



# Forgiveness:

## A Path to Freedom

This is a sample chapter from

### Feelings Allowed:

Making Emotions a Key Part of Our Being  
Together

Blending personal stories, reflective questions,  
and the latest insights from neuroscience,

Feelings Allowed invites you to see emotions not as obstacles, but as  
powerful allies for growth, connection, and transformation.

Explore the list of emotions featured in the book, each complementing  
the theme of this chapter.

Discover more and order your copy at [www.FeelingsAllowed.com](http://www.FeelingsAllowed.com).

List of Feelings-Emotions

| <i><b>Feelings</b></i> | <i><b>Constructive<br/>Positive Side</b></i>    | <i><b>Fragmenting<br/>Negative Side</b></i> |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Joy                    | Promotes optimism and<br>motivation             | Unrealistic expectations                    |
| Sadness                | Encourages empathy<br>and healing               | Withdrawal and depression                   |
| Fear                   | Enhances caution                                | Anxiety and avoidance                       |
| Anger                  | Drives assertiveness                            | Aggression and relationship<br>damage       |
| Disgust                | Helps avoid harm                                | Prejudice and exclusion                     |
| Embarrassment          | Encourages humility                             | Social anxiety and avoidance                |
| Ennui (Boredom)        | Sparks creativity                               | Apathy and disengagement                    |
| Nostalgia              | Provides comfort                                | Stuck in the past                           |
| Anxiety                | Improves preparedness                           | Chronic stress and avoidance                |
| Envy                   | Motivates self-<br>improvement                  | Resentment and<br>unhealthy competition     |
| Resentment             | It helps us to face areas that<br>need healing. | Foster's bitterness                         |

# Forgiveness: A Path to Freedom

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Forgiveness is a courageous act of release, freeing us from resentment's grip. It invites healing, restores connection, and opens the heart to peace. Through awareness, humility, and grace, it becomes self-liberation. Discover more and order your copy at [wwwFeelingsAllowed.com](http://wwwFeelingsAllowed.com).

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Forgiveness is one of the most profound journeys of the heart, a path that requires courage, patience, and the strength to confront our vulnerability. It is not a fleeting feeling or a simple gesture but a deliberate act of release. Forgiveness doesn't erase the pain or justify the harm; instead, it is a gift we give ourselves, freeing us from the suffocating grip of resentment. It is a softening of the heart, an offering of grace that ripples outward, inviting healing and connection where there was once division. One of the most challenging moments of forgiveness in my life came when I had to let go of resentment towards someone who never acknowledged their wrongdoing. Waiting for an apology kept me constrained, and I found peace after forgiving without expectation.

At its core, forgiveness is a paradox. It feels liberating and daunting all at once. While forgiving others is a mountain many struggle to climb, asking for forgiveness, admitting fault and saying, "I'm sorry", can feel like an even steeper ascent. The difficulty often lies in our ego, that fragile yet stubborn part of us that resists vulnerability. The ego thrives



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on the illusion of control and perfection, and admitting wrongdoing can feel like chipping away at its armour. Admitting fault requires humility; for some, it feels like surrendering power. But acknowledging our mistakes strengthens relationships, fostering trust and emotional depth.

When we avoid forgiveness or hold back apologies, we unwittingly carry a heavy burden. Resentment clouds our ability to connect with our emotions, dampening our capacity for joy, empathy, and clarity. I once

witnessed a family torn apart by years of unspoken grudges; each member convinced that the other should make the first move. The weight of pride kept them in a painful stalemate, but healing followed when one person finally extended an olive branch. Forgiveness acts as a clearing storm. It sweeps away the debris of anger and pain, creating space for understanding and deeper relationships.

Psychologist Clarissa Pinkola Estés offers a beautiful framework for the journey of forgiveness, outlined in four steps: forgo, forbear, forget, and forgive. These stages provide a structured path through the complexities of forgiveness, helping us navigate both personal and relational healing.

When trust is broken within a family, forgiveness can feel like an impossible journey. The wounds of betrayal run deep, challenging our ability to move forward. However, the process of healing unfolds in four crucial steps: Forgo, Forbear, Forget, and Forgive.

