

## Forgiveness: Acceptance and Letting Go

Have you ever noticed the difference in people who are able to easily let go of resentment and forgive, and those who stay in anger and blame?

What I have noticed is that those who continue to stay in blame and resentment are often people who see themselves as victims of other people's choices. I've noticed that people who stay angry at someone are generally people who are very controlling and believe that they can control someone else's behavior through punishment - anger, withdrawal, withholding, blame, righteousness, judgment, and so on.

There is a big difference between forgiving someone and wanting to spend time with that person. For example, if you find out that your partner has lied to you in a major way, you might decide to leave that relationship and not spend any more time with that person. You might decide that it is not in your highest good to be with someone whom you cannot trust to be honest with you. Leaving that person may be what is best for you.

However, if you hang on to anger, blame and resentment, what happens to you? You end up feeling miserable.

Whenever someone behaves in a manner that I find unacceptable, I attempt to understand the good reasons behind the unacceptable behavior. Is this person a very scared and insecure person? Did this person come from an unloving background? Is this person a very young soul, doing the best he or she can but is limited in ability? I do not take others' behavior personally, knowing that their behavior is coming from their fears and beliefs and actually has nothing to do with me.

Even though I choose compassion rather than judgment when others behave in unacceptable ways, this does not mean that I want to continue to be around the person. I can fully understand why the person acted as he or she did, yet still decide that being around this person is not in my highest good. I can fully forgive that person, which means that I am not carrying around blame and resentment, without wanting to continue to be around that person.

If you forgive but choose to not be around someone, it is important to be aware of your intent in not being around that person. Your intent is either controlling or loving.

If your intent is to control, then you hope that by not being around that person, he or she will learn their lesson and change their behavior. You have not really decided to end the relationship. You have a secret hope that by distancing yourself, you can have control over whether or not this person changes.

Leaving with the intent to control can lead to you getting stuck in misery, waiting for that person to change.

If your intent is to be loving to yourself, then you have decided that not being around this person is in your highest good. You are ready to move on, rather than being attached to this person changing. You have fully forgiven this person and are now taking loving care of yourself by letting go of all hope of this relationship working.

If someone behaves in a way that is not acceptable to you, this does not mean that you need to leave the relationship. It does mean that you need to accept that it may happen again and that there is nothing you can do about it. You have no control over another's choices. Again, hanging on to blame and resentment will only make you miserable. If you decide to stay, then you need to decide how to take loving care of yourself in the face of the other's unacceptable behavior. When you are truly taking loving care of yourself, then you will find you can easily forgive the other person.

The blessing of forgiveness is that it allows you to let go of life-draining resentment and open to love and joy.

## About the Author

Margaret Paul, Ph.D. is the best-selling author and co-author of eight books, including "Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By You?" and "Healing Your Aloneness." She is the co-creator of the powerful Inner Bonding healing process.

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Inner Bonding course: [http://www.inner](http://www.innerbonding.com)

[bonding.com](http://www.innerbonding.com) or email her at

[margaret@innerbonding.com](mailto:margaret@innerbonding.com). Phone sessions

available.

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