

**FORGIVENESS:  
A PATHWAY TO  
EMOTIONAL  
HEALING**



**A CONTINUING EDUCATION WEBINAR**

**ARRANGED AND HOSTED BY**

Canadian Society for  
**Spirituality &  
Social Work**



**north american association  
of christians in social work**  
A Vital Christian Presence in Social Work

PRESENTED BY  
**DR. ROBERT D. ENRIGHT**



**WISCONSIN**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



## **OBJECTIVES FOR TODAY**

- ✓ Learn what forgiveness is and what it is not.
- ✓ Discover the Pathway to Forgiveness.
- ✓ Exercise your forgiveness muscles.
- ✓ Develop confidence in introducing the life-giving qualities of forgiveness to your clients and others in your life.

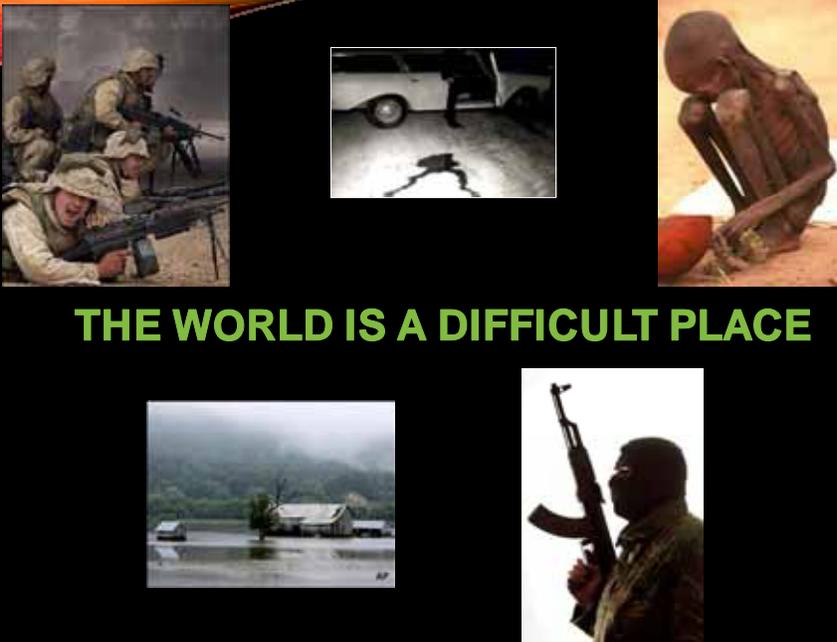
## **AGENDA**

- I. Foundation and Fundamentals
- II. What is Person-to-Person Forgiveness?
- III. The Benefits of Forgiveness
- IV. Learning to Forgive – the 20-Step Process Model
- V. Spreading Forgiveness - the Forgiving Community

## **FORGIVENESS: A PATHWAY TO EMOTIONAL HEALING**

### **PART I: FOUNDATION AND FUNDAMENTALS**





**THE WORLD IS A DIFFICULT PLACE**



**ANGER, VIOLENCE, ABUSE, TRAGEDY  
BEGET MORE OF THE SAME**



**WITH EACH GENERATION  
THE MISERY MULTIPLIES**

And the list of failed solutions is long

**YET, THERE'S A GLIMMER OF HOPE  
ON THE HORIZON**

It's proving effective at reversing the trend

**ITS NAME?**  
**FORGIVENESS**

**ITS CHAMPION?**  
**THE INTERNATIONAL FORGIVENESS INSTITUTE**  
MADISON, WISCONSIN



**THE IFI MISSION**

The International Forgiveness Institute is dedicated to helping people gain knowledge about forgiveness and to use that knowledge for personal, group, and societal renewal.



**Missing Peace?**

**RESEARCH HAS FOUND:**

**“FORGIVENESS IS A SKILL THAT CAN BE TAUGHT,  
EXERCISED, STRENGTHENED LIKE A MUSCLE.”**

**FRED LUSKIN**  
DIRECTOR OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY'S FORGIVENESS PROJECT



— EXPERT!  
— SKILLED  
— LEARNER  
— NOVICE  
— AMATEUR

**THE INTERNATIONAL FORGIVENESS INSTITUTE**  
Is Recognized World-Wide  
As the Leader in Forgiveness Education



## Forgiveness Education in Award-Winning Documentary

**The POWER of FORGIVENESS**

UNDERSTANDING FORGIVENESS | HOW FORGIVING ARE YOU? TAKE THE QUIZ | OUTREACH TOOLS | FORGIVENESS RESOURCES | ABOUT THE FILM | WHEN TO WATCH

**FORGIVENESS AND JUSTICE**

Dr. Everett (Ev) Worthington is a professor of psychology who has published over 20 books on forgiveness, marriage, and family topics. But his experience with forgiveness comes not just from study and research. He's had some first-hand experience with forgiveness.

