

eHealth: Let it go

Let's say someone hurts your feelings or does something that makes you angry or sad. Do you let it roll off your back or does it take a day or two until you're over it?

Or do you hold onto your feelings for weeks, months, or even years? If you're in the last category, you may be holding grudges and that's not good for you.

Holding grudges can hurt you both physically and mentally. It's like walking around with a boulder on your back. It really weighs you down.

Holding onto grudges makes you more stressed, anxious, and hostile, impacts your sleep, can affect your health by increasing your blood pressure or add to symptoms of depression.

It's often useless because whoever hurts you may not know it or may have just moved past it.

Refusing to hold grudges can improve your health and peace of mind. It makes your relationships healthier, happier, and more accepting. Can help boost your immune system.

Ready to learn how you can let go of grudges?

Here are some steps you can take:

Share your feelings. Put them in a notebook or write a letter you're not really going to send to the person who hurt you. The idea is to get your feelings out and make them more concrete by putting them in writing.

When you have some privacy, sit down and talk with a good friend or family member about what happened. Maybe you can read your letter to that person or at least tell them what happened. Good friends often give support during a hard time.

Try putting yourself in the other person's shoes. This is practicing empathy and it may help you understand the other person's behavior. You don't need to analyze them too deeply but it may help you see what happened if you can see their point of view.

Forgive. Forgiving is something you do for yourself. It's not the same as forgetting or condoning what happened and the other person doesn't need to know about the forgiveness in order for it to work for you.

Forgiving us just accepting that no one is perfect and we all make mistakes that we can learn from. Forgiving isn't easy, especially when you've endured a lot of hurt and pain.

Move on. Forgiving will lift that boulder off your back and enable you to move on. Going through these steps will help you learn from this event. So you'll be able to handle disappointments and hurts in the future.

Give yourself the gift of letting go of grudges and open the door to a happier life.

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