

Presbyterian Counseling Center

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CENTERPOINT

Forgiveness Article for Centerpoint

During regular Sunday church services, many of us say a Prayer of Confession followed by silent confession and the minister then declares that we have been forgiven. Praise the Lord! I always like to hear that I've been forgiven. It's a fresh start of sorts. But how much of an emotional burden do many of us carry around because we still feel angry and haven't forgiven someone for something they did to us?

It's healthy and natural to feel angry when someone has hurt us or our loved ones. We need to grieve our hurts and losses, but ideally, we don't stay in a psychological position of grief and anger. Staying angry and not forgiving is hazardous to our emotional AND physical health.

Forgiveness doesn't mean that what someone did to us is okay. Forgiveness is a conscious effort not to dwell on negative thoughts about past events that can never be changed. It's up to each of us, through our relationship with God and our own sense of purpose, to decide how we want to respond. By staying angry, we don't punish anyone else nearly as much as we punish ourselves. By going through the process of consciously letting go of anger-producing thoughts, we reclaim our power and free up positive energy to serve God fully in the present.

Many of those we see at the Presbyterian Counseling Center have been hurt and are dealing with feelings of anger. Working through anger and letting go leads to physically and emotionally healthier lives.

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