

*The Path to Forgiveness:  
Six Practical Sections for Becoming a  
More Forgiving Person*



**Self-Directed Learning Workbook**

**An Intervention to Promote Forgiveness**

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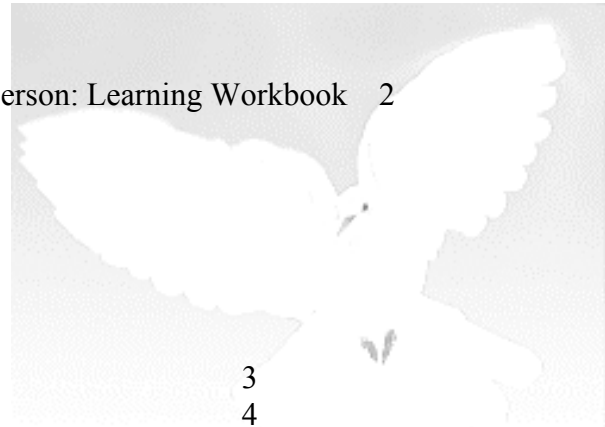
***(Adapted as a Workbook by Caroline Lavelock)***

November 1, 2011

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## *Introducing the Program*

In this book, you will work through practical exercises with the goal of becoming a more forgiving individual. In this book, you will learn to forgive through applying a five-step method of forgiving transgressions you have experienced.

The method you will learn in this workbook is based on practicing a five-step model on a particular hurt you have experienced in your lifetime. Like learning any skill, it is best to first practice this skill on an issue that is of moderate importance to you. If the harm you practice on is too traumatic and emotionally raw, you might be so distressed it may impede your ability to learn the method. If the harm has already been put far in your past and no longer bothers you, you probably won't be experiencing enough emotional pain to learn that the method can actually help relieve emotional pain.

Once you have learned the five steps, you will apply them to a variety of hurts. By doing so, you can broaden your forgiving character. You can truly become a person who has few unresolved hurts and who can resolve new hurts quickly and thoroughly.

### *Design of the Book*

The book is structured into six sections.

## *Before You Begin*

### *Welcome*

Welcome to “The Path to Forgiveness: Six Practical Sections for Becoming a More Forgiving Person.” If you haven’t done so already, you can read the following description at your leisure.

### *Do you want to become a more forgiving person?*

**What?** A 6-section workbook that will help you develop a more forgiving character. In the workbook, you will discuss what you believe about forgiving, and you will learn a method for forgiving a particular transgression. By practicing that method and reflecting on it, you will become a more forgiving person as you build a forgiving attitude and forgiving skills.

**Who?** This is for people who want to learn to become more forgiving individuals. They are willing to do this by learning and practicing a five-step method of forgiving that has been used and studied for years by clinical psychologist, Everett L. Worthington, Jr., Ph.D.

**How?** Write responses to the BOLDED items in this workbook. We also highly recommend that you *break up the workbook* using the sections provided as opposed to trying to do it all in one sitting. This workbook is necessarily repetitive so that you can learn new habits, which can be frustrating if you rush yourself. Take your time.

We best learn to forgive by seeking forgiveness ourselves. As we learn what it is to be forgiven, we become more eager to forgive transgressions ourselves. To aid us, we learn a method of forgiving a particular transgression. Then, we learn to apply those skills to other hurts and offenses. We learn to forgive others, and we also can apply the same method to forgiving ourselves, though forgiving ourselves is particularly hard. Despite your efforts you might have *granted forgiveness* (or you might *not* have granted forgiveness), but the *emotional experience of forgiveness* has eluded you. The workbook will teach members how to REACH an experience of emotional forgiveness by working with a particular hurt that each member is willing to share (all events shared in the workbook is confidential). Or, you might want to participate in this study because you’ve generally forgiven automatically all your life, but have realized that there you have trouble forgiving some people or some events. Or perhaps, you want to learn how to forgive faster and more thoroughly.

**When?** The workbook must be completed over two weeks in order for you to receive credit for participating. Completing the sections should take about six hours total, but go at your own pace. Once you start a section, try to finish it in the same day.

## *Effectiveness of the program to REACH forgiveness*

The REACH model has been subject of a book for general audiences, *Five Steps to Forgiveness: The Art and Science of Forgiving* (Crown Publishers, 2003), and later as a Christian book, *Forgiving and Reconciling: Bridges to Wholeness and Hope* (InterVarsity Press, 2003).

The program was developed by Clinical Psychologist, Everett L. Worthington, Jr. He has conducted over seven scientific studies that support the effectiveness of the method to REACH forgiveness. The model has also been discussed at scientific conferences; in magazines like *People* magazine, *O* magazine, *Redbook*, *Reader's Digest Canada*, virtually every major US newspaper, television shows (like *Good Morning America*, *The Jane Pauley Show*, *The Leeza Show*, *The Iyanla Show*, *Starting Over*, the *700 Club*, *CNN*). Thousands have gone through forgiveness groups similar to this workbook, and countless others have read about, seen, or heard about the method and perhaps tried it more informally. In addition, it has been researched scientifically in many settings. Consistently, the REACH model has been shown to promote forgiveness and thereby produce various additional benefits. This workbook improved not only forgiveness, but also patience in its inaugural study when participants were assessed at a two week follow-up.

### ***Empirical Study, Forgiveness in Marriage***

\*Worthington, E. L., Jr., Berry, J. W., Miller, A. J., Sharp, C. B., Canter, D. E., Hook, J. N., Davis, D. E., Scherer, M. Campana, K. L., Wade, N. G., Yarhouse, M., & Ripley, J. S. (2011). Relative efficacy of interventions to promote forgiveness-reconciliation and communication-conflict-resolution versus retested controls in early married couples.

\*Ripley, J.S., & Worthington, E.L., Jr. (2002). Hope-focused and forgiveness group interventions to promote marital enrichment. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 80, 452-463.

### ***Empirical Study Forgiveness in Marriage, Not Done in Our Lab***

\*Burchard, G.A., Yarhouse, M.A., Worthington, E.L., Jr., Berry, J.W., Killian, M., & Canter, D.E. (2003). A study of two marital enrichment programs and couples' quality of life. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 31, 240-252.

### ***Empirical Study, Psychoeducational Group on Forgiveness, from Our Lab***

\*Sandage, S. J., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2010). Comparison of two group interventions to promote forgiveness: Empathy as a mediator of change. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 32(1), 35-57.

\*Worthington, E. L., Jr., Hunter, J. L., Sharp, C. B., Hook, J. N., Van Tongeren, D. R., Davis, D. E., Miller, A. J., Gingrich, F. C., Sandage, S. J., Lao, E., Bubod, L., & Monforte-Milton, M. M. (2010). A psychoeducational intervention to promote forgiveness in Christians in the Philippines. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 32(1), 75-93.

\*Kiefer, R. P., Worthington, E. L., Jr., Myers, B., Kliewer, W. L., Berry, J. W., Davis, D. E., Kilgour, J., Jr., Miller, A. J., Van Tongeren, D. R., & Hunter, J. L. (2010). Training parents in forgiveness and reconciliation. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 38, 32-49.

\*Wade, N.G., Worthington, E.L., Jr., & Haake, S. (2009). Promoting forgiveness: Comparison of explicit forgiveness interventions with an alternative treatment. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 87(1), 143-151.

\*Worthington, E.L., Jr., Kurusu, T.A., Collins, W.B., Berry, J.W., Ripley, J.S., & Baier, S.N. (2000). Forgiving usually takes time: A lesson learned by studying interventions to promote forgiveness. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 28, 3-20.

\*McCullough, M.E., Worthington, E.L., Jr. & Rachal, K.C. (1997). Interpersonal forgiveness in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 321-326.

\*McCullough, M. E., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (1995). Promoting forgiveness: A comparison of two psychoeducational group interventions with a waiting-list control. *Counseling and Values*, 40, 55-68.

**Articles Studying REACH Forgiveness, Not Done in Our Lab**

\*Blocher, W.-m. G., & Wade, N. G. (2010). Sustained effectiveness of two brief group interventions: Comparing an explicit forgiveness-promoting treatment with a process-oriented treatment. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 32(1) 58-74.

Cornish, M. A., & Wade, N. G. (2010). Spirituality in group counseling: A literature review with practice guidelines. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, Sep 6, 2010, No Pagination Specified. doi: [10.1037/a0020179](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0020179)

\*Shechtman, Z., Wade, N. G., & Khoury, A. (2009). Effectiveness of a forgiveness program for Arab Israeli adolescents in Israel: An empirical trial. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 15(4), 415-438. doi: [10.1080/10781910903221194](https://doi.org/10.1080/10781910903221194)

\*Wade, N. G., & Meyer, J. E. (2009). Comparison of brief group interventions to promote forgiveness: A pilot outcome study. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 59(2), 199-220. doi: [10.1521/ijgp.2009.59.2.199](https://doi.org/10.1521/ijgp.2009.59.2.199)

\*Stratton, S. P., Dean, J. B., Nooneman, A. J., Bode, R. A., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2008). Forgiveness interventions as spiritual development strategies: Workshop training, expressive writing about forgiveness, and retested controls. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 27, 347-357.

\*Wade, N. G., Meyer, J. E., Goldman, D. B., & Post, B. C. (2008). Predicting forgiveness for an interpersonal offense before and after treatment: The role of religious commitment, religious affiliation, and trait forgiveness. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 27(4), 358-367.

\*Lampton, C., Oliver, G., Worthington, E.L., Jr., & Berry, J.W. (2005). Helping Christian college students become more forgiving: An intervention study to promote forgiveness as part of a program to shape Christian character. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 33, 278-290.

\*Rye, M.S., Pargament, K.I., Pan, W., Yingling, D.W., Shogren, K.A., & Ito, M. (2005). Can group interventions facilitate forgiveness of an ex-spouse? A randomized clinical trial. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 73, 880-892.

\*Rye, M.S., & Pargament, K.I. (2002). Evaluation of a secular and religiously integrated forgiveness group therapy program for college students who have been wronged by a romantic partner. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 58, 419-441.

\*Rye, M. S. (1999). Evaluation of a secular and religiously integrated forgiveness group therapy program for college students who have been wronged by a romantic partner. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B: The Sciences & Engineering*, 59, 6495.

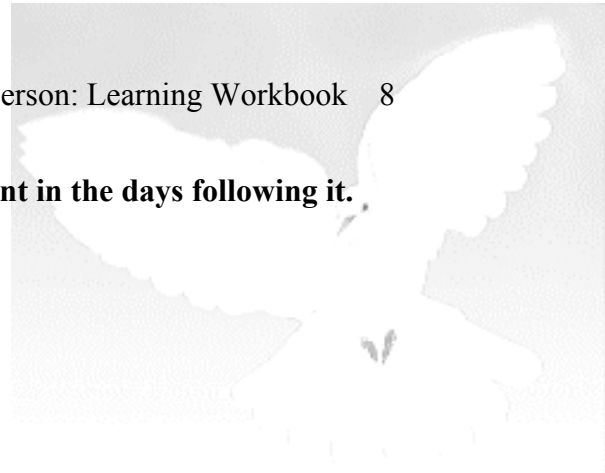
*Pre-Workbook Exercise*  
*Assessments Prior to the Beginning of the Workbook*

You will learn to REACH forgiveness by working with a hurt or offense that you might have tried repeatedly to forgive. You might have granted forgiveness (or you might not have granted forgiveness), but the peace and the emotional experience of forgiveness might have eluded you on this particular event. The workbook will teach you how to REACH an experience of lasting *emotional* forgiveness by working with a particular hurt. You'll complete some instruments as you learn to forgive better. The instruments will ask you to rate your feelings and motivations about the particular event you are working on and about yourself in general. It is important that you always complete the instruments about the same event.

A word about your choice of an event to work with: If you were learning to play a sport—like soccer—you wouldn't try to learn the skills you need to play well by playing in the World Cup finals. You'd learn the skills by playing in a low-stakes scrimmage or practice session. In the same way, if you choose a really difficult offense that you still need to forgive—such as physical abuse as a child, or murder of a close relative, or abandonment by your father at an early age—you'll have difficulty learning the skills because the event is simply too hard to begin with. Also, sometimes harms are one-time events (such as a boss who harshly criticizes you), but at other times the events are ongoing and seem to involve new transgressions every day. Those ongoing hurtful interactions also make it difficult to learn skills because it is hard to tell what the effects of a single harm are when it is bunched with so many other events. Instead, choose a relatively isolated event of moderate hurtfulness or offensiveness but one that you still don't have complete emotional peace with. On such an event—even if you feel like you have already granted forgiveness—you can best learn to emotionally forgive. Please write a brief description about what happened in that event in the space below.

- 1. Describe the event. (Please don't use names. You can designate the person who hurt you by initials or by a pseudonym that you can remember.)**

**2. Write briefly how you felt and reacted to the event in the days following it.**



**3. Write briefly about things pertaining to the event that have happened since the event that have affected your current feelings and motivations.**

Please complete the following instruments about how you feel at the current time about the event (and about yourself).



