Can we talk?

ANGER

Brother

Alcoholism

Dad

Shame

Depression

Bullying

Unforgiveness

Isolated
Do we live in an unforgiving world?

• Revenge
• Power
• Disrespect
• Hang onto that anger!
What can carrying around unforgiveness do to us?

- **Physically**—stress, high blood pressure, ulcers, addictions
- **Mentally**—distracted, triggered
- **Emotionally**—depression, anger, resentment, bitterness
- **Relationally**—broken, distant, distrust
- **Spiritually**—broken, less than life
How do we deal with it?

• Defense Shields
  – Denial
  – Blame
  – Rationalization
  – Isolation
  – Double life
Forgiveness?
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
“When we forgive, we willingly and deliberately offer goodness to those who have been unfair to us.”

Dr. Robert Enright, UW-Madison
Why does it matter?

Faith backgrounds teach it

- Hebrew Scriptures
- Christian Scriptures
- Muslim
- Confucian
- Buddhist
- Native American
What does science say forgiveness can do?

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

Dr. Enright and others
JUST DO IT!

YOLO
Why are you in pain?

- www.dumb.com
How do I forgive?

- Acknowledge the pain and the junk
  - Focus on one person at a time
- Decide my way isn’t working
- Consider forgiveness
- Choose to forgive
- Decide to forgive
How do I forgive?

• Rehumanize
• Reflect
• Gift of goodness
Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania  2006

"I don't think there's anybody here that wants to do anything but forgive and not only reach out to those who have suffered a loss in that way but to reach out to the family of the man who committed these acts."
Charleston, South Carolina     2015

“I believe once we’re able to forgive you are able to build on things and you’re able to free yourself of that constant feeling of anxiety or feeling like you need to get revenge or whatever it may be.”
• How do you talk about yourself to yourself?
• You can and should honor yourself even as you are imperfect
• Offering yourself a sense that you have inherent worth
Forgiving yourself

- You are more than your actions
- Admit you did wrong and need to correct wrong done to other people
  - Seek forgiveness and right any wrongs
Living as if . . .

- First---shut up!
- Recognize we are leaky people
- Choose the positive over the negative
- Look for love, mercy and forgiveness
- Practice love, mercy and forgiveness
There is more to your story
Contact information

Tim Markle  
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
Go . . . and do amazing things – because you can!