

Forgiving

A negative situation can hold you in its grip. It can make us want to take revenge or get back at someone. This urge has led to new horrors such as wars, rape, murder and so on. Forgiveness is one of the most difficult strategies to increase happiness. Not everyone is able to forgive their transgressors. So, only try this strategy when you really want to learn how to forgive someone. You cannot change how other people have treated you, the only thing you can change is how you look at this. When you are really able to forgive someone for what they did to you, you free yourself from the negative power they hold over you. It will improve your self-worth, because you have done something difficult in order to help yourself feel better.

These are 5 things you could do learn how to forgive:

1. Realize that you have been forgiven before for things that you did to other people. Think of a time when you've hurt someone else. When these people forgave you, how did they show this? Why do you think they forgave you?
2. Write a letter of apology to someone that you've hurt. Tell them what you are sorry for. Tell them how you value the relationship. Promise to change / ask them what you could do to repair the relationship.
3. Visualize forgiving someone. Try to understand why they did what they did. Try to show empathy for them. See this person as a whole person, and not only their behavior. Imagine forgiving the person. Which emotions / bodily sensations would you feel at that moment?
4. Write a forgiveness letter. Let go of your anger / frustration / bitterness through writing a letter. Describe in detail what has been done to you. Write down how this has influenced you and still hurts you. End the letter with a clear explanation of forgiveness and understanding (I now realize that this was the best you could do at that moment).
5. Stop fantasizing about how you want to hurt / punish someone who hurt you. People think that this makes them feel better, but it does not. In fact, this way you strengthen the negative feelings instead of releasing the tension.