

## Letting Go of the Past - Choosing Joy

By Gayle North

***"You get to choose your thoughts, you get to choose your feelings, you get to choose your actions. If it is not you choosing them – who have you assigned the choice to? "***

Georgia had been dealing with a crippling chronic illness for many years when I met her. A beautiful and talented woman, it didn't take long to get a sense of her deep anger. Her resentment toward certain people in her life was creating tension and chemical stress that could interfere with her physical and mental well being.

Giving up the anger and resentment she felt toward family members did not even seem like a possibility to her. After all, these people had not treated her right. She had gone out of her way to give to them and they had not returned her caring gestures in kind and there had been things said about her. So she cut them off and felt justified in doing so.

She felt angry and betrayed by her husband because he was not acting like the man she thought she had married and he did not respond to her the way she wanted him to. She couldn't cut him off because she needed him to support her and help with her care.

Parts of her were holding on to the old emotional patterns as if they were determined to prove her right and every body else wrong. She had set up the battle lines years ago and was determined to defend her position. She talked about the insults and offenses attempting to help people understand her position and bring them to "her side". She built her case and stood by it. Her position compromised her enjoyment of her life and affected the people who cared most for her.

We can all look back into our past and point to times when we were betrayed or even abused by others. There was a report in the paper recently of a woman who had forgiven her son's murderer. I am deeply touched by these stories because of the positive effect that forgiveness brings to the forgiver and the forgiven.

Several years ago I worked with a woman in her fifties who had been molested by a male relative as a young girl. She said that she had not been able to be happy since that incident. She had done a lot of therapy and had forgiven him but she still had some PTSD related to that incident that was holding her back from her joy. We cleared the remaining PTSD.

At that point her compassion for this man was so strong that it became important to her that he forgive himself. She knew that he was still suffering with guilt and shame. She felt that if he could come into a state of forgiveness of himself, her process would be complete and she would never have to deal with it again.

I had the privilege of facilitating some phone sessions with this man to help him release the guilt and shame he had carried for so many years. He came to a state of self-forgiveness. It was time for him to do this so that he could thrive in his life.

Talking with this client later, she said the freedom and transformation that resulted from the forgiveness they both found released the dark cloud from her life. She told me that she is happier than she has ever been in her life. She is expressing joy in her life and feels like she is finally being her real self.

By releasing resentment and forgiving people and events of the past, we empower our selves to create our own life story and to live the present – in the moment. Unhindered by the resentments, judgments and pain of the past, we free ourselves to live in joy as we flow with the challenges of life.

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Gayle North offers Personal Coaching for Positive Change using recently developed empowerment technologies to clear mental and emotional blocks that keep people stuck in unhealthy habits and prevent them from performing at their highest potential in school, sports, relationships, work and finance. Call 406-837-1214 to learn how you can STOP SMOKING IN ONE HOUR and for coaching in person or by phone.

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