

Focus for Day 29, February 27: I FORGIVE OTHERS

“An eye for an eye, and soon the whole world is blind.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Felicia Sanders survived the massacre at the Mother Emmanuel Church in Charleston, N.C. She said she chose to forgive because: *“If you don’t, you’re letting evil into your heart. You’re the one suffering. You’re the one hating. You have to forgive. For you.”*

Despite the pain cracking their voices in the courtroom, the survivors and their families chose to speak the language of forgiveness. Their attacker, a white supremacist, intended his killings to provoke a race war. Instead, Charleston erupted with grace.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ Who, or what, do I struggle with the most to forgive?
- ❖ In what ways do I suffer when I continue to hate?
- ❖ What would be a first step for me to start the process of forgiveness?

Action Step:

*I choose to forgive _____
so that I can move forward
with my life.*

Focus for Day 30 , February 28: I MAKE AMENDS

"It is the highest form of self-respect to admit our errors and make amends for them."

Dale E. Turner, Actor & Musician

Gary Chapman, author of *The 5 Love Languages*, has written a sequel called: *5 Languages of Apology*. He suggests we use "code words" to signal a desire to repair a relationship.

Making amends can take various forms such as:

1. Express **Regret**: *"I'm sorry."*
2. Accept **Responsibility**: *"I was wrong."*
3. Make **Restitution**: *"Ask—What can I do to make this right?"*
4. Genuinely **Repent**: *"I commit to not do that again."*
5. Request **Forgiveness**: *"Will you please forgive me?"*

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ How do I signal, in ways that others understand, that I am ready to make amends?
- ❖ Which love language or code words would be the most appropriate to repair the relationship?
- ❖ How do I let others know that I accept their intent to make amends?

Action Step:

I will take the first step to make amends with: _____

Focus for Day 31, March 1: I PRAISE

“The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is to celebrate.”

Oprah Winfrey

Praise is a form of affirmation and encouraging others, as well as ourselves.

John Gottman, Ph.D., a relationship researcher, suggests we use a 5:1 ratio to give at least five positive comments for each negative one.

Whatever I focus on, increases. So, why not choose to celebrate what is going well?

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ How well do I affirm and encourage myself, as well as others?
- ❖ What is my current ratio of positive to negative comments?
- ❖ What reminds me to praise what is going well, rather than to focus on what is not?

Action Step:

I will encourage others today by giving at least five sincere comments of praise.

Focus for Day 32 , March 2: I AM PATIENT

“Patience is not the ability to wait, but how you act while you are waiting.”

Joyce Meyer, Christian Author & TV Minister

It is often challenging to wait and be patient. Like a two-year-old throwing a tantrum, I want my needs met--right now!

The key to developing patience is trusting that the deepest desires for my Highest Good are being met. However, I need to let go that it might not be in my preferred time-line, nor in the form that I expected.

Life’s challenges are ongoing invitations to practice more patience.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ What supports me to grow in patience?
- ❖ How could I deepen my trust that all is unfolding for my Highest Good– and release my time-lines or agendas of how I think things should go?
- ❖ What reminds me to see life’s challenges as opportunities to practice more patience?

Action Step:

I slow down and practice being more patient, especially with:

Focus for Day 33, March 3: I ACKNOWLEDGE

"You can't change what you don't acknowledge." Dr. Phil, TV Host

Conscious living experts, Gay and Katie Hendricks, discuss the "*Rule of 3*" in their workshops on co-creative relationships.

When something happens once, it may not be a big deal. However, when it repeats a second time, consider it a wake-up call. A third occurrence, often signifies an ongoing pattern.

I have a choice to pay attention and acknowledge what is. Or, I can avoid and dismiss it. It takes courage to live consciously.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ How do I acknowledge the blind spots that limit my ability to see what is really happening?
- ❖ How will I acknowledge recurring patterns and respond more effectively to life's wake up calls?
- ❖ What helps me to face and accept a current reality that I have been avoiding?

Action Step:

I choose to live consciously by acknowledging what I have been avoiding, particularly: _____

Focus for Day 34, March 4: I LOVE

"I don't do great things. I do small things with great love." Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Love, the glue that bonds us together, is expressed in tangible ways by being fully present.

Maralyn Cale, a life coach at <http://realizingrichrelationships.com> nurtures juicy partnerships with ourselves and others by strengthening **RICH** relationships.

R = Respectful: I revere others by honoring their unique gifts and I let go of controlling them.

I = Intimate: I demonstrate trust by being open and undefended.

C = Courageous: I live with integrity, celebrate what is and I am curious to learn from all.

H = Human: I honor our humanity when we do not live up to our ideals.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ What will encourage me to do small things with great love, such as being fully present?
- ❖ How will I nurture juicy partnerships by strengthening **RICH** relationships?
- ❖ In what ways will I demonstrate increased respect, intimate trust, and courage, while also honoring human frailties, as I grow in love?

Action Step:

I commit to being a more loving person—towards myself and others, particularly: _____

Focus for Day 35 , March 5: I UNDERSTAND

“Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding.”

Albert Einstein, Physicist

Understanding is different from agreement. It means that I am willing to let go of my agendas about what I think I know about you.

With an open heart, I commit to truly “getting you”. I practice seeking to understand others even when it appears we have little in common and I am in conflict with them.

Understanding is based on developing empathy for another—an ability to imagine what it would be like to walk through life in their shoes.

Reflection Questions:

- ❖ When do I get stuck seeking agreement, rather than understanding?
- ❖ How will people know that I understand and respect their viewpoint, even when we disagree?
- ❖ What helps to increase my empathy to promote better understanding?

Action Step:

I seek to understand another’s experience. I will practice more empathy with:
