

48--- Forgiveness Trumps Compartmentalization

A corollary to our Happiness lesson is also a Dennis Prager quote. Dennis asks --- how can you really be happy without compartmentalization? This should be an easy concept for guys. Our brains are like waffles with many isolated compartments. That's why guys are great soldiers, law enforcement officers and athletes. We focus like a laser beam and accomplish the mission. Our female counterparts have a brain structure very different from our waffle brains. They are great integrators. The analogy is often used that their brains are like spaghetti. Everything connects to everything else. For a guy to truly understand is impossible until your spouse reels off ten events that remind her of what you just did. Yep they can connect the dots in rapid fashion while we just go "but I only said/did!"! Now it turns out that our waffle brains are great when we encounter something we cannot fix.

Dennis provides a four step process to employ when we are unhappy

- Find out why you're unhappy
- See if you can fix it
- If you can't fix it, *compartmentalize it*
- Concentrate on those things in life that bring you some joy

As much as I like the four-step Dennis approach, I have found the one-step God approach is more effective. I just forgive as I have been forgiven! In one step I get rid of the unhappiness (without "fixing" it) and am reminded of the great joy and freedom that has been provided by Jesus. I have joy and happiness and eliminate the unhappiness in one step.

You can use the compartmentalization process if you want to. It does help you focus on why you're unhappy. It may help fix a long term issue. My suggestion is when you reach step 3 where it cannot be fixed that you let the Creator of the Universe deal with it. He'll help you forgive the offence, forgive the offender and remember that He can bring you more happiness than any human can deliver.

If you want the best evidence that forgiveness is the answer look no further than **Matthew 6:14-15** – "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."

I want to treat others the way God treats me. He forgives me unconditionally. So I need to follow his example (and command) and forgive those who sin against me.

If I am the reason for the unhappiness in my life then I must forgive myself. God designed us for peace and joy. Unhappiness is not part of His design but it is part of satan's design to steal our joy and peace. Every time we react to unhappiness we give satan a victory. Deny him the victory and forgive the offender, especially if it's YOU!

Verses

1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Acts 3:19: "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that time of refreshing may come from the Lord."

Psalms 103:12: "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

Personal Reflection:

Ponder a situation where your actions brought you unhappiness. Have you forgiven yourself? Has forgiveness restored you and brought you peace? Now ponder a situation where someone else's actions brought you unhappiness. Have you forgiven them? Has God restored the relationship?

Group Discussion:

How can the group encourage brothers who struggle with forgiving themselves?

With forgiving others?

Share how forgiveness has overcome unhappiness and restored relationships.