TRIM

DIRECTIONS: For the following questions, please indicate what you imagine your current thoughts and feelings would be about the person who stole from you. Use the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	mildly disagree	agree and disagree equally	mildly agree	strongly agree

1. \_\_\_ I'll make him or her pay.
2. \_\_\_ I wish that something bad would happen to him/her.
3. \_\_\_ I want him-her to get what he/she deserves.
4. \_\_\_ I'm going to get even.
5. \_\_\_ I want to see him/her hurt and miserable.
6. \_\_\_ I'd keep as much distance between us as possible.
7. \_\_\_ I'd live as if he/she doesn't exist, isn't around.
8. \_\_\_ I wouldn't trust him/her.
9. \_\_\_ I'd find it difficult to act warmly toward him/her.
10. \_\_\_ I'd avoid him/her.
11. \_\_\_ I'd cut off the relationship with him/her.
12. \_\_\_ I'd withdraw from him/her.
13. \_\_\_ I looked for the source of the problem and tried to correct it.
14. \_\_\_ I took steps toward reconciliation: wrote him/her, called him/her, expressed love, showed concern, etc.
15. \_\_\_ I made an effort to be more friendly and concerned.
16. \_\_\_ I did my best to put aside the mistrust.
17. \_\_\_ I tried to make amends.
18. \_\_\_ I was willing to forget the past and concentrate on the present.
19. \_\_\_ Even though his/her actions hurt me, I still have goodwill for him/her.
20. \_\_\_ I want us to bury the hatchet and move forward with our relationship.
21. \_\_\_ Despite what he/she did, I want us to have a positive relationship again.
22. \_\_\_ I have given up my hurt and resentment.
23. \_\_\_ Although he/she hurt me, I put the hurts aside so we could resume our relationship.
24. \_\_\_ I forgive him/her for what he/she did to me.
25. \_\_\_ I have released my anger so I could work on restoring our relationship to health.

### Single-Item Assessment of Two Types of Forgiveness

Note: We want you to rate two types of forgiveness. For example, a person might perhaps decide to *grant* complete forgiveness but still *feel* very unforgiving toward a person.

*Granting forgiveness* is defined as *deciding (even if you don't say aloud) that you will not seek revenge against and not avoid but try (as much as it is up to you) to put the relationship back on the pre-offense footing.* Using the scale below (from 0 = no forgiveness granted to 4 = complete forgiveness granted) estimate the current level to which you have granted forgiveness.

**0**
**1**
**2**
**3**
**4**  
**No Forgiveness** **Complete Forgiveness**

*Experiencing emotional forgiveness* is defined as *the degree to which you actually feel that your emotions have become less negative and more positive toward the person who offended or harmed you.* If 0 = No forgiveness experienced and 4 = complete forgiveness experienced (that is, if you have experienced complete emotional forgiveness, you have no negative feelings and perhaps even some positive feelings toward the person who offended or harmed you), then use the scale below to indicate to what degree you have experienced emotional forgiveness.

**0**
**1**
**2**
**3**
**4**  
**No Forgiveness** **Complete Forgiveness**

#### DFS

Think of your current intentions toward the person who hurt you. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Neutral (N)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)
<b>1. I intend to try to hurt him or her in the same way he or she hurt me.</b>	SD	D	N	A	SA
<b>2. I will not try to help him or her if he or she needs something.</b>	SD	D	N	A	SA
<b>3. If I see him or her, I will act friendly.</b>	SD	D	N	A	SA
<b>4. I will try to get back at him or her.</b>	SD	D	N	A	SA
<b>5. I will try to act toward him or her in the same way I did before he or she hurt me.</b>	SD	D	N	A	SA
<b>6. If there is an opportunity to get back at him or her, I will take it.</b>	SD	D	N	A	SA

<b>7. I will not talk with him or her.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>8. I will not seek revenge upon him or her.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>

(Go on to following page)

**EFS**

**Think of your current emotions toward the person who hurt you. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

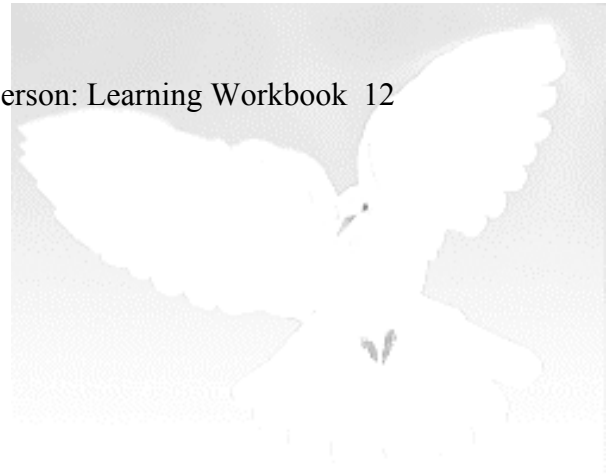
	<b>Strongly Disagree (SD)</b>	<b>Disagree (D)</b>	<b>Neutral (N)</b>	<b>Agree (A)</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (SA)</b>
<b>1. I care about him or her.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>2. I no longer feel upset when I think of him or her.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>3. I'm bitter about what he or she did to me.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>4. I feel sympathy toward him or her.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>5. I'm mad about what happened.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>6. I like him or her.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>7. I resent what he or she did to me.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>8. I feel love toward him or her.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>

**TFS**

Directions: Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement below by using the following scale:

- 5 = Strongly Agree
- 4 = Mildly Agree
- 3 = Agree and Disagree Equally
- 2 = Mildly Disagree
- 1 = Strongly Disagree

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| _____ | <b>1. People close to me probably think I hold a grudge too long.</b>                 |
| _____ | <b>2. I can forgive a friend for almost anything.</b>                                 |
| _____ | <b>3. If someone treats me badly, I treat him or her the same.</b>                    |
| _____ | <b>4. I try to forgive others even when they don't feel guilty for what they did.</b> |
| _____ | <b>5. I can usually forgive and forget an insult.</b>                                 |
| _____ | <b>6. I feel bitter about many of my relationships.</b>                               |
| _____ | <b>7. Even after I forgive someone, things often come back to me that I resent.</b>   |
| _____ | <b>8. There are some things for which I could never forgive even a loved one.</b>     |
| _____ | <b>9. I have always forgiven those who have hurt me.</b>                              |
| _____ | <b>10. I am a forgiving person.</b>   |



## *Section 1*

### *Forgiving in Context*

*Goal of Section 1*

1. To investigate some of the things that famous literary works say about interpersonal forgiveness—that is the forgiveness of one person by another.

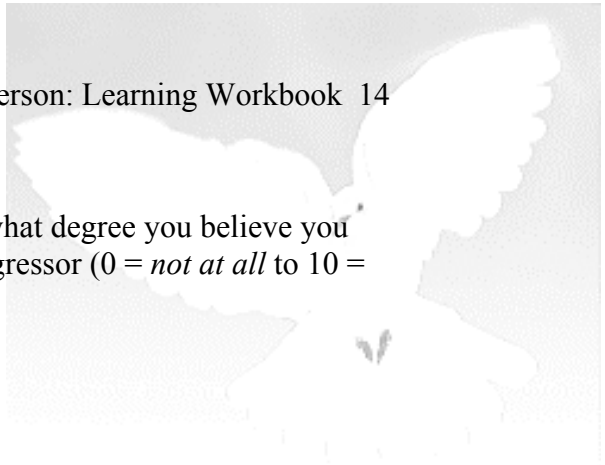
*A Few Questions for Section 1*

1. **To what degree do you think forgiveness might be a free gift? To what degree is it conditional?**

2. **To what degree might forgiveness of one person by another be conditional to the other?**

3. **In Texas, Carla Faye Tucker was executed for a brutal murder. She had become a Christian in prison. She had received a statement of forgiveness and support from one of the children of the people she had murdered. If a person victimized by the offense forgives the offender, does that mean that Carla should have been pardoned by the state?**

In this workbook, we are working from an assumption. We assume that you want to forgive—that you are motivated to forgive. We also assume that forgiveness is not only a virtue that you can build and will benefit you in terms of physical health, mental health, relationships, and spirituality but it is also (and perhaps most strongly influential) something that you can do for the benefit of others. The Greeks used a term, eudaimonia, to talk about doing the right thing. Eudaimonia is best defined as virtue for yourself and others. Thus, we look to both personal self-beneficial and other-beneficial motives to forgive. For some, there might also be religious motives for forgiving, but others who are not religious or whose religions do not promote forgiveness might not have those religious motives.



4. For yourself, would you estimate, at this moment, what degree you believe you are motivated to develop forgiveness for your transgressor (0 = *not at all* to 10 = *never more serious about anything in my life*):

\_\_\_\_\_ **Degree of motivation to forgive**  
**(0 to 10)**

Regardless of how much motivation you feel you have to forgive, please divide your subjective motivation into self-benefit, other-benefit, religious/spiritual. **Suppose you allocate 100% of your motivation among the three. What percent would be attributed to each?** (For example, if you were not very religious but wanted to benefit others more than you thought forgiving would benefit yourself, you might answer as follows:

<u>30%</u>	Self-benefit
<u>65%</u>	Other-benefit
<u>5%</u>	Religious/spiritual
100%	Total (should add to 100%)

**Now please partition your motives:**

<u>  %</u>	<b>Self-benefit</b>
<u>  %</u>	<b>Other-benefit</b>
<u>  %</u>	<b>Religious/spiritual</b>
100%	<b>Total (should add to 100%)</b>

### *Introduction to the Forgiveness Workbook*

The goal of this workbook is to help you become a more forgiving person through learning and practicing a five-step method of forgiving.

To accomplish this goal requires you to share parts of your personal lives. That requires trust. The investigators of this study pledge to safeguard the information shared within the workbook and not to divulge it to anyone outside of our research lab and *never* to link your name with any publicly discussed information.

### *Personal Self-Assessment*

Write the following:

- a. First name, age, job, family information.**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. Brief description of the hardest thing that you have ever forgiven?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- c. What do you want to get out of this workbook experience?**

*Exercise 1-1*  
*Experiencing Forgiveness in Literature*

The intent is to explore forgiveness in famous literary quotes and discuss their meanings. This method is aimed at furthering knowledge about forgiveness. There are four steps:

- Read the quote.
- Write one word that is a reaction to the quote.
- Read each quote again.
- Write a phrase that captures your feeling about the quote.

Quote 1

*History, despite its wrenching pain  
Cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage  
Need not be lived again.*

Maya Angelou

**Word:**

**Phrase:**

Quote 2

*Hatred is the rabid dog that turns on its owner. Revenge is the raging fire that consumes the arsonist. Bitterness is the trap that snares the hunter.*

Max Lucado

**Word:**

**Phrase:**

Quote 3

*Resentment is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die.*

Malachy McCourt

**Word:**

**Phrase:**



Quote 4

*We make believe we are at peace while the furies rage within, beneath the surface. There, hidden and suppressed, our hate opens the subterranean faucets of venom that will eventually infect all our relationships in ways we cannot predict. Hate left to itself, denied and hidden, leaves us in a cold hell behind insulated masks of warm conviviality.*

Lewis B. Smedes

**Word:**

**Phrase:**

Quote 5

*We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.*

Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Word:**

**Phrase:**

Quote 6

*Anyone who wants to forgive must come down from his [or her] throne. Otherwise, the attempt at forgiveness degenerates into an indictment and then we should not be surprised when the other person rejects the offer.*

Peter van Breeman

**Word:**

**Phrase:**

*Exercise 1-2*  
*Analysis of the Literary Quotes*

Now that you have put some thought into what the literary quotes mean to you, answer each of these questions.

