How Forgiveness Can Help You Find Happiness (October 7 is National Forgiveness and Happiness Day)

Most of us have experienced pain or heartbreak at the hands of another person. Perhaps we have felt betrayed by a friend. Maybe we have experienced heartbreak at the hands of a lover. Or perhaps a family member has left us in emotional turmoil through hurtful words. It doesn’t matter what or who has left you feeling hurt; any pain caused by another can be challenging to forgive.

When one struggles to let go of their anger or resentment toward someone who has hurt them, they may find that other pieces in their lives begin to suffer. Because of this, the grudge they hold against that person may cause them more harm than anyone else. This is why forgiveness can be crucial to a person’s mental health and wellbeing. This National Forgiveness and Happiness Day (October 7), we are going to take a deeper dive into reaching a state of forgiveness.

# **What Does it Mean to Forgive?**

Forgiveness can look different in different people and situations. However, the most basic definition of the term essentially defines it as letting go of the anger and resentment one feels toward another for hurting them.

Just because you decide to let go of your anger toward a person and situation, however, does not discount the pain or suffering that person and situation caused you. However, forgiving and letting go of the pain you have experienced can allow you to find peace and may even lead to a deeper understanding of the situation that caused you pain. You don’t have to forget the situation in order to forgive it. All you need to do is release your resentment to make room for inner peace.

# **The Benefits of Forgiveness**

There is a [multitude of benefits](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7528379/) that come along with deciding to forgive someone. These benefits can include:

* Healthier, happier relationships
* Improved mental wellbeing
* Lower levels of stress and anxiety
* Reduced feelings of hostility or irritability
* Fewer depression symptoms
* Improved self-esteem
* Better cardiac health
* A stronger immune system

# **Tips for Reaching Forgiveness**

No matter how beneficial we know forgiveness to be, the act does not always come easy. When making the decision to actively forgive someone for doing you wrong, you are deciding to commit to change within yourself actively. A few tips for releasing your resentment and anger include:

* Understanding just how beneficial forgiveness can be
* Determining the pieces of you that need healing
* Identifying who and what situations you need to forgive in order to find peace
* Joining a support group
* Acknowledging and validating the hurt you experienced and making the active decision to release it

# **We Are Here for You**

If someone has left you feeling betrayed, hurt, or vengeful, it can begin to take a serious toll on your mental health. For some people, forgiveness is not an easy destination to reach on your own. If this is the case for you, our compassionate and knowledgeable therapists are here for you. [Contact](https://michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php) us today, and we will work to pair you with a counselor who fits your individual needs for reaching a state of forgiveness.

References:

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