

**Some scientific findings of Stanford
Forgiveness Project of USA to cope with anger**

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**Let us be realist and practical.
Forgive for Good Workshop**

* **By Dr. Frederic Luskin**, Director of the
[Stanford Forgiveness Project](#), Research
Associate, Stanford Center for Research in Disease
Prevention, and author of *Forgive for Good*

* **Schedule:** October 9 through October 30, 2012
(Tuesdays) ; 6:45pm - 8:40pm

* **Tuition fee:** \$245

* **Location:** 1101 Welch Road, Suite A6; Palo Alto, Ca
94304. **To Register:** Call (650) 498-5566

(Note: I am not any agent of this workshop)

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**Workshop participants who
complete the series will be able to:**

1. Describe the core components that create an interpersonal grievance
2. Articulate a practical definition of forgiveness for improved understanding of self and others
3. Explain new strategies for managing anger and hurt

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4. Describe the advantages of forgiveness as a general problem-solving strategy
5. Discuss ways forgiveness can be used to enhance interpersonal relationships
6. Practice the positive emotion refocusing technique
7. Learn how to practice forgiveness to prevent conflicts

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A. H. Harris, F. M. Luskin, S. V. Benisovich, S. Standard, J. Bruning, S. Evans, and C. Thoresen.

Effects of a group forgiveness intervention on forgiveness, perceived stress and trait anger: A randomized trial.

Journal of Clinical Psychology. 62(6) 715-733 (2006).

A randomized study of 259 adults.

Conclusions are: (See next slide)

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Skills-based forgiveness training may prove effective in

(a) reducing anger as a coping style,

(b) reducing perceived stress and physical health symptoms, and,

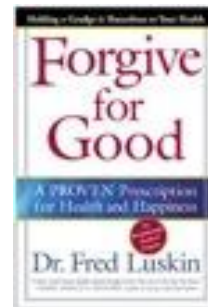
(c) thereby may help reduce allostatic load (e.g., immune and cardiovascular functioning) in daily living.

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Some tips to adopt forgiveness explained by Dr. Luskin

- * Forgiveness is for you and not for anyone else.
- * Forgiveness does not necessarily mean reconciliation with the person that hurt you, or condoning of their action.
- * Forgiveness can be defined as the “peace and understanding that come from blaming that which has hurt you less, taking the life experience less personally, and changing your grievance story.”

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•Give up expecting things from other people, or your life that they do not choose to give you.

•Recognize the “unenforceable rules” you have for your health or how you or other people must behave.

•Remind yourself that you can hope for health, love, peace and prosperity and work hard to get them.

*Put your energy into looking for another way to get your positive goals met than through the experience that has hurt you.

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* Remember that a life well lived is your best revenge.

*Instead of focusing on your wounded feelings, and thereby giving the person who caused you pain power over you, learn to look for the love, beauty and kindness around you.

*Forgiveness is about personal power.

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uns5ik6qEeA&feature=related>

A 6 minute video at above youtube website gives a brief summary of some concepts.

In this video, Dr Luskin also says that he can teach the skills to cope with anger, and these skills tend to develop forgiveness. But he finds it difficult to teach forgiveness. Forgiveness involves spirituality and consciousness.

His experience points out that with spirituality it may be easier to learn and adopt forgiveness.

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Some valuable quotes of Luskin worth remembering

(1) Forgiveness is defined as the affirmative ability to remain at peace when one is unable to get what one wants.

(2) In more colloquial terms forgiveness is defined as making peace with the word “no”.

(3) Forgiveness is contrasted with reconciliation, justice, condoning, and acceptance.

(4) Forgiveness can be defined as the “peace and understanding that come from blaming that which has hurt you less, taking the life experience less personally, and changing your grievance story.”

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Luskin's study includes the following:

* Training of many victims of the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland who lost their family members. Noted a significant reduction in hurt, stress, and depression and a significant increase in physical vitality.

* Forgiveness training to various sales groups. More sales and better health have been noted in trained persons as compared to other group which was not trained.

* Forgiveness training lead to reduction in stress hormones in pre-menopausal women, and decrease in blood pressure in moderately hypertensive cardiology patients.

* Benefit of this training to family members of the victims of the attack at the World Trade Center on 9/11.

* Benefit to tens of thousands of persons have been studied so far.

