

**FORGIVENESS AND COMPASSION**

*Always a Struggle; Always Worth It*

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# DEFINITIONS

THE FLY IN THE BOTTLE

## WE GET HUNG UP ON WORDS

- **FORGIVENESS CAN MEAN DIFFERENT THINGS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS.**
- **WE DO NOT HAVE TO USE ONLY ONE DEFINITION**
- **BUT WE WILL FEEL DIFFERENTLY ABOUT THIS ISSUE IF WE ARE CLEAR ON WHAT WE MEAN BY OUR WORDS.**

## STANFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PHILOSOPHY

- **“GENERALLY REGARDED AS A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO HUMAN WRONGDOING, FORGIVENESS IS A CONCEPTUALLY, PSYCHOLOGICALLY, AND MORALLY COMPLEX PHENOMENON. THERE IS DISAGREEMENT OVER THE MEANING OF FORGIVENESS, ITS RELATION TO APPARENT COGNATES, THE PSYCHOLOGICAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND NORMATIVE DIMENSIONS OF FORGIVENESS, AND WHEN AND UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS FORGIVENESS IS MORALLY PERMISSIBLE, REQUIRED, OR WRONG. MOREOVER, THE MANY LEGAL AND POLITICAL ANALOGUES TO FORGIVENESS RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT HUMAN BEHAVIORS MAY BE PROPERLY DESCRIBED AS FORGIVENESS.”**

# FORGIVENESS

- TO DRAW A LINE THROUGH TIME AND DECIDE THAT WHAT IS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT LINE WILL NO LONGER AFFECT BEHAVIOR
- WE CAN'T "FORGIVE AND FORGET."
- WE CAN DECIDE NOT TO LET A PAST WRONG CHANGE HOW WE BEHAVE IN THE FUTURE.
- WE USUALLY CAN'T CHANGE HOW WE FEEL.

# FORGIVENESS IS BEHAVIOR

- IT IS A DECISION TO ACT AS IF SOMETHING THAT HAS HAPPENED, HAD NOT.
- FEELINGS FOLLOW BEHAVIOR. IF YOU WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE NO LONGER ANGRY TO “FORGIVE” YOU WILL NEVER GET THERE.
- IF YOU WANT TO FORGIVE, BEHAVE AS IF YOU HAVE AND YOUR FEELINGS WILL GRADUALLY CHANGE.

## TWO FORMS OF FORGIVENESS

- **UNILATERAL - IT IS ALWAYS BETTER TO FORGIVE EVEN IF THERE IS NO REMORSE EXPRESSED BY THE OTHER PARTY OR PARTIES.**
- **CONDITIONAL - FORGIVENESS IS A TWO-WAY STREET THAT REQUIRES CHANGE ON THE PART OF THE OTHER PARTY OR PARTIES.**

# EITHER FORM IS GOOD

- WHILE THE GENERAL SCIENTIFIC CONSENSUS IS THAT IT IS USUALLY BETTER FOR ONE'S OWN MENTAL, SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH TO FORGIVE A WRONGDOING PERSON, THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT THAT IT BE UNILATERAL.
- SOME THINGS CAN'T, AND SHOULDN'T, BE FORGIVEN. PARDON AND COMPASSION ARE ALL THAT MAY BE POSSIBLE.

# WHY NOT FORGIVE?

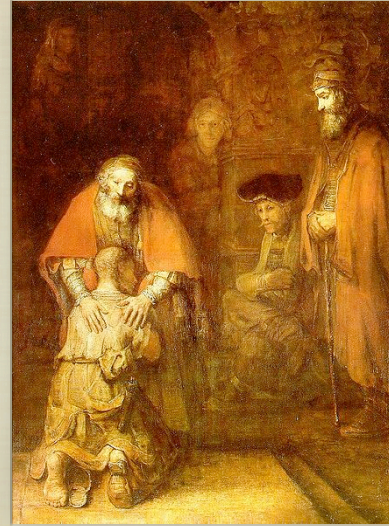
- **FORGIVENESS IS BEHAVIOR. IT MEANS ACTING AS IF SOME WRONG THAT WAS DONE HAD NOT BEEN DONE.**
- **THAT MAY BE UNWISE IF THE OTHER PARTY WOULD JUST USE IT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE ANOTHER SHOT AT YOU.**
- **IN SUCH CASES, COMPASSION, NOT FORGIVENESS IS THE RIGHT CHOICE.**

