



iChoose XLR8

Module 1

A hand holding a bright orange rectangular sign with the word "HELLO" in large, white, sans-serif capital letters, and "i am" in smaller, white, lowercase letters below it.

HELLO
i am



Lesson 7: Forgiveness

*“All possibilities are on
the other side of forgiveness.”*

JOHN C. MAXWELL



AT THE END OF THE CHARACTER LESSON, YOU WROTE AN ACTION STEP TO IMPROVE YOUR SELF-RATING.

Did you complete the action? Yes No Describe the results.

LEGEND:

Use the prompts throughout the lesson to guide you.



First person read aloud.



Next person read aloud.



Underline what's important to you.



Share with others.



Take action.

HOW YOU CAN MAKE THIS LESSON EFFECTIVE FOR YOU AND OTHERS:

1. Form groups of 3-5 for a 30-45-minute time slot and 6-8 for an hour.
2. Respect and value each person in the group.
Encourage yourself and others as you share.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud.
You may request to pass to the next reader.
4. Discuss openly. As you read, underline what is important to you.
5. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect. Apply. Have fun!



THE GOAL OF THIS LESSON:

Choose to allow forgiveness to make a beautiful mosaic of your life.



01

Forgiveness is a Choice



Everyone needs forgiveness. The humanity in our lives causes us to not always do the right thing. All of us at some time have wronged others. That action separates and damages the relationship. It causes a brokenness between ourselves and others. The result? Over time, we become broken people.

Forgiveness is like a mosaic. A mosaic is a decoration made up of small, usually colored pieces of inlaid stone, glass, or tile. These small broken pieces are put together in such a way that they display a fragile beautiful picture for others to see. Sense has been made out of brokenness. Beauty is a result of it. That is a picture of forgiveness. Forgiveness takes the brokenness of our lives and allows us to choose to create something of beauty from it.



REFLECTION:

What did you underline that was important to you?



Forgiveness is Not...



To make a beautiful mosaic of your life, you need to have a clear picture of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a choice to not hold something against another person, in spite of what he or she has done to you. Forgiveness is not...



- ***Forgiveness is not approving of what they did.***

It's not saying, "Well, it's okay. Nobody's perfect. Everybody makes mistakes. It's no big deal." It is a big deal; what they did hurt you.

- ***Forgiveness is not denying what was done.***

It's not saying, "It didn't happen. I forgot all about it. I just moved on. I didn't let it affect me." It did happen, and it hurt you.

- ***Forgiveness is not waiting for an apology.***

You may say, "I'll forgive them as soon as they say they are sorry." Don't wait. Some people will never apologize.

- ***Forgiveness is not forgetting.***

Often people say, "Forgive it and forget it." It is impossible to forget if you were mistreated in any manner by an adult or peer. And keep in mind, forgiveness does not have to be private or silent. If an adult or peer has mistreated you, or behaved in a manner which made you uncomfortable, immediately tell a trusted adult who can help you address the mistreatment and begin the healing process. "Forget it?" Impossible!



- ***Forgiveness is not ceasing to feel the pain.***

The wrongs committed toward you may always hurt. It's okay for that to bother you. Just because it hurts doesn't mean you can't forgive. It may not eliminate the pain, but forgiving will lessen it.

- ***Forgiveness is not a one time event.***

Forgiving someone doesn't mean they stop doing wrong. They may need forgiving again. Forgiveness is a process.



• *Forgiveness is not a matter of trust.*

Forgiveness does not mean trust. Forgiveness is a choice — a gift to others and yourself. Trust must be earned over time. To forgive someone immediately does not mean to trust a person immediately. Trust is built slowly based upon behavior, not words.

• *Forgiveness is not reconciliation.*

Just because you have forgiven someone does not always bring reconciliation — the act of restoring your friendship, closeness or compatibility to what it once was. Forgiveness is the choice of one person. Reconciliation is the choice of two. Without forgiveness you remain broken, detached, and jagged. With forgiveness, you become an image of beauty within brokenness, inclusive and peaceful.



REFLECTION:

..... What is the most important thing you learned about what forgiveness is **NOT**?

What is the difference between forgiveness and reconciliation?

Make a list of all the trusted adults you feel you can talk to, identifying at least one trusted adult at school.

HOW FORGIVENESS AFFECTS ME

What is one positive benefit to me if I forgive someone?



**This week I will begin making a mosaic
out of the broken pieces in my life.**



03

Forgiveness Gives You Healing and Health



There's an old saying that unforgiveness towards someone is like drinking poison and waiting for them die. When we hold on to old wounds or grudges, we are in essence choosing to keep a wound that prohibits us from being fully healthy. If we embrace anger, resentment, and bitterness, we will never be able to truly heal from our hurts.

Only by choosing to forgive can we begin the healing process. It may sound cliché, but forgiveness is medicine for the soul —medicine we all need if we want to live life to the fullest.



REFLECTION:

WHICH PATH WILL YOU TAKE?



There are three paths we can take when it comes to relationships. Select one path and discuss why you chose it.

- The Easy Path:** We treat people however we like.
- The Better Path:** We treat people the same as they treat us.
- The Excellent Path:** We treat people better than they treat us.

People You Need To Forgive



There are people you need to forgive if you desire to change your life in a positive way:



1. Forgive Yourself.

Part 1 of this lesson stated, “Everyone needs forgiveness.” We are all broken. When we accept our brokenness, we judge ourselves less harshly and find ourselves more compassionate toward others. Place the broken pieces of your life into a beautiful mosaic by forgiving yourself. You can live a life you are proud of. If that’s not happening now, forgiving yourself will give you the strength to start over again.

2. Forgive Others.

Forgive everyone. Living a life of forgiveness is to live a life of freedom. Forgiveness is about letting go of your past so you can go forward with your life. Whether living or dead, you need to forgive others for the poor choices they have made. Forgiving others may seem insignificant but forgiving everyone is actually the best thing you can do for the quality of your life.



Even low-grade blame and resentment from the past can negatively affect your current relationships, future relationships, and overall wellbeing. You may cause emotional harm to yourself that can hinder your healthy growth and development. This can prevent you from achieving the love, abundance, and happiness you deserve. And being willing to forgive others can have a profound effect on your relationship with them.

Lewis B. Smedes said,

*“When we forgive,
we set a prisoner free
and then discover that the
prisoner we set free was us.”²*



²Smedes, Lewis B. *Forgive and Forget: Healing the Hurts we Don't Deserve*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1984.



05

Benefits of Forgiveness

- You will improve your psychological well-being.
- You will feel a sense of peace as you let go of pain and anger.
- You will see yourself and others with greater clarity.
- You will be able to treat others better than they treat you.
- You will be able to live a life without unfinished business.
- You will be able to ask for forgiveness from others.



..... Select the benefit above that is most desirable to you.
What benefit did you select? Why?



REFLECTION:

Who do you feel that you should forgive first? Yourself? Others? Your parents?

~~~~~

**Today I will forgive someone and reap the positive possibilities of my action.**

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*“All possibilities are on
the other side of forgiveness.”*

JOHN C. MAXWELL

EVALUATE YOURSELF ON HOW WELL YOU DEMONSTRATE A WILLINGNESS TO FORGIVE ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5: Select your answer. (1 is weak, 5 is strong)

1

2

3

4

5

Why did you give yourself this rating?



ACTION STEP:

What specific action can you take immediately that will improve your rating?





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