

Freedom In Forgiveness

Introduction

If you ever wanted to know what holds you back in life, much of this revolves around the way that you interact with other people and with yourself. The conversations that you have in your mind may be the very reason that you are not happy.

In this, we explore the connection between un-forgiveness and unhappiness. It's a very strong connection and we give you 7 reasons why you are unhappy, based upon the premise that you are having problems forgiving yourself and others. Read on if you want to know the reasons and be ready to address them.

1. Unhealthy Thoughts

(i) You think bad thoughts that fuel your unhappiness

The thoughts that you have in your mind when you cannot learn forgiveness include negative and destructive thoughts. When you feel that you have been wronged, there can be all kinds of consequences. What you may not realize is that revenge eats away little pieces of who you are. A wife who has been cheated on may go to unhealthy lengths to try and make her man feel her wrath. Marriages that go through scenarios such as this rarely survive. While the woman may feel slighted, what she may not realize is that playing the part of the victim makes her even less attractive. Jealous people are rarely attractive as long term propositions. Although wrong may have been done, two wrongs certainly don't put things right. In fact, the second wrong is holding onto negative thoughts.

When Chuck found out his wife had been unfaithful, he recoiled into himself, rather than hating his partner. He knew he had never been as passionate as his wife wished he was, and he saw the ultimate betrayal as being largely his own fault. The negative feelings he experienced stayed with him for years and he even spent time in psychiatric care because he believed he was no longer whole without his wife.

The reason I recount the two stories I have chosen is to demonstrate that whenever any kind of hatred exists in the mind, the person feeling it extends their suffering. They can't forgive. They can't forget and, consequently, are stuck because a mind that cannot forgive and let go can never find inner peace.

Holding onto unhealthy thoughts also does something else. It triggers a reaction in your subconscious mind. If you hate someone and cannot forgive that person, each time that his/her name is mentioned, your subconscious mind records your response. This is a very negative response. The subconscious mind doesn't know the difference between emotions but it does set you off into a vicious circle of negativity because that's how it sees you as reacting when this name is mentioned.

There's a very good way around this vicious circle and it takes a little bit of conscious effort on your part. If you can fool the subconscious mind into seeing things differently by forgiving the sin committed, you can start showing less reaction when that name comes up and your subconscious will record that your reaction is no longer negative. Then, move onward and don't look back because looking back with regret only prolongs your agony and unhappiness.

It may sound fundamentally simple, but the reason it isn't so simple is because you haven't yet learned to let go. There's a trick that you can try which was used by a doctor on a YouTube video on Neuro Linguistic Programming. It helps you to move forward. You need to prepare to do this and will need clown music in the background, so find something suitable on YouTube that you can play during the episode.

Then close your eyes and imagine your relationship from the last time that you met right through to the first time you met. The image should come in the form of a movie playing backwards, accompanied by the music that I suggested at the beginning. Now,

try to think of that name and you will find that your thought processes are very different. That's because you have something very different to think about that will help to retrain the subconscious to help you get through this situation. It may sound a little strange, but it really does work.

(ii) You think you are not whole without a partner

I have heard this so often and yet know from experience in my work that if you feel incomplete alone, then all you have to offer to a new relationship is someone who is incomplete. When you start to celebrate who you are, you discover all the things that you enjoy doing alone. You don't sit around waiting for love to happen and take the risks associated with this attitude. Have you ever known someone who is married to an abuser? The reason that people settle for relationships that are abusive is because they don't believe they deserve better and everyone does. The first step toward being happy is to forgive yourself for all of your own shortcomings and accept yourself for who you are. When you are able to do that, you don't settle for those who may harm you or those who belittle you. You look for something much more satisfying – a partner who is willing to walk with you, rather than dragging you down.

2. Anger and Hatred

If you are a person who has experienced either of these emotions, you have weakened your own viewpoint in life. The reason that I say this is because angry and hateful people can never be happy. The two sentiments just don't go together. You may have noticed postings on Facebook that sounded hateful, but look how many people actually joined in and showed their hate. The world is becoming a dangerous place and if you can step away from anger and hatred, you can begin to remake your world a place where you don't have space for such negativity.