Reference : <http://www.apa.org/international/resources/forgiveness.pdf>⁴

For various research papers presented in a midday workshop in UN in 2006 by American Psychological Association, one may refer to

American Psychological Association, (2006). Forgiveness: A Sampling of Research Results. Washington, DC: Office of International Affairs.

This reference can be available at <http://www.apa.org/international/resources/forgiveness.pdf>

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* Spirituality and forgiveness

Logic: Karmic laws

Sarvam sadaiv niyatam bhavati swakiya,
Karmodayanmaranjeevitdukhasaukhyam,
Agyanmetadiha yattu parah parasya,
Kuryatpumanmaranjeevitdukhasaukhyam.

(Acharya Amrit Chandra: Samayasaar Kalash No.168)

All - life, death, pain, and pleasure – happen according to one's own Karma;

an ignorant person does not know this truth, and thinks that others are responsible for his/her life, death, pain, and happiness.

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Question (1) If a thief steals our money then what to do? Should we forgive and forget? Should we not report to police?

Question (2): A customer buys TV on credit and does not pay in three months even after repeated reminders. Should we forgive and forget and allow him to give a washing machine on credit again.

Question (3): If a neighboring country invades our country then what to do? Should we not defend by fighting the war imposed on us?

Answer:

Fred Luskin says, "Forgiveness does not necessarily mean reconciliation with the person that hurt you, or condoning of their action."

Let us now see what Tirthankar Mahaveer says in this regard:

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Jain philosophy says:

(a) Our thoughts and feelings should not have anger and revenge

(b) Our actions and reactions must be non-violent to self and others.

Four kinds of violence towards self and others

Type	Acts	Monks	Householder
Intentional violence (Sankalpi Hinsa)	Anger, Feeling bad, Revenge, To harm others and self.	NO	NO Reference RKS
Violence in defense (Virodhi Hinsa)	Acts of protection (country, self, ours, etc.)	NO	Yes with minimization
Violence in trade and business	Acts associated with trade, Business, earning livelihood.	NO	Yes with minimization
Violence in daily chores	Household activities	NO	Yes with minimization ¹⁸

Let us review a common Puja related with forgiveness

पीडे दुष्ट अनेक, बांध मार बहु विधि करै ।
घरिये छिमा विवेक, कोप न कीजे पीतमा ॥

उत्तम छिमा गहोरे भाई, इह भव जस पर भव सुखदाई ।
गाली सुनि मन खेद न आनो, गुनको औगुन कहै अयानो ॥
कहि है अयानो वस्तु छीने, बांध मार बहु विधि करै ।
घरतै निकारे तन विदारै, बैर जो न तहाँ धरै ॥
तैं करम पूरव किये खोटे, सहै क्यों नहि जीयरा ।
अति क्रोध अगनि बुझाय प्राणी, साम्यजल ले सोयरा ॥

ॐ ह्रीं उत्तक्षमा धर्मागाय अर्घम् ॥१॥

Three messages (1) Kopa na kije pitama, (2) Khed na ano, (3) Bair jo na tahan dhare.

Reference DP⁹

Good Jain tradition

सर्वे जीवेषु सर्वे जीवा खमन्तु मे
मित्ति मे सर्व्व भूएस् वैरम् मज्झम् ण केणवि ।

KHAMEMI SAVVE JIVESHU
I forgive all the living beings

SAVVE JIVA KHAMANTU ME
All the living beings forgive Me

MITTI ME SAVVA BHUESU
I am friendly towards all the living beings

VERAM MAJJHAM NA KENVI
And no one is my enemy

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Examples of intentional violence, and violence in defense.

I have every right to be angry and sad when someone harms me.	(<i>Samkalpi Himsa</i>) Intentional violence towards self. Not allowed.
I will take revenge of this loss to me.	(<i>Samkalpi Himsa</i>) Intentional violence towards others. Not allowed.
I will do my best to protect my interest without being angry and without any revenge attitude.	Householder cannot sustain without such attitude of defense. (<i>Virodhi Himsa</i>). Example: Rama fought for his Sita. Jainism gives green signal with caution to minimize the loss.

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We now answer the three questions raised earlier:

- (1) (a) It is not good to remain angry and upset. To be angry and upset is *Sankalpi Himsa* towards self. It is not easy to control anger, but if you think that it is OK to remain angry then it would prolong your anger.
 (b) You may report to police. Any lesson given by the police or any loss to the thief by the police in your protection is *Virodhi Himsa* (OK for a householder).
- (2) (a) See Answer 1(a).
 (b) You may try to get your money back by all possible valid means. It is not necessary to give a new credit. Any disturbance to him by this decision would be *Virodhi Himsa* or Trade related *Himsa* (OK to a householder).
- (3) (a) See Answer 1(a).
 (b) Householders need to defend by fighting the war. The associated violence is *Virodhi Himsa* (OK to a householder).