# UNILATERAL FORGIVENESS

- **FORGIVENESS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE PERPETRATOR. IF YOU WAIT UNTIL REMORSE IS EXPRESSED, YOU MAY WAIT FOREVER.**
- **IT IS BETTER TO UNILATERALLY FORGIVE SOMEONE, EVEN IN THE ABSENCE OF REMORSE, IN ORDER TO FREE YOURSELF FROM THE HARM YOUR ANGER WILL DO TO YOU.**

# UNILATERAL FORGIVENESS

- A TYPICAL RELIGIOUS AND PRAGMATIC APPROACH
- DOES NOT REQUIRE THE PERPETRATOR TO DO ANYTHING.



# QUOTES

- **“ANGER IS AN ACID THAT CAN DO MORE HARM TO THE VESSEL IN WHICH IT IS STORED THAN TO ANYTHING ON WHICH IT IS Poured.” --MARK TWAIN**
- **“RESENTMENT IS LIKE A GLASS OF POISON THAT A MAN DRINKS; THEN HE SITS DOWN AND WAITS FOR HIS ENEMY TO DIE.” --NELSON MANDELA**

# CONDITIONAL FORGIVENESS

- REQUIRES AT A MINIMUM:
  - 1. GIVING UP OF REVENGE BY THE VICTIM, AND
  - 2. ASSUMPTION OF RESPONSIBILITY BY THE PERPETRATOR.



WHY FORGIVE?

# TWO BASIC ANSWERS

- **BECAUSE A SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY REQUIRES IT, AND SO MY FORGIVENESS IS AN ACT OF FIDELITY TO MY SPIRITUAL PATH.**
- **BECAUSE I RECOGNIZE THAT NOT FORGIVING HARMS ME IN THE LONG RUN AND I CHOOSE NOT TO LET THE PAIN OF PAST DETERMINE MY PATH TO THE FUTURE.**

# AFFECTS YOUR HEALTH

- **DR. ROBERT ENRIGHT FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON FOUNDED THE INTERNATIONAL FORGIVENESS INSTITUTE.**
- **PEOPLE WHO DO NOT FORGIVE CAN BECOME NEUROTIC, ANGRY AND HOSTILE.**
- **PEOPLE WHO DO FORGIVE HAVE BETTER CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH AND BETTER NERVOUS SYSTEMS.**
- **PEOPLE WHO DO NOT FORGIVE REPORT A FAR GREATER RANGE OF HEALTH PROBLEMS.**

# FRED LUSKIN

- **STANFORD UNIVERSITY FORGIVENESS PROJECT**
  - **THE ABILITY TO FORGIVE CAN BE TAUGHT.**
- **THREE STUDIES ON FAMILIES OF CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANTS THAT EXPERIENCED POLITICAL VIOLENCE**
- **WHEN TAUGHT FORGIVENESS REPORTED LOWER SCORES ON ANGER AND RAGE, HIGHER OPTIMISM AND COMPASSION AND IMPROVED OBJECTIVE MEASURES OF STRESS.**

# ALWAYS?

- SHOULD PEOPLE ALWAYS FORGIVE EACH OTHER?
- THE PSYCHOLOGICAL/PRAGMATIC VIEW SUGGESTS THAT IT IS IN OUR BEST INTEREST TO ALWAYS DO THIS.
- I DISAGREE

