



RADICAL  
ACCEPTANCE



UNIVERSITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
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## CULTIVATING A FORGIVING HEART

“When we ignore the pain, it grows bigger and bigger, and like an abscess that is never drained, eventually it will rupture. When that happens, it can reach into every area of our lives—our health, our families, our jobs, our friendships, our faith, and our very ability to feel joy may be diminished by the fallout from resentments, anger, and hurts that are never named.”

— **Desmond Tutu, *The Book of Forgiving***

# ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed and relax. Breath in and out for a few moments. Bring to mind a situation in which you have caused harm to another person, intentionally or unintentionally. Now, holding this person in your awareness, confess the harm you have inflicted to God and ask for forgiveness. Pause afterwards and focus on receiving this forgiveness.

# FORGIVING OURSELVES

Bring to mind some aspect of yourself that feels unforgivable. Sense what feels so bad about your unforgivable behavior, emotion, or way of thinking. How does it make you feel about yourself? Allow yourself to feel the pain of that tension. Now ask yourself, what might this unacceptable part of your being be driven by? Begin to offer a sincere message of forgiveness to whatever it is that you are rejecting. Be patient with yourself as the seed of this self-forgiveness slowly takes root in your heart.

# FORGIVING OTHERS

Bring to mind an experience in which you were deeply disappointed or rejected, abused, or betrayed. Consider whether you are still carrying feelings of anger and blame toward the person who hurt you. Recall details of the situation and reflect on the feelings that arise alongside that memory. Now consider what hurt or neediness might have cause them to behave in this way. With this possibility in mind, voice words of forgiveness towards them.

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You can practice forgiving informally throughout the day. When you realize you are judging yourself or another person harshly, you might pause and become aware of the thoughts and feelings of blaming.

**PRACTICES ARE ADAPTED FROM TARA BRACH'S BOOK, RADICAL ACCEPTANCE**