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Application in our family life.

It is very important to learn this skill to apply in our family life. Following revised formulas can be re-written in the new software in our mind by believing, reading, and speaking these again and again.

1. I can learn to avoid anger and can stop becoming upset. I do not allow others to make me angry or upset.
2. I will never intend to harm others.
3. I will do my best to protect my rights, but I shall also learn to assess my rights. (See examples given below.)
4. I will sincerely discharge my duties.

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Father (80), 11 Crore earned by himself, 2 sons.

Real state + Cash + Gold + Stocks/bonds (value 5 Crore as per assessment to each of the two sons). 1 Crore cash for himself and balance for donations after his death.

Son 1 estimates 4 crore to himself and 6 crore to brother.
 Son 2 also sees 4 crore to himself and 6 crore to brother.

Both fight with father and stop taking care of their father. Sons came to me (imaginary case) one by one. I explained:
 (a) Protect your rights. But first decide your rights.
 (b) Before this stop anger and do your duty towards father.

How to decide Rights? What would be the judgment of the court? Father's decision regarding his self earned money will be your right.

Many problems can be solved by this method. Take one more example.

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Father in debt. Three sons worked hard and became rich. They paid the debt. They arranged weddings of their sisters and themselves.

Now father is 80. Each son has 10 crore and all sons are highly respectful to father.

Father announces donations and sons honor his wishes.

One day, the father expressed his desire to make a donation of 2 crore rupees for building a temple.

Sons find it difficult. Father becomes angry, upset and fights .

He came for my advise (imaginary case). He argues that the money has been earned by his blessings and good *Samskar*. Therefore, it is his money. I explained:

(a) Protect your rights. But first decide your rights.

(b) Before this stop anger and do your duty of loving your sons. What would be the judgment of the court? It is sons' money. You have limited rights.

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More help from scriptures related with Karmic Laws.

Tattvarthsutra written by Acharya Umaswati (Umaswami) nearly 2000 years back gives recipe for unhappiness and happiness as follows:

Asrava of Asatavedniya (Unhappiness):

Dukh-shoka-tapakrandan-vadh-paridevananyatmaparo bhayasthananyasadvedyasya. (VI.11)

Meaning: Extending misery, grief, agony, moaning, injury and lamentation in self, in others, or in both leads to the Asrava of Karmas responsible for suffering and misery.

Asrava of Satavedniya (Happiness):

Bhut-vratyanukampa-dana-sarag-sayamadiyogah kshantithi shauchmiti sadavedyasya. (VI.12)

Meaning: Compassion towards living beings in general and the spiritually advanced in particular, charity, self-restraint with attachment, forgiveness, purity, etc. lead to the Asrava of Karmas responsible for pleasure and happiness.

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Concluding quotation from one of the most popular books of modern times (37 million books have been sold)

You can heal your life by Louise Hay.

In this book, on page 14, the following lines are worth noting:

“All disease comes from a state of unforgiveness. Whenever we are ill, we need to search our hearts to see who it is we need to forgive. Forgiveness means giving up, letting go. It has nothing to do with condoning behavior.”

MICHHAMI DUKKADDAM!

Mithya me dushkratam.

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References

1. Fred Luskin, *Forgive for Good* (Harper)
2. Louise L. Hay, *You can heal your life*, Hay House, Santa Monica, CA, 1984.
3. For youtube video regarding Stanford Forgiveness Project:
(a) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlo26PwfcLY>
(b) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uns5ik6gEeA&feature=related>
- 4 <http://www.apa.org/international/resources/forgiveness.pdf>
5. American Psychological Association, (2006). *Forgiveness: A Sampling of Research Results*. Washington, DC: Office of International Affairs.
6. Acharya Amritchandra, *Atmakhyati* (Commentary on *Samayasara*).
7. Acharya Umaswami, *Tatvarthasutra*.
8. (RKS): Acharya Samantabhadra, *Ratnakaranda Shrivakaachaar* (For Samkalpi Himsa see verse No.53) .
9. (DP): Pundit DhyanatRay, *Daslaxan Puja*.

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THANK YOU

For comments e-mail to :

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