

# Forgiveness: One Way to Stop Guilt and Self-Blame

WI FACETS

September 11, 2019



Tim Markle: Parent, Forgiveness Practitioner,  
Forgiveness Factor Founder; [forgivenessfactor.org](http://forgivenessfactor.org)



# What forgiveness is not

- Forgiveness is not just saying “I Forgive You”
- Forgiveness is not primarily about you
- Forgiveness is not finding excuses for the offending person’s behavior
- Forgiveness is not offered to inanimate objects but is offered to persons
- Forgiveness is not a quick formula you can recite and it works like magic



# What forgiveness is

“When we forgive, we **willingly** and **deliberately** offer **goodness** to those who have been **unfair** to us.

Dr. Robert Enright, UW-Madison

A decorative horizontal line at the bottom of the slide, featuring a series of small, colored squares in various colors (green, orange, yellow, teal, blue, purple) arranged in a pattern.

# What forgiveness is

- Response to an injustice
- Free choice
- Difficult
- Life-changing
- One response to trauma



# Why does it matter?

Faith backgrounds teach it

- Hebrew Scriptures
- Christian Scriptures
- Muslim
- Confucian
- Buddhist
- Native American



# What are the results of unforgiveness?

- Physically—stress, high blood pressure, ulcers, addictions
- Emotionally—depression, anger, resentment, bitterness
- Relationally—broken, distant, distrust
- Spiritually—broken, less than life



# What does science say forgiveness can do?

- Reduce psychological depression
- Reduce anxiety
- Reduce unhealthy anger
- Decrease posttraumatic stress symptoms

