HEMPSTEAD
City of Character

"Building On a Solid Foundation"

"When a deep injury is done to us, we never recover until we forgive." - Alan Stewart Paton

Featuring this month~

Forgiveness

vs. rejection

"Clearing the record of those who have wronged me and not holding a grudge."

I will:

- ***Be quick to forgive.***
- ***Not cover up my own wrongs but will be quick to ask for forgiveness.***
- ***Not seek revenge.***
- ***Respond kindly to those who hurt me.***
- ***Not take up offenses for others.***

More...

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What is Forgiveness?

"Forgiveness" comes from an old English word meaning to pardon. A further meaning of "forgiveness" is to turn away from anger against an adversary and to release from any payment due. It does not ignore the offense or pretend it was trivial, but chooses to overcome the wrong with good

Forgiveness that is not extended soon after an offense often turns into anger, thoughts of revenge, and bitterness. Unhealed, this can lead to damaged relationships, mental problems, and illness.

The first aspect to forgiveness, extending it, isn't based on feelings, but rather is a choice to forgive. Doing something good for the offender often brings a release from the negative feelings that might remain.

The second side to forgiveness is clearing accounts when you are the one who has offended. Being quick to be humble and genuinely ask forgiveness of the person who is offended can bring healing to relationships. It is important to ask the person how your actions affected him and then to be specific about those actions when asking for forgiveness. Asking, "Will you forgive me?" gives the hurt person a chance to extend grace and to heal quickly.

"The only way to destroy my enemy is to make him my friend."
--Booker T. Washington

Choose the "higher ground" of forgiveness.

Talk about Forgiveness

1. Why is it so hard to forgive?

2. What do people feel they gain by holding a grudge?

3. Can you describe a situation where forgiveness brought some real benefits or changes?

4. How could talking with someone who has offended you to gain understanding of their side help you to forgive?

5. Discuss the balance between forgiving someone and yet placing boundaries on his or her behavior with you.

6. What is the balance between justice and forgiveness?

Barriers to Forgiveness

- Thinking, "If I forgive them, they'll be off the hook and just wound me again."
- Trusting feelings instead of right choice: "The way I feel, I won't be sincere if I forgive them."
- Being locked into the thinking that you need to keep a mental balance sheet with others.
- Using unforgiveness to put up a barrier so you won't be hurt again.
- Not recognizing your own need to receive forgiveness (pride), therefore seeing no need to extend forgiveness.
- Wanting the offender to suffer for his/ her actions and thinking that our forgiveness does that, ignoring the fact that our unforgiveness causes us to suffer much ourselves.
- Asking for forgiveness the wrong way. For example, saying, "I'm sorry you took offense" or making excuses for your behavior, such as, "Sorry, that's just how I am."

The rewards of forgiveness.

How does it feel to be forgiven?