On a New Year's Eve about ten years ago someone broke into his mother's house. An attempted theft turned into a brutal murder when his mother fought back. A suspect was captured who volunteered details no one could have known who wasn't at the scene. But because of "some issues with the evidence," a jury wouldn't indict.

*"We tend to talk about justice far more often in every community that's been in turmoil and we rarely talk about forgiveness and mercy."*  
Robert Enright

Watch Video [icon]

<http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com/understanding/index.html#>

## UNITED NATIONS ENDORSES FORGIVENESS EDUCATION

*"I would be interested in working with the IFI to provide training for both the UN staff and national counterparts who could then deliver the curriculum to stakeholders we serve...I would hope for more opportunities for forgiveness education to be introduced in a variety of situations where it is needed around the world."*

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

Bureau for Public Administration and Development Management  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations, Two UN Plaza - DC3-1734, New York, NY 10017  
Tel: (212) 963-8381, Fax: (212) 963-8881, E-mail: [rosalinda.bonarrigo@un.org](mailto:rosalinda.bonarrigo@un.org)

7 April 2008

Dear Bob,

Thank you for our recent email exchanges which have given me the opportunity to learn more about forgiveness education and its relevance to areas of the world recovering from conflict and violence. It was very impressive to know that your forgiveness programs with children and adults have been scientifically evaluated and found to be effective in improving emotional health. From my personal experience observing the effects of war and conflict on people and their societies, I believe that your approach would complement and add to the work of the UN in reconciliation and peacebuilding. I hope that in the long-term forgiveness, when embedded deeply in communities, can help forge a more long-lasting peace than has been the case in too many regions of the world. As I mentioned, the UN is grappling with the statistics that almost 50% of countries coming out of violent conflict will revert back into conflict within ten years. Perhaps by imparting forgiveness education as part of a comprehensive peace strategy, we could help more societies sustain peace.

## IFI FORGIVENESS EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

### Asia:

China, Singapore

### Africa:

Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda

### Europe:

Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, *Northern Ireland*, Sweden

### Middle East:

Iran, Jerusalem/Palestine, Turkey

### North America:

Canada, Mexico, 18 U.S. States

### South America:

Brazil, Colombia

## IFI FORGIVENESS EDUCATION PROGRAMS



## IFI FORGIVENESS EDUCATION PROGRAMS

### What others are saying:

*"Forgiveness has the potential to transform our communities that have not known peace for decades and reshape our world. Teaching the art and power of forgiveness to children may be both the best and the fastest way to positively change our world. I believe the Belfast experiment should be expanded to first grade classes in every elementary school in the world."*

Patrick Wells, Writer & Movie Producer  
The Washington Post 3-26-2010

## ➤ FORGIVENESS IS A CHOICE



## **FORGIVENESS: A PATHWAY TO EMOTIONAL HEALING**

**PART II:  
WHAT IS  
PERSON-TO-PERSON  
FORGIVENESS?**



**➤ FORGIVENESS  
IS A MORAL VIRTUE**



## ➤ FORGIVENESS CUTS ACROSS MANY DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHIES AND RELIGIONS



## FORGIVENESS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- **Luke 15:11-32** - the prodigal son
- **Matthew 18:23-35** – the unforgiving servant
- **Matthew 6:9, 14-15** - Jesus' commentary on The Lord's Prayer
- **John 15:12-14; 13:34-35** – “Love as I have loved you.”
- **Matthew 5:43-47** - we are to pray for those who hurt us
- **1Peter 4:12-14, 19** - we are to share in Christ's suffering

## DEFINING FORGIVENESS

*"When unjustly hurt by another, we forgive when we overcome resentment toward the offender, not by denying our right to the resentment, but instead by trying to offer the wrongdoer compassion, benevolence, and love; as we give these, we as forgivers realize that the offender does not necessarily have a right to such gifts."*

