

# FORGIVENESS

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## What?

Forgiveness is freeing you from the control of the person who harmed you.

Sometimes, forgiveness might even lead to feelings of understanding, empathy and compassion for the one who hurt you.

## Why?

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Studies have found that the act of forgiveness can reap huge rewards for your health.

E.g. lowering the risk of heart attack; improving cholesterol levels and sleep; and reducing pain, blood pressure, and levels of anxiety, depression and stress.

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## 4 R'S

**Responsibility:** Accept what has happened and show yourself compassion.

**Remorse:** Use guilt and remorse as a gateway to positive behaviour change.

**Restoration:** Make amends with whomever you're forgiving, even if it's yourself.

**Renewal:** Learn from the experience and grow as a person.

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## Therapeutic Process

The forgiveness therapy model is flexible enough to be integrated into any therapeutic approach.

Fostering forgiveness in therapy involves uncovering the depth of the client's anger, obtaining commitment to forgive, and working on being able to forgive.

## Brainy Benefits

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Forgiveness creates structural changes in the brain and body; as neural networks that control stress, pain and awareness of threat – all, processes that increase stress hormones in the body and negatively impact physical and mental health, are dialled down.

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## Summary

Forgiveness often represents an act of individual freedom or a method of relationship repair. The concept is versatile and has many benefits for mental health and personal wellbeing