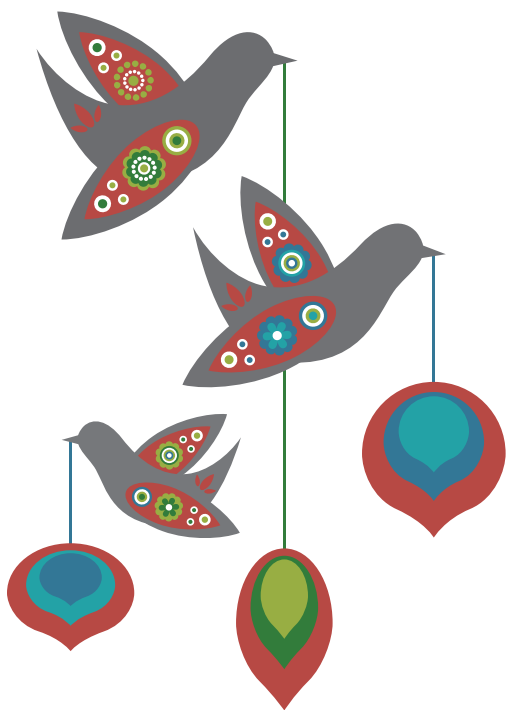


PEACE through Forgiveness



“
With forgiveness
there can
be transformation.
”

NELSON MANDELA

Dear Carmen:

I just learned that my best friend Ciara – at least I thought she was my friend – began secretly dating my boyfriend while I was out of town visiting my parents a month ago. I am absolutely crushed. How could they do this to me? Not only have I lost the guy I really cared for, but I have lost a trusted friend and confidant as well. I cannot stop thinking about it. I am angry, and I am hurt. I don't think I can ever forgive either one of them. How can I put this behind me and move on?

~ Tommasina

Dear Tommasina:

It has been said that the people most likely to hurt us are the people we love and trust. The pain caused by their actions can be difficult to overcome. But re-living the event over and over in your mind won't improve the situation. In fact, the more you dwell on the events, the greater the offense becomes. What's worse, your internal hostilities may become obvious to others causing them to back away from you – just when you could benefit from their friendship and counsel.

Are you aware that being resentful and unforgiving could result in long-term mental and physical problems? Forgiveness, on the other hand has a laundry list of benefits from lowering your blood

pressure and heart rate to reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression, resulting in a greater feeling of overall wellbeing.

In a word, forgiveness is a blessing but it often takes time. Before you can begin to forgive your former friend and boyfriend, you might want to take a little look inside yourself. From my perspective, there is some excellent news. While you could conceivably feel bitterness, hostility or even vengeance, it appears you have begun to let go of your resentments – you are contemplating moving forward. That's definitely a step in the right direction.

An inspired man, Nobel Peace Prize Winner Nelson Mandela



offered a message at one of his 90th birthday celebrations. In his speech he said, "With forgiveness there can be transformation." That message is something you may want to claim as your mantra, Tommasina. By embracing forgiveness, you can embrace the peace and joy within yourself.

Good luck moving on,

Carmen

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