

Becoming a Confident Mom

Week 9: Unstuck



Tools to Help Move Past Unforgiveness and Shame

Presented by Lindsey Werner, November 1, 2023

The Purpose of Unforgiveness

- Flight/flight response communication tool
- Discover why something happened
- Process pain that has happened to us

Personal Challenges of Unforgiveness

- We Get Stuck:

1 John 2:11, "But anyone who hates a brother or sister is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness. They do not know where they are going, because the darkness has blinded them."

- It Impacts Our Physical Bodies:

"Chronic anger puts you into a fight-or-flight mode, which results in numerous changes in heart rate, blood pressure, and immune response. Those changes, then, increase the risk of depression, heart disease, and diabetes, among other conditions. Forgiveness, however, calms stress levels, leading to improved health." Johns Hopkins Medicine, *Forgiveness: Your Health Depends On It*

Relational Challenge of Unforgiveness

- The Relationship Stays Stuck
- We get caught up in a pattern of blaming vs. relating
"Our attention is focused on classifying, analyzing, and determining levels of wrongness rather than on what we and others need and are not getting." Marshall Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication*

Tool 1: Grieving Well

- Acknowledge Pain
- Turnaround time of forgiveness varies

"As long as you keep secrets and suppress information, you are fundamentally at war with yourself...The critical issue is allowing yourself to know what you know. That takes an enormous amount of courage."
Bessel A. van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*

Tool 2: Compassionate Curiosity

- We assume the negative because of our negativity bias.
- There is a function for behavior.
- Compassionate Curiosity puts us in a perspective position, ready to observe and grow.

Self: "I wonder how that (*name the situation*) impacts me?"

Other: "I wonder what is going on in their lives that they are needing?"

Tool 3: Take Appropriate Responsibility

Self:

- What is for me to own in this situation?
- What can I learn from it?
- How can I grow?

Other:

- What is their responsibility? What is theirs to own?

Tool 4: Meaning Making

"Certainly, much harm can be done by telling people to simply buck up, count their blessings, and remember how much they still have to be grateful for.

Processing a life experience through a grateful lens does not mean denying negativity. It is not a form of superficial happiology. It does mean realizing the power you have to transform a loss into a potential gain, recasting negativity into positive channels for gratitude." Emmons, *Gratitude Works*

Meaning Making Exercise

Application and Discussion

1. Which tool was the most challenging for you?
2. What tool was most helpful for you?
3. What is your next step in processing unforgiveness?
4. What is your next step to move from shame to balance?

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