*Joanna North & Robert D. Enright*

## FORGIVING IS NOT:

- **Condoning or excusing**
- **Forgetting the injustice**
- **Condemning**
- **Simply calming down or becoming indifferent**
- **Reconciliation**

## TO FORGIVE A PERSON WHO CAUSED US AN UNFAIR HURT IS:

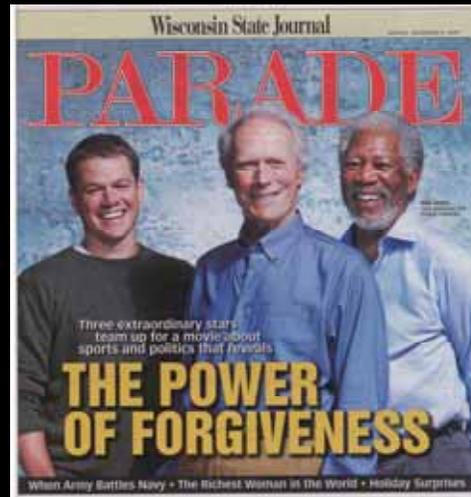
- To see his or her inherent worth
- To forego resentment or revenge (when the wrongdoer's actions deserve it)
- To respond to that person with the gifts of mercy, generosity, and love when the wrongdoer's actions indicate that he/she does not deserve them
- To chose to have a merciful heart—a heart with the power to free yourself so you can live a better life

## FORGIVENESS: A PATHWAY TO EMOTIONAL HEALING

### PART III: THE BENEFITS OF FORGIVENESS



## **FORGIVENESS = INCREASING PUBLIC INTEREST**



## **FORGIVING IS NOW SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN TO IMPROVE PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**

- Men who forgive themselves are seven times more likely *not* to be classified as clinically depressed than men who don't forgive themselves.  
(Toussaint)
- Veterans tested for cardiac problems improved heart health and suffered less risk for sudden death if they forgave.  
(*Journal of Psychology and Health*)

## FORGIVENESS: SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN

- AIDs patients who forgive are more likely to care for themselves and stop engaging in unprotected sex.  
*(Los Angeles Times)*
- Incest sufferers who forgive are emotionally healthier with less depression, anxiety, more hope and self esteem.  
*(Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology, Enright)*
- Those who pardon others have lower blood pressure, fewer depressive symptoms and better overall physical and mental health.  
*(Journal of Adult Development)*

## FORGIVENESS: SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN

- Women who forgive their abusers reduce their anxiety and depression, increase self esteem and hopefulness.  
*(Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology, Enright)*
- Terminally ill and elderly cancer patients decline more slowly if they forgive.  
*(Hansen, Enright, Baskin)*
- At risk middle school children who forgive have improved emotional health and academic performance over control groups.  
*(Enright, Wisconsin, Seoul, Korea)*

## ENRIGHT FORGIVENESS RESEARCH

29+ YEARS

Peer-Reviewed Empirical Studies

Incest Survivors    Drug Rehab Patients    Terminally-ill Cancer Patients    Students in 3 Countries    Parents of Students

***TIME* magazine called Dr. Enright “the forgiveness trailblazer.”**

## HOW FORGIVENESS CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE PHYSICALLY

- Forgiving reduces the anger, bitterness, resentment, depression, and negative emotions that accompany the failure to forgive. *WebMD.com*
- “People who are able to forgive can actually modify their heart rate, lower their blood pressure, decrease physical pain and even relieve their depression.” *Psychology Today*

## HOW FORGIVENESS CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE SPIRITUALLY

- Forgiveness affirms what our faith usually requires of us and, therefore, helps us live a life of integrity.



## HOW FORGIVENESS CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE SOCIALLY

- Forgiveness reduces anger and resentment and often leads to an improvement in personal relationships with family, friends and community.



## **FORGIVENESS: A PATHWAY TO EMOTIONAL HEALING**

### **PART IV: LEARNING HOW TO FORGIVE**



## **THE PROCESS MODEL OF FORGIVING**

### **PRELIMINARIES**

- Who hurt you?
- How deeply were you hurt?
- On what specific incident will you focus?
- What were the circumstances at the time?  
Was it morning or afternoon? Cloudy or sunny?  
What was said? How did you respond?

© R. Enright (2001). [Forgiveness Is a Choice](#). Washington, D.C.: APA Books.

