

TIPS FOR THE FORGIVENESS PROCESS

Acknowledge it's an ongoing choice. Forgiveness involves healing, and healing takes time and intentional effort. Pay attention to sprouts of hurt, spite, and resentment. Pull them up as soon as you notice to avoid more damage to you and your relationships.

Check your motives. We are often told forgiveness is more for and about ourselves than the people we need to forgive. But that can fog our motives and expectations. Responding out of selfishness might make matters worse in the long run. Ask yourself, "Why is forgiveness important?" Wrestle with it. Forgiveness releases baggage over time. Don't pick up more than is necessary through the process.

Be aware of conditions you place on forgiveness. If you expect a specific response to your forgiveness or withhold forgiveness until you hear certain words or see particular actions, you might be holding too tightly to unforgiveness.

Set healthy boundaries. Forgiving someone doesn't mean returning to an unhealthy relationship or situation. Sometimes reconciliation involves reconnecting and rebuilding trust, but many times reconciliation involves coming to terms with a broken relationship and learning how to live whole and healthy in new ways.

Know God's forgiveness. He's the one who is the best at forgiving. The more familiar you are with God's character, including his forgiveness, the more willing you'll be to look at forgiveness with authenticity and respond with intentional, persistent effort as you lean forward.

Check out *Fractured Into Wholeness* by Susan H. Lawrence on Amazon, available in print and ebook formats.

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