



Can you Forgive Yourself?

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Published

November 3rd, 2018

So many people spend their lives with regret. They worry about the things that they “should have” said or done.

Perhaps it is time for you to let go of the self-punishment and forgive yourself. There are some important things to remember about forgiveness:

1. You are human and human beings make mistakes. No one is perfect.
2. You might be the only person who even remembers the error you committed.
3. The past is the past. You cannot change it or take back anything that you would like to do differently.
4. Thinking about the problem over and over again does not resolve it. In fact, it just ingrained it into memory without any resolution.
5. Forgiveness begins with being honest about what you have done without blaming, minimizing or denying.
6. Understand the difference between guilt and shame. Guilt is about making a mistake. Shame is about thinking you are a mistake.
7. Write one sentence that clearly states the mistake you made so it is clear in your mind and not muddled by details.
8. Worry and rumination can steal health and well-being over time.
9. People who are willing to learn from mistakes not only tend to avoid making them again, but usually make far better choices in the future because of them.
10. It is never too late to make a sincere apology to the person or persons you feel that you have offended.
11. Good apologies are usually brief. Try saying “I am sorry for the part that I played in our relationship problem” and then stop talking.
12. If the others don’t forgive you, then that is their issue to live with.
13. If you don’t forgive yourself, then you will likely suffer in physical and/or mental ways.
14. Forgiving does not mean forgetting. Forgiving is accepting and letting go of the hurt.
15. Remorse means crying because you were caught. Repentance means crying because you are truly sorry and ready to choose a completely different path in the future.
16. Forgiving yourself and others sets a powerful example for those around you who will learn from your example.
17. Daily affirmations will help you to stay on track. Repeat positive statements like “Today is a brand-new day”, “I can make good choices beginning right now”, “I am forgiven, and this gives me a fresh, new start”.
18. Stay away from things that tempted you and led to trouble in the past.
19. Keep yourself busy with activities that bring contentment into your life.
20. Give thanks for the things you have done well and the ways you have been blessed.