## THE PROCESS MODEL OF FORGIVING

### PHASE I – UNCOVERING YOUR ANGER

- ❖ How have you avoided dealing with anger?
- ❖ Have you faced your anger?
- ❖ Are you afraid to expose your shame or guilt?
- ❖ Has your anger affected your health?

CONTINUED 

© R. Enright (2001). [Forgiveness Is a Choice](#). Washington, D.C.: APA Books.

## THE PROCESS MODEL OF FORGIVING

### PHASE 1 — UNCOVERING YOUR ANGER (CONTINUED)

- ❖ Have you been obsessed about the injury or the offender?
- ❖ Do you compare your situation with that of the offender?
- ❖ Has the injury caused a permanent change in your life?
- ❖ Has the injury changed your worldview?

© R. Enright (2001). [Forgiveness Is a Choice](#). Washington, D.C.: APA Books.

## THE PROCESS MODEL OF FORGIVING

### PHASE 2 – DECIDING TO FORGIVE

- ❖ Decide that what you have been doing hasn't worked.
- ❖ Be willing to begin the forgiveness process.
- ❖ Decide to forgive.

© R. Enright (2001). *Forgiveness Is a Choice*. Washington, D.C.: APA Books.

## THE PROCESS MODEL OF FORGIVING

### PHASE 3 – WORKING ON FORGIVENESS

- ❖ Work toward understanding.
- ❖ Work toward compassion.
- ❖ Accept the pain.
- ❖ Give the offender a gift.

© R. Enright (2001). *Forgiveness Is a Choice*. Washington, D.C.: APA Books.

## THE PROCESS MODEL OF FORGIVING

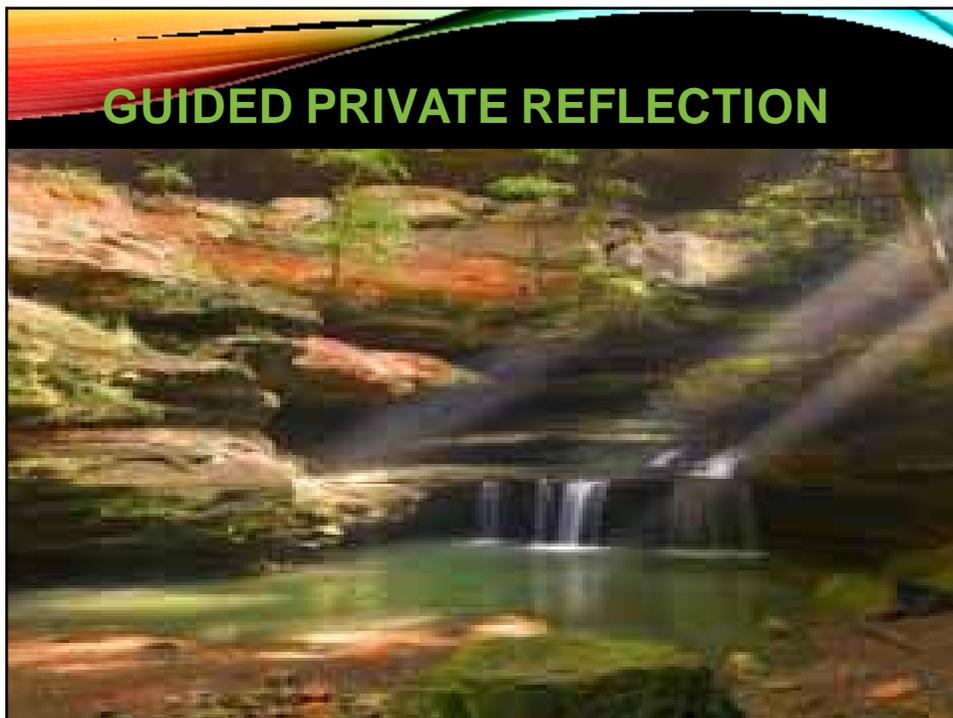
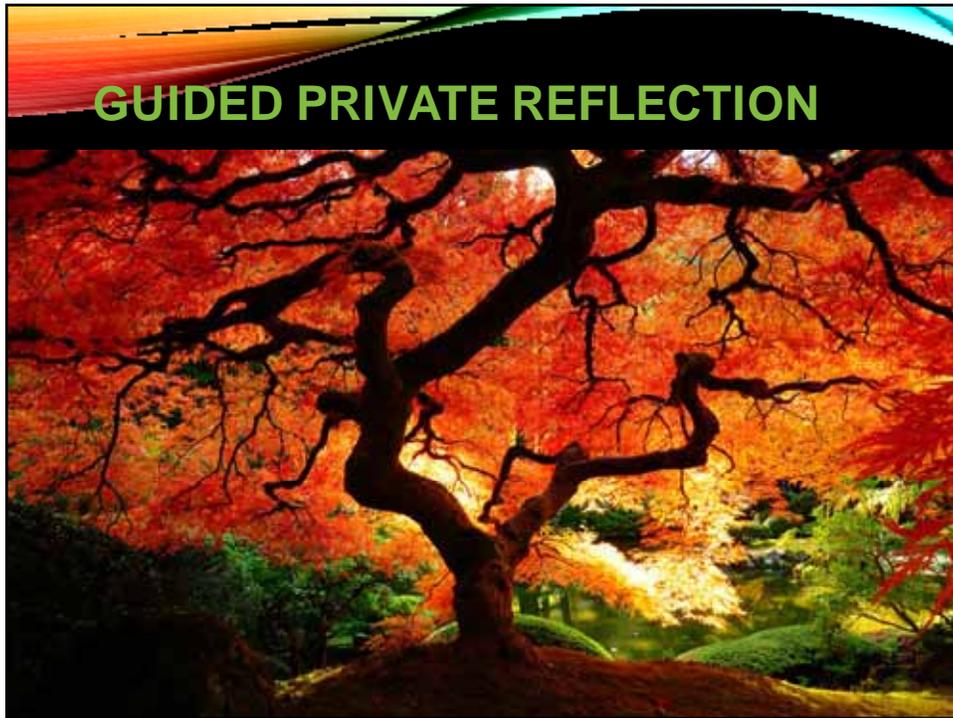
### PHASE 4 — DISCOVERY AND RELEASE FROM EMOTIONAL PRISON

