

## Weekly Meditation by Rev. Teri Lubbers

### Forgiveness

***One of the great teachings of that personification of our original nature we call Jesus is forgiveness. Forgiveness is the quality of letting go of resentment and holding to a separate identity. It means going into your heart so that you can feel the pain of another and let go of it. Forgiveness occurs when the holding mind sinks into the spacious heart and is dissolved. The Indian saint, and teacher of many close friends, Maharaji, use to say, "Don't put anyone out of your heart." Because when you put someone out of your heart, you remove yourself as well. This truth is perhaps reflected in Jesus' statement "Judge not lest you be judged." ~ Stephen Levine, "Who Dies?"***

How do you "learn" forgiveness? Can you find a how-to book on it at the library? Can you go to a forgiveness school and take classes? Is there a guild out there where you can be apprenticed to a master forgiver? Well, maybe that last one is a possibility. I do think that sometimes we can learn some things by watching others. But if we want to be forgiving in the way we interact with others, it will mean letting our hurt-holding minds sink into the open and loving space of our hearts.

When you put someone out of your heart, you remove yourself as well. We are all connected. How we are to and with one another profoundly shapes how we are with and within ourselves.

You don't have to wait until someone says they're sorry to offer forgiveness. You don't have to carry around resentments until someone admits that they were wrong, and you were right all along. In fact, while forgiveness might make the other guy feel better, it benefits you far more by freeing you up. You are free to act rather than react, free to feel the pain of another and release it.

**Prayer: God, free me from the need to be right at the cost of my peace of mind and heart. Teach me that forgiveness is a path that leads me home, to you and to myself. Amen.**