

Forgiveness is the Key to Happiness

Have you found the key to lasting happiness yet? If so, many congratulations, because life on this planet is extremely challenging and most human beings are anything but happy for virtually the whole of their lives.

The title of this message comes from *A Course in Miracles*. When I first read this lesson 121 from the Course, it made no real sense to me. I still thought that my future happiness would come from falling in love with a wonderful guy and I had no idea that healing my own mind was the key to lasting happiness

But by my mid-40s, I was so disillusioned with my pursuit of happiness through the usual worldly channels that one evening I collapsed on the floor of my kitchen and cried, 'God if you are out there, which I very much doubt, please, please help me because I just cannot go on living like this!' Not long after that desperate time, I met Master Jason Chan, and not long after meeting Jason, I began to study *A Course in Miracles*. From that time on, all my beliefs about life were steadily turned upside down, including my belief that my happiness basically depended on external factors rather than my own core beliefs and habitual thoughts.

Over the next twenty plus years, I gradually came to accept that the key to happiness lay in letting go of all my grievances against the world, including my unforgiving thoughts about my own past behaviour. First and foremost, I began to realise that my current happiness greatly depended on believing that I was 100 percent loveable, and in order to believe that, I had to let go of any idea that I was unworthy of limitless love because of my 'bad' behaviour in the past. In particular I had to dissolve a very strong belief that I had at times behaved in unforgivable ways to my adoptive father.

I am not sure even now that I have completely forgiven my younger self for pushing away her father in what I now recall to be extremely unkind ways. But I have forgiven her to at least some extent on the grounds that she was simply doing the best that she possibly could at that time. She was not fundamentally an unkind or mean person. She had simply been hypnotised by a vicious thought system that insisted that her dear father was the cause of all her unhappiness and that her only recourse was to do her best to push him away.

Maybe if you look back into your own past, you too can remember a painful time when you were really unkind, or even aggressive, to someone you loved? If so, I urge you this month to do your very best to forgive your younger self for his/her unconscious mistake. Centre in your own infinitely loving heart and then send waves of unconditional compassion back in time to your younger self who simply had no idea how to think clearly or act kindly in this incredibly challenging world full of insane people driven mad by unconscious guilt and fear.

I have not yet forgiven my younger self 100 percent. However, I do know that the level of self-forgiveness I have attained has played a key role in bringing far more happiness into my life than I ever imagined possible when I was in my teens, 20s and 30s. For example, just last month I had the best birthday of my whole life, surrounded by unbelievably lovely friends in an incredibly beautiful spot in North Yorkshire.

Now you may think to yourself, 'What on earth has that fabulous birthday party got to do with my forgiving myself for some unkind actions that took place many decades ago? But I am convinced there is a causal connection between all the work I have done over decades on forgiving myself and on learning to love and support myself unconditionally and the fact that my life is now full of so many unexpected blessings that keep bringing me great joy.

My deepest intuition now tells me that there is a strong causal link between forgiving ourselves for any mistakes we may have made in the past – however big – and opening up to love and joy in the present. Whenever we feel guilty about our past behaviour or feel unworthy of love, we tend to inadvertently cut ourselves off from experiencing love and joy in our current lives. In contrast, whenever we make even a small effort to forgive ourselves, or to love ourselves unconditionally, we take a big step toward attracting more love and joy into our lives.

So please maybe think about asking yourself at the beginning of the beautiful month of June, 'What have I got to lose by practising self-forgiveness this month, except maybe some stored guilt from the past that may still be blocking so many blessings from winging their way to me right this moment?'

Then for the next few weeks or maybe even the next few months, why not practise letting go or deleting any guilty thoughts about anything you did in the

past - whether that was five minutes ago or fifty years ago? As you do this, please keep a look out for some positive changes in your life in the present. I am sure you will soon begin to notice a plethora of them.

I am now totally convinced that if we really begin to forgive ourselves from the depths of our own beautiful hearts, sooner or later, we will notice that our lives are so miraculously filled with love and joy that we will be in awe of the benevolent power of the universe.

Peggy Foster

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