

[Forgiving Others Is Good for Your Health](#)

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Hindu Dharma implores us to let go of grudges, resentment and especially self-contempt

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Most people today are working harder to correct the faults of others than they are their own. It is a thankless job. It truly is. Most are trying to recreate the relatively real world into being absolutely real. Another thankless job. The wise implore us to accept things as they are, to be happy and content at every point in time.

They tell us: do not be discouraged in seeing the failing of others. Rather, let it help awaken your understanding of them as to where they are in consciousness and the suffering they must be going through. If others harm you in thought, word or deed, do not resent it. Rather, let it awaken compassion, kindness and forgiveness. Use it as a mirror to view your own frailties, then work diligently to bring your own thoughts, words and deeds into line with Hindu Dharma.

The secret is that we have to correct all matters within

ourselves. We have to bear our karmas--the reactions to our actions--cheerfully. And what are the apparent injustices of life but the self-created reactions of our own past actions in this or a former life? The person of perfect understanding accepts all happenings in life as purposeful and good. We must be grateful to others for playing back to us our previous actions so that we can see our mistakes and experience the same feelings we must have caused in others. It is in this way that we are purified and trained not to commit the same adharmic acts again.

All the great ones have preached the art of forgiveness. First we must learn to forgive ourselves, to accept ourselves as we are and proceed with confidence. New energy is released for a healthy future when we forgive ourselves. Yes, forgiveness is a powerful force. We must start with ourselves, for as long as we hold self-contempt, we are unable to forgive others, because everyone else is a reflection of ourself. We react to what we see in them that we are not ready to face up to in ourselves.

It is a great power to be able to look beyond ourselves and see others as they really are, how they really think and how they really feel. When we are wrapped up in our own individual ego, this is hard to do. We surmise that those we know are exactly like us, and we find fault with them when they are not. But once we break the shell of the ego--an act symbolized by smashing the dark brown coconut in the temple--the beauty of the pure, white fruit inside is revealed, which represents our pristine spiritual nature. It takes a hard blow to subdue our ego, and this is never without pain. But we can remove the ego's hard shell painlessly through absolute surrender to Hindu Dharma, absolute surrender to our own soul, to God within us.

External worship and internal worship, external surrender and internal surrender, bring about the softening of the ego and the unveiling of spirit.

What is resentment? Resentment is pranic force, subtle energy, that is congested. What is love? Love is pranic force that is flowing and uncongested. When someone performs an injustice towards us, they are giving us a conglomerate of congested prana. If we were able to look at it in the astral world, we would see it as a confused mass of disharmonious colors and shapes. If we are unable to remain detached, we become upset and resentful. Instinctively, this prana is held by us and only released when we find it in our heart to forgive the person. At the moment of true forgiveness, the congested prana is transferred back to the person who harmed or insulted us. Now we can see that when we resent or hold something against someone, we are actually astrally connected to them and, in fact, holding back the karma that will automatically come to them as a result of their harmful act. If we forgive the person, we release the congested energy. Then the unfailing karmic law begins to work. In other words, their actions will cause a reaction back on them, and we won't be involved in the process at all. That is why the Tirukural, a wonderful book written 2,000 years ago, tells us, "Though unjustly afflicted, it is best to suffer the suffering and refrain from unrighteous retaliation. Let a man conquer by forbearance those who in their arrogance have wronged him (157-8)."

However, it would not be wise to accept the transgressor back in your life until true remorse is shown and resentment on their part is dissolved through apology and reconciliation.

Otherwise, wisdom indicates they might just perform the same hurtful acts again.

To be affectionately detached--that is a power. That is a wisdom. Being detached does not mean running away from life or being insensitive or passively accepting harm to yourself or loved ones. When we have the ability to let go, through forgiveness, we are warmer, more friendly, more wholesome, more human and closer to our family and friends.

Just the opposite happens if we remain attached by resenting that which happened in the past. Take the example of a teenager who sees a wonderful future ahead of him. Experiences begin to happen in his life, some of which are unpleasant. If these are not resolved, negative prana begins piling up within his subconscious mind, vasanas are made, and the future begins to diminish from view. Year after year as he gets older, the past gets bigger and bigger and bigger, and the future gets smaller and smaller and smaller. Finally, there is so much resentment that the once joyful adolescent grows into a depressed and bitter adult. Eventually he develops cancer and dies lonely and miserable.

We recently learned that the oldest person in the world is a 118-year-old lady in Canada who happens to be vegetarian. She is quite up in the news and in the Guinness Book of Records. In a study of her life, and that of several others over age 110, it was asked, "Why has she lived so long? Why is she still living?" The answer is that these elderly folk are optimistic. They see a future, and that keeps them living. They must be easy-going and probably have a philosophy of forgiveness

toward what anybody has done to them along the way. People who are successful at flowing with the events of life do not hold onto a lot of resentment or congested pranas. It is when hate and resentment become a way of life that we begin to worry and wonder what life is all about.

The wise have given a remedy, an effective penance, prayaschitta, that can be performed to get rid of the bundle of past resentment and experience forgiveness and the abundance of divine energy that comes as an aftermath. Collect two pieces of paper for every year of your life, and write down in detail all the resentments, misunderstandings, conflicts and confusions that you are still holding onto. When each page is completed, crumple it up and burn it in a garbage can. When the mind sees the fire consuming the paper, it intuitively feels that the burden is gone. It is the emotion connected to the imbedded experience that actually goes away. When this vasana daha tantra, subconscious purification by fire, is complete, you will never feel the same again. If it works for you, send a letter to the editor to encourage others.

After this spiritual experience, religious life, or Hindu Dharma, will be first in your life. All other activities--business, social and family life--will circle around your newly found ideals. Many of the wealthiest people on our planet have kept their religion first, their family and business second and other activities third. Their timing was always right. They were magnetic and happy. Others were happy to be near them.

Resentment is a terrible thing. It affects the astral body and then the physical. When there is a health problem, there may

well be a forgiveness problem. It is crippling to the astral body and the emotions, because when we resent someone, we can't get them out of our mind--we are definitely attached to them. Resentment is equally distributed worldwide. Workers resent their bosses. Bosses resent the owners. Owners of companies resent the government. This is modern society today. This is all-pervasive ignorance, and ignorance added to ignorance makes ignorance stronger. One resentment adds to another in the subconscious mind.

We must begin the healing by first forgiving ourselves, by claiming our spiritual heritage, gaining a new image of ourselves as a beautiful shining soul of radiant light. Then we can look at the world through the eyes of Hindu Dharma. The Yajur Veda expounds, "He who dwells in the light, yet is other than the light, whom the light does not know, whose body is the light, who controls the light from within--He is the soul within you."