- **Who is doing the forgiving in each of the quotes?**
- **Is there anything different when forgiveness goes both ways versus when it only goes one way?**
- **How do the quotes relate to each other? What is a common theme among them? What is different between them?**

*Exercise 1-3*  
*Seeing Forgiveness in Action*

Copy and paste the following link into your browser to see a famous example of forgiveness from Les Miserables:

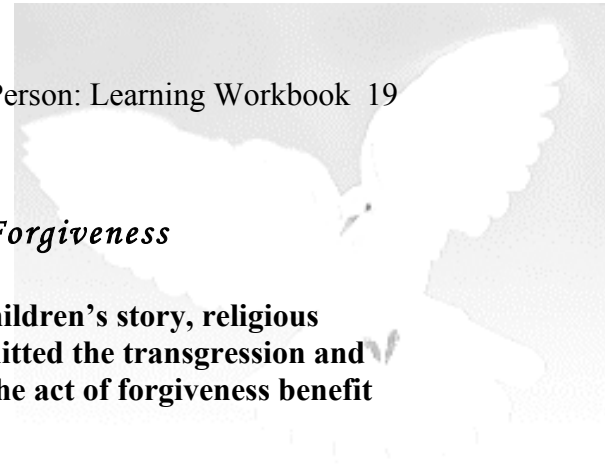
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wF3FX43F-7Y&feature=related>

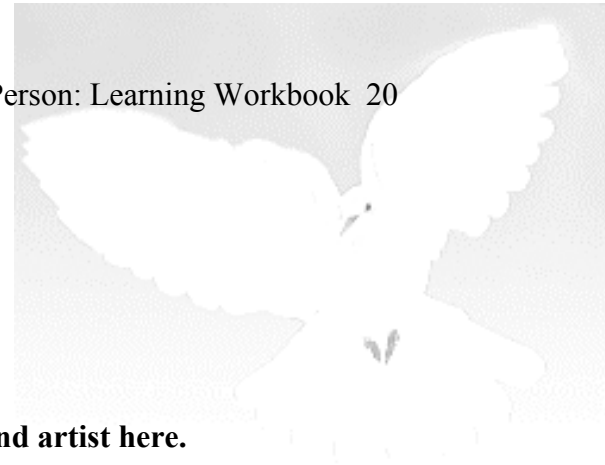
After watching, answer the following questions:

- 1. Why did the bishop forgive Valjean?**
- 2. What, if anything, did the bishop have to gain by forgiving?**
- 3. How do you think Valjean felt upon this act of forgiveness?**

*Exercise 1-4*  
*Finding Your Own Example of Forgiveness*

**Describe a classic story of forgiveness, maybe from a children's story, religious passage, or movie plot. Explain why the offender committed the transgression and why the victim chose to forgive the offender. How did the act of forgiveness benefit their situation?**





*Exercise 1-5*  
*Forgiveness in Music*

**Find a song with a forgiveness theme and list the title and artist here.**

**-Was this a song you already knew, or did you search for a song to fit the question?**

*Exercise 1-6*  
*Discuss Whether Deciding to Forgive and Experiencing Emotional Forgiveness Are Always Closely Linked to Each Other*

In *Five Steps to Forgiveness: The Art and Science of Forgiving* (Crown Publishers, 2003), Everett Worthington suggests that forgiveness is tied to making a *decision to forgive* those who harm us. That decision binds people not to act negatively toward the person who hurt us and to treat them as people of value. However, Worthington also suggests that experiencing *emotional forgiveness* might take longer than deciding to forgive and that a person might sincerely decide to forgive and might hold perfectly to his or her resolve not to harm the offender, yet might not fully experience emotional forgiveness. He believes that decisional and emotional forgiveness—while sometimes occurring together—are two different processes and can occur at different times with either one occurring first. In fact, some people can experience one and never experience the other. Answer the following question.

**How are emotional and decisional forgiveness different?**

**How are they the same?**

**Would you expect emotional and decisional forgiveness to occur at the same or different times? If different times, how far apart?**

*Exercise 1-7*  
*Deciding to Try to Forgive*

This requires that you think about the event you identified during the Pre-Workbook Assessments. Referring to that particular transgression, can you make a decision right now that you are going to *try to forgive* and to *try to experience the freedom of emotionally forgiving* over the next five sections?

- Do you want to *try to forgive* and learn to stick by your decision?
- Do you want to *try to experience the freedom of better feelings of forgiveness*?

*Exercise 1-8*  
*Forgiveness Contract*

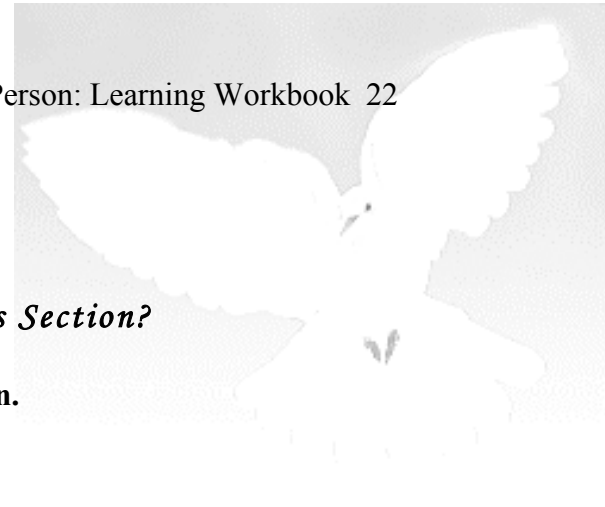
I declare to myself that on \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, I intend to try to use these workbook experiences and my work at home to try to forgive \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ and I also want to become more forgiving person.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness (Signature - Optional)

*Exercise 1-9*  
*Sign the Declaration of Intent*

Complete the statement in Exercise 1-8 and sign it. If you wish, you can have someone witness your signature (but you don't have to do that). The important thing is to make your declaration of intent in writing to YOURSELF.



*Exercise 1-10*  
*What Did Your Get Out of This Section?*

**Write one (or more) thing that you got out of the section.**

*Some Ideas in Response to the Few Thought Questions for Section 1*

1. To what degree do you think forgiveness might be a free gift?

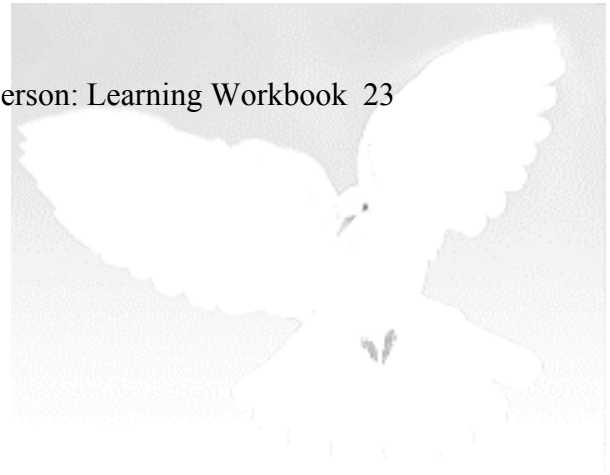
In *Five Steps to Forgiveness: The Art and Science of Forgiving* (Crown Publishers, 2003), Worthington suggests that forgiveness can have emotional, physical, and psychological benefits to the individual granting forgiveness. Sometimes there is not time or opportunity to demonstrate the genuine forgiveness. In those instances, it will suffice to know that you *have* forgiven.

2. To what degree might forgiveness of one person by another be conditional on the repentance of the other? Do you think it is necessary for an individual to seek forgiveness before it may be granted, or can it be granted without it having been sought by the offender?

We can't know the other person's motives. We cannot control the actions of others, we can only control our own.

3. In Texas, Carla Faye Tucker was executed for a brutal murder. She had become a Christian in prison. She had received a statement of forgiveness and support from one of the children of the people she had murdered. If a person victimized by the offense forgives the offender, does that mean that Carla should have been pardoned by the state?

Just as emotional and decisional forgiveness differ from each other, social or societal forgiveness differs from both. A society has social rules that help bind it together, and so Carla Faye Tucker had to pay the social penalty for her brutal murders. In *Five Steps to Forgiveness*, Worthington describes the murder of his mother. Although he forgave the murders, he still suggests that if they were to be apprehended, they would need to be imprisoned so that such a crime could not happen to other elderly women.



## *Section 2*

### *What Is Forgiveness?*

*Goals of Section 2*

1. To agree upon a working definition of forgiveness that we will use for the workbook's purposes.
2. To understand that there are many reasons to forgive.
3. To understand that we often hold on to past hurts by worrying and ruminating about them.

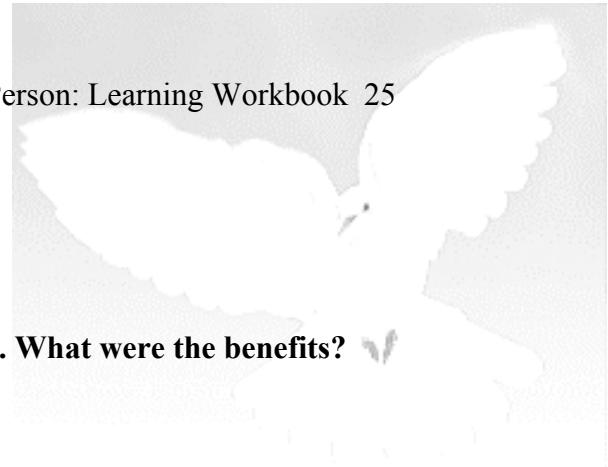
*A Few Questions for Section 2*

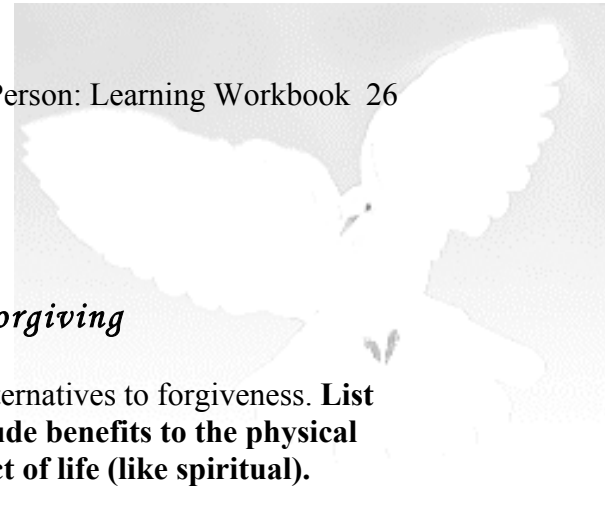
1. **Does it really matter how forgiveness is defined?**
  
2. **Why *should* I forgive? Should I forgive one who hurt me primarily because I don't want to carry around the anger, resentment, and unforgiveness? Should I forgive because I get physical, mental-health, or relationship benefits? Should I forgive and forgo the right to punish the person who harmed me?**



*Exercise 2-1*  
*Why Forgive?*

**Describe a time when you successfully forgave someone. What were the benefits?**





*Exercise 2-2*  
*Identifying the Benefits of Forgiving*

Often, unforgiveness and revenge are seen as legitimate alternatives to forgiveness. **List as many benefits of choosing forgiving as you can. Include benefits to the physical health, mental health, relationship, and any other aspect of life (like spiritual).**

**Physical Health**

**Mental Health**

**Relationship**

**Other**

*Exercise 2-3*  
*Which Two of the Following Is Forgiveness?*

Some of the following ideas have been used to describe forgiveness in the past. Two of them are accurate definitions of forgiveness. Some of them are not quite right, and some of them are just plain wrong. Which are the right ones? What are the others if they are not forgiveness? Select your two answers at the bottom of the page.

1. Telling yourself that what happened wasn't really that bad, and that you ought to just forget what happened and move on
2. Forgetting that anything bad happened, simply pushing the event or relationship out of your memory
3. Starting up your relationship with the person who hurt you again, as if nothing happened
4. Opening yourself to be hurt again
5. Accepting an excuse or explanation for what someone did or is doing to you
6. Doing whatever you can to smooth over conflict
7. A voluntary release of your right to condemn and get revenge on the person who hurt you because you have different feelings toward the person
8. Tolerating negative things that someone has done or continues to do to you
9. Accepting people despite their flaws
10. Blaming and confronting the person who hurt you
11. Getting someone who hurt you to believe that everything is still okay
12. Getting even with the person who hurt you
13. Voluntary decision to give up the right to revenge and release a person from any interpersonal debt incurred by wronging you.
14. Having the other person apologize, express regret, or beg forgiveness until the balance of justice has been restored.

**I choose \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as the definition(s) of forgiveness. Here's why: (write your reasons on the next page)**

### *Explanations for Non-Forgiveness Options*

Here are reactions to each incorrect definition of forgiveness. Read the definition on the previous page. Then read the reactions (on this page and the next).