### Forgo: Creating Space Before Reacting

The first step invites us to set aside our grievances, even if only temporarily. It does not mean ignoring the betrayal but rather creating a pause, a space to reflect, breathe, and gather strength before moving forward. This intentional pause allows emotions to settle, preventing impulsive reactions that could deepen the wounds. A close friend once told me how stepping away from a heated argument saved her marriage. In the silence, she gained perspective, enabling her to approach the conversation with clarity rather than anger.

### Forbear: Resisting the Urge to Retaliate

Patience becomes the cornerstone here, as we choose not to retaliate or act out of hurt. It is the practice of holding steady and refraining from spreading harm, even when anger and betrayal demand immediate action. By resisting the urge to lash out, we create room for clearer understanding and a more measured response. One of the hardest things I have learned is that not every wound requires a reaction. Sometimes, silence and patience pave the way for the most meaningful reconciliation.

### Forget: Releasing the Grip of Resentment

Forgetting in this context doesn't mean erasing the memory of betrayal, it means releasing the toxic grip of pain and refusing to let it control our future. Holding onto resentment keeps us trapped in the past, replaying the hurt instead of making space for healing. Letting go is not about denial but about freeing ourselves from the weight of

bitterness. I once heard forgiveness compared to setting down a heavy stone you've been carrying for miles. The moment you release it; you realise just how much lighter life can be.

### Forgive: Choosing Liberation Over Bitterness

The final step is the heart of the process, a conscious choice to let go of anger and resentment. It does not excuse the betrayal or erase its impact; rather, it releases the emotional burden it carries. Forgiveness allows us to reclaim our inner peace, making way for healing and the possibility of reconciliation, whether or not trust is ever restored. However, forgiveness and wisdom must go hand in hand. Granting forgiveness does not mean the other person has changed. Wisdom helps us discern what kind of relationship, if any, we can have with the person who has hurt us, ensuring that our healing includes both compassion and self-protection. Some relationships are best loved from a distance, and forgiveness does not always mean re-entry into another person's life.

This journey is rarely linear or easy. Forgiveness asks us to face the ego's resistance, which clings tightly to pain as a form of validation or self-protection. Eckhart Tolle insightfully describes the ego as a force that thrives on separation and control, making forgiveness feel like a threat to its survival. When we are unwilling to forgive, we often convince ourselves that holding onto pain keeps us strong, when in reality, it only keeps us stuck. Yet, as we loosen the ego's grip, we rediscover a deeper peace, one that reconnects us with our true selves. The act of forgiveness, then, is not just about mending relationships; it is a profound act of self-liberation, allowing us to move forward with greater clarity, strength, and openness to life's possibilities.

Each of us navigates forgiveness through our lens, shaped by personality and life experiences. The Enneagram, a powerful framework for self-awareness, reveals why some people struggle more with forgiveness than others.

Enneatype Ones, with their deep fear of being flawed or "bad," may find it difficult to admit mistakes, seeing an apology as a crack in their moral foundation.

Enneatype Fives, who fear being helpless or emotionally depleted, might retreat instead of addressing conflict, guarding their vulnerability rather than opening up to repair.

Enneatype Eights, driven by a desire for control and strength, may resist forgiveness because it feels like giving up power or appearing weak.

Recognising these patterns is a crucial step toward self-awareness and growth. By understanding our own tendencies, we can approach forgiveness with greater compassion, not just for others but also for ourselves. When we realise that our resistance to forgiveness is rooted in something deeper than the specific conflict, we gain the ability to navigate it with more patience and wisdom.



***Forgiveness is an act of liberation.***

Thomas Merton eloquently wrote that forgiveness dissolves the barriers between us, allowing us to see both ourselves and others more clearly. It bridges divides, reminding us of our shared humanity and the potential for growth and reconciliation. Forgiveness is not simply an act of grace toward another, it is an act of liberation for ourselves.