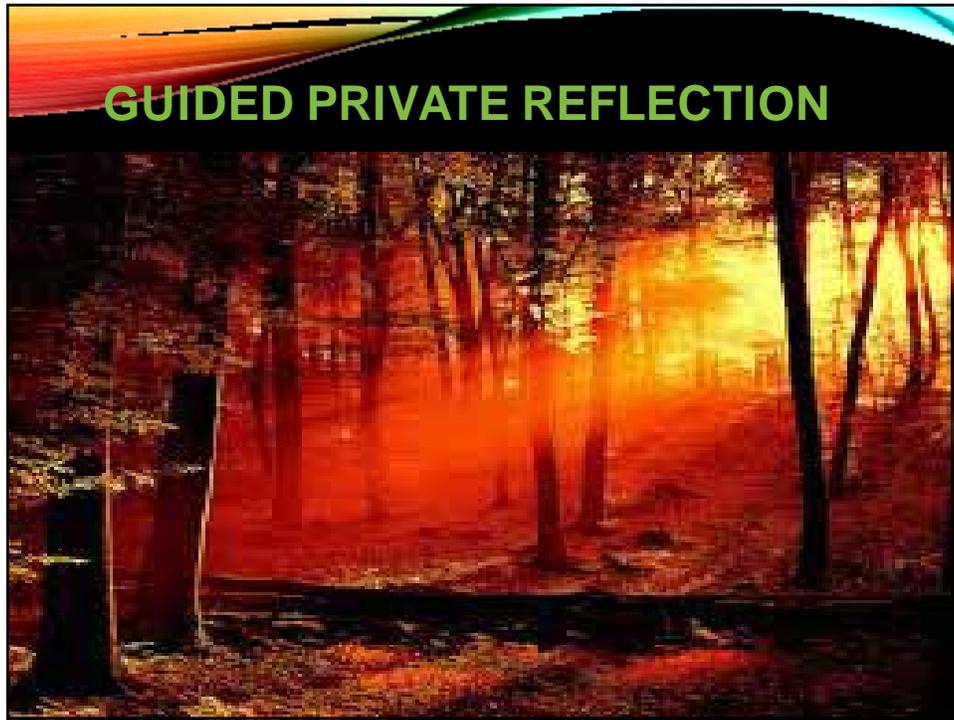
- ❖ Discover the meaning of suffering.
- ❖ Discover your need for forgiveness.
- ❖ Discover that you are not alone.
- ❖ Discover the purpose of your life.
- ❖ Discover the freedom of forgiveness.