(iii) You feel anger

Anger usually comes from an action of some kind. This can be an action that was shown toward you or someone that you care

about. Anger usually results in words being said which are later regretted but it does much more than that. It fills your head with a cloud of negativity. While anger is justified in some circumstances, you need to be able to let it out and then forgive. You can do this by breathing in the same way that people do when they meditate. These deep breaths help you to calm what's going on inside of you. They also help to reduce the over burdening of the body with excess oxygen. This comes from entering the panic mode that anger imposes. Your blood pressure rises. Your heartbeat increases and you become your own worst enemy when you can't let go of anger. This is one of the major reasons people are unhappy. Anger is destructive – every bit as destructive as the action that led to it in fact more so. Long after the person who made you angry has forgotten about the incident, you are still punishing yourself by continuing to hold onto anger. It's pointless and it serves no purpose.

(iv) You Want Revenge

There are those who believe that revenge is the only way to stop the anger. In fact, it's walking the line between anger and letting yourself down so much that you cannot live with the consequences. Revenge is what causes world wars. It is what makes one country feel justified in killing the people of another country. It's a horrible state of affairs.

Opening your heart to better understanding is a far more fruitful way to go forward and will leave you with a lot more happiness than revenge ever will. Those who inflict revenge on someone else, thinking that it will make them feel better are fooling themselves. It's like being in that childlike state where you argue tit for tat on things of little importance just because you can. It serves no purpose. Revenge isn't sweet. It leaves a taste in the mouth that is bitter and it actually does more than that. It diminishes YOU as a person because it shows you as being too weak to find more peaceful solutions.

People don't admire those who seek out revenge. They may fear them, but they certainly don't respect them and if others cannot respect you, how can you expect to respect yourself. One of the prime reasons why people are unhappy is because they let their

hate eat up who they are instead of working out ways to get beyond hate. Compassion is a choice that shows wisdom and strengthens your character as well as allowing you to stay happy. Forgiving someone shows much more strength than seeking out revenge and forgiveness also allows you to be true to your own heart and happy that you were able to step over the temptation of revenge in favor of something much more valuable.

(v) You spread discontent

There is a certain kind of personality which feels good only when involved in spreading gossip. You must have known people such as this and usually they are not very happy in their lives. They dramatize the lives of others to take focus away from the unhappiness within their own lives or the mundanity of their lives. If you are one of these people, you will never really be happy because you are taking your focus away from the real problem and camouflaging it under the dramas of others. Not only is this unkind, but you will have a job ever forgiving yourself or those around you simply because you don't think in an appropriate way.

People who spread discontent are also prone to be moody. They don't forgive people for small injustices and they see themselves as being beyond reproach. The problem is that they are guilty of being unkind and of making people around them unhappy as well as experiencing unhappiness when they are not engaged in this kind of activity. The way out of a situation such as this is to apologize to those people you have hurt and understand that it was your action, rather than theirs that hurt others. Then you can forgive yourself by becoming involved in your own life and making it a better place to be.

Your Interactions with Others

Although we briefly touched on this in the last chapter, it's important that you realize that your unhappiness level is as a direct result of your contact with other people, whether these are close friends or the people who influence you through news, TV entertainment or the media in general. If you are influenced too much by the media, you may believe that you don't measure up. We are not all slim. We are not all six feet tall with long legs. We are not all perfect.

(vi) You compare yourself unfavorably to others

People who are unhappy because they feel that they don't measure up will remain unhappy while they look negatively toward who they are. There's a very vicious circle at work here. If you believe you are too fat, you try to diet. When the diet fails, you feel depressed. When you feel depressed, you eat comfort foods. When you eat comfort foods, you get fatter. So where does forgiveness come into a situation such as this? For me, it's obvious that there is a need to forgive oneself. To those stuck within this situation, this isn't quite as clear. They see themselves as inferior and regardless of how hard they try, they cannot let go of the fact that they don't measure up.

