

Excerpted from The Little Guide to Big Changes, Chapter 7

A Matter of Perspective

Learn to let go of petty animosities. Don't sweat the small stuff that's a natural outgrowth of living. Being human means we will hurt someone many times throughout our life and be on the receiving end of hurt feelings as well. The only way to end the cycle of emotional wounding is by growing so much in awareness that this type of behavior is not part of our consciousness anymore. Then the emotional cuttings will not have the power to injure us because *our perspective* will be different.

Oftentimes, the perceived offense has no basis in truth; it is only a belief based upon perception that is often flawed. Perception is what makes people different from one another. Humanity is like a multifaceted diamond radiating a myriad of colors, where each color is an individual perspective. It's easy to misread someone's point of view; misunderstandings happen all the time. Our hurt feelings are often based upon a faulty assessment: a certain look, a false impression, a misinterpretation, a difference of opinion, a mix-up, an argument or a misunderstanding.

Everyone has shortcomings and everyone makes mistakes. No one likes to be misunderstood. So why would you hang onto a grievance that may or may not contain an element of truth? Even if your appraisal of the situation were correct, why would you condemn someone for his or her actions? We are all fallible. *Blame the behavior, not the person.* The offending behavior is a reflection of their beliefs and attitudes. You don't have to understand someone's behavior, but at the same time, don't condemn him or her because of it either. Learn to look past the outer manifestation and see the inner potentials of a fellow spiritual being. Look inside at their spiritual essence, who they really are and learn to forgive. Seek compassion in yourself before condemning another. As we are all connected on a subtle level and we are all one, condemning someone is akin to condemning yourself.

An Uplifting Effect

Take a long look at your life. Is it sweet and fruitful or bitter with resentment? Do you nurture forgiveness in your life? If not, why not?

Forgiveness is a lesson in acceptance and grace. Embracing these qualities creates a change of attitude resulting in a positive mental state that extends into all life areas. Positive emotions have a

healthy, uplifting effect on the body. Forgiveness encourages constructive and favorable benefits for the *whole* person and allows you the freedom to move forward with your life.

So many people today need emotional healing. Just look at all the failed relationships, divorces, children being shuttled between two families, lack of family cohesiveness and loyalty. Not so very long ago, people stayed together, divorce was not common, the threads in a child's life didn't come unwoven so easily and the idea of family as a unit was an important and meaningful concept. It seems that people have lost their connection with timeless principles such as forgiveness. How many relationships would still be intact if forgiveness were freely given?

Forgiveness comes in a small package yet its effects are enormous. It is the healing solution to so many problems in life. Forgiveness releases you from debilitating emotions, transforming your relationships. It is a simple tenet, but one that holds much power; forgiveness cleanses the soul.

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