



# GROW IN FORGIVENESS

8 ways to cultivate a forgiving mindset

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**1.** When you are in a good mood and rested, you react differently to situations than you do when you are tired and irritable. Therefore, establish **good sleep routines and nutrition habits**.

**2.** We each have tender **pressure points** that make us more sensitive to feel hurt in situations that might not offend other people: for example, a tendency to feel ignored, exploited, unappreciated, or superior. Grow to know yourself and use self-talk when tempted by feelings of hurt or anger.

**3.** Use **"I" messages** to communicate in a respectfully assertive way.

- When ... (state the behavior)
- I feel ... (state the feeling)
- Because ... (state the consequence)
- Request (state your need)

Example: "When trash is left on the lunch table, I feel taken for granted because I am left to clean up the mess that others make. Please show respect for me by clearing your meal space before leaving the table."

**Forgiveness is, first, a gift that we give to ourselves.**

**4.** Other people are not mind readers! Use **"I" statements** to express your needs, feelings, wants, and desires. Example: "I need you to turn the stereo volume down" or "I feel invisible" or "I want to complete my thought before hearing a response."

**5.** Take **ownership** (accept responsibility) for what you contributed to the situation.

**6.** Whenever anger or hurt surfaces, pray a **short prayer** (aspiration) such as: "My Jesus, mercy" or "Mother of Good Counsel, guide and protect me" or "Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place my trust in you" or "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing."

**7.** **Reverse roles.** Put yourself in the offender's shoes. What is the reason behind the person's behavior (*attention, power/control, revenge, or inadequacy*)? Rather than

take it personally, realize that the behavior results from the offender's personal struggle.

**8.** **Ground yourself.** Carry a small medal, rosary, or wooden cross in your pocket. When hurt or anger press on your heart, touch the object and recall that God is with you. **✠**

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