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"I'll never forget the day in September 2013 when Dan Bastien walked into my store, The Recycled Closet, and asked me if I wanted to advertise in his new magazine. As a small business owner I was very reluctant and told him I'd think about it. A month later I had my first ad running and a day later I had a new customer. Since I do a verbal business matrix, asking each customer how they heard about my store, this new customer said "I saw your ad in The Florida Villager." She proceeded to make a purchase that practically paid for my ad! Needless to say I was thrilled and it was the beginning of many new customers and increased sales. There isn't a week that goes by that I don't meet a customer who says "I read about you in The Florida Villager!"

This proves that The Florida Villager is a first rate publication that people actually read and enjoy (including the ads) instead of throwing it away with the junk mail. Dan and his staff have done a wonderful job of bridging our community together, something so important for South Florida.

Jennifer Vosters Kaloti
Owner, The Recycled Closet

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THE MINDFUL DIVORCÉE

Forgiveness is a Must

BY DEBBIE MARTINEZ, DIVORCE COACH



YEAH, RIGHT! ARE YOU SERIOUS?" I HEAR IT ALL THE time from hurt, betrayed and emotionally abused clients who crave to move on but continue to carry their steamer trunks of resentment, anger, revenge and hate around with them. When I ask if they have worked on forgiveness, they look at me like I am a traitor, when in truth, I am their ally. Yes, I speak the truth - forgiveness will set you free.

Yep, take it from me, a forgiveness convert. I, too, had to commit to forgiving those that so deeply hurt my kids and me. Trust when I tell you, by the time the divorce is final, and even years after, the forgiveness list can get quite long. The fly in the ointment is this: there is actually a part of you that wants to hold onto the justification of the anger and consequently, not forgiving. The Catch 22 is that unless you do, you will never feel the peace that allows you to fully move on.

Forgiveness is profound and life changing as it breaks the tie that binds us to the past. The power we hold to be able to let go of things we couldn't control and leave them in the past is within all of us, we just need to make the choice. Forgiving others for their limitations will free you to not just live life but to experience life at its highest peak. Why settle for the valley when you can stand on the mountaintop?

Think of it this way, not forgiving someone keeps us tied to them. It allows them to control us from afar and can possibly hinder any new relationships due to inner conflict, stress and mistrust. Wouldn't Marley have given anything to be free of those clanking, heavy chains? Too late for him but not for you. I'm not going to sugar coat the fact that to forgive someone who hurt you so deeply is hard work and something that warrants a strong commitment, but it is possible and the rewards are miraculous. Here are some tips to help you on the path of healing.

1. Stop the blame game as it only keeps you entrenched in what was and keeps that person as part of your life.
2. Be willing to see things through a different lens. Nothing happens to us that doesn't teach us something. When you can look at those that have caused you pain, see the lessons they have taught you and be grateful for that lesson, then you are on your way to forgiveness.
3. Stop replaying the hurtful memories. The more you replay them, the deeper they take root.
4. Accept that you might never get an explanation or an apology. If you are holding out for one before you feel you can move forward with forgiveness, you might just be in a holding pattern for eternity.
5. Yield to the fact that not everyone is meant to be in your life forever and that they are guided by their own limitations and life experiences. Don't personalize their behavior towards you, realize they have their own lessons to learn and release them.

Do you want to be imprisoned or liberated? Do you want to drown in the past or breath in the present moment? Do you want to feel anger and resentment or peace and contentment?

Two things can't occupy the same place at the same time. You choose.

Debbie Martinez, MA is a certified, mindful life coach specializing in divorce (aka: heartbreak coach). She professionally coaches clients on how to avoid the breakup backlash and live better, not bitter. As a Florida Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator trained in collaborative divorce, Debbie gives clients the tools they need to successfully untie the knot and stand strong in the wake of adversity. She brings her formal training and life experience into her coaching practice to empower and educate clients through their divorce journey and onto new beginnings. You can contact Debbie at debbie@thepowerofdivorcecoach.com.

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