

Mayo Clinic is home to the top-ten ranked Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine in addition to many of the highest regarded residency education programs. Mayo Clinic is ranked number 1 in the United States for 2019-20 *U.S. News & World Report Best Hospitals Honor Roll*, maintaining a position at or near the top for more than 27 years. Here is what they say about FORGIVENESS:

“Who hasn't been hurt by the actions or words of another? Perhaps a parent constantly criticized you growing up, a colleague sabotaged a project or your partner had an affair. Or maybe you've had a traumatic experience, such as being physically or emotionally abused by someone close to you.

These wounds can leave you with lasting feelings of anger and bitterness — even vengeance.

But if you don't practice forgiveness, you might be the one who pays most dearly. By embracing forgiveness, you can also embrace peace, hope, gratitude and joy. Consider how forgiveness can lead you down the path of physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.”

Furthermore, UN-FORGIVENESS increases the risk of depression, heart disease and diabetes, among other conditions.

The Gospel teaches us that FORGIVENESS is ESSENTIAL for OUR wholeness as persons and for healthy, growing relationships. Jesus teaches that every human being needs mercy. That, we, as weak human beings, all stumble and fall from time to time. and need help getting back on track.

Jesus, in his parable of the merciful king and vengeful servant, teaches us that we must forgive one another, because we have been forgiven by God. The Lord has forgiven a debt we could not possibly pay, and expects us to extend such mercy to one another.

Personal wholeness and healthy relationships cannot exist without forgiveness. Forgiveness initiates necessary healing within the forgive-ER and begins reconciliation with the forgive-EE. God warns us through St. Paul: “Never hold grudges,” because bitterness and resentment ALWAYS destroy wholeness and relationships.

Because we are imperfect, sinful people, we inevitably hurt each other when we live together or share life together. Sometimes we hurt each other intentionally, and sometimes unintentionally, but either way, it takes mercy and forgiveness for the healing of the personal self and our relationships with others.

St. Paul reminds us in his letter to the Colossians, “*You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.*” Col.3:13 Remember, you or I will never be asked to forgive someone else more than God has already forgiven you or me.

God is a God of mercy, love, and fullness of life. He knows UN-FORGIVENESS will hurt you. Don't hurt yourself, forgive.