Far from being a sign of weakness, forgiveness is a quiet strength. It takes courage to unclench the fists of anger and let go. As Buddhist wisdom teaches, “Holding onto anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned.” Marianne Williamson echoes this truth: “Unforgiveness is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.” These teachings remind us that forgiveness always heals the one who forgives. It transforms suffering into wisdom, freeing us from the prison of our pain.

Forgiveness doesn’t deny the past; it honours it by weaving clarity and understanding from the threads of suffering. I saw this truth in my parents, who embraced the principle: “Don’t let the sun go down on your anger.” They resolved conflicts by avoiding them and facing them head-on, offering apologies rooted in sincerity and a desire to mend what was broken.

This distinction between regret and remorse is crucial. Regret lingers in the past, but remorse moves us toward transformation. Regret keeps us stuck in what was, while remorse urges us to grow beyond it. As we continue, we will explore how genuine remorse deepens our understanding of forgiveness and helps us grow emotionally, spiritually, and relationally.

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## Discover the Heart of *Feelings Allowed*

*Feelings Allowed* is a practical, poetic, and neuroscience-informed guide to emotional intelligence, personal growth, and authentic relationships. In this powerful first volume of the *Living Well* series, Dr Carlos Raimundo and co-authors invite readers to embrace emotions—not as problems to fix, but as essential guides to a fuller life.

- ≈ **Section One** explores the foundations of emotional awareness. From the complexity of relationships and the healing power of forgiveness and grace, to the neuroscience of gratitude, learned helplessness, and the layers of emotional and social intelligence—it's an invitation to welcome feelings into our everyday conversations.
- ≈ **Section Two** dives into the rich tapestry of individual emotions—joy, sadness, fear, anger, envy, nostalgia, grief, and love—revealing how each feeling shapes our lives. These reflections are both personal and universal, helping readers make peace with even the most difficult emotions.
- ≈ **Section Three** brings insight into the roles we play and the patterns we repeat. It includes a practical introduction to the Active Roles method and the Enneagram, along with creative therapeutic tools like mandala-making and bilateral drawing used in transpersonal art therapy.
- ≈ **Section Four** offers a thoughtful path forward. It links emotions to spirituality, explores how to find the right therapist, and guides readers toward greater self-understanding, connection, and transformation.

*Blending neuroscience and storytelling, Feelings Allowed offers an accessible guide to understanding emotions and fostering resilience.*

**Read the full journey in *Feelings Allowed*—**

**[www.FeelingsAllowed.com](http://www.FeelingsAllowed.com)**

## Feelings Allowed: Embracing Emotions, Finding Freedom

In *Feelings Allowed*, Dr Carlos Raimundo blends neuroscience, storytelling, and decades of experience in psychodrama and psychotherapy to offer a powerful guide to embracing the full range of human emotions—without fear or judgment.

Each feeling, from joy and love to sadness and resentment, is a messenger guiding you toward deeper truths about yourself and your relationships. With gentle insights and practical exercises, *Feelings Allowed* helps you heal old wounds, strengthen connections, and break free from self-limiting narratives.

A perfect companion for those on a therapeutic journey, this book expands the healing process and reveals hidden emotions waiting to be explored.

If you enjoyed Brené Brown's *Atlas of the Heart* or seek to weave science with personal growth, *Feelings Allowed* will inspire you to live with greater emotional clarity and courage—because every emotion is part of your story, and every feeling is allowed.

*"Feelings Allowed is a gentle set of suggestions for grappling with emotions on the surface and hidden. The illustrations offered are clear and convincing, and the discussion of ways that some hidden emotions are manifested is very helpful."*

- Erica Michaels Hollander, JD, PhD, TEP, USA

*"Feelings Allowed is a true treasure, warm, wise, and wonderfully practical. With bite-sized insights and rich emotional guidance, it weaves tools like Play of Life and the Enneagram through heartfelt stories. It will be a daily companion for me and for navigating emotions with my daughter. A must-read for those in counselling, seeking self-help, and a valuable resource for coaches, educators, and therapists alike."*

- Cathy Bishop, Founder Big Leap Coaching and Consultant, HeartStyles Associate, South Africa

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