

F Family CUS

CAN YOU FORGIVE?

We have all heard of people who can't let go of past hurts or injustices. A Japanese factory worker must have created some sort of record!

There was a story a few years ago about Tetsuro Tanaka who, twenty five years prior, had been fired from his job as an engineer for refusing to join in with compulsory morning calisthenics. From that moment, every single working day, he went to the company gate at 8am to sing protest songs for half an hour. Once a month, on the anniversary day of his sacking, he sang all day.

With a guitar and megaphone Mr Tanaka, 58, sang of his distress and pain.

"Never once in 25 years has anyone asked me what I am doing," he said to a journalist.

Life is full of disappointments and injustices and our culture often deals with it in a strange way. In fact we can tend to ignore pain until it happens to us. When it does, we seem surprised, as though we were convinced that, "Maybe I'll be one of the lucky ones".

You might be one of the lucky ones. But I haven't met anyone who can claim that to be true yet.

We can choose to wallow in these or get up and get on with life. Who do we hurt when we refuse to forgive and move on? Usually the person we hurt most is ourselves.

So what is forgiveness?

Forgiving is the act of VOLUNTARILY giving up resentment or revenge. **When we refuse to forgive we remain in bondage to the person who hurt us.** Forgiveness doesn't make the other person right, but it just makes us free!

Why?

Because when we release the wrong-doer from the wrong, we are cutting a malignant tumour out of our inner life. In fact we're setting a prisoner free! **But we may discover that the real prisoner all along was ourselves...**



The hurt, anger and rage of unforgiveness MUST be pulled out by the roots- even when the roots are buried deep in the painful territory of unresolved loss that most of us don't care to visit. For when we begin to take tentative steps into forgiveness we are allowing hope and a deep, releasing peace to begin to enter.

Forgiveness is NOT holy amnesia which erases the past- instead it is the experience of healing that draws the poison out. You may recall the hurt but you will not relive the hurt.

Quotes sourced from: Karl Faas (The Daily Nudge), David Augsburger (Anger is a Choice book) & Marilyn Heavlin (When Dreams Die book)