,” in *Reflections on Forgiveness and Spiritual Growth*, ed. Andrew Weaver and Monica Furlong (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), p. 85.

² William Klassen, *The Forgiving Community*, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966).

³ Karen S. Peterson, “Victim of Betrayal Must Learn How To Forgive,” *USA Today* (18 August 1998), n.p.

⁴ Ibid. Gary S. Shogren, "Forgiveness," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Logos Library System, 1997. :

6. Marjorie Suchocki, *The Fall to Violence: Original Sin in Relational Theology* (New York: Continuum, 1994), pp. 146

7. Ibid.

7. John Patton, *Is Human Forgiveness Possible?: A Pastoral Care Perspective* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), p.184.

⁸ Ernest Kurtz and Katherine Ketcham, *The Spirituality of Imperfection: Modern Wisdom from Classic Stories* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), pp. 213-229.

⁹ Punishment is not retaliation. Withholding resources is the most common form of punishment. Loading the scales means that when your resources are taken, you must purposely replace them so that it is your own accomplishments that give you a sense of personal power. Forgivers should join support groups, start new relationships, perhaps find a new or renewed enthusiasm for a job, make new friends, and reacquaint themselves with their own strengths.

Whichever way it is done, by deriving new advantages from the injury itself you are no longer at the mercy of someone else's will. The creation of opportunity takes work, but the payoffs in self-esteem and restored balance are enormous.

10. Beverly Flanigan, *Forgiving the Unforgivable* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), pp. 69-170.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹² Richard Fitzgibbons "Forgiveness Boosts Health And Self-Esteem, Research Shows," *Jet*, 6 (11 January 1999): 39.

¹³ Fred Luskin, *Forgive for Good: A Proven Prescription for Health and Happiness* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002).

¹⁴ PERT has three steps. First is to dust off our remote control so we can find what is playing on our beauty, gratitude, love, and forgiveness channels. Second is to practice the Breath of Thanks a couple of times every day. The Breath of Thanks is a breathing exercise of saying "thank you" ten times. Third is to set aside about an hour each week to practice the Heart Focus. The Heart Focus is a breathing exercise of focusing on reexperiencing peaceful and loving feelings. Beauty channel means to awaken ourselves to the beauty of our surroundings. Gratitude channel is to find grateful elements around us. Love channel is to look for people who are in love, smile at their bliss, and become a more loving person. Forgiving channel is to discover people's stories of forgiveness (Luskin, *Forgive for Good*, pp. 114-119).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 211-212.

¹⁶ Lewis Smedes, "Keys to Forgiving," *Christianity Today*, 15 (3 December 2001): 73. These words are directly from the article, but I abbreviated them and added inclusive terms to them.

¹⁷ Joram Haber, *Forgiveness*, (Savage, MD : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1991).

¹⁸ Kathleen Lawler, "Forgive to Live" *Health* 6 (Jul/Aug2000): 28.

¹⁹ Karen S. Peterson, "Victim of Betrayal Must Learn How To Forgive," n.p.

²⁰ Scott Peck, *Further Along the Road Less Traveled: Blame and Forgiveness*, audio (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992).

²¹ *Ibid.*

²³ Andrew Sung Park, *Racial Conflict and Healing: An Asian-American Theological Perspective* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996), p. 186.

²⁴ Some modern Protestant theologians have questioned whether forgiveness has any different existence from reconciliation, or even whether it is a discrete aspect of a process. Both Barth and Tillich decline to give it the status of an independent event. See Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV, 2nd ed. trans. G. F. Bromley and T. F. Torrence, (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1975), pp. 500-502; Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1957), II: 177 and (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1963), III: 226-227.

²⁵ Elliot N. Dorff, "The Elements of Forgiveness: A Jewish Approach, in *Dimensions of Forgiveness: Psychological Research & Theological Perspectives*, ed. Everett L. Worthington, Jr. (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 1988), p. 35.

²⁶ Donald Shriver, *An Ethic For Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

²⁸ *New York Times*, "letters," (6 October 1987), quoted in *An Ethic for Enemies*, p. 166.

29. Frank H. Boehm, "Forgiveness: Another Kind of Medicine," in <http://dr-boehm.com/Forgiveness.htm>, (October 1997): Dr. Boehm is a professor of OB/GYN and Director of OB at Vanderbilt Medical Center in Nashville