



When people say we should forgive, usually they mean we should let go of hurt, anger and grudges about some past event, and allow the person being forgiven to go forward, perhaps even as a friend or someone close. Often it is not that optimal. People say they forgive someone, and actually mean it, and yet the feelings and thoughts that aren't forgiving persist.

There are some things to consider about forgiveness...

1. Forgiveness is not a gift from an offended person to someone considered to be an offender. Forgiveness is for one's own self, for the other person involved, and ultimately for everyone.
2. Forgiveness is not really something one gives as a tolerant response to undesirable actions of someone else. Such gifts would be better terms as "postgiveness".
3. Forgiveness is opening to the shared reality of self, which is also the shared reality of everyone. As one opens in this way, after a time allowing the influence of reality to guide, one's attitude and feelings begin to shift. The result of that shift eventually is seen as love in which there simply isn't any condemnation. If that were already the case completely, our world view would be filled with the influence of peace and joy. But often we find ourselves either out of touch with that inner reality, or not as much in touch as needed to respond to someone's actions without resistance, hurt, anger and resentment. Therein lies the problem mankind faces. In order for forgiveness to truly be "fore-given", one must tend to the inner noticing of the shared reality of peace before events come along triggering negative feelings and reactions. One's response to people and their behavior is then "*forgiveness*".
4. Forgiveness from opening the heart, causes the heart to be even more open and flexible, adjusting to each wind the world sends our way...perhaps not all at once, but it starts us moving that way in the world a little at a time.

5. This "inner reality of self" which is shared with all, is also called oneness. When we hear about oneness, we may tend to think of it as a state of positivity or closeness. But oneness is more literal than this. Each of us shares the same reality outside of time and space, and inside the framework of our time continuum and world, we each share the same identical boundless, infinite existence as oneness, even though perception insists we each have separate existence in separate space. In other words, we are not only interconnected, but are co-existent in all ways other than our temporal sense of individuality and separateness. We are much more expansive than appears to be so. We are not literally separate. I am you, and you are me, just beyond the veil of intellect and bodily senses with their perceptions and imagery. That brings up a very important aspect related to forgiveness as well as all giving. Giving is actually receiving as well. To our perception, this doesn't seem so, but our perception is mistaken. "Love thy neighbor as thyself" is taken to mean that we should treat others similarly to how we treat ourselves. It is usually missed that this instruction is nudging us toward the truth of our oneness. True loving involves loving others AS our own self, because they are. Allowing the impact and influence of our shared reality accesses the peace which is that reality, and brings it to perception in the apparent world as love. And this is forgiveness. Give that you may receive, for giving is receiving, whether perception agrees or not.
6. Not forgiving, or not pausing our activity regularly and giving our reality the opportunity to guide us with less hindrance is a choice. On the other hand, forgiveness is not a choice, but is the influence realized from no longer making the choice against reality's breath in our lives.
7. From reality's view, the illusion called love is not present, for love is the answer to the fearful call of the heart which believes the peace of reality is absent, and no such condition exists in reality. From perception's view, there is no perceptible difference between love and peace, for perception cannot see or experience peace. Perceiving love would be tantamount to seeing peace if it were not for the continual energetic denial of the reality of peace and its vision, in play as that which creates and maintains the imagery of the perceived illusory world. Love with its nature as forgiveness then, is compassion embedded in all illusions, and when noticed, is rightly called a miracle. Many of the experiences people feel and call love are not love, and yet their response to these experiences nudge the mind to remember love, however hidden it may seem to be.

*Doug Couch - 2018*