
Column: Taking a stab at forgiveness

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If you've gone to any sort of church at any time in your life, it's likely you've heard a sermon or maybe even two, on forgiveness.

Yes, that old chestnut. It's no doubt you've danced with that devil in the pale moonlight, and to what end, I would ask you. The path of forgiveness is bumpy and dusty and gets entirely sticky when we're applying it in the mirror.

I've had clients tell me they don't believe in it. I've had people say to me there are some things that are unforgivable. If we know the world of Harry Potter, there are even unforgivable curses. So what's the real lowdown? Is forgiveness about you or the other person or about what God wants you to do? Truthfully, it's anyone's guess. Ask ten priests and ten rabbis and I bet you get twenty different answers. So here's my toss into that ring.

In my not so humble opinion, true forgiveness happens when I no longer wish the past was any different than it was. My energy and my plans and my thoughts, they all get to be in the here and now cuz the then and there isn't happening any more. In this version of forgiveness, I've picked up my toys and I've moved on from that unfulfilling party. Whether I was the one that didn't show up as my best self, or it was my husband or the grocery store clerk, I've said, "Well, that's what that was, as far as I can tell So now what?"

I'm not afraid to admit I've spent a lot of time fist fighting shadow enemies in the dark neighborhoods of my mind. I've held court with ghost judges deciding my "rightness." I'm also here to admit to you this is a fruitless effort and I recommend you skip it for something juicier like things that are real and make you feel happy.

When I'm not fussing with things I can't change, because they are literally in the past, I am free to make something more with the world that is happening right now. While I'm no theologian, that seems a worthy way to spend my time and thoughts.

Can I get an amen?

Michelle Pierson Young is a Lincoln City life coach. She may be reached at Michelleatplay.com or at 503-957-0821.