

## How to Forgive

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It's impossible to go through life without having to forgive someone for something, or without someone else needing to forgive us. It's a simple fact of life that no matter how well-intended people are, we sometimes hurt others and others hurt us.

Most people want to forgive. In fact, 94 percent of those surveyed in a recent nationwide Gallup poll said it was important to forgive. But, only 48 percent of those people said they tried to forgive others.

Forgiving allows you to move forward in life. And it provides closure so you can concentrate on things in your future, rather than in your past. So what's the best way to forgive someone who caused you hurt or pain?

1. Acknowledge your anger by giving yourself permission to be angry. You were wronged. It's okay to be upset about that.
2. One time, and one time only talk or write about your feelings. You can talk to the person who hurt you (provided you can do so safely), or to a friend or counselor, or you can write a letter that only you will read. Prepare for this one-time event by preparing a bullet-list of points you want to make.
3. After the conversation or letter, let it go. Move on. This is your opportunity to put the event behind you and choose to forgive. There is power in this choice because choosing to *forgive* is your decision. You are choosing to move on with your life and all the wonderful things that lie ahead.
4. Remember that you, too, have the ability to hurt others, whether you mean to do so or not. If you caused hurt, would you want to be forgiven? Be sure to keep that thought in mind when you make your forgiveness choices.