# FORGIVE TOO EASILY?

- **“I THINK THE 20TH CENTURY SAW SUCH A LEVEL OF ATROCITY THAT IT HAS FOCUSED OUR MINDS VERY, VERY HARD ON THE DANGERS OF FORGIVING TOO EASILY ... BECAUSE IF FORGIVENESS IS EASY IT IS AS IF THE SUFFERING DOESN'T REALLY MATTER'...IT'S NOT FAIR TO EXPECT VICTIMS OF ABUSE, RAPE OR TORTURE TO TURN THE OTHER CHEEK WITH EASE.” - ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, 2011**

# UNFORGIVABLE THINGS

- TORTURE OF ANIMALS
- LIES UNDER OATH
- DELIBERATE PSYCHOLOGICAL, PHYSICAL,  
EMOTIONAL OR VERBAL ABUSE.

# PEOPLE OF THE LIE

■ M. SCOTT PECK, M.D.

■ THE NARCISSISTIC DESTRUCTIVE PERSONALITY

# NOT AN OBLIGATION

- NO ONE SHOULD EVER BE COERCED INTO FORGIVING. IT SHOULD HAPPEN ONLY WHEN SOMEONE DECIDES THEY WANT IT TO.
- DEMANDING SOMEONE FORGIVE ONLY RE-VICTIMIZES THAT PERSON.
- FORGIVENESS IS NOT AN ALL-OR-NOTHING GAME. WE CAN CHOOSE TO FORGIVE SOME PEOPLE AND NOT OTHERS.

# NO ONE IS REQUIRED

- WE MAY CHOOSE TO FORGIVE, OR NOT, DEPENDING ON WHAT WE THINK IS RIGHT FOR US.
- MOST AUTHORITIES WILL ADD THAT YOU WILL PROBABLY BE HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER IF YOU DO, BUT IT IS NOT AN OBLIGATION, JUST ADVICE.
- IF WE CHOOSE TO FORGIVE, WE MAY CHOOSE TO FORGIVE UNILATERALLY OR CONDITIONALLY. EITHER MAY BE APPROPRIATE.

# SUMMARY

- **FORGIVENESS IS A DECISION MADE BY SOMEONE WHO HAS SUFFERED EMOTIONAL PAIN.**
- **IF CONDITIONAL, WE REQUIRE SOME RESPONSIBILITY TO BE ASSUMED BY THE OTHER PARTY.**
- **IF UNILATERAL, WE RELEASE OUR NEGATIVE ENERGY IN ORDER TO PROTECT OURSELVES.**

# NO ONE IS REQUIRED

- NO ONE IS REQUIRED TO FORGIVE ANOTHER. IT IS A GIFT FROM ONE PERSON TO ANOTHER THAT ONLY THE SUFFERING PARTY IS QUALIFIED TO GIVE.
- IT IS PERMISSIBLE TO SET CONDITIONS.
- THERE IS A “FALL-BACK” POSITION IF FORGIVENESS ISN’T POSSIBLE OR APPROPRIATE. THIS IS COMPASSION.



TIPS

## TIP #1 - FRAMES

# FRAMES OF REFERENCE

- HOW DO PEOPLE MAKE THEIR CHOICES? THEY USE FRAMES.
- A FRAME IS A BUNCH OF ANECDOTES AND EXPERIENCES WE REMEMBER THAT HELP US EVALUATE OUR OPTIONS.

# INCREDIBLY INDIVIDUAL

- WHAT I WAS TAUGHT IN CHURCH OR SCHOOL.
- WHAT MY PARENTS SAID.
- WHAT MY FRIENDS SAID.
- WHAT MY SIXTH GRADE TEACHER (WHO I ADORED) SAID V. WHAT MY SEVENTH GRADE TEACHER (WHO I HATED) SAID.
- WHAT MY FAVORITE TV SHOW SAYS (FOX V. MSNBC) ...

