

2. *Witnessing the anguish.* Now look deeply at how your actions have harmed the other. Write sentences that begin 'I am sorry for...' Write as many sentences as you can.
3. *Asking for forgiveness.* Write the following sentence and finish it: 'I would understand if you are not able to forgive me now, but I hope you will be able to forgive me some day because...'
4. *Renewing or releasing the relationship.* You will be asking the person what you can do to make it right, but here you will list your own ideas for how you can renew the relationship. What could you do to repair what you have broken?

(Tutu,2014. Pg 192)

Listen to what the heart says

I am sorry; How many deaths have those words died?

They were stuck in my throat; they melted on my tongue

They suffocated before they met the air

I am sorry; The words crouch on my heart; And they weigh a ton

Could I not just get on with it, say I'm sorry and be done?

I am sorry, and I am not done; I am sorry for the hurt I caused

For the doubts I inspired, for the sadness you held

For the anger, despair, suffering and grief you endured

I am sorry;

There is no currency with which I can repay you for your tears

But I can make amends; And I do mean it when I say

I am sorry

(Tutu,2014. Pg. 187)

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ST LUKE'S, PECKHAM, LENT COURSE 2018 WEEK 3 NEEDING FORGIVENESS

There are two simple truths:
First - There is nothing that cannot be forgiven
Second – There is no one undeserving of forgiveness

Reflection on Scripture – Luke 15.11-32

In the Gospel reading there are three characters mentioned.

- Reflect on the emotions and actions of the younger Son who went away. Identify and name, what needed to happen before he could ask for forgiveness.
- Reflect on the emotions and actions of the Father and identify and name what it is he needed to forgive his younger Son.
- Reflect on the emotions and actions of the elder Son, did he need to show forgiveness or receive forgiveness?

Meditations

The Box of Forgiveness

1. *Create a safe space.* Bring to mind a place of safety. Your place of safety can be real or imaginary. See this place fully and inhabit it. Are you indoors or outdoors? Is it a large, open space or a cosy place? What does it smell like? What does the air feel like on your skin? What sounds do you hear? Music? A crackling fire? Birdsong? A babbling brook or a fountain? Ocean waves? The hushed whisper of grass swaying in a breeze? There is an inviting place to sit comfortably. Relax into this place. It is your place of safety.

2. *Someone is calling for you.* The one who is calling for you speaks in a voice filled with warmth, love, and delight. When you are ready, welcome this person into your safe place. Notice how the person's presence increases your sense of safety and assurance. Who is your companion? Is it a loved one, a friend, or a spiritual figure? It is someone who is accepting, affirming and utterly trustworthy.
3. *Between you and your companion sits an open box.* Look at the box. It is small and light enough for you to lift and hold. Notice its size, shape and texture. What is unique about this box? Tell your companion the story of what you have done. Tell the truth about the harm you have caused in as much detail as you can. As you speak, see the guilt and shame pouring out of you like a stream. Watch the stream being poured into the open box. Speak until you have finished.
4. *Ask for forgiveness.* Tell your companion that you are sorry for what you have done and ask for forgiveness. Your companion smiles at you, knowing that you are whole and worthy of love no matter what you have done. Now gently close the box of forgiveness.
5. *Take the box into your lap.* You may want to sit with it in your lap for a few moments. When you are ready, hand the box to your trusted companion.

6. *When you are ready, you may leave your place of safety.* Know that your trusted companion will hold your box of forgiveness and welcomes you at the end of your Fourfold Path.

(Tutu, 2014. Pg. 189- 190)

Stone Ritual

Setting Down the Stone

1. For this ritual you will need a heavy stone. You want to feel its weight as burdensome.
2. Walk with this stone some distance to a private place.
3. Admit to the stone what you have done.
4. Then tell the stone the anguish you have caused.
5. Then apologise to the stone and ask for forgiveness. You can imagine the person you have harmed in your mind's eye or ask God for forgiveness.
6. Decide what you can do to make amends to the person you harmed or how you can help others.
7. Then set the stone down in nature.

(Tutu, 2014. Pg. 191)

Journal Exercise

Meditations and visualisations can be healing, but it is also extremely helpful to write down what you have done as a preparation for apologising and asking for forgiveness.

1. *Admitting the wrong.* What have you done? Use this place in your journal to tell the truth and list the facts of the harm you have caused.