

# Heal Yourself by Starting with Forgiveness

*August 5, 2020*

August 25th is National "Kiss and Make Up Day". It's founder, Jacqueline Milgate wanted a day to encourage people to face their issues head on so they could finally resolve them and move on. Jacqueline's idea of resolving our differences and celebrating a new start with "Kiss and Make-up Day" is a great philosophy to adopt. After all, kissing is known to release serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin in the brain - all of which are feel-good chemicals. However, in the times we are currently living, that might not be appropriate. So in lieu of literally kissing to make up, maybe we could work on forgiveness this month.

What does it mean to forgive? Many people hang onto grudges because they believe that if they forgive someone for a transgression against them that they are then making what happened okay. Or that they then have to be okay with that person. Both are misconceptions. You can forgive a person and decide that they are not trust-worthy enough to be a part of your life and by forgiving them you are not excusing or even forgetting what happened. You are simply deciding that you will not let those issues continue to hurt you or to adversely affect your present life.

"Forgiveness is letting go of the pains of the past." - Anonymous

"Forgive others not because they deserve forgiveness but because you deserve peace." - Jonathan Lockwood Huie

Forgiving someone is also not about getting that person to change. The point is to change your life for the better. This can happen in many areas, including your physical health. A study by Concordia University found that holding onto resentment and bitterness adversely affects many systems and organ functions including your immune system. So, not forgiving someone is keeping yourself in control of the person who harmed you and allowing their actions to continue harming you.

So how does one actually go about forgiving someone? For simple slights or arguments, self-reflection and/or journaling can help. Identifying the anger and pain, while allowing yourself to feel it are the first steps. Healthy, constructive expression of those feelings is next followed by releasing the anger and the pain. Scheduling a Reiki session here at Body Mind Spirit can help to start the healing process. Working with the Bach Flower Remedy, Willow can also be supportive as one of the qualities this flower essence is the ability to forgive.

For someone dealing with serious abuse and trauma issues, forgiveness is understandably extremely difficult. Professional help is essential in those situations and we recommend that you reach out for those services. The purpose of a Reiki treatment is to relieve stress and pain, induce relaxation, release emotional blockages, and accelerate natural healing.

"Forgiveness does not change the past but it does enlarge the future." - Paul Boese