# CHANGING THE FRAME

- SPIN DOCTORING BY PR PROFESSIONALS
- ADVERTISING
- PREACHING
- PSYCHOTHERAPY (RE-FRAMING)
- SOCIAL PERSUASION/PEER GROUP CHANGE...

# CHOICE ARCHITECTURE

- THE SCIENCE OF DESIGNING SITUATIONS TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO PREFER ONE OPTION OVER ANOTHER, OR A SET OF OPTIONS OVER ANOTHER SET OF OPTIONS.
- MOST PEOPLE MAKE CHOICES UNCONSCIOUSLY. THAT IS, THEY START MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF ONE OPTION BEFORE THEY CAN EXPLAIN WHY.
- PEOPLE CHOOSE ON THE BASIS OF A FRAME AND THEN USE THEIR REASONING ABILITY TO EXPLAIN WHY THAT CHOICE WAS APPROPRIATE.

# UNCONSCIOUS POWER

- YOU DO FAR MORE UNCONSCIOUSLY THAN YOU ARE AWARE. MUCH OF WHAT YOU DO IS DECIDED BY PROCESSES UNDER THE LEVEL OF YOUR AWARENESS

# DEMONSTRATION

- FEET ON FLOOR.
- CROSS RIGHT LEG OVER LEFT
- ROTATE RIGHT FOOT CLOCKWISE
- FOLLOW DIRECTIONS FOR DRAWING THE NUMBER 6

# WHAT IS YOUR FRAME?

- **FIGURE OUT THE UNCONSCIOUS ASPECTS OF YOUR FRAME FOR FORGIVENESS**

# FRAMES OF FORGIVENESS

- WHAT IS YOUR FRAME FOR FORGIVING SOMEONE?
- WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN TAUGHT?
- WHAT ARE THE STORIES YOU'VE HEARD
- STORYBOARD TECHNIQUE
- CREATE AND CRITIQUE

## TIP #2 - NARRATIVES

# NARRATIVES

- WE ALL TALK TO OURSELVES, ALL THE TIME
- AN INNER DIALOGUE THAT WE USE TO NARRATE AND EXPLAIN THE WORLD TO OURSELVES.
- EXPLANATORY STYLE OF MARTIN SELIGMAN

# HUGE DIFFERENCE

- A VICTIM'S NARRATIVE

  - THE LIST OF WRONGS DONE TO ME

- A VICTOR'S NARRATIVE

  - THE LIST OF THINGS I HAVE TRIUMPHED OVER.

- USUALLY THE SAME HISTORY CAN BE NARRATED EITHER WAY.

# TELL A VICTOR STORY

- TELLING YOURSELF A VICTOR'S STORY MAKES IT DRAMATICALLY EASIER TO FORGIVE SOMEONE WHO HAS HARMED YOU.
- "THAT WHICH DOES NOT DESTROY YOU, MAKES YOU STRONGER." -FREDRICK NIETZSCHE

TIP #3 - SELF-HYPNOTISM

# HYPNOTISTS DABBLE

- THE ALCHEMICAL HYPNOTHERAPY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA.
- FORGIVENESS FORMULA
- STRESSES IMAGINED RETRIBUTION

# NLP

- THE SWISH TECHNIQUE

- IMAGINE TWO SCREENS, SIDE-BY-SIDE

- PUT IMAGE OF NEGATIVE EVENT ON ONE SCREEN IN COLOR, AND A BETTER IMAGE ON THE OTHER IN BLACK AND WHITE.

- GRADUALLY DRAIN THE COLOR FROM ONE IMAGE AND ADD IT TO THE OTHER.

- THEN, WITH A SWISH, FLIP THE POSITIONS OF THE SCREENS.

# INNER HEALING

- RUTH CARTER STAPLETON
- ENTER QUIET PRAYER
- IMAGINE WHAT HAPPENED.
- IMAGINE A SPIRITUAL FIGURE INTERVENING AND CHANGING WHAT HAPPENED.

# BEST-ME

■ DON GIBBONS, PH.D.

