



FORGIVENESS – Costs and Benefits

To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

1 Peter 3: 8-9 (NASB)

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| The event: Describe what happened and what I am feeling. (Continue on back if needed): | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">1a</p> <p>How I reacted by default when I was wronged (circle any that apply):</p> <p>Gave them silent treatment / avoidance Resentment / bitterness Put-downs / insults / lectures Retaliation / revenge Gossip _____ Read _____ Other: _____ James 1:14-15</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">1b</p> <p>“Benefits” (imagined) of my default reactions—This is what I imagined I would accomplish by acting on my temptations:</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">1c</p> <p>Costs of my default reactions—In reality, my default reactions will lead to these problems:</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">2a</p> <p>Give a blessing through outward actions:</p> <p>Acts of kindness Gifts Talk it out peacefully Gentle words Other: _____ Read _____ _____ Romans 12:14, 21</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">2b</p> <p>Benefits of outward blessing—The benefits of kindness and self-control are:</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">2c</p> <p>Costs of outward blessing—The cost for me to be kind to them is:</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">3a</p> <p>Give a blessing through inward heart (forgiveness)</p> <p>Read Colossians 3:12-13, 1 Peter 2:19-25, Matthew 5:44-45, Ephesians 4:31-32</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get alone with God. Express to God my desire to forgive. I relinquish my “right of revenge.” I’m willing to bear the cost. • Agree that He is their Judge, not me. • Thank Jesus that He has forgiven me. Worship, gratitude for grace and blessings. • Pray a blessing for them. • Ask God’s Spirit to live out His love for them through my life. • Ask God for a mentor or counselor who can help me process feelings, to forgive & bless. • Be honest about my feelings and express them to my advisor. • Get advice about how and when (and whether) to talk to the offender. • Get advice about apologizing for any hurtful responses that I showed (and follow through with an apology if appropriate). • When sad, I’ll reaffirm my forgiveness in prayer and spring to God’s promises. | <p style="text-align: center;">3b</p> <p>Benefits of forgiveness—Promise(s) that I will cling to:</p> <p>Three examples of promises: Romans 8:31-39 Romans 12:19-21 Psalm 56:8-13</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">3c</p> <p>Costs of forgiveness—Costs that I accept and am willing to bear are:</p> |
| <p>Note: Forgiveness does not equal trust. Boundaries may be needed for your protection or for theirs. If boundaries are needed, keep an inner attitude of forgiveness so you can set the boundaries with a heart of love rather than with a desire for retaliation.</p> | | |