

Pre-class Checklist:

- Play-Doh
- Bungee cords
- Whiteboard
- Whiteboard Markers
- Name tags, Markers
- Meditation CD's

Students Leave Class With:

- A sense that forgiveness is a human function that we have mistakenly transferred to the Universe, although there is no place for anger or resentment in the harmony of the Eternal Now.
- The realization that no real spiritual progress is possible until everyone, including ourselves, is wholly forgiven.
- A workable pattern to follow in achieving true forgiveness of self and others.

Opening Meditation

Get paper and pen ready to journal. After becoming quiet and centered, ask, ***“What kinds of activities make you feel the best about yourself?”*** (pause) *“Choose something that you haven’t done in awhile, something you long to do. Picture yourself doing it.”* (pause) *“Choose another and picture yourself doing that.”* (pause) *“What about these activities nurtures you?”* (pause) Ask them to open their eyes and quietly write their answers. Then take them back into the silence and ask, *“Is there anything stopping me from doing these activities on a regular basis? If so, what must I change?”* (pause) *“What must I surrender in order to bring these activities into my life as often as I’d like? What must I change in consciousness?”* (pause) *“What must I embrace?”* Now give them 2-3 minutes to write the answers to these last two questions. Once most have finished writing ask for 1 or 2 volunteers to share. *“Who would be willing to share the activities that make them feel best about themselves?”*

Welcome and Sharing

Lesson / Talk / Dialog

1. Any questions from last week’s lesson? Any questions about Personal Project – SB-5?

2. **Unexpected Income Club** – Demonstrations and collection of offerings [see Class 6 for full explanation].
3. Core Concept Eight. SA-11 (Before reading Core Concept Eight, “The Thing Itself,” discuss God as Love. As Love, God creates only peace and harmony, as this is Its natural state. Before reading “The Way It Works” discuss how, when we’re centered in our own Divinity, our lives are peaceful and harmonious – it’s our natural state of being. Condemnation, and therefore the need to forgive, is a human experience.
4. **Does God forgive?** Forgiveness is only necessary where condemnation and/or injury are present. God does not condemn nor can God be injured.
5. We tend to create God in OUR image and likeness rather than the other way around.
6. Exploration of the human necessity for forgiveness – of self and others. S9-3 Pray for the other person . . . for them to be completely happy.
7. Bungee cords exercise – attach +/- 4 bungee cords to my belt. Have +/- 4 students come up front. I pretend I am recalling the past: “My mother dropped me as a child while she was drunk!” (One of the students holds the other end of first bungee); “My spouse had an affair!” (Another student holds second bungee) etc. Now I try to walk forward. I cannot. I am firmly rooted in the past.
8. “A Pattern for Forgiveness,” S9-4 to S9-7: A workable **forgiveness technique**. Ask, “Why don’t we want to forgive?” Write answers on the board. You may ask, “Why do I have to be the one to forgive?” Because you’re the one who wants to be healed! Is unforgiveness worth losing even one instant of holiness, of sanity? There’s a certain Something in you that knows what’s right for you. Go over the following reasons to forgive:
 - Forgiveness ultimately has little to do with the “other person”
 - We identify ourselves with our wounds.
 - “Hold nothing against anyone – for if you do, there is a dark spot in your heart where the Holy Spirit is not welcome.” (Course in Miracles)
 - “Anger is nothing more than an attempt to make someone else feel guilty.” (Course in Miracles)
 - Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and hoping the other person will die.
 - Forgiveness is giving up all hope for a better past.
 - You know you’ve forgiven when you can allow that person or event safe passage through your mind.

Break

Housekeeping functions (homework / attendance etc.)

Experiential T9-3 “Forgiving is Letting Go” – Whole or Small Group Exercise

PART 1

- Start meditation music.
- Have the students take out several sheets of blank paper and pen or pencil.
- Briefly explain the process of dialoguing in a journal. No editing, don't worry about spelling, punctuation or grammar – just write and write.
- Ask each student to think over any hurtful incidents in the past week or two and choose one to work with. They are to dialogue on this hurt for about 5 minutes, writing without review or editing for the entire time. Let them know that they will be sharing it with one other person. At the end of the 5 minutes, say “Please take one more minute to finish your thoughts.”
- Quiet the mood by saying, *“Put your pencil down, close your eyes, let your body relax ... sink into your chair ... take a deep breath and know you’re loved.”* Sit in silence for one minute. Then ask them to open their eyes and silently read what they’ve written.
- Now, have them intuitively find their perfect partners and share (speaking about what they’ve written instead of reading it) for about 3 minutes each.

