

Forgiveness – fair dinkum or false?

Forgiveness is a confusing and little understood aspect of communication and can be very difficult.

It is getting rid of resentment, indignation or anger as a result of a perceived offence, disagreement, or sometimes, a mistake. It is letting go of grudges and bitterness and can lead to healing and peace – an act of generous loving compassion that unconditionally ceases to demand explanation, punishment or resolution.

We are aware that hurting people often hurt other people as a result of their own pain coming from the unresolved issues inside them and happens in most relationships.

We are all filled with troubling feelings so why blame someone whose upbringing was without love or understanding?

False forgiveness – Forgiving because it is the decent thing to do or is in some way advantageous – does not bring healing . It adds to the original injury. Resolution begins and ends with truthfulness and a genuine expression of feeling.

We sometimes need to forgive ourselves for our own short comings. Until we do, our undermining feelings of unworthiness and unforgiveness can be self-destructive.

If we are the offender, an acknowledgement of the offence or a humble apology or even asking for forgiveness, may enable the wronged person to believe himself able to forgive. It can be very difficult to respond to evil with kindness and to lovingly forgive the offender.

Where the offence against us occurred many years ago -perhaps in our childhood - the offender may have subsequently moved out of contact or even have died. We can, from our heart, still offer forgiveness and thus find healing by our compassionate thought and word, and move forward.

From the wisdom of Martin Luther King Jr. *“Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a constant attitude.”*

(Reference: various including Forgiveness and other acts of love by Stephanie Dowrick.)