© R. Enright (2001). [Forgiveness Is a Choice](#). Washington, D.C.: APA Books.

## GUIDED PRIVATE REFLECTION







# **FORGIVENESS: A PATHWAY TO EMOTIONAL HEALING**

**PART V:  
SPREADING  
FORGIVENESS -  
THE  
FORGIVING  
COMMUNITIES**



## **THE FORGIVING COMMUNITIES**



**Family**



**Place of Worship**



**School**



**Workplace**



**CLOSING REFERENCES**

*Eva Mozes Kor*  
HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR ON WHOM MENGELE EXPERIMENTED

"I have healed myself by forgiving everyone. If anyone had told me I would forgive the Nazis I would tell them they are crazy. But when I chose to forgive I felt the pain lifted from my shoulders. I was finally free of Auschwitz."

As quoted during her visit to Marshfield, WI, Nov. 2009

## CLOSING REFERENCES

*Mahatma Gandhi*



The weak can never forgive.  
Forgiveness is the  
attribute of the strong.

## CLOSING REFERENCES

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

We must develop  
and maintain the  
capacity to  
forgive.

He who is devoid of the power  
to forgive is devoid of the power  
to love. There is some good in the  
worst of us and some evil in the  
best of us. When we discover this,  
we are less prone  
to hate our enemies.

## CLOSING REFERENCES

*Mother Theresa*

If we really want to  
*love*  
we must learn  
how to  
*forgive.*



## CLOSING REFERENCES

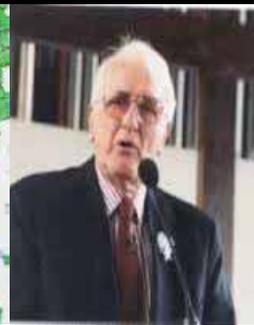
*Roberto Assagioli*



Without forgiveness,  
life is governed  
by. . . an endless  
cycle of resentment  
and retaliation.

## CLOSING REFERENCES

*Lewis B. Smedes*



## CLOSING REFERENCES

*Dr. Robert Enright*



*"Forgiveness is one of the miracles of this world. What other word do you know that suggests love in the face of woundedness, in the face of injustice, in the face of cruelty? To forgive is to try, as best we can, to love those who have wounded us. To forgive is to find a better way."*

National Eucharistic Congress  
Knock, Ireland - June 26, 2011

**PARTING INTERCESSION**

In GOD's eyes,  
love is never absent.

In GOD's heart,  
forgiveness is never impossible.

In GOD's embrace,  
no one is ever alone or forgotten.

**GOD BLESS YOU!**

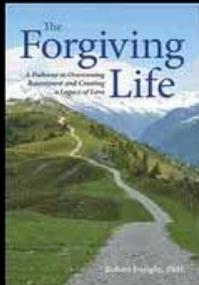
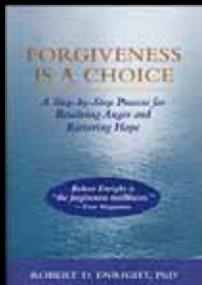
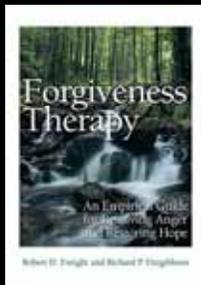


*All we want to do is change the world.*

# REFERENCES AND RESOURCES FOR THIS PRESENTATION



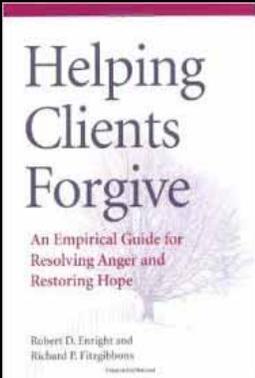
## DR. ENRIGHT'S BOOKS



All Dr. Enright's books are available at the [IFI Online Store](#)



## ONLINE CE COURSE



### Helping Clients Forgive An Online Continuing Education Course

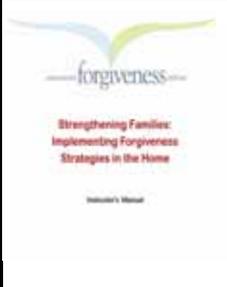
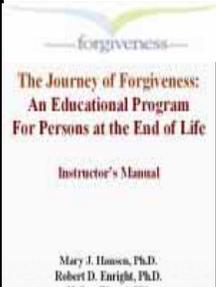
For licensed psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, nurses, counselors, ministers, and other helping professionals.