Dr. Enright and others

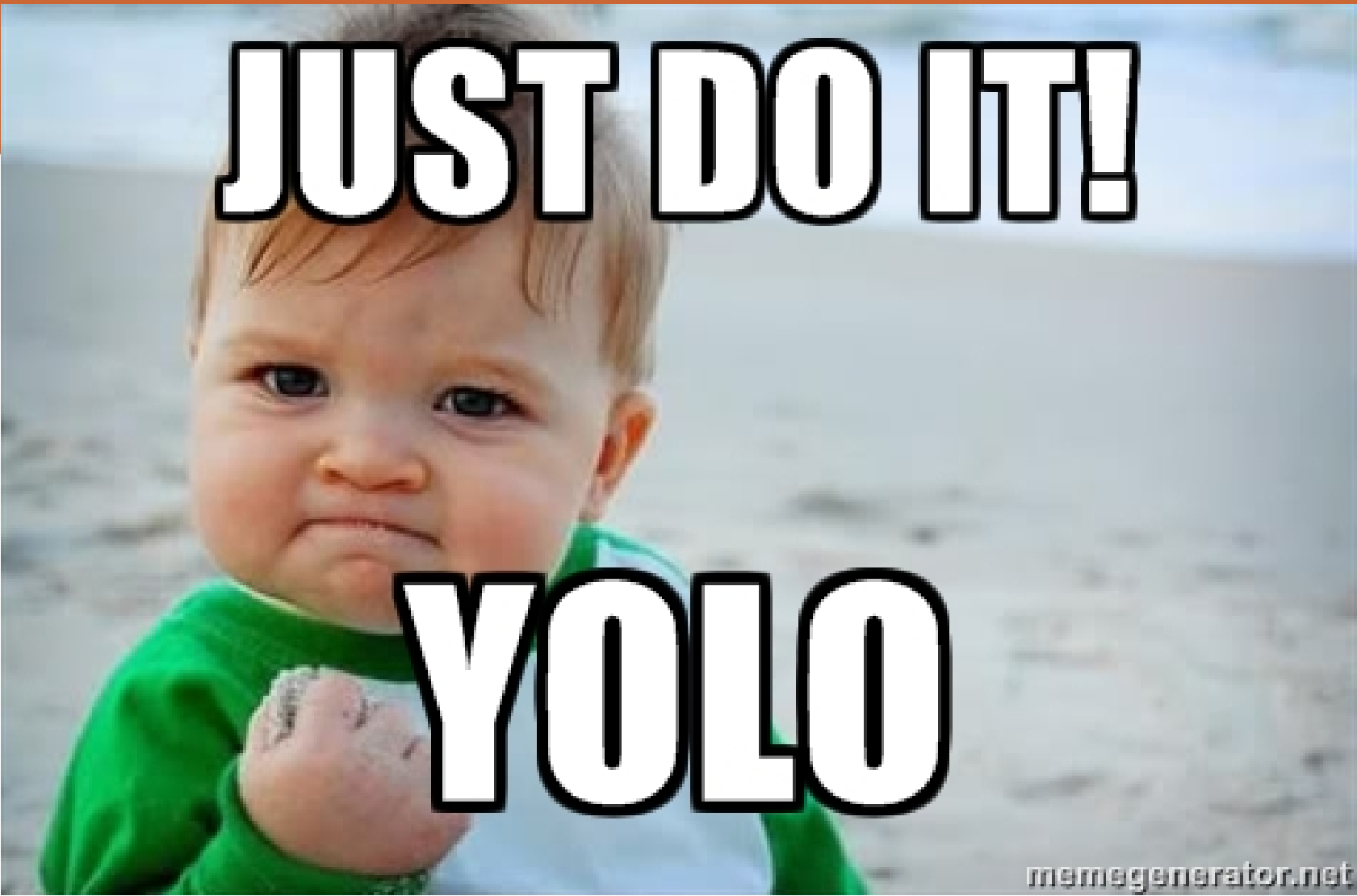


# What does science say forgiveness can do?

- Increase quality of life
- Increase focus (not distracted by the thoughts and negative feelings)
- Increase cooperation and reduce bullying (deal with underlying issue)
- Increase self-esteem



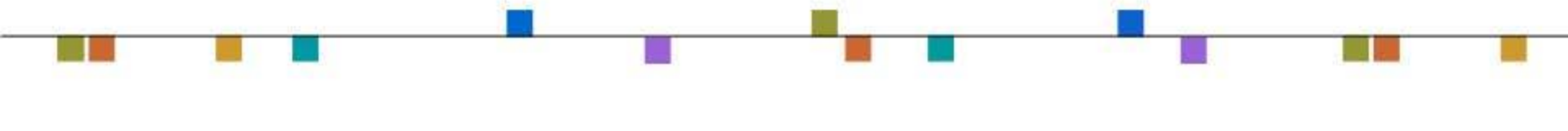


A close-up photograph of a baby with light brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a green long-sleeved shirt. The baby has a determined, slightly pouting expression and is holding a handful of sand in their right hand. The background is a blurred beach scene with sand and a light blue sky. The text "JUST DO IT!" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif font with a black outline at the top of the image.

**JUST DO IT!**

**YOLO**

memegenerator.net

A decorative border at the bottom of the page consisting of a horizontal line with small, colorful squares (blue, purple, green, orange, yellow) scattered along it.

Decorative border with colorful squares.

# Become forgivingly fit

- Commit to do no harm
- Practice the BIG THREE
  - Clearer vision (See, then Be)
  - Love (See, then Be)
  - Mercy (See, then Be)



# Why are you in pain?



[www.dumb.com](http://www.dumb.com)

# As Parents of CYSHCN

Where might we encounter pain or disagreements or injustice?

- educational
- medical
- social
- family



# Things to remember

- Has there been an injustice?
  - Any action or inaction that is directed at you by a person and that you do not deserve
- You have a right to healing.
- Where/with who do I start?



# Decide to forgive

- Decide what you have been doing hasn't worked (alcohol, avoidance, etc.)
- Be willing to try forgiveness
- Commit to forgive
  - Choose one person to start with
  - Slay the monster—give back humanity
  - Visualize person at different stages of life
- Don't give up (practice, practice, practice)



# Decide to forgive

- Practice compassion
- Can you practice the BIG THREE on this person who hurt you?
- Can you give the person a gift?
  - Not to show them up
  - Not extravagant
  - Meaningful to you and to the other
  - Don't need to explain the whole process



# Forgiving yourself

- Having mercy on yourself as we have been offering mercy to others
- Offering yourself a sense that you have inherent worth
- You are more than your actions
- You can and should honor yourself even as you are imperfect





