



Heart & soul

Cate Mackenzie, our resident love coach, helps readers open their hearts to relationships they never thought possible



Find your forgiveness

Let go of festering resentments and feel liberated

If you are holding on to something from your past which brings up nothing but bitter and angry emotions, you will find it hard to feel truly free.

If we don't face up to ill feelings, they permeate into situations we are facing in the present. In fact, I would say that 90 per cent of that negativity you might be feeling stems from past experiences.

I'll give you an example. Sarah's father had huge expectations for her, his only daughter, and she had always felt under a massive amount of pressure.

This bright woman believed she was expected to get married, have children and become successful. All her life she longed for her dad's approval and love,

striving to do what she could to make him happy.

But over time, Sarah grew anxious at the thought of being in her father's company and started to avoid him. The pressure he'd put on her also created so much anxiety, she avoided living her dream of becoming a writer or meeting the man she wanted. She felt she was expected to make gold out of straw without the support to do it and was terrified of trying and failing.

Sarah felt stuck, so she visited a healer to help her move forward. He advised her to practise holding a warm image of a loving father in her heart – you can do the same with any person, such as a friend, lover, sibling or boss.

This internal father would love, hold and appreciate her. Then, once she had connected

with this caring figure, she was to tell her actual father in her mind how she felt about the way he'd treated her, making sure to express her anger and upset.

Next, she had to imagine him walking towards a cleansing blue light while she released any emotions she felt as she visualised the scene. Interestingly, Sarah experienced a pain in her shoulder when she first performed this exercise, but it lessened each time she repeated it.

After using this technique for two weeks, the physical pain had gone, and Sarah felt free to meet with her dad. She found she was no longer affected by his judgement or behaviour and, more than that, was able to feel love for him.

Sarah also began writing and dating again, this time for her and her

alone, and finally felt that she was living her own life.

Release the hurt and heal

Don't take things personally

Make a determined effort here. If you find yourself reacting to things, think about where this feeling is really coming from. Does it originate from a past experience rather than the current situation? You may find the source of the pain from earlier in your life – this will help you forgive the person now.

Write three letters

Use these as an outlet for your feelings – don't actually send them. Firstly, compose a heart letter to express all the hurt and pain someone has caused you. Secondly, write an understanding letter to express empathy for this person's behaviour and how it relates to their own past. And, finally, write a farewell letter to express how you wish to say goodbye to them and the negative feelings.

Say a forgiveness prayer

Try these words: 'For all the people that have hurt me, for all the times they have taken me for granted, for all the injustices done to me and my family lineage, please forgive those who have harmed me. Please forgive their selfishness, and all the ways they rejected and abandoned me. Please help me to forgive, now and forever.' ■

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

Cate Mackenzie is a love coach and couples counsellor with more than 20 years' experience. For more information about her work, visit catemackenzie.com

Free yourself up from ill feelings

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