



Health in Focus

Volume 12 | Issue 06 | June 1st, 2021

By Edgar Jno Baptiste, BSc Public Health

Forgiveness

Potential to be the most powerful drug used by mankind.

At some point in your life, you have heard the phrase, "forgive and forget". You are also most likely familiar with the phrase, "easier said than done". To "forgive and forget" is great in theory, but in reality, it's "easier said than done". The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche once stated, "It is much more agreeable to offend and later ask forgiveness than to be offended and grant forgiveness." Many people will identify with this statement by Nietzsche, as forgiveness is no easy task. The Cambridge dictionary defines a task as, "a piece of work to be done, especially one done regularly, unwillingly, or with difficulty". So yes, forgiveness is indeed a task.

Many people have misconceptions about what forgiveness really means and they avoid it. Today, in this edition of Health in Focus, I'm here to tell you, when it comes to forgiveness, your health depends on it.

There is a great physical burden to being hurt, arising from situations such as a simple argument with your spouse, a long-held resentment toward a family member or friend, or being a victim of crime. Nonetheless, I'm saying to you, forgiveness can minimize the impact of a past hurt and there is growing evidence to suggest so.

Forgiving is essential to our spiritual, emotional and physical health. By refusing to forgive someone, we're choosing to hold on to all the anger and bitterness that their actions have created. When we hold onto this anger, it festers inside and makes us bitter, irritable, impatient, and even physically ill.

What does the Science say?

In our culture, forgiveness is often perceived as a sign of weakness, however, the true weakness manifests when chronic anger and resentment takes a daily toll on our health. A growing body of evidence in the scientific community; one of the best kept secrets in science, shows that practicing forgiveness can improve our mental and physical health. Inability to forgive is linked to anger, bitterness and hostility, and those negative tendencies are linked to a heightened risk of cardiovascular disease and a compromised immune system. Professor Everett L. Worthington, Jr. is one of the researchers instrumental in focusing on the science of forgiveness.

What exactly is Forgiveness?

Forgiveness is not forgetting or even excusing wrongdoing. The goal of forgiveness is to assist us in eliminating the harmful negative emotions and replacing it with a frame of positivity. Is it possible that one can be truly healthy when those old hurts are just below the surface, easily provoked by a memory or a similar circumstance?

Religious admonitions to forgive.

Scientists are discovering that religious admonitions to forgive have been making sense all this time. The Bible reminds us that during his physical suffering on the cross, Jesus exclaimed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34).

We also learn in **Matthew 6: 14-15** "For if you forgive other people when they sin

against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

We may find it hard to forgive but the Bible encourages us to. Focusing less on the person who has offended us and more on the Person who suffered for us is the heart of true forgiveness.

Essentially, forgiveness is not just about saying the words. One has to make a conscious decision to let go of the pain whether the person deserves it or not. Forgiveness is a medicine, but it is not a one size fits all quick fix. Like medicine, it may have to be tailored on an individual basis.

Two sides of Forgiveness

(1) As aforementioned, forgiveness is therapeutic but it can be a struggle. For those struggling with forgiveness, we are the patients, not the person who has wronged us. One of the strategies is to see forgiveness as about us, and not the other person(s). Forgiveness is a choice, and we choose to forgive the offender because we cannot let go of the destructive emotions until we do. We forgive to improve our long-term health.

Bob Marley's redemption song urges us to, "emancipate yourself from mental slavery". Forgiving others is emancipating ourselves. We are breaking the chains of imprisonment and making that great escape just by forgiving those who wronged us.

(2) Contrary to the first point, we don't just forgive for ourselves. Forgiveness can result in psychological and physical healing, definitely; however, in essence, it is not all about us. When we walk in forgiveness, we have the ability to extend grace to others, and to play a role in rehabilitating the offender because this could be what is truly missing from their lives.

Paul Boese, an avid philosophical writer once stated, "Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future". If you are finding it difficult to forgive, that doesn't make you a failure. It is a process that takes time, and calls for patience and determination. Sometimes, we may have to work on self-forgiveness and love ourselves before we can forgive others. Sometimes we may need to seek forgiveness from others we have hurt. Importantly we should stay afloat and not lose our sense of purpose. Forgiveness can heal, but it's up to us to determine how quickly we want to. Until next time, let me remind you that, "Your health is your greatest resource, preserve it".

Jollysdm

ESSENTIAL OILS

Categories: Jollys Manufacturing, Pain Relief
Local 767 Products,

SKU: JP24919

XCD: \$11.00

In stock

5

ADD TO CART

VISIT
WWW.JOLLYS.DM
TO PURCHASE
ALL FEATURED
PRODUCTS.

LIKE & SHARE



@Jollys Pharmacy Ltd

FEATURED PRODUCTS



Use these essential oils to ease stress and anxiety. Boost feelings of relaxation.

AVAILABLE!
AT JOLLYS PHARMACY