

## SELF-FORGIVENESS

**Chalice:** Genuine self-forgiveness is a complex internal process that involves a long state of grieving, a working through of anguish to a place of remorse. It is not a magical system of undoing what has been done but rather acknowledging responsibility.

- *Melanie Suchet*

### **Check-in:**

**Reading:** In the movie, "The Mission," Robert DeNiro plays a conquistador who mindlessly slaughters natives in the Amazon jungle. He feels excruciating remorse when he realizes the wrongfulness of his actions, a pain that is not alleviated by the priest offering him God's forgiveness. He requests and is given a penance to complete; he is to carry a full-sized cross on his back until such time as the priest indicates he can remove it. He suffers greatly, carrying the cross in a trek through the wilderness. Another member of the party, seeing his distress, says to the priest, "can't you tell him to remove the cross? He has suffered enough." The priest replies, "you know that and I know that, but he doesn't know it yet."

*Cited in, "Wounds Not Healed by Time: The Power of Repentance and Forgiveness" by Solomon Schimmel (2002).*

**Quotes from the Common Bowl: see attached**

### **Life Questions:**

1. Have you ever forgiven yourself before? (If not, what beliefs are preventing you from forgiving yourself?)
2. How do you decide if self-forgiveness is necessary? What does self-forgiveness mean to you?
3. What are the benefits of self-forgiveness? If you have forgiven yourself, how has it helped you?
4. Does self-forgiveness involve justification of one's actions?
5. What is the role of guilt in self-forgiveness?
6. Can you forgive yourself if you have not been forgiven by others whom you have hurt?

### **Closing ritual:**



- *Psychology Today*

Self-forgiveness entails a facing of one's wrong while abandoning negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors directed at the self and replacing them with compassion, generosity, and love.

*Enright and The Human Development Study Group (1996)*

**Check-out:**

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**QUOTES – Self-Forgiveness**

“Confront the dark parts of yourself, and work to banish them with illumination and forgiveness. Your willingness to wrestle with your demons will cause your angels to sing. Use the pain as fuel, as a reminder of your strength.”

- *August Wilson*

“Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.”

- *Tao Te Ching*

“Our capacity to make peace with another person and with the world depends very much on our capacity to make peace with ourselves.”

- *Thich Nhat Hanh*

“Forgiving myself brings release, for it is unconditional. It says, ‘I acknowledge my mistake and I learn from it. My mistake does not condemn me. I accept the lesson and let the judgment go’.”

- *Paul Ferrini*

“Self-forgiveness may be defined as a willingness to abandon self-resentment in the face of one's own acknowledged objective wrong, while fostering compassion, generosity, and love toward oneself.”

- *Solomon Schimmel*

“When people self-forgive, their feelings, actions, and beliefs about the self become more positive...when people self-forgive, they are more likely to think and act constructively toward the self and believe the self to be a worthy individual.”

- *Michael J. A Wohl , Lise Deshea , Rebekah L. Wahkinney*

“If I could only use one method of emotional healing, it would be the technique of self-forgiveness. No doubt about it. Why?”

Because it's the greatest gift you can give yourself. It answers the tough question of -

"What's wrong with me?!"

- *Mark Ivar Myhre*

“Guilt is a wastebasket term that we use to cover everything negative and bad. One defining factor of guilt is that we commit the ultimate betrayal: abandoning ourselves. If you can't love yourself, you won't be able to heal yourself.”

- *Dr. Phil McGraw*