

Forgiveness

Choosing What Forgiveness Means for Me

Adults | 10 to 15 minutes

Forgiveness can mean different things to different people, and you may not want it as a goal. You can explore hurt, responsibility, and the future without contacting the person or changing a boundary. Your safety and choice remain central.

Use a manageable example without recounting details. Begin with your own definition, including uncertainty or a decision not to use the word.

Separate the meanings

Distinguish forgiveness from forgetting, excusing, reconciliation, trust, or contact. None automatically follows from another, and you can reject definitions that erase what happened.

Choose what you need

Consider protection, acknowledgment, grief support, practical repair, or space. Identify a step that serves your needs without making another person's apology or agreement a condition.

1. What does forgiveness mean to me, if anything?**2. What pressure or expectation am I experiencing?****3. What boundary or accountability must remain clear?****4. What next step would serve my needs whether or not I forgive?****Clinical use and adaptation**

Never assign forgiveness after abuse or imply that healing requires it. Assess coercion and current safety privately. Avoid contact exercises, equal-blame framing, or spiritual pressure; support client-defined goals and appropriate protection.