

Letting Go Of The Past

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There is no more powerful pre-requisite for manifesting everyday miracles than letting go of the past. A Course In Miracles teaches that *to be born again is to let go of the past and look without condemnation on the present*. Our ego, on the other hand, seeks to keep us imprisoned in the past by having us react to the present as if it *were* the past. In Course terminology, it *regards the present only as a brief transition to the future, in which it brings the past to the future by interpreting the present in past terms*. For example, one of our ego's favorite lies is that we can't experience a loving relationship because of the abuses and dysfunctions we suffered in the past. It convinces us that we are defined in the present by what we were deprived of in our past.

Whenever we buy into this kind of thinking we are placing our faith in an illusion. The past is gone. It exists only in a fantasy. We turn this fantasy into a reality by constantly focusing on it and projecting it out onto the world we are experiencing now. While it's true that we may not be able to erase the *influences* the past has had on us, we certainly can decide whether those influences will continue to rule us in the present. To do otherwise is to say that we are completely powerless over our own lives in the here and now.

Letting go of the influences of the past occurs through forgiveness. Choosing *unforgiveness* always means that we are getting some benefit out of holding on to the past. For example, we may refuse to forget about the mistreatment we received from our parents because we unconsciously want to be sure they suffer today for what they did to us back then. In this way our remedial performance in life stands as a constant reminder to them of what *they* did to us. This only serves to hurt us not them. It squanders our life in the present moment and robs us of the joy that we can experience now. If indeed, our parents withheld proper love from us, the way to heal ourselves is not to perpetrate their misdeed by withholding love from them in the present. The way to heal is to give them the love they need today as desperately as we do. It has been said that the problem is never what was withheld from us in the past, but rather what we ourselves are failing to give in the present.

It's easier to let go of the past when we think of life as a classroom that presents us with lessons to learn. Our lessons always involve love and forgiveness. We are not in this world to judge other people or make sure they learn *their* lesson. We are here to learn *our* lesson and perfect ourselves. Until we learn love and forgiveness we are doomed to repeat the same scenarios in our lives over and over again.

If we insist on thinking that we're limited by our past, in any way, we lock ourselves out of any chance of experiencing the present. To truly experience the newness of the present we must forgive the past. This includes letting go of the thought that we have been limited by our culture, the neighborhood we grew up in, or the race or religion we

were born into. As the aphorism teaches, conditions don't make a man they reveal him. If we want to get on a higher plane in life we can't keep blaming the amorphous *they* for the conditions of our life. Our lives are either *theirs* or ours. It's up to us to decide. When we realize we have a choice and that we can choose differently now we become masters of our own fate. Accepting total responsibility for our lives in the present moment by letting go of the past creates a context in which everyday miracles can occur.