■ HYPEREMPIRIA

■ SELF-HYPNOTISM BY MEANS OF BEST-ME

# DAYDREAM BELIEVER

- SELF-HYPNOTISM IS A KIND OF MOTIVATIONAL DAYDREAM THAT PROPOSES AN ATTRACTIVE SITUATION.
- YOU GENTLY CONVINCING YOURSELF TO BECOME A DAYDREAM BELIEVER.

# FIRST, THE TRANCE

- EASY
- CLOSE YOUR EYES, RELAX YOUR BODY, IMAGINE AN ELEVATOR OR STAIRCASE, AND START WALKING DOWN.

## SECOND, BEST-ME IMAGE

■ B - BEHAVIORS

■ E - EMOTIONS

■ S - SENSATIONS

■ T - THOUGHTS

■ M - MOTIVATION

■ E - EXPECTATIONS

WHAT WOULD SERVE  
ME WELL?

## HOLD THAT IMAGE/FEELING

- JUST DRIFT WITH IT.

- DWELL ON IT.

- ENJOY IT.

# HARRY POTTER

(AND SCRIPTURE)

# UNFORGIVABLE CURSES

- THE KILLING CURSE, “AVADA KEDAVRA,”
- THE TORTURE CURSE, “CRUCIO,” AND
- THE ENSLAVEMENT CURSE, “IMPERIO.”

# HARRY DOES USE THEM

- 1996, HARRY USES THE CRUCIATUS CURSE ON BELLATRIX LESTRANGE, CAUSING HER ONLY A MOMENT OF PAIN.
- ORDER OF THE PHOENIX, BATTLE OF THE MINISTRY OF MAGIC
- "NEVER USED AN UNFORGIVABLE CURSE BEFORE, HAVE YOU, BOY? YOU NEED TO MEAN THEM, POTTER!"

# CURSES REQUIRE BELIEF

- IN ORDER TO USE THEM YOU MUST BE THE KIND OF PERSON WHO REALLY WANTS TO KILL, TORTURE OR ENSLAVE. IF YOU ARE NOT, THEY DON'T WORK.
- USING THESE CURSES CHANGE YOU FOR THE WORSE.

# PLATO

- CHOOSE YOUR ENEMIES CAREFULLY, BECAUSE YOU WILL BECOME JUST LIKE THEM.
- J.R.R. TOLKIEN, THE LORD OF THE RINGS. YOU CANNOT USE THE RINGS OF SAURON WITHOUT BECOMING HIS SLAVE.

# THE COUNSEL

- THE COUNSEL OF SCRIPTURE AND SPIRITUAL LITERATURE IS THAT THERE ARE SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL ENERGIES THAT ARE SIMPLY UNSAFE TO USE.
- RESENTMENT, ANGER AND VENGEFULNESS ARE AMONG THESE. IF YOU HOLD ONTO THEM, THEY CHANGE YOU AND NOT FOR THE BETTER. THEREFORE, RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS URGE YOU NOT TO.

# IN WESTERN RELIGION

- JUDAISM - PEOPLE ARE OBLIGATED TO GRANT FORGIVENESS WHEN IT IS SINCERELY REQUESTED, WHILE ONLY G-D CAN FORGIVE OFFENSES AGAINST G-D.
- CHRISTIANITY - FORGIVENESS IS PUT FORWARD AS A POSITIVE GOOD. THE ABILITY TO FORGIVE IS A SIGN OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY.
- ISLAM -ALLAH IS THE ALL-FORGIVING. IT IS ALWAYS BETTER TO FORGIVE THAN NOT.