PART 2

- Give each student a lump of Play-Doh, either purchased or homemade¹. Have each participant sculpt a representation of what his or her unforgiveness looks like. When most are done say, *“Use the next 60 seconds to finish up.”*
- Go around the room and have each person tell the others in a few words what their representation represents. *“My unforgiveness represents _____.”*
- When all have shared lead them in a visualization of transmuting unforgiveness energy into forgiveness and letting-go energy. Say, *“Think about being comfortable . . . think about feeling secure . . . think about a time you were so happy that no one could push your buttons (one minute of silence). Now, in that space of bliss, think about the incident you wrote about . . . let peace wash over you . . . let peace wash over the incident . . . you are now in a state of forgiveness . . . you are aware that this feeling is God-blessed because not only are you in a space of forgiveness, you are feeling loving towards yourself in it.”*

¹ **Recipe for Play-Doh:** In a saucepan mix equal parts of flour and salt with a spoonful or two of salad oil, some food coloring and just enough water to make a thick paste. Heat and stir until the salt is dissolved and you have a Play-Doh consistency. This takes only a few minutes. Store in an airtight container such as a plastic bag.

- Have them re-sculpt the Play-Doh into a representation of what forgiveness looks like, then share their creations. *“My representation of forgiveness is a _____.”*
- If time, have them return to the partner they talked with earlier this evening to share any new realizations after this activity.

Closing

Some Personal Thoughts on Core Concept Eight: *Forgiveness*

Perhaps this is the concept which best lends itself to God as Love? God as Givingness? According to Santa Rosa California Professional Practitioner Kathleen Kearney, Core Concept Eight doesn't fit the pattern of the rest of the Core Concepts because with the others you can say, "God is ___", in the left column, and "I am ___" (the same thing) in the right column. But in Eight you would have to say, "God is forgiveness" in the left column, which some might have difficulty accepting. Condemnation must be present in order for forgiveness to be necessary, and we teach that God does not condemn.

Perhaps we can say, "God is giving," and "I am giving"? As we see it, unforgiveness is as simple as withholding love.

Perhaps we can change the left column to say "God is Love" or "God is Givingness" or "God is Giving." In the right column it would follow that "I am Love" or "I am Givingness" or "I am Giving." For instance, in the left column we could talk about how God as Love or God as Givingness creates the natural order of things, which is peace and harmony. In the right column we could say that when we're centered in the Love or the Givenness of Spirit within, our lives are peaceful and harmonious – it's our natural state of being.

After we've established that God is Love/Givingness, we could explore forgiveness. Left column – Because God is Love/Givingness, It knows nothing of condemnation, so It has no need to forgive. Right column – Condemnation is a human experience. Forgiveness brings us back to our natural state of being, which is living our Divinity.

When we revisited "What We Believe," the Holmes' statement that appears to best fit this revised view of Core Concept Eight is, "We believe in the eternal Goodness, the eternal Loving-kindness and the eternal Givingness of Life to all." It appears this statement already lends itself to Core Concept Six – Abundance – but the belief statement for Core Concept Eight works well with this statement, too: it talks about emancipation from all discord. It just doesn't mention Love.

Isn't that interesting?

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Forgiveness Exercise

After working through the forgiveness exercises on pp. 9-4 through 9-7, complete the following, to be handed in:

1. List 10 things that cause you to be grateful.
2. Complete the following sentences. Include a short explanation for each.
 - a. "Something I have learned about myself is . . ."
 - b. "Something I've learned about my relationship with Spirit is . . ."
 - c. "Today I'm proud of myself because . . ."

1. Reading/Study

- a. Appendix A. **Core Concept Eight**, p. A-11
- b. All the resource material marked The Way It Works (*TW/W*) in your Workbook for Week 9
- c. *The Science of Mind (SOM)* pp. 457-458; required.
- d. *Living the Science of Mind (LSOM)* pp. 396-404; required,
pp. 364-368; suggested.

2. Writing ... (retain in Workbook for reference)

Work through the four-page exercise "A Pattern for Forgiveness", pp. 9-4 through 9-7. Try to work with heart and head, recognizing that this may be an effective tool for future challenges in forgiveness.

3. Writing . . . (to be handed in)

Forgiveness exercise, Homework Week 9, p. 2.

4. Meditation

"Many Stages, Many Paths".