1. This is denial. If you are hurt and you try to deny it to yourself, the denial almost never works. The hurt keeps resurfacing and you never seem to be free of it.
2. Forgetting is impossible. A memory has been formed. The memory may shift with time. It may change. Or the pain you associate with the memory may even diminish or disappear. But you simply won't be able to completely forget. The disturbing part of *trying* to forget is that the harder you try, the less you will succeed.
3. Trying to start over might actually smooth out the relationship. But smoothing out the relationship is not forgiving. In addition, pretending that the event didn't matter might communicate to the person who hurt you that it is okay to hurt you the same way again.
4. Opening yourself to be hurt again is possible if you continue or restart your interaction with the person who hurt you. That decision is separate from a decision to forgive or not. You can *forgive* and restore the relationship (called reconciliation) or *forgive* and not restore the relationship. Or you can *not forgive* but choose to interact with the person (and risk further hurts) or *not forgive* and not choose to interact.
5. You can accept an excuse or explanation (whether a valid excuse or explanation or an inadequate one) and still not forgive the person for hurting you.
6. Smoothing over conflict can be done whether or not you forgive.
7. This is emotional forgiveness. It acknowledges that a wrong was done but chooses not to seek revenge and not to continue to condemn the person who hurt you. It is the experience of forgiving because you experience different feelings toward the person.
8. Tolerating negative things will generally not stop the negative, and it will generally keep you angry and unforgiving.
9. Accepting someone (with or without acknowledging the flaws) is not forgiving. We can accept a person and not forgive a hurtful act by the person. Or we can forgive a hurtful act and still not accept the person.
10. Blaming a person for hurting you certainly acknowledges the person's guilt but blame keeps the hurt "on the front burner." Confronting the person, which is directly talking with the person about the hurt, might help the relationship (if the confrontation is done gently in love and other person talks instead of attaching or defending). Confronting the person might also damage the relationship. Confronting is not forgiving.
11. Getting someone who hurt you to believe everything is okay when you feel hurt is not forgiving; it is deception. The deception might be done for good motives (such as to spare feelings or prevent being fired by a boss). Or the deception might have more complex or even evil motives (such as setting the person up so you can hurt him or her).
12. Getting even is revenge, not forgiveness.
13. This is decisional forgiveness. It involves your pledge that your behavior will not be aimed at revenge, but that you will try to behave as if the transgression never happened.
14. While having the person apologize, express regret, or beg forgiveness might make you willing to put the offense behind you and might allow you to feel at peace, it is more like getting justice than like forgiving. If the other person humbles himself or herself enough to satisfy your sense of justice, often the other person will feel resentful and feel that you might have asked for too much.

*Exercise 2-4*  
*Assessing the Hurts*

Think about the time that someone hurt you. Try to get back into how you felt around that period of your life, so you can remember vividly how you reacted to the hurt. Which of these kinds of hurt did you feel from the person who hurt you?

\_\_\_ **Disappointment:** I did not get from the person some things I wanted, some things I looked forward to, or some things that I expected.

\_\_\_ **Rejection:** I experienced the loss of some important parts of our relationship and felt that some personal flaw of mine might have been the cause of the loss of the relationship.

\_\_\_ **Abandonment:** I was left behind, physically or emotionally. This experience left me feeling fearful and insecure about the future.

\_\_\_ **Ridicule:** I was the object of his/her anger and mockery. I sometimes wonder if the ridicule was deserved or accurate.

\_\_\_ **Humiliation:** I lost every shred of pride and dignity I had.

\_\_\_ **Betrayal:** My confidence was completely destroyed.

\_\_\_ **Deception:** I was lied to, cheated on, or deceived.

\_\_\_ **Abuse:** I was treated in a way that degraded who I am and robbed me of my dignity, emotionally, physically, or sexually.

\_\_\_ **Separated, unconnected, or estranged:** I felt a loss of connection.

\_\_\_ **Other:** What were they?

Describe your feelings when you learned about the person's hurtful actions. (Write at least 3 sentences about your feelings.)

*Exercise 2-5*  
*Nurturing the Hurt*

Complete Exercise 2-5, Nurturing the Hurt, by answering the following three questions.

- 1. Are there any ways that you are possibly nurturing the hurt in your mind now? Can you think of any ways that you think about the events that happened to you that may serve to continue your pain?**
- 2. What are some of the payoffs of nurturing your hurt?**
- 3. What are some of the costs of nurturing your hurt?**

*Exercise 2-6*  
*The Burden of Unforgiveness*

Clasp your hands and extend your arms as far away from your body as you can. Imagine that in your hands is your burden of hurt and unforgiveness. You may not be ready to let go of this yet, so hold it for thirty more seconds. As your arms grow weary, think of all of the other things you could be doing with your hands (and with your life) if you could just let go and move on. Remember that holding this burden is hurting you, not your offender, but letting go will help you both.

Even though you may not be ready to figuratively let go, open your hands and let your arms fall back to their natural position. Remember the relief you feel, and embrace it when you are ready to forgive.

*Exercise 2-7*  
*What Did Your Get Out of This Section?*

**Write one or more things that you got out of the section.**

*For Further Study and Work Outside of the Workbook*

Think of two recent examples in which you were hurt or offended and forgave the person who harmed you both through making a decision to forgive and through emotionally forgiving the person. Also try to discern, relative to the period immediately after the hurt or offense, whether you feel differently toward the person. Do you think differently? Do you believe the person is safe to be around? Does that mean you didn't fully forgive, or is the feeling of lack of safety something else?

*Some Ideas in Response to the Few Thought Questions for Section 2*

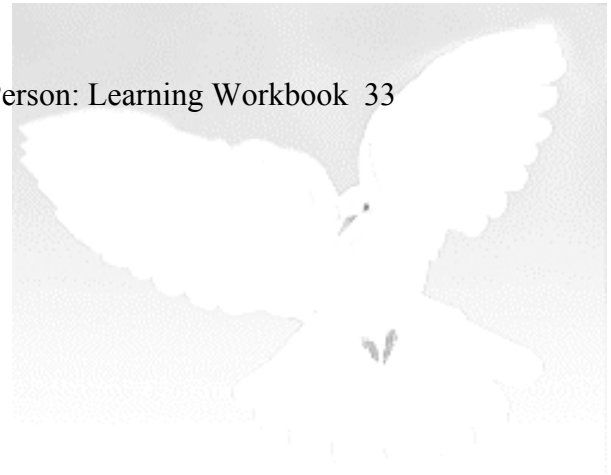
1. Does it really matter how forgiveness is defined?

It is important that we adopt a “working definition” of forgiveness to use when we are working through this workbook. People legitimately differ in whether they think forgiveness is best initiated by changing their thinking or beliefs, changing their motivations, changing their behaviors, or changing their emotional experience. Regardless of how forgiveness is begun, when it is complete, we have made a decision to forgive and have different emotions. We might also have different thoughts, beliefs, and actions. Experience from all of our groups has taught us that people can benefit the most by accepting a working definition and sticking with it—at least while working through the workbook. So, even if you think of forgiveness a bit differently than we are describing it, would you suspend your own definition for the time being and work through this workbook thinking along with us. That is, we are treating forgiveness as two separate experiences: (1) as a decision about how you intend to act toward the person who hurt you and (2) as an emotional replacement of negative emotions with more positive emotions toward the offender.

2. Why *should* I forgive? Should I forgive one who hurt me primarily because I don't carry around the anger, resentment, and unforgiveness? Should I forgive because I get physical, mental-health, relationship, or other benefits? Should I forgive and forgo the right to punish the person who harmed me?

There is no single reason why we should forgive. As complicated humans living in complicated communities, it is good for us to forgive—physically, mentally, relationally, and even spiritually, if you are so inclined, and it is good for society that more people forgive. Yet, we have found that when people forgive for these “instrumental” reasons, they paradoxically often do not receive the depth of forgiveness that they get when they forgive because they experience altruistic love and want to grant a gift to the person who harmed them. This is a great challenge. This is forgiveness.





## *Section 3*

### *Recalling the Hurt (in Helpful Ways)*



*Exercise 3-1*  
*Decisional Forgiveness*

Answer the following two questions:

**Have you made a *decision* (regardless of your feelings) in the sense of *granting forgiveness* for the target transgression that you picked out at the beginning?**

**What does making such a *decision* mean for your behavior toward the person? Will you do anything differently than you have been doing?**

Hopefully, you now feel that you've made a sincere decision to forgive regarding this transgression. But making a decision to be more forgiving is far different than actually experiencing forgiveness in your life. Otherwise, all we would have to do is make a New Year's resolution, and not have to actually live out the love of forgiveness. But, indeed, although making a decision is necessary, it is not sufficient to really change. You need to REACH forgiveness to change. The remainder of the workbook is about moving through five steps to REACH forgiveness. Your memory for each of the five steps will be cued by one of the letters of REACH. So, now you will work through these five steps to REACH forgiveness.

*R=Recall the Hurt*

*Exercise 3-2*  
*Recall the Hurt through Imagination*

Take some deep breaths before beginning this section. We are about to really start working toward forgiveness. Quiet yourself, relax. Picture the person who hurt you. Picture the experiences you had during and before and after the hurtful incident. Remember conversations and other experiences of events.

*Exercise 3-3*

*Recall the Hurt through Discussing What You Just Imagined*

**Write about your story. Try to create a vivid picture of event.**

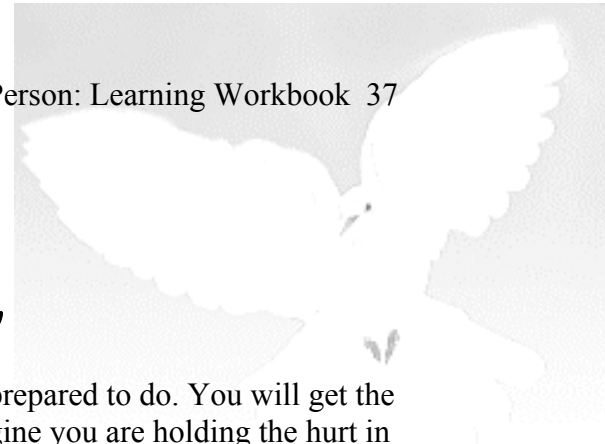
*Exercise 3-4*

*Discussion of Events Objectively*

Rationale: We aren't going to get anywhere if we keep telling the story repeatedly. We need another, more objective story. Someone once defined *insanity* as doing the same thing again and again and expecting a different result. So visualize as a 3<sup>rd</sup> party observer. Get more distance on the story. Do imagery.

**a. Share the story again, but this time without emphasizing the perpetrator's badness or your own victimization or the consequences this has had.**

**b. What are the differences between the first and second versions of your story?**



*Exercise 3-5*  
*Giving the Hurt Away*

Let's try this again to remind you of what you are prepared to do. You will get the most out of this exercise if you use your body. Stand. Imagine you are holding the hurt in your hands. Hold your arms out and think about this picture as what you might be doing with the hurt. You are trying to keep it contained inside your hands. You are trying to keep it at arm's length from you. If you, in fact, stand and hold your arms out for a while, after about a minute of this, your arms will get tired and feel heavy and burdensome. Can you see how this is a metaphor for holding onto grudges?

Now, if you've done this, imagine yourself making a decision to release the hurt. To symbolize this—regardless of whether you feel like really forgiving at this moment—open your hands and suddenly let your arms fall to your sides. (You may choose to do this exercise with actually holding an object that represents the hurt.)

You might actually want to make a decision to forgive the person right now. If you do, that will not necessarily mean that you feel any differently toward the person. Your feelings will be more affected by the following sections as we work through emotional forgiveness. But in decisional forgiveness, you make a decision to act differently toward the person. You agree with your self to stop holding a grudge and start trying to treat the person as a valuable person.

Are you able to make the decision to forgive? Importantly, type in one of the options below that expresses your current status of decision-making:

**Yes, I have decided to forgive (and I'll try to act like it in the future)**

**No, I have not yet decided to forgive; maybe later in the workbook**

**Right now, it seems that I'll never be able to forgive even though I want to**

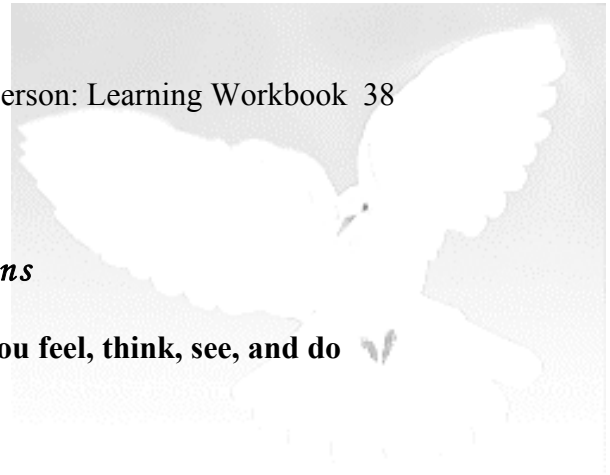
**Right now, I can't see that forgiveness is going to happen**

Later, after trying to change your emotions toward the person, you can come back to this. If you haven't been able to make a decision to forgive right now, you might find it easier later.

*E=Empathize with (and Sympathize with, Feel Compassion for, and Love)*  
*the One Who Hurt You*

*Exercise 3-6*  
*We Do Things for Reasons*

**Write about a time when *you hurt someone*. What did you feel, think, see, and do *before, during, and after*.**



*Exercise 3-7*  
*Examining Closeness*

**How does closeness to your offender influence your ability to forgive? How is the forgiveness experience different with someone who is close to you than with someone who is just an acquaintance or even a stranger?**

*Exercise 3-8*  
*A Thought to Ponder Prior to Next Section*

A concluding thought to ponder this week:

We all do things for what we believe at the time to be good reasons. (These might not seem like good reasons to the people who might have hurt.) Because we have all had this experience of hurting others even with the best of intentions, we can understand that the person who hurt us (in our target transgression) probably had what he or she believed to be good reasons.

