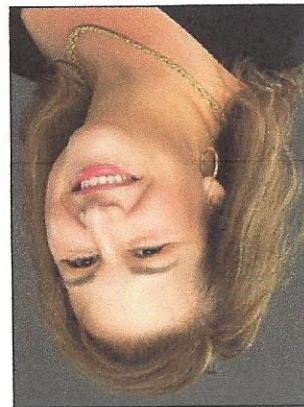


SIMPLE YET PROFOUND

It's Time, Forgive Yourself

By Kimberly Hambrick



In a recent moment of quiet reflection, these words came through loud and clear: "It's time, forgive yourself!" As a person of faith, I knew who spoke those words to me and instantly I teared up and knew I needed to hear this.

It would take me a bit longer to lean into what exactly I was holding onto that I needed to let go. As a mentor of mine says the meaning of the word forgiveness is the action or process of letting go of anger or resentment. The past few years have been the most difficult ones in my life—with two gut-kicks delivered in a row—one personal and one professional. Both forced me into unchartered waters, but my faith, and friends kept me afloat.

The personal situation involved my youngest son. God allows us free will. What we do with it has positive or negative consequences. For my son, the consequences were devastating. We entered a world of lawyers and courtrooms, public judging, and extreme hurt and anger. And for the first time I was struggling. I am a take charge type of person and I couldn't find a thread to hold onto. But God holds you up when you need it. We made our way through; my son is forever changed, but stronger. When I see how he handled this, I am ashamed that I gave any energy to others' opinions of me.

As I was reflecting on God's words to me, I knew it was time to let go of the guilt I was still holding onto as his Mother. Was there anything I could have done to prevent what happened? Where did I fail him? I talked with my son and he said this was all on him. Not on me. He thanked me for standing with him, fighting for him, and loving him unconditionally. I was carrying around guilt that served no purpose. I sat in prayer with God and

I let it go. I forgave myself. Not for my any part in my son's decision, I now know and fully accept there was nothing I could have done to prevent it. I forgave myself for being weak in my faith of God when He was carrying us through. Why did He allow this to happen? If my faith were stronger, I would have never wasted any energy on this question. He did not allow it to happen. I know that. I know it was my son's decision that put this in motion. I let go of my guilt for being angry at God.

Forgiveness of others, even when they have done extremely hurtful things, has always been easy for me. The concept of forgiving myself was foreign. As someone who suffered from limiting self-beliefs for most of my life, why would I even consider giving myself grace? But to move forward and heal, we must forgive ourselves. I forgive me.

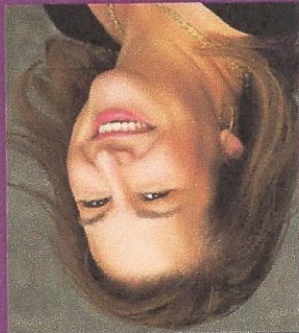
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