

A Benefit For You

BEST CARE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



EAP NOTES

A Fresh Start: *Practice Forgiveness in the New Year*

Forgiveness is not an occasional act. It is a permanent attitude.

~ Ann Landers

It may be one of the most difficult things a person can do, but in the end, may be the most rewarding. *Webster* defines forgiveness as “to give up resentment against or the desire to punish; pardon; to overlook an offense; to cancel a debt”. Therefore, when you choose to forgive, you choose to live in the present and focus on the future instead of the past. Forgiveness does not mean to forget, but rather to release negative feelings and to move forward.

Consider the following tips on forgiveness for a fresh start in 2003.

- ◆ **Start small.** Practice the art of forgiveness by easily letting go of the small stuff, for example, the driver that cuts you off or a rude clerk. This will help prepare you for the larger hurts.
- ◆ **Use your energy wisely.** Holding a grudge often depletes your level of physical and emotional energy. Forgiving can increase your overall level of health and well-being.
- ◆ **Restore your power.** Withholding forgiveness allows another to have control over your emotions. Forgiveness can help you regain control and focus on positive thoughts and actions.
- ◆ **Make a symbolic effort.** Write a letter (no need to mail it) to the person that has caused you pain. Openly express your feelings and how their actions hurt you. Conclude the letter by forgiving the person and offering to make a fresh start. This symbolic exercise may be just what you need to get moving in the right direction.
- ◆ **Remember that forgiveness is a gift you give to yourself.**

Source: *Victor M. Parachin, How to Forgive: 10 Guidelines*

If you would like to learn more about forgiveness and its benefits, contact your Best Care EAP. A professional counselor is available to help. For a confidential appointment please call (402) 354-8000 or (800) 666-8606

Forgiveness Pointers

1. Forgiveness is not forgetting.
2. The pain may not be completely gone. One can forgive and still grieve a loss or feel pain from a wound.
3. Damage and wounds take time to repair.
4. Forgiveness does not deny responsibility for behavior. You have simply committed to not hold the other person in debt.

Source: www.positive-way.com

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