*Exercise 3-9*  
*What Did Your Get Out of This Section?*

**Write one or more things that you got out of the section.**

*For Further Study*

**Make a list of five times in your life—thinking back to early childhood, adolescence, and more recently—that someone significantly betrayed, hurt, offended, or disappointed you. Attempt to recall each hurt objectively and empathize with the offender. How does that make you feel?**

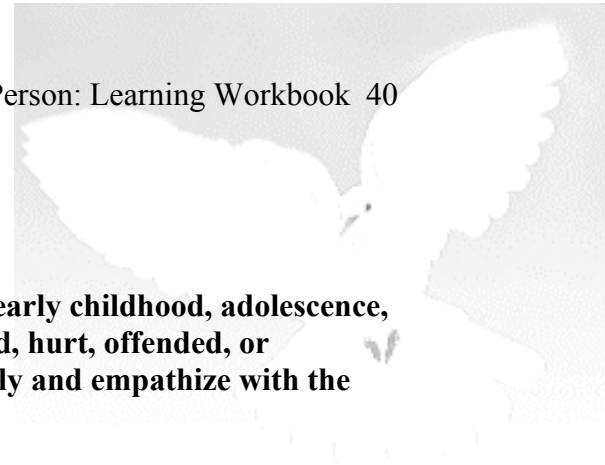
1.

2.

3.

4.

5.





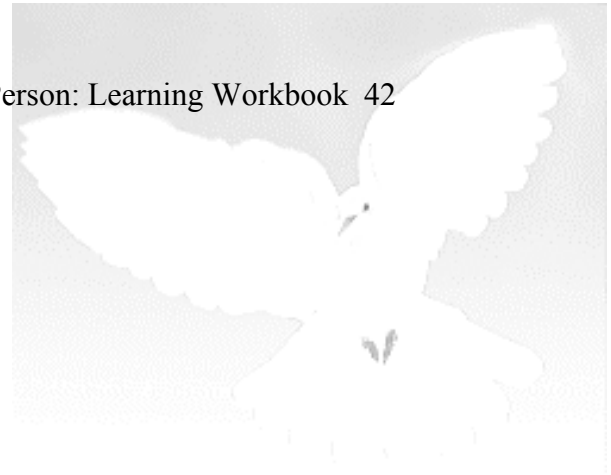
*Some Ideas in Response to the Few Thought Questions for Section 3*

1. When you recall times that you were hurt, disappointed, misunderstood, betrayed, and dealt with unfairly, what are the effects of thinking and feeling the same way every time you recall or tell those events?

Telling the story with all of its pathos and tragedy—whether to yourself or to others—will program you with the message that you are a victim. Is that the picture of yourself that you want to dwell on—as a victim?

2. Is dealing with a transgression against you similar to grieving a loss?

When we are hurt, we *might* lose many things—our peace, our sense of safety and security, our close friendship, material things, our belief in a just world. We grieve those losses. Grieving comes in stages. We are at first upset and emotional. Later, we replay those events again and again—to others and in our own minds. Eventually, most of the events are accepted and we move on with life. If the period of time in which we are replaying the events in our minds and in conversations to others tell a story of victimization or hatred, it can program that view into our worldviews. But if our story is one of forgiveness, we program into our worldview a story of reconciliation, mercy, and often forgiveness.



## *Section 4*

# *Empathy for the One Who Hurt You: The Hard Part of Experiencing Emotional Forgiveness*

*Goals of Section 4*

1. To empathize with the person who hurt you.
2. To learn ways that we can promote empathy.
3. Even if you cannot empathize, to learn ways to sympathize and experience compassion for those who have harmed you

*A Few Thought Questions for Section 4*

1. **Do we really want to get into the mind and heart of a person who inflicted harm on us? Should we identify in some way with heartless mass murderers, serial killers, people who abuse their children or family members, people who betray fragile trusts?**

2. **In empathizing with our offenders, and forgiving, what is our part?**

*E=Empathize with (and Sympathize with, Feel Compassion for, and Love) the One Who Hurt You (continued from the previous section)*

*Exercise 4-1*

*Remember: We Do Things for Reasons*

The previous section, you thought of a time when **you hurt someone**. We concluded this: We all do things for what we believe at the time to be good reasons. (These might not seem like good reasons to the people who might have been hurt.) Because we have all had this experience of hurting others even with the best of intentions, we can understand that the person who hurt us (in our target transgression) probably had what he or she believed to be good reasons.

**Since the previous section, do you still believe this idea has merit? Why?**

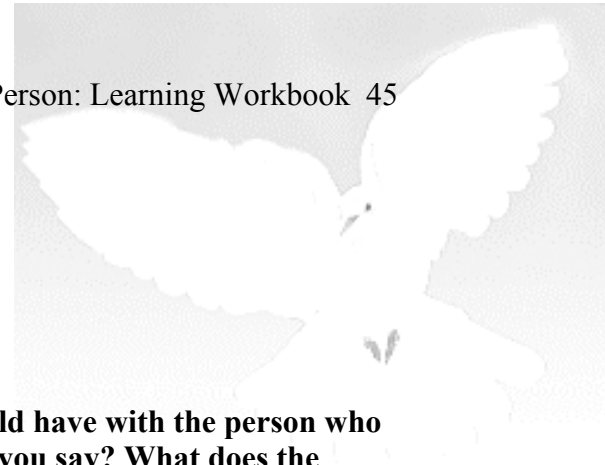
*Exercise 4-2*

*Trying to Understand Why the Person Hurt You*

Pertaining to the target transgression:

**a. Write about what you think your offender was experiencing.**

**b. What are some other possible experiences the perpetrator might have had?**



*Exercise 4-3*  
*Role Play*

**a. Write about a hypothetical conversation you would have with the person who transgressed. How does this conversation go? What do you say? What does the transgressor say?**

(Example)

Me: You really hurt my feelings when you ran over my dog and didn't seem sorry.

Transgressor: I didn't realize it still bothered you.

Me: I wish you had showed a little more remorse, I really loved my dog.

Transgressor: I'm sorry for causing you pain.

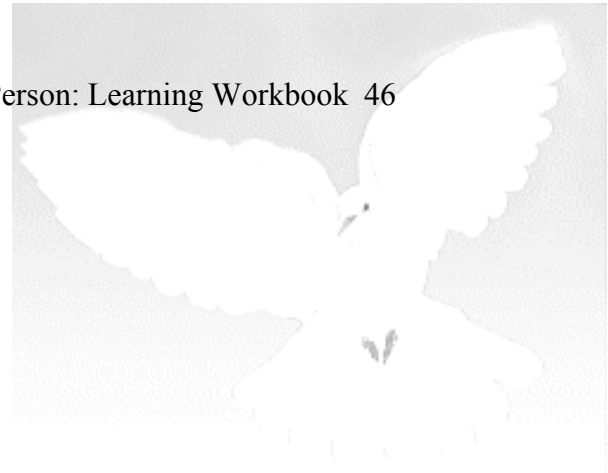
**(Now you)**

**[Try to have at least three meaningful exchanges between you and your transgressor]**

**b. Did you consider person's history? Pressures? Reasoning?**

**c. Pull up an empty chair across from you, and deliver the above dialogue. Sit one chair for your lines, and in the other chair for your transgressor's lines, so that you are moving back and forth every few seconds. Do you have any new insights now that you're putting yourself in the transgressor's place?**

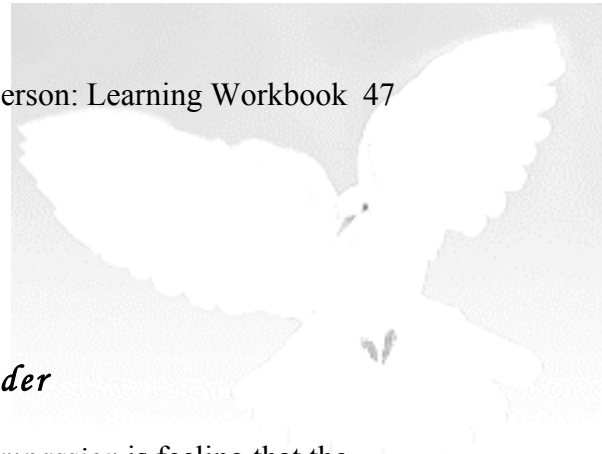
**d. What have you realized about the person's motives and possible feelings. Do you understand their feelings and reasoning better now?**



*Exercise 4-4*  
*Sympathizing with the Offender*

Answer the following five questions:

- **Are there any reasons to feel sorry for the person who offended you?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Does he or she need forgiveness?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **From him or herself?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **From yourself?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Do you feel any sorrow on behalf of the person?**



*Exercise 4-5*  
*Compassion for the Offender*

*Compassion* is “sympathy with work boots on.” That is, *compassion* is feeling that the person is needy and *wanting* to do something to help.

***Answer this:*** If you felt real compassion for the person who hurt you, what might you do to meet one of the person’s needs?

*A = Give an Altruistic Gift of*  
*Forgiveness*

*Exercise 4-6*  
*When Did You Do Something Altruistic for Someone Else*

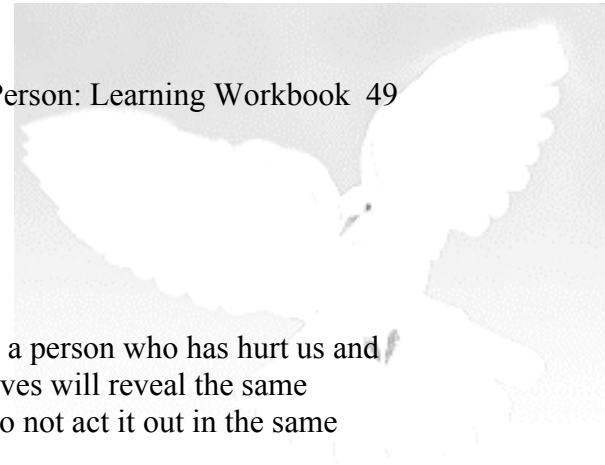
**Write about a time when you did something altruistic for another person. Describe what you did. Describe how you felt about doing it. How did you feel after you had done this altruistic act?**

*Exercise 4-7*  
*We Are All Capable of Wrongdoing*

Yehiel Dinur was a holocaust survivor who was a witness during the trial of the infamous Nazi war criminal, Adolf Eichmann. Dinur entered the courtroom and stared at the man behind the bulletproof glass—the man who had presided over the slaughter of millions. The court was hushed as a victim confronted a butcher of his people. Suddenly Dinur began to sob and collapsed to the floor. But not out of anger or bitterness. As he explained later in an interview, what struck him was a terrifying realization. “I was afraid about myself,” Dinur said. “I saw that I am capable to do this...Exactly like he.” In a moment of chilling clarity, Dinur saw the skull beneath the skin. “Eichmann, “he concluded, “is in all of us.”

- Answer these three questions:
  - 1. What is the point of this story? Do you agree with it? Why or why not?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 2. Do you think that Yehiel Dinur thought that he was in any way similar to Adolf Eichmann before his realization?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 3. Do you tend to underestimate your capacity, under a different set of circumstances, to commit atrocities?**





*Exercise 4-8  
For Contemplation*

We often exaggerate the “psychological distance” between a person who has hurt us and ourselves. More frequently than not, a hard search of our lives will reveal the same energy to commit evil that is in our offenders, even if we do not act it out in the same ways or with the same severity of outcome.

People tend to attribute *their* negative behavior to thoughts or feelings due to circumstances outside of their control, but attribute the negative behavior to *others* to something wrong with *them*. (Example: What if either you or your teacher arrived late to class because of car trouble. If you arrive late, you are likely to say that you had car trouble. If your teacher arrived late, what would be some explanations that you might guess were the causes of his/her lateness?)

The act/disposition distinction is an important one to make, because we tend to judge our actions by a different set of standards than we do other people.

The truth is, everyone’s negative behavior is a combination of circumstances happening to us and our natural tendency to behave selfishly and in ways that hurts others. The human tendency to blame others for the very thing for which we let ourselves off the hook creates an artificial psychological distance between others and ourselves.

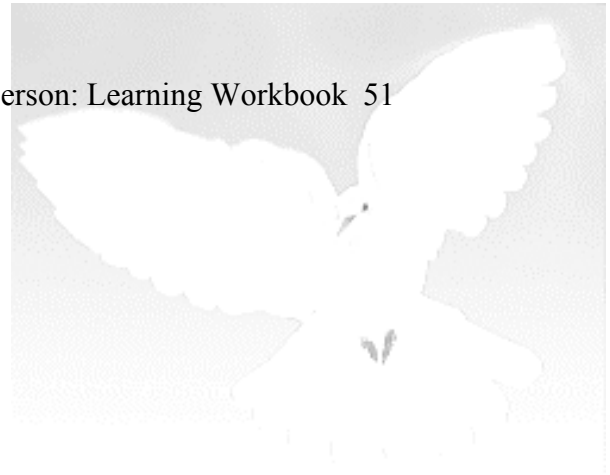
*Exercise 4-9  
What Did Your Get Out of This Section?*

**Write about one or more things that you got out of the section.**

*Some Ideas in Response to the Few Thought Questions for Section 4*

1. Do we really want us to get into the mind and heart of a person who inflicted harm on us? Should we identify in some way with heartless mass murderers, serial killers, people who abuse their children or family members, people who betray fragile trusts?