In a case such as this, meditation helps as well as mindfulness. This helps you to stop mulling over negative thoughts and to learn to find some kind of harmony between your body and your mind. It relaxes you and helps you with self-acceptance. However, first you need to forgive yourself for all the negativity that you feed your mind about who you are. I would suggest that keeping a journal that shows all the things that you like about yourself is a

good start. It's also a good start to forgive those who make you feel bad about yourself. People who insult others or mock them are actually much less likely to feel happy than those who they insult. Think of things in reverse. If they feel that bad in their own lives that they have to hurl abuse at others, it's a fairly sad state of affairs. Show this kind of person a little empathy, while accepting that the words that come out of their mouths do so as a sign of their own insecurities. Forgive them and feel better immediately about who you are. It makes you a greater person than they will ever be, while they continue to put people down.

Forgive yourself for not being able to keep to that diet. Forgive yourself for not giving your body all of the right foods, but when you forgive, it has to be sincere. That means moving on to healthier approaches learning from the mistakes in the past.

(vii) You Hold bias against other people

One of the worst types of feeling that people have these days is bias. This may be against different races. It may be against people who make different life choices. You may not feel comfortable with people who have different sexual preferences to your own.

The fact is that the world is opening up all of its corners to scrutiny like never before. Much of what we heard as hearsay in the past went over our heads because it was just that – hearsay. However, today, we are reminded so often of discord between different religions, between different races and between those who believe in personal liberties and those who see these as unacceptable. In an ever diverse world where people are being killed every day through hatred, it's hard to drop fear and it is this fear that fuels bias.

Elaine explained how unhappy she was because she couldn't forgive herself for the feelings she had. After a bombing had been on the TV in the morning, she went to get onto a train to go and visit her mother in another town. The first thing that she saw was a man of another race, wearing his traditional costume and she assumed automatically that he was a threat. The problems of the world today touch us like at no other time in history because it's in your face all of the time. You have to forgive yourself for these feelings that are brought about by ignorance. Learn more. Mix with people and learn about those things you don't understand. When you do, you are able to remove the stigma of unhappiness from your life by knowing there are good and bad in all types of people.

Elaine said that she was ashamed of the feelings that she had and she started to read up on world affairs because she wanted to be more informed. When she did, and saw how the world had treated so many people unfairly, she decided that the only way forward was to consider each human being as being her equal. She learned to be more giving and kind and learned to help others worse off than herself – not so that she could boast about her charitable activities – but so that she could live with herself in a much happier way than the media would have her live. She kept abreast of the news, but was able to read it in a more neutral manner without placing judgment on what it was that she read. When you are able to do that, you see the bigger picture and still allow yourself to see the good in the world, regardless of what news stories tell you.

You can't bear a grudge against the whole of a race because of the actions of one man. You can't live with fear in your heart all the time either. Thus, the only way forward is to be more advised about what's really happening in the world and live with the conclusions that you come to using an unbiased viewpoint.

When a man beats his child because the child is homosexual, it doesn't make the child less homosexual. It just makes the child's life unhappy knowing that someone he loved could not love him sufficiently to accept that he was different. When you point your finger at someone in the street as being a terrorist, you are becoming very narrow in your view of life and that too makes you very unhappy.

You have to find a level that works for you. Mindfulness teaches you to observe the world without forming opinions. It allows news stories to go through your mind without filling your life with a sense of hatred for what you consider to be wrongdoing. If you are unhappy and pass that bias on to your children, you restrict their lives too because they grow up having never really experienced other ways of life or other points of view. It makes them myopic and unable to accept things that other people find perfectly acceptable.

Taking judgment out of the picture helps you to look at life in a more open way and to forgive those who cross boundaries, understanding that there will always be the individual who doesn't feel the same way as you do. See the world with the glass

half full instead of half empty by forgiving yourself for your bias and embracing the differences between you and the people around you.

Conclusion

I would suggest that you read over the points made in the book and fully understand how they relate to your life. Once you are able to do this, you will find that life will improve and that you will become happier with who you are and what you represent in life. Forgiving others is the first step toward happiness. Forgiving yourself is the next step and both help you to increase your happiness levels.

Want to discover EVERYTHING you need to know to achieve absolute forgiveness and free your life from pain & misery forever?