Letting go of intense anger and hurt does NOT excuse offenses nor condone misbehavior. Releasing anger and hurt can free you to live a more joyful life. **Forgiveness is different than reconciliation.** **Forgiveness can happen within you and for you.** Reconciliation takes effort and agreement of two or more people. Reconciliation may not be possible or appropriate in some situations. Allowing resentment to build inside you drains time, energy, and focus that could be directed toward more positive and fulfilling outcomes. The following steps may help in letting go of a grudge:

1. **Identify the negative impact your grudge has had on your mood and relationships.** Begin to imagine the positivity that could result from releasing the grudge.

2. **Acknowledge the feelings you experienced as a result of whatever perceived wrongdoing is the focus of the grudge.** Give yourself compassion regarding the emotional pain you experienced. You may want the help of a trusted friend, family member, or counselor in experiencing compassion.

3. **Affirm your strengths and who you are outside of the grudge.**

4. **Feel empowered to choose to forgive.** Choose to release the anger, bitterness, and vengeful thoughts. Try writing a letter you will never send to the person toward whom you hold a grudge. Then, rip up the letter and dispose of it in a symbolic release from the grudge’s hold on you.

5. **Allow relief to wash over you as you unburden yourself from the grudge.** Consider getting help from a counselor at any point in this process of trying to heal from being wronged or trying to let go of a grudge.

You Can Let Go of a Grudge

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