We want to believe that we are different from those who harm us. On many levels, we *need* to believe we are different from those who harm us. As we have seen, however, in Dinur's tale, we are all capable of the same evils as others, even if we choose not to believe it. By looking deep in ourselves and discovering that we are capable of doing onto others as our offenders have done unto us, we learn that perhaps offender aren't evil monstrous creatures bent on our suffering, but rather they are people like you or I.



## *Section 5*

# *Giving a Gift of Forgiveness: Altruism and Commitment*



## *A = Give an Altruistic Gift of Forgiveness (continued)*

### *Exercise 5-1* *When Did You Need Forgiving?*

“Humility is the antidote to shame.” Dan Allender

*Recalling a Time When You Needed Forgiveness.* Think back to a time in your past when you hurt someone or did something wrong, and you needed forgiveness, *and were granted forgiveness*. This might be an incident from your childhood, a time when you were in high school or college, a time in your marriage or relationship, or an incident in some other relationship. What matters is that you had done something wrong and felt badly about it *and* that you were forgiven. **Write a description of the event.**

Now, answer the following questions in writing by jotting a few notes.

- 1. What did it feel like to be in trouble, to lose face, to lose respect or self-respect, and to need forgiveness?**
- 2. What does it feel like in your stomach? How did your palms feel? Other parts of the body?**
- 3. What would you call the emotions that you experienced as you realized that you had wronged another and needed forgiveness?**

4. **What did it feel (or would it have felt) like to ask the person you hurt for forgiveness and to have received it? Were you humbled?**

*Exercise 5-2*

*Getting in Touch with the Gratitude We Feel for Our Forgiveness*

Focus for a moment on how good it felt to receive forgiveness and the feeling of freedom you received when the burden of guilt was lifted from you in that time in the past. When you have been able to adopt this state of gratitude, do this exercise.

Exercise:

- **If you were going to write a letter of gratitude for being forgiven, what would you say? Write a few notes here:**

*Exercise 5-3*

*Reactions to Being Forgiven*

**What did it feel like to be forgiven? Write your feelings here.**

*Exercise 5-4*  
*The Gift of Forgiving (I)*

**Imagine the person who hurt you in the scenario you have chosen for this workbook. If that person were in trouble, would you help? Write about things you would be willing to do for that person.**

*Exercise 5-5*  
*The Gift of Forgiving (II)*

**Open “Paint” on your computer, it should be under “Accessories.” Draw a gift that you would like to give your offender as a sign of their forgiveness. Copy it here or attach it to this workbook. After that, explain the meaning and significance of what you made here:**

*Exercise 5-6*  
*A Crucial Question*

On a percent basis, what percent of the negative feelings have you replaced?

**I have forgiven the person who hurt or offended me \_\_\_\_\_ percent of the negative feelings I held.**

*C=Commit to the Forgiveness You Experienced*

*Exercise 5-6*  
*Commit By Writing*

- Write about how much you forgave emotionally and how that feels.



*Exercise 5-7*  
*Completing a Certificate of Emotional Forgiveness*

Complete the following:

**CERTIFICATE OF EMOTIONAL FORGIVENESS**

**I DECLARE TO MYSELF THAT AS OF THE DATE \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_\_, I  
HAVE FORGIVEN \_\_\_\_\_ FOR \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.**

**TO DATE I HAVE FORGIVEN \_\_\_\_\_ PERCENT OF THE EMOTIONAL  
UNFORGIVENESS.**

**SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_**

*Exercise 5-8*  
*What if Emotional Forgiveness Isn't Complete?*

1. If you have experienced less than 100 percent emotional forgiveness, you might need to go back through the steps again.
2. If you have a history of mutual hurtful acts with your transgressor—perhaps some big hurts and many small hurts—you do not need to recall every hurt to effectively forgive your transgressor for his or her hurtfulness. You can forgive the hurtfulness by taking three steps.
  - a. Pick two or three of the most hurtful acts that will stand for proxies for all the hurts inflicted by the person.
  - b. Work through those two or three—one at a time—until each is forgiven.
  - c. At some point you will decide that you have forgiven enough of the individual acts, and you have thus forgiven the person.

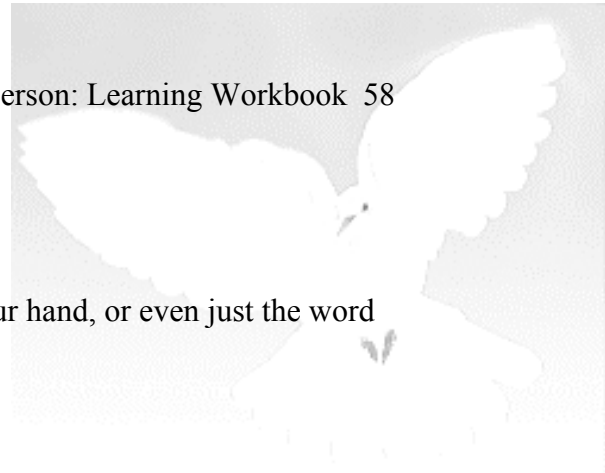
*Exercise 5-9*  
*Hand Washing*

- Write a brief description of the transgression on your hand, or even just the word “HURT.”
- Now go to the bathroom and wash it off.
- Were you able to get all of the ink off?

Lesson: We can move through the Pyramid Model to REACH Forgiveness once, and it probably won't totally erase our bad feelings about the transgression. But it will lighten the feelings. Through repeated washings, we become free of the negative, unforgiving feelings.

*Exercise 5-10*  
*Barriers to Complete Emotional Forgiveness*

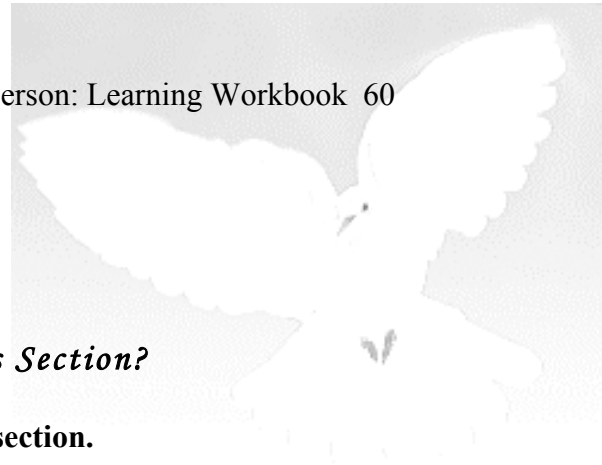
**List some barriers to emotional forgiving completely.**



*Exercise 5-11*  
*A Hypothetical Letter Expressing Forgiveness*

**Write in the space below about what you would say if you were to write a letter to the transgressor expressing your *decisional* forgiveness (that is, that you have decided not to hold a grudge and to treat the person as a valuable human) and telling the person of your experience of emotional forgiveness (that is, that you have replaced negative emotions with positive emotions toward the person).**

(Note: I'm not recommending that you actually send such a letter. Sometimes that type of letter can offend the other person—especially if he or she isn't aware you still held unforgiveness against him or her. But writing down your experience will help YOU.)



*Exercise 5-12*  
*What Did Your Get Out of This Section?*

**Write about one or more things that you got out of the section.**

*For Further Study*

Using this website (<http://www.elijah.com/lexicon.html>), look up entries from whichever source you're comfortable with that pertain to "gratitude," being "grateful," "thanks," and "thanksgiving" (and other related words). To whom ought we to be thankful? To whom ought we to express our thanks? Do the same type of word-study with "altruism" or "unselfish" or the opposite—"selfish."

*Some Ideas in Response to the Few Thought Questions for Section 5*

1. What are you grateful for? Do you consider yourself a generally grateful person? To whom are you grateful and for what?

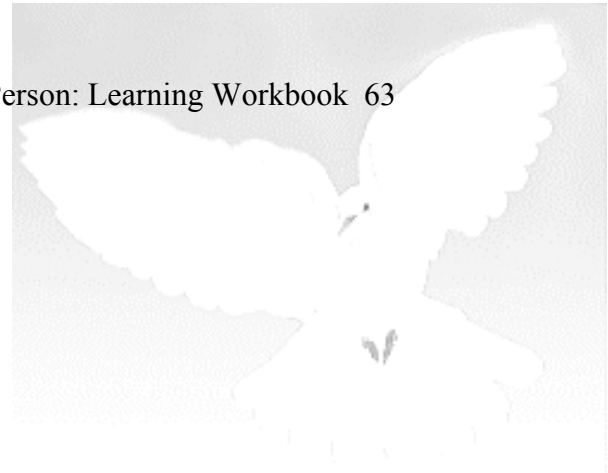
When we are grateful, we can feel that gratitude toward any person. Scientists have begun to show that an attitude of gratitude can produce better health. In fact, just writing down things you are grateful for each day can result in better health.

2. Are you often altruistic? Altruism is unselfish behavior to aid another person. Can you think of a time when you behaved altruistically? What happened?

Scientists are studying altruism, too. Some people argue that no purely altruistic act is possible, that all acts have some self-interested motives. Usually, though, such debates can distract us from trying to practice altruism. Let's not be distracted from acting in altruistic love at every possible opportunity.

3. If you come to the conclusion that you have forgiven someone, do you expect that you should forget the incident? Should you be able to see the person and feel nothing but love in your heart for the person? Should you put by-gones aside and embrace the person with an open heart, ignoring all past history that might suggest that you be careful?

“Forgive and forget,” is social encouragement that once we forgive, try not to bring up the matter. In fact, though, forgiving implies that we don't really forget. If we forgive it is because we remember and then choose to forgive and often experience emotional forgiveness as well. But when a person hurts us, they make it less safe to be around them. It is natural to be more wary—even if we have fully forgiven—about being harmed again. It takes a while for a person to regain their trust. Being prudent is not the same thing as being unforgiving.



## *Section 6*

# *Holding on to Forgiveness and Becoming a More Forgiving Person*

*Goals of Section 6*

1. To develop a number of strategies to maintain emotional peace that comes from forgiveness and to practice those.
2. To expand the applications of the REACH model to other issues so that we can become truly more forgiving people.

*A Few Thought Questions for Section 6*

1. **How do you try to hold on to forgiveness whenever you unexpectedly encounter someone that you forgave?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. **Do you have ways of getting your mind off of worry and rumination if you start to think negatively about an old wound? What strategies work for you?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. **If you wanted to design you own program to become more forgiving, what would you do?**



*Exercise 6-1*  
*Review of Major Concepts*

**What are the five steps to REACH forgiveness?**

**What are our working definitions of “granting decisional forgiveness” and “experiencing emotional forgiveness”?**

***H=Hold on to Forgiveness When You***  
***Doubt***

*Exercise 6-2*  
*Smile*

**Copy and paste a picture into this space that always makes you smile. (It can be one of you or your friends or family, or it can be one you have found on the internet.)**

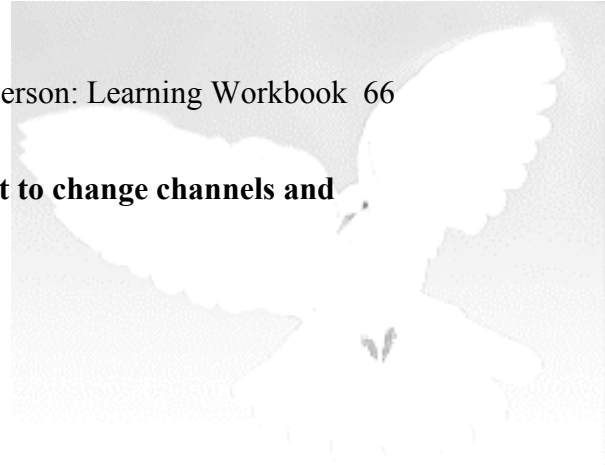
Here’s the message: You have a choice about your emotions. You can hold onto your unforgiving emotions, or if you have replaced those with love or empathy or sympathy or compassion, you can now hold on to your emotional forgiveness- even in the face of powerful events that demand that you give up that emotional forgiveness. Psychologist Fred Luskin suggests that experiencing negative emotions is like watching a television channel that is depressing, angering, fear-producing, or bitterness-enhancing. But importantly, *you can change channels*. Choose a more positive channel.