# IN EASTERN RELIGION

- **BUDDHISM - FORGIVENESS IS A PRACTICE THAT PREVENTS DISRUPTION OF ONE'S OWN STATE OF MIND.**
- **HINDUISM - FORGIVENESS IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF KARMA. USING IT WE CAN MODERATE OUR OWN BAD KARMA, PREVENT HARM TO THE KARMA OF OTHERS AND REMIND OURSELVES OF OUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE.**
- **"FORGIVE THREE SINS. THAT I WORSHIP YOU HERE WHEN YOU ARE EVERYWHERE. THAT I PRAISE YOU WHEN YOU NEED NO PRAISE. THAT I USE THESE FORMS WHEN YOU NEED NO FORM."**

WHEN YOU CHOOSE  
NOT TO FORGIVE

# COMPASSION

- LITERALLY MEANS “CO-SUFFERING”
- THE ABILITY TO FEEL A CONCERN FOR ANOTHER PERSON’S WELFARE, EVEN IF YOU DISLIKE THAT PERSON, OR ARE ANGRY AT, OR HURT BY HIM OR HER.
- THE ABILITY TO REGARD ANOTHER PERSON AS A “RUINED PIECE OF NATURE.” (SHAKESPEARE. LEAR, ACT 4, SCENE 6)

# A STEP SHORT

- FEELING COMPASSION FOR A WRONGDOER MAY ALLOW ONE TO TAKE A STEP JUST SHORT OF FORGIVENESS.
- OFTEN THIS INTERIM STEP CAN SET THE STAGE FOR LATER FORGIVENESS. HOWEVER, EVEN IF IT DOES NOT, THIS IS STILL BETTER THAN CLINGING TO RESENTMENT AND ANGER.

# PARDON

- PARDON AND FORGIVENESS ARE NOT IDENTICAL.
- PARDON IS A DECISION TO NULLIFY PUNISHMENT WITHOUT EXCUSING PERPETRATOR FROM RESPONSIBILITY.
- “WHAT YOU DID WAS WRONG AND YOU HAVE MADE NO APOLOGY. THEREFORE, I DO NOT FORGIVE YOU. INSTEAD, I CHOOSE TO FORGO ATTEMPTS TO PUNISH YOU FOR REASONS THAT ARE GOOD AND SUFFICIENT TO ME.”



ALCHEMY

# ALCHEMY

- AN ANCIENT PHILOSOPHICAL TRADITION, FOUND AROUND THE WORLD FROM EUROPE TO CHINA.
- HISTORICALLY, A PROTO-SCIENCE AS CHEMISTRY DEVELOPED FROM IT.
- PSYCHOLOGICALLY, A SET OF SYMBOLS DEALING WITH THE TRANSFORMATION OF PERSONALITY.

# TRANSMUTATION

- **ALCHEMISTS TRIED TO TURN LEAD INTO GOLD**
- **THE SPIRITUAL ALCHEMISTS SAW THIS AS A METAPHOR FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE HUMAN SOUL.**
- **TURN THE LOWER PARTS OF ONE'S MIND INTO SOMETHING OF VALUE AND MEANING.**

# PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

- **BILL FELT ANGRY AND FRUSTRATED AT A SITUATION, BUT FOUND A WAY TO TURN THAT INTO A FOCUSED DETERMINATION TO CHANGE THINGS.**
- **MIKE FELT VULNERABLE AND INSECURE AND TURNED THAT INTO A CONNECTION THAT ALLOWED HIM TO OPEN UP TO SOMEONE ELSE.**
- **SALLY FELT INFATUATION AND DESIRE AND TURNED THAT INTO LOVE AND COMMITMENT.**

# IN EACH CASE

- A BASE EMOTION WAS TRANSFORMED BY BEING CHANNELLED INTO A HIGHER PURPOSE.
- JUST AS AN ARTIST TURNS PASSION, DREAMS AND EMOTIONAL WOUNDS INTO ART.
- JUST A DIFFERENT WAY OF REFINING LEAD INTO GOLD.

# FORGIVENESS & COMPASSION

- **FORGIVENESS AND COMPASSION ARE HOW I TRY TO TRANSFORM MY BASE EMOTIONS INTO SOMETHING HIGHER.**
- **I CAN'T RECOMMEND THEM ENOUGH.**

THANK YOU!