*The International Forgiveness Institute is approved by the APA to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The International Forgiveness Institute maintains responsibility for this program and its content.*

**Course information is available at the [IFI Online Store](#)**



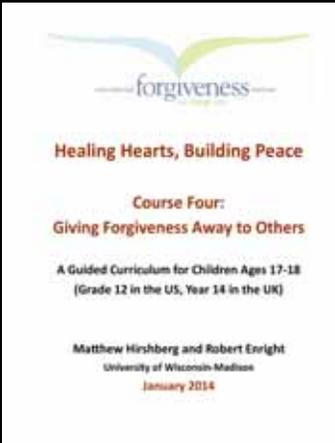
## FORGIVENESS INTERVENTION MANUALS

			
<p><b><u>A Family Guide</u></b> Helping Primary-Aged Children Learn About Forgiveness</p>	<p><b><u>Strengthening Families</u></b> Helping Adolescent Children Learn About Forgiveness</p>	<p><b><u>The Anti-Bullying Forgiveness Program</u></b> Helping 9-14 Year Old Children Stop Bullying</p>	<p><b><u>End of Life Manual</u></b> Helping the Dying Person Forgive</p>

**Information about each of these courses is available at the [IFI Online Store](#)**



## CURRICULUM GUIDES



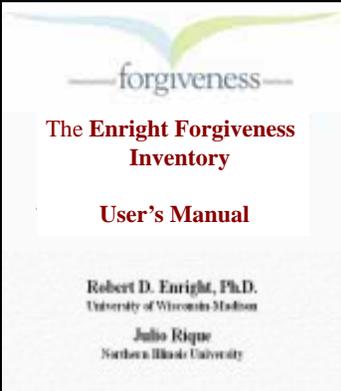
Comprehensive forgiveness education curriculum guides (most of them well over 100 pages) are available for grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade. Two versions of the guides are available at each grade level--the standard version and a Christian version.

These teacher's guides employ the scientifically-proven forgiveness education principles and techniques developed by Dr. Enright during his 29 years of research. They have been tested and enhanced in the U.S. and Northern Ireland for the past 12 years.

**All Guides are available for purchase in electronic or hard-copy format in the [IFI Online Store](#)**



## FORGIVENESS RESEARCH TOOLS



This manual provides the only objective test for measuring the degree to which one person forgives another who has hurt him or her deeply and unfairly.

The EFI Manual begins with a description of the concept of forgiveness and the process model of forgiving upon which the Enright Forgiveness Inventory is based. The manual then provides administration and scoring instructions, the establishment of validity and internal consistency, national and international norm tables, and a bibliography of forgiveness research articles.

**The EFI Adult Version is available only from [Mind Garden, Inc.](#)  
The EFI for Children is available at the [IFI Online Store](#)**



## **DR. ENRIGHT'S PEER-REVIEWED EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

- ❖ The Effects of a Forgiveness Intervention on Patients with Coronary Artery Disease
- ❖ Forgiveness Education with Parentally Love-Deprived Late Adolescents
- ❖ The Effects of a Forgiveness Intervention on Patients with Coronary Artery Disease
- ❖ The Effects of Forgiveness Therapy on Depression, Anxiety, and Posttraumatic Stress for Women after Spousal Emotional Abuse
- ❖ A Palliative Care Intervention in Forgiveness Therapy for Elderly Terminally-Ill Cancer Patients

Continued 

The [full text](#) of each research study can be accessed on the [Research Page](#) of the IFI website.



## **PEER-REVIEWED EMPIRICAL STUDIES (CONTINUED)**

- ❖ Forgiveness as a Psychotherapeutic Goal with Elderly Females
- ❖ Forgiveness Intervention with Post-abortion Men
- ❖ Effects of Forgiveness Therapy on Anger, Mood, and Vulnerability to Substance Use among Inpatient Substance-Dependent Clients
- ❖ Forgiveness as an Intervention Goal with Incest Survivors
- ❖ Bringing Peace to the Central City: Forgiveness Education in Milwaukee
- ❖ The Forgiving Child: The Impact of Forgiveness Education on Excessive Anger for Elementary-Aged Children in Milwaukee's Central City

The [full text](#) of each of these research studies as well as many others can be accessed on the [Research Page](#) of the IFI website.