**What negative emotional channels do you often watch?**

**What positive emotional channels do you want to watch more of?**

**Is there something stopping you from changing channels? What is it?**

**Can you do something about it? Or can you just commit to change channels and seek more positive experiences?**



*Exercise 6-3*

*Things That Might Make You Doubt Whether You Really Emotionally Forgave*

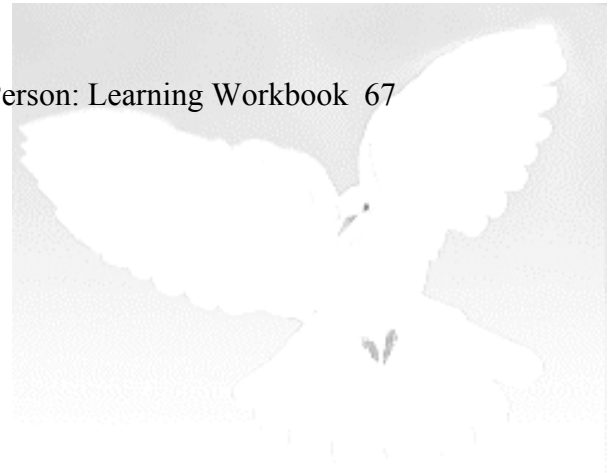
You've worked hard and experienced either complete or at least partial emotional forgiveness when compared to beginning the workbook. But it's possible you might doubt that you actually have forgiven. **Can you think of some times when you might doubt that you have forgiven?**

One conclusion: There are *hot* reminders (like seeing the person unexpectedly, getting hurt similarly again by someone else, getting hurt by the same person again). There are other times when we just worry or ruminate about the past.

*Exercise 6-4*

*Seeing the Person Again*

**#1: Imagine seeing the person again. What feelings might you feel? Draw a picture of your face to show your inner feelings, using Paint. Copy and paste your picture into this space.**



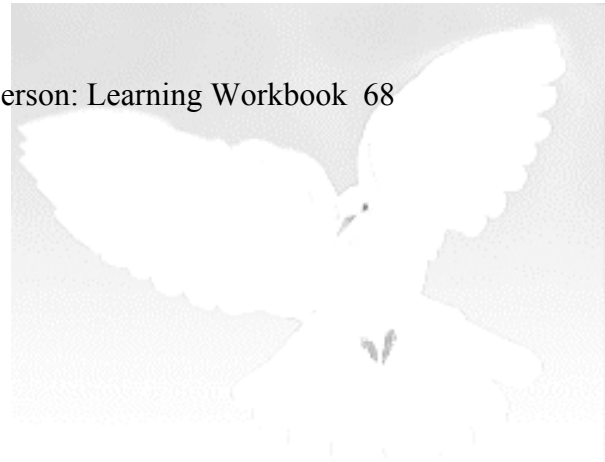
**#2: If you do feel anger, what do you plan to do?**

**#3: Write a message in favor of the offender that helps you hold onto your forgiveness.**

*Exercise 6-5*

*Hold on to Forgiveness When You Are in the Midst of a "Reminder" Experience*

**Make a list of ways to avoid getting back into bitterness or hatred if you are in one of those "reminder" situations?**



***Exercise 6-6***  
***Important Example***

Having memories of past harms is our way to protect ourselves from doing something dangerous again. If I burn my hand on a stove eye, I feel fear and anger when my hand gets near the eye again. That isn't "unforgiveness" against the stove eye; it's just my body's way of protecting me.

Further, if you keep touching a hot stove, you'll keep getting burned. You have to change your actions and the way you think about the hurt to keep it from happening again.

So, remember: *The pain, anger, or fear that arises due to a memory or that comes from encountering the person who hurt us once again are NOT unforgiveness.* When you see the person who hurt you and feel the negative feelings (anger, fear, sadness) pop up again, you can remind yourself: *This pain, anger, and fear I'm feeling is not unforgiveness. It's just my body's way of protecting me so I won't make the same mistakes I made last time.*

***Exercise 6-7***  
***Control Rumination or Worry***

- Experience in controlling your thoughts. Many of you have probably heard of the white bear phenomenon. Spend twenty seconds trying NOT to think about white bears.
- **What worked and what didn't?**
- **What can you apply from this exercise when you start thinking about the time when the person hurt you?**

***Exercise 6-8***  
***Summary of Ways to Hold On to Forgiveness***

WAYS TO HOLD ON TO FORGIVENESS IN THE MIDST OF A REMINDER EXPERIENCE

1. GET OUT OF THE SITUATION
2. DISTRACT YOURSELF

WAYS TO HOLD ON TO FORGIVENESS IF YOU START TO WORRY OR RUMINATE ABOUT IT

1. REALIZE THAT THE PAIN OF A REMEMBERED HURT IS NOT UNFORGIVENESS.
2. DON'T DWELL ON NEGATIVE EMOTIONS
3. REMIND YOURSELF THAT YOU HAVE FORGIVEN THE PERSON
4. SEEK REASSURANCE FROM A PARTNER OR FRIEND
5. USE THE DOCUMENTS THAT YOU CREATED
6. LOOK AT THE PYRAMID MODEL TO REACH FORGIVENESS, AND THINK THROUGH THE STEPS AGAIN.

**Which of these do you intend to try to use more often than you have been? List the ones that appeal to you the most and that you think you have the best chance of using.**

*Exercise 6-9*  
*Before and After*

**Using Paint, draw a representation of your feelings before and after forgiveness and copy it into the space below.**

**Describe your pictures and tell us what changed between them.**

*Exercise 6-10*  
*Helping You Remember*

Assume that you have been talking to a friend about forgiving a hurt that he or she has recently experienced. The person has told you that forgiveness has been extremely hard. The person has been wrestling with two problems. First, the person says he or she has forgiven and really means it, but finds that he or she still gets resentful or angry when thinking about the harm done. Second, the person doesn't know how get rid of the resentment and anger.

**Explain the difference between decisional and emotional forgiveness to your friend.**

**Tell your friend how one can make a sincere decision to forgive and yet still feel resentment until emotional forgiveness is experienced.**

**Explain the five steps to REACH emotional forgiveness to your friend.**

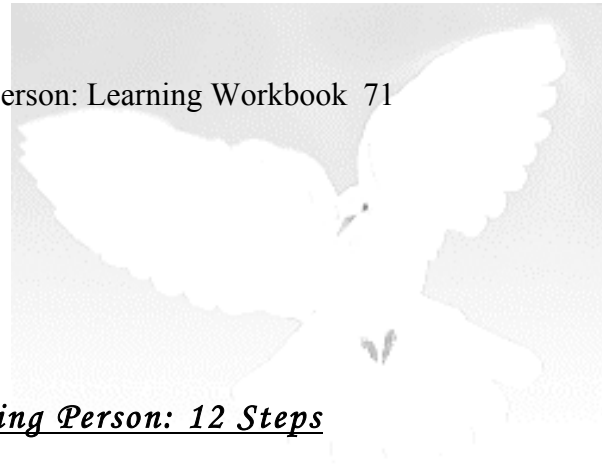
**What do you think would be most helpful to tell your friend? Least helpful?**

**If you have not yet done these things, would you agree to try to make time for the conversation?**

**Who specifically would you like to talk with these about? Write his or her first name here.**

**When might be a good time to have this talk?**

**Do you intend to follow through and do it?**



*Exercise 6-11*

*Dedicate Yourself to Being a More Forgiving Person: 12 Steps*

**Step 1: Why Forgive?**

**Why do you want to be a more forgiving person? List as many reasons as you can.**

**Step 2: Identify the 10 greatest wounds you have experienced throughout your lifetime.**

**List a short description (like: “Dad abandoned our family when I was young”) of about 10 of the most severe wounds you have experienced.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

**Step 3: Forgive one wound at a time.**

Pick one of the wounds you listed in Step 2, write a brief description of each.

**R= Recall the hurt (summary)**

**E=Empathize (from a sympathetic point of view, describe why the person did what he or she did)**

**A=Altruistic gift (write a reason why you might want to unselfishly grant forgiveness; you could bless this person?)**

**C=Commit to any forgiveness you experienced (write your intention to try someday, or soon, or when, to forgive)**

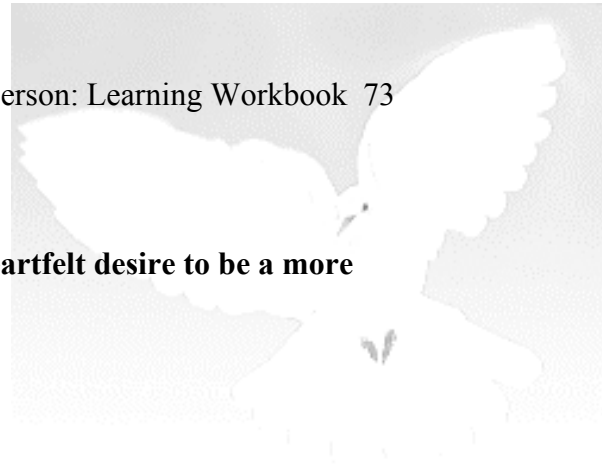
**H=Hold on to forgiveness (write how hard you think it would be to make this a lasting forgiveness)**

**Step 4: Identify your forgiveness heroes**

Looking back over your life and thinking of people you know or have read or heard about, identify 2 people you think of as *forgiveness heroes*—people who have forgiven much and whom you admire.

- 1. Describe someone in your life who you consider to be very forgiving. What makes them forgiving? How do you feel about this person?**
- 2. Someone from the past (examples: Jews, Gandhi, King David, Solzhenitsyn, Martin Luther King, Jr., etc.)**
- 3. Someone from the present whom you don't know personally**





**Step 5: Examine yourself**

**Write a detailed message to yourself expressing your heartfelt desire to be a more forgiving person.**

**Step 6: Try to become more forgiving**

**Write ways you would like to develop a forgiving and warm character. How do you think you could begin moving toward this character?**

**Step 7: Change your experience with the past**

**You can't change the past, but you can change the way you are going to talk about it. Pick out one of the ten events (step 2) and write how you are going to talk differently about it from now on.**

**Step 8: Plan your strategy for becoming more forgiving**

**Write below a way you are going to try better from now on to forgive your offender.**

**Can you dedicate yourself to seeking forgiveness for your offenders and being more grateful for the roles others play in our lives?**

**Write something else that you really intend to do to become a more forgiving person.**

**Step 9: Practice forgiving under imagined conditions**

**Pick one of the people from your list of ten events (Step 2). Imagine you are in a room with that person. What happens?**

**Step 10: Practicing Forgiveness day to day**

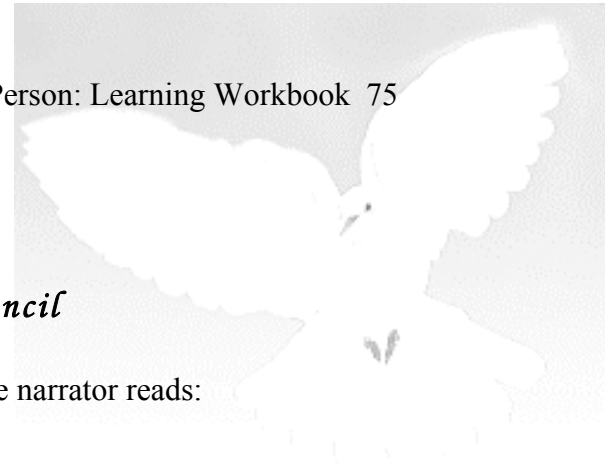
**Looking back at your list of 10 (see Step 2), choose the one person that you have the most negative feeling toward. List their strengths as a person.**

**Step 11: Consult someone you trust**

**Do you seek social support when someone has wronged you and you are feeling hurt, or do you try to handle it alone? Is there anyone you trust that you could talk to about your heartfelt desire to be a more forgiving person? Write that person, or persons, name(s) below. Why do you go to that person? What kind of response do they usually give you?**

**Step 12: Start a campaign to feel warmth towards your enemies**

**Write out things you could do (both privately and publicly) to show your attempts to change your feelings toward those that have harmed you. Write out specific things you could do to show the warmth of your emotions towards one of those people you listed in Step 2.**



*Exercise 6-12*  
*Learn the Lessons of a Pencil*

Look at or imagine a pencil with an eraser while the narrator reads:

Learn the lessons the pencil has for your life.

- It has a short life, yet it can make a significant mark- just like you.
- It is not a pen. Its mistakes can be corrected with effort, but it often means standing the pencil on its head. Instead of the power that the world advocates, seek love. Instead of revenge, seek to forgive.
- For the pencil- like you- what is inside, not outside, is responsible for its mark.
- The pencil needs to be ground down and sharpened regularly, so don't despise the sharpening that you must undergo. Often the hurts and wounds you feel as painful can be your own sharpening.

