**Motivational Minutes on Forgiveness from 2015**

1. **What Good Does Forgiving Do?**

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**Quote of the day:**

“My idea of forgiveness is letting go of resentment, ridding yourself of negative thoughts. All they do is make you miserable. Believe me, you can fret and fume all you want, but whoever it was that wronged you is not suffering from your anguish whatsoever.” — Della Reese

**Reflection:**

What good does forgiving do? When you forgive someone, it's no longer about the other person; a change takes place in you--something happens in the depths of your soul. The feelings of anger and resentment that corrode and eat away at your heart are replaced with feelings of relief. When you forgive someone, your heart is cleansed and you receive peace.

Forgiveness is a chance to do the right thing, regardless of what's been done to you. When you forgive you are saying, “I let it go. I no longer want it to be part of my life. I no longer want this to affect me. I truly forgive this person for what they have done. It's over.” Once you've done this, the hurt in your heart will begin to heal even if the other person isn't sorry and everything isn't perfectly resolved.

Stop making yourself miserable by letting go of resentment and negative thoughts--forgive.

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**2. Forgiveness Myths**

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**Quote of the day:**

"Forgiveness is the fragrance that the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it.” — Mark Twain

**Reflection:**

Here are five myths about forgiveness. See if any of them are stopping you from forgiving.

**Myth #1. It isn't really that important.** The cost of not forgiving someone is greater than most of us realize. It is a significant drain on our energy to carry bitterness around. And not only do we end up infecting ourselves with our own hurt and anger, but we can poison those around us as well.

**Myth #2. If we forgive, we are condoning someone's bad behavior.** This is a misperception. Forgiveness does not imply that you agree with or accept the behavior. To forgive is actually recognition of human frailty.

**Myth #3. We insist that the time is never right to forgive the person.** Actually, there's never a good time not to forgive.

**Myth #4. It's not okay to ask for an apology.** So often people wait, hoping that one day an apology will magically appear. In most cases, people don't even realize that they have offended you so how would they think of apologizing? It is up to you to let someone know when they've hurt you and ask for an apology. If an apology is not enough for you, go ahead and ask them to make amends.

**Myth #5. You can't forgive someone unless they apologize.** Wrong again. The real key to forgiveness is realizing that you can do it regardless of what the other person says or does or doesn’t do. The forgiveness isn't so much for them as it is for you. We can't control what others do. We can only control ourselves.

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1. **Are You Hurting Yourself?**

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Quote of the day:

“Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one getting burned.” — Buddha

Consider:

To go along with this great quote here is an old fable:

*A rodent which tried to gnaw at a nail file gnawed and gnawed and gnawed, until the pile of filings began to grow. He was overjoyed until he discovered that something was terribly wrong. The pile of filings were the remains of his own teeth and not the file. All his gnawing had no effect on the file. He ended up just hurting himself.*

So is it when we allow ourselves not to forgive.

Are you hurting yourself? Is there someone you need to forgive?

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1. Don’t Give It One More Second of Your Life



**Quote of the day:**

"Forgiveness doesn’t mean the damage never existed. It means the damage no longer controls our lives.” – Author unknown

**Reflection:**

I think this is a beautiful story on forgiveness.

*A woman in Florida was raped, shot in the head by her attacker and left for dead. She survived, but she was blind and mutilated. She later appeared on a television talk show. The interviewer remarked, "You must have a lot of resentment and hatred toward the man who did this!" She replied, "No, I gave that man one night of my life, and I'm not going to give him a second more!"*

Of course, you can cling to your grudge if you want to. But when you do, you use your strength for this day making yourself and the people around you feel miserable and guilty. Or, you can cut the line to what is behind you through the power of forgiveness and use your strength to pull you toward what lies ahead.

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**5. Yom Kipper**

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Quote of the day:

"He that cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must pass himself; for every man has need to be forgiven.” — Thomas Fuller

Reflection:

Among people of the Jewish faith, the holiest day of the year is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. It's a day set aside for prayer and fasting while people account for their sins and seek reconciliation with God. According to tradition, a person who sincerely repents on this day will be forgiven by God. But there's another part to this great day of healing. It involves being forgiven by those who have been offended. This can't happen until the offending person goes to the one who has been hurt and speaks healing words.

Wouldn't it be nice if there was a National Day of Atonement, regardless of one’s faith, in which everyone made the effort to try and heal our broken relationships? Why wait for that? We can turn any day we want into a day to make amends. We already have the words, “Please forgive me and I forgive you.” We just need to say them.

Is this your day of atonement?

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1. **Retaliation or Resolution**

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**Quote of the day:**

“We are most like beasts when we kill. We are most like men when we judge. We are most like God when we forgive.” — Chuck Swindoll

**Reflection:**

Whenever we are hurt by someone, we have a choice to make: Will you use your energy and emotions for retaliation or for resolution? You can't do both.

Many people are reluctant to show mercy because they don't understand the difference between trust and forgiveness. Forgiveness is letting go of the past. Trust has to do with future behavior. Forgiveness must be immediate, whether or not a person asks for it. Trust must be rebuilt over time. Trust requires a track record. If someone hurts you repeatedly, you are to forgive them instantly, but you are not expected to trust them immediately, and you are not expected to continue allowing them to hurt you. They must prove they have changed over time.

The bottom line is you don’t have to trust someone to forgive them. Is there someone you need to separate the trust issue from the forgiveness issue?