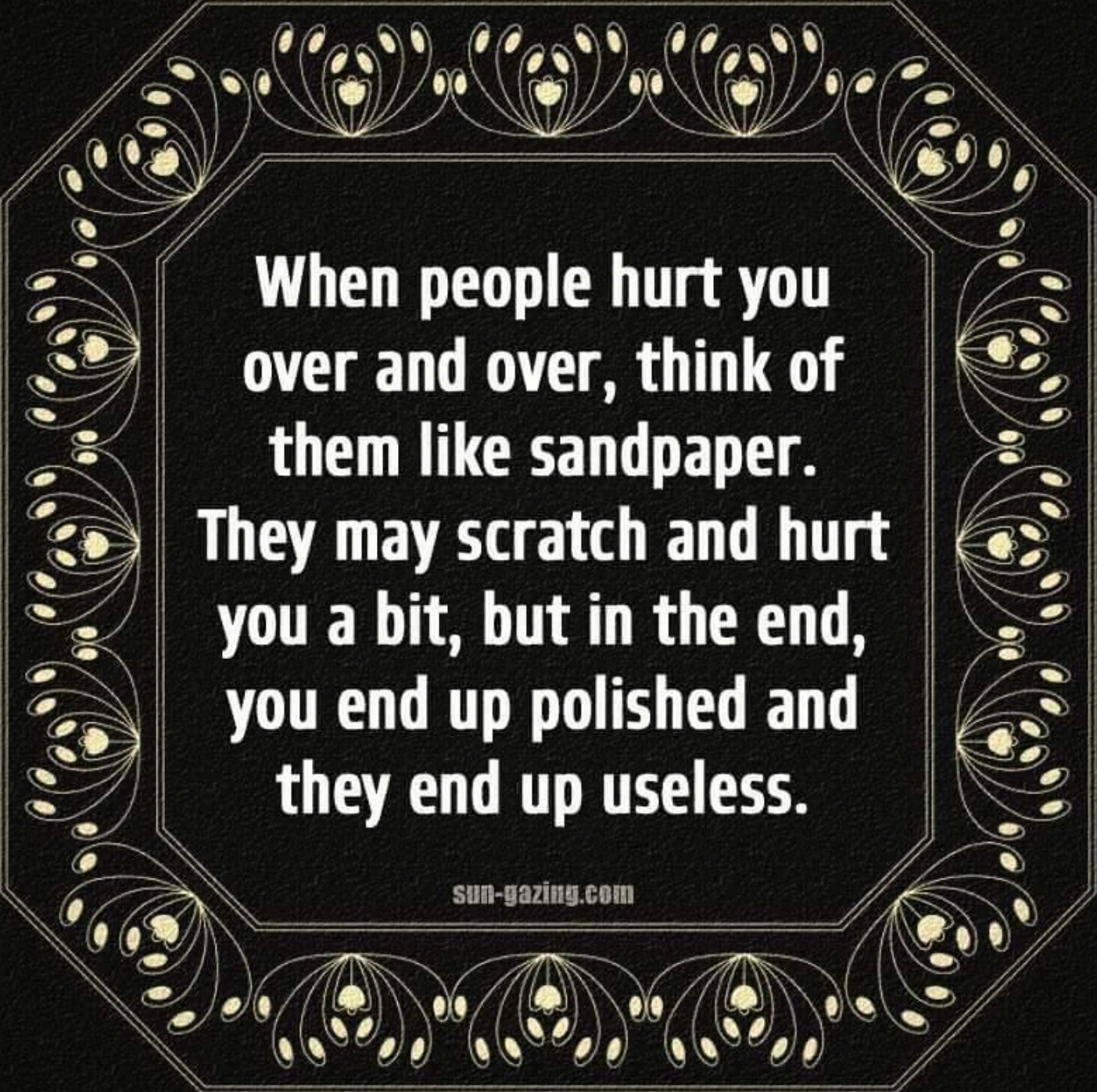
# Forgiving yourself

- Admit you did wrong and need to correct wrong done to other people
  - Seek forgiveness and right any wrongs



“Until you heal the wounds of your past, you are going to bleed. You can bandage the bleeding with food, with alcohol, with drugs, with work, with cigarettes, with sex; But eventually, it will all ooze through and stain your life. You must find the strength to open the wounds, Stick your hands inside, pull out the core of the pain that is holding you in your past, the memories and make peace with them.”

Iyanla Vanzant

A decorative octagonal frame with a repeating floral pattern of stylized flowers and leaves, rendered in a light yellow or gold color against a dark background. The frame surrounds the central text.

**When people hurt you  
over and over, think of  
them like sandpaper.  
They may scratch and hurt  
you a bit, but in the end,  
you end up polished and  
they end up useless.**

[sun-gazing.com](http://sun-gazing.com)

**I forgive people but that  
doesn't mean I accept their  
behavior or trust them.  
I forgive them for me, so  
I can let go and move on  
with my life.**

**WomenWorking.com**



**“No one, no memory,  
should have the  
power to hold us  
down, to deny us  
peace. Forgiving is  
the real power.”**

**--Jose Hobday**



If you can't say  
nuffin' nice,  
don't say nuffin'  
at all!



# Contact information

Tim Markle

[www.forgivenessfactor.org](http://www.forgivenessfactor.org)

608-421-0850

markle@forgivenessfactor.org

Waisman Center/Southern Regional Center for Children and Youth with  
Special Health Care Needs

608-262-8033

tmarkle@wisc.edu