*Exercise 6-13*  
*Mirror*

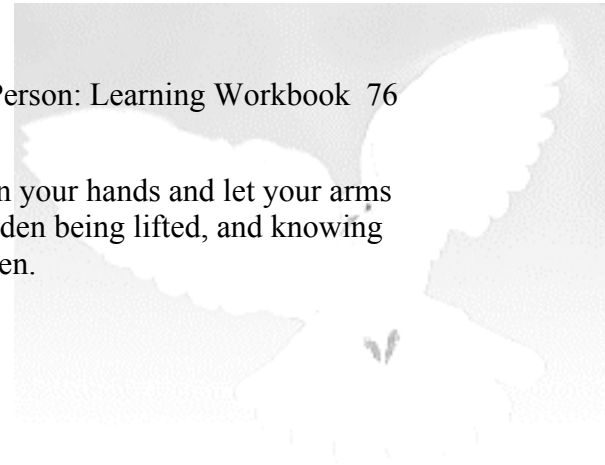
Look at yourself in the mirror, then walk away. Return to the mirror a second time.

You have looked at two faces. The first face you saw was the face of a person who has been hurt and at the same time the face of a person who has hurt others. The second face you saw is the face of one who has struggled against the oppression of unforgiveness, revenge motives, and grudges. It is the face of one who has emerged victorious over unforgiveness. It is the face of a hero of forgiveness. Live like the hero of forgiveness that you are!

*Exercise 6-14*  
*The Burden of Unforgiveness*

One last time, clasp your hands and extend your arms as far away from your body as you can. Imagine that in your hands is your burden of hurt and unforgiveness, and hold it for about thirty seconds. As your arms grow weary, think of all of the other things you could be doing with your hands (and with your life) if you could just let go and move on. Remember that holding this burden is hurting you, not your offender, but letting go will help you both.

If you feel like you are ready to let go and forgive, open your hands and let your arms fall back to their natural position. Feel the relief of that burden being lifted, and knowing that you can get back to your life now that you have forgiven.



**For yourself, would you estimate, at this moment, what degree you believe you are motivated to develop forgiveness for your transgressor (0 = *not at all* to 10 = *never more serious about anything in my life*):**

         Degree of motivation to forgive  
(0 to 10)

**Regardless of how much motivation you feel you have to forgive, please divide your subjective motivation into self-benefit, other-benefit, religious/spiritual. Suppose you allocate 100% of your motivation among the three. What percent would be attributed to each?** (For example, if you were not very religious but wanted to benefit others more than you thought forgiving would benefit yourself, you might answer as follows:

<u>  30%  </u>	Self-benefit
<u>  65%  </u>	Other-benefit
<u>   5%  </u>	Religious/spiritual
100%	Total (should add to 100%)

**Now please partition your motives:**

<u>  %  </u>	Self-benefit
<u>  %  </u>	Other-benefit
<u>  %  </u>	Religious/spiritual
100%	Total (should add to 100%)

*Exercise 6-15*  
*What Did Your Get Out of This Section?*

**Write one or more things that you got out of the section.**

*Some Ideas in Response to the Few Thought Questions for Section 6*

1. How do you try to hold on to forgiveness whenever you unexpectedly encounter someone that you forgave?

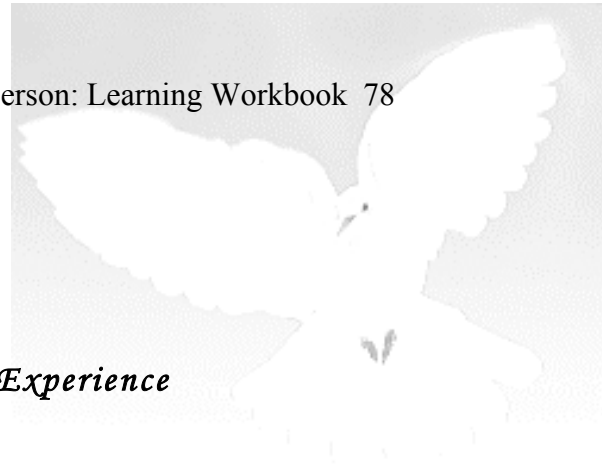
Sometimes we work hard to forgive, but we just stumble across the person in an unexpected location or context. We might feel those old familiar resentments begin to surface. Are you relegated to just getting away from the situation or avoiding the person and trying not to interact with him or her?

2. Do you have ways of getting your mind off of worry and rumination if you start to think negatively about an old wound? What strategies work for you?

Usually, it doesn't help to command ourselves not to worry. That just makes us worry more and worry because we cannot stop worrying. We need some sort of distraction. Perhaps praying for the person is a good distraction.

3. If you wanted to design your own program to become more forgiving, what would you do?

In this experience, the main idea has been that we become a more forgiving person by forgiving one transgression at a time. We have used the structure of learning a five-step method to forgive individual hurts and broadening its application to other hurts we've experienced. What other ways work for you? Pay attention to the way you answered this question. Chances are, you answered it in a way that described many strategies that you yourself would find helpful...after all, you are the world's greatest expert on yourself. Feel free to put these to good use!



*Exercise 6-14*  
*Processing the Whole Workbook Experience*

**Complete the evaluation.**

**Evaluation of the Forgiveness Workbook**

Rate each of the following on a scale of 1 to 5 representing the degree to which you experienced the item.

1 = Not at all

2 = A Little

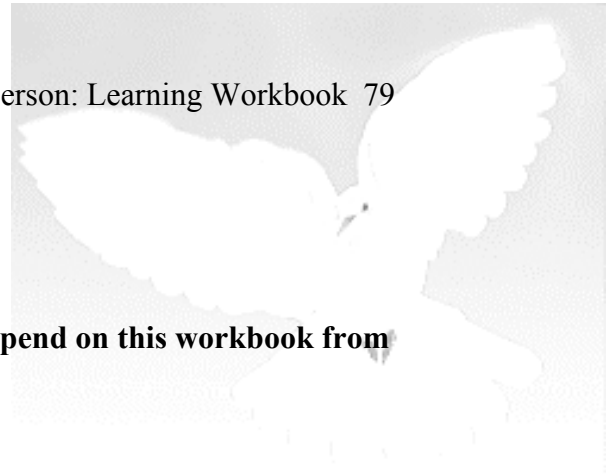
3 = Moderate

4 = A Lot

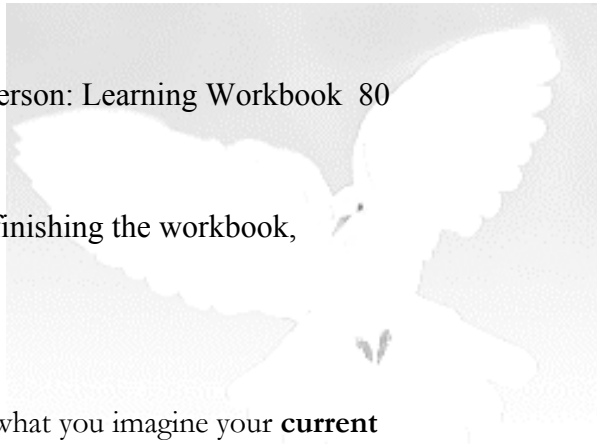
5 = Tremendous Amount

<b>I learned that making a decision to forgive doesn't necessarily mean I have forgiven emotionally.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I came to see the transgressor as more "human," fallible and needy than I did before</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I understand the transgressor better now.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I don't quite see myself as so perfect and spotless as I did. I am capable of hurting other people badly.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I learned the five steps and can tell you what each is:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>R =</b>					
<b>E =</b>					
<b>A =</b>					
<b>C =</b>					
<b>H =</b>					
<b>To hold on to forgiveness, if I started to ruminate about an old hurt, I have at least two things I could do to snap myself out of it.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I have committed to being a more forgiving person because of the workbook.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I have learned how I can be a more forgiving person.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

**What feedback would you like to give the writers of this workbook?**



**About how long, in hours and minutes, did you spend on this workbook from start to finish?**



Complete the following measures as soon as you can after finishing the workbook, preferably within the same day.

### TRIM

**DIRECTIONS:** For the following questions, please indicate what you imagine your **current thoughts and feelings** would be about the person you specifically have worked to forgive throughout this workbook. Use the following scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	mildly disagree	agree and disagree equally	mildly agree	strongly agree

1. \_\_\_ I'll make him or her pay.
2. \_\_\_ I wish that something bad would happen to him/her.
3. \_\_\_ I want him-her to get what he/she deserves.
4. \_\_\_ I'm going to get even.
5. \_\_\_ I want to see him/her hurt and miserable.
6. \_\_\_ I'd keep as much distance between us as possible.
7. \_\_\_ I'd live as if he/she doesn't exist, isn't around.
8. \_\_\_ I wouldn't trust him/her.
9. \_\_\_ I'd find it difficult to act warmly toward him/her.
10. \_\_\_ I'd avoid him/her.
11. \_\_\_ I'd cut off the relationship with him/her.
12. \_\_\_ I'd withdraw from him/her.
13. \_\_\_ I looked for the source of the problem and tried to correct it.
14. \_\_\_ I took steps toward reconciliation: wrote him/her, called him/her, expressed love, showed concern, etc.
15. \_\_\_ I made an effort to be more friendly and concerned.
16. \_\_\_ I did my best to put aside the mistrust.
17. \_\_\_ I tried to make amends.
18. \_\_\_ I was willing to forget the past and concentrate on the present.
19. \_\_\_ Even though his/her actions hurt me, I still have goodwill for him/her.
20. \_\_\_ I want us to bury the hatchet and move forward with our relationship.
21. \_\_\_ Despite what he/she did, I want us to have a positive relationship again.
22. \_\_\_ I have given up my hurt and resentment.
23. \_\_\_ Although he/she hurt me, I put the hurts aside so we could resume our relationship.
24. \_\_\_ I forgive him/her for what he/she did to me.
25. \_\_\_ I have released my anger so I could work on restoring our relationship to health.



### Single Item Assessment of Two Types of Forgiveness

Note: We want you to rate two types of forgiveness. For example, a person might perhaps decide to grant complete forgiveness but still feel very unforgiving toward a person.

*Granting forgiveness* is defined as *deciding (even if you don't say aloud) that you will not seek revenge against and not avoid but will try to put the relationship back on the pre-offense footing.* Using the scale below (from 0 = no forgiveness granted to 4 = complete forgiveness granted) estimate the current level to which you have granted forgiveness.

**0**
**1**
**2**
**3**
**4**  
**No Forgiveness** **Complete Forgiveness**

*Experiencing emotional forgiveness* is defined as *the degree to which you actually feel that your emotions have become less negative and more positive toward the person who offended or harmed you.* If 0 = No forgiveness experienced and 4 = complete forgiveness experienced (that is, if you have experienced complete emotional forgiveness, you have no negative feelings and perhaps even some positive feelings toward the person who offended or harmed you), then use the scale below to indicate to what degree you have experienced emotional forgiveness.

**0**
**1**
**2**
**3**
**4**  
**No Forgiveness** **Complete Forgiveness**

#### DFS

Think of your current intentions toward the person who hurt you. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	<b>Strongly Disagree (SD)</b>	<b>Disagree (D)</b>	<b>Neutral (N)</b>	<b>Agree (A)</b>	<b>Strongly Agree (SA)</b>
<b>1. I intend to try to hurt him or her in the same way he or she hurt me.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>2. I will not try to help him or her if he or she needs something.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>3. If I see him or her, I will act friendly.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>4. I will try to get back at him or her.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>5. I will try to act toward him or her in the same way I did before he or she hurt me.</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
<b>6. If there is an opportunity to</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>

get back at him or her, I will take it.					
7. I will not talk with him or her.	SD	D	N	A	SA
8. I will not seek revenge upon him or her.	SD	D	N	A	SA

**EFS**

Think of your current emotions toward the person who hurt you. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Neutral (N)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)
1. I care about him or her.	SD	D	N	A	SA
2. I no longer feel upset when I think of him or her.	SD	D	N	A	SA
3. I'm bitter about what he or she did to me.	SD	D	N	A	SA
4. I feel sympathy toward him or her.	SD	D	N	A	SA
5. I'm mad about what happened.	SD	D	N	A	SA
6. I like him or her.	SD	D	N	A	SA
7. I resent what he or she did to me.	SD	D	N	A	SA
8. I feel love toward him or her.	SD	D	N	A	SA

**TFS**

Directions: Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement below by using the following scale:

- 5 = Strongly Agree
- 4 = Mildly Agree
- 3 = Agree and Disagree Equally
- 2 = Mildly Disagree
- 1 = Strongly Disagree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. People close to me probably think I hold a grudge too long.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I can forgive a friend for almost anything.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. If someone treats me badly, I treat him or her the same.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I try to forgive others even when they don't feel guilty for what they did.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I can usually forgive and forget an insult.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I feel bitter about many of my relationships.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Even after I forgive someone, things often come back to me that I resent.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. There are some things for which I could never forgive even a loved one.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I have always forgiven those who have hurt me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I am a forgiving person.

Thank you for your dedication to this workbook and for being a part of a more forgiving and virtuous world. Your commitment will not only benefit you, but those around you. You worked very hard for this and deserve to experience all of the rewards that being a forgiving person has to offer.

