

THERAPEUTIC PRACTICES FOR MENTAL HEALTH

The Healing Power of Forgiveness

The transformative power of forgiveness transcends feelings of resentment and disappointment, offering a path forward for those who choose to use forgiveness as a tool for emotional freedom. Forgiveness is often misunderstood as an act of weakness; in reality, it's an act of empowerment. At its core, forgiveness involves letting go of the negative emotions associated with a past hurt or betrayal that can't be changed and choosing to move forward free from the emotional pain with compassion and understanding.

Psychologically, forgiveness is a complex process that involves acknowledging the pain caused by our own or someone else's actions, accepting that the past cannot be changed, and making a conscious decision to release the desire for revenge or retribution.

Numerous studies have highlighted the profound impact of forgiveness on mental health and well-being. Here are some ways in which forgiveness serves as a tool for healing:

1. **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** Holding onto grudges and harboring resentment can take a toll on our mental and physical health, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and even depression.
2. **Improved Relationships:** Unresolved conflicts and lingering resentment can strain relationships and erode trust. By practicing accepting and granting forgiveness, we foster deeper connections with others and build mutual respect.
3. **Greater Self-Compassion:** Forgiveness isn't just about pardoning others; it's also about compassion and understanding for ourselves. By letting go of self-blame and criticism, we cultivate a sense of self-compassion and acceptance.

Forgiveness is a skill that can be cultivated through practice and intention. Here are some strategies to cultivate forgiveness in your life:

1. **Try Another Perspective:** Seek to understand the motivations and perspectives of others. Understanding can help foster compassion and facilitate the forgiveness process.
2. **Let Go of Control:** Accept that there are aspects of life that are beyond your control, including the actions of others. Release the need to seek revenge or hold onto grudges and focus instead on boundaries and what you have power to change within yourself.
3. **Seek Support:** Don't hesitate to seek support from friends, family, or a mental health professional who can provide guidance and encouragement along the way.

In a world filled with conflict, hurt, and pain, forgiveness is a beacon of hope and healing that one has to offer and accept. By embracing forgiveness as a tool for mental health, we find solace in the power of compassion and reconciliation. As we cultivate forgiveness in our lives, we not only heal ourselves but also contribute to more compassionate relationships and world.

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RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH

At any given time, more than 20% of Americans are struggling with their mental health. It may not be your struggle, but it affects your neighbors, family members, friends, and colleagues. Even though these challenges aren't uncommon, they can leave folks feeling isolated or without hope. We want to change that.

Nick Finnegan Counseling Center strives to provide affordable and accessible counseling services to anyone regardless of differences such as age, finances or beliefs.

Counseling can help during times of crisis but is not limited to just those moments. It can also help reduce day-to-day stress and gives you the chance to talk about what's going on in your life with someone who is professionally trained and unbiased about your situation.

Nick Finnegan Counseling Center (NFCC) a ministry of St. Luke's United Methodist Church

Make an appointment at the
Nick Finnegan Counseling Center
2714 Joanel St., Houston, TX 77027
713-402-5046



If you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide, there is help:

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:

- Text or call 988
- Chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org)

Crisis Intervention of Houston, Inc. Hotline

- Adults: 832-416-1177
- Teens 832-416-1199 (call) or 281-201-4430 (text)