Forgiveness in Leadership

IT'S OFTEN SEEN AS A WEAKNESS WHEN THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE

By SANDY CLARKE

Forgiveness is not an occasional art, it is a constant art. — Martin Luther King Jr.

Forgiveness is often seen as a weakness, chosen by those who lack the stomach for confrontation and give up on the power of forgiveness. It’s a strength, which is why so many choose to fully embrace it.

The weakness lies not in age, nor need to be appeared and acknowledged as someone who has been wronged, in a way that suggests we believe life should never run against our expectations.

Holding onto grudges and past ils that can’t be changed to a waste of energy that could be better put to use meeting ourselves and our ambitions forward. Forgive, therefore, is more than a strength—it’s a means to let go of animosity.

Otherwise, the painful past remains in your heart, without leaving a space where positive emotions could be present, trust, and mutual respect.

As Kels De Vries puts it, forgiveness separates the best from the rest among leaders. People’s actions, but it opens up the opportunity for compassion and forgiveness if we can learn to fully embrace the time we have to grow and be good to one another.

Remembrance is like drinking poison and then hoping it will kill your enemy. — Nelson Mandela

Forgiving means accepting the fact that the past is the past. It does not mean condoning, condoning and not, all conclusions to seek ways of improving the situation. As Kels De Vries puts it, forgiveness forces people who aren’t pre-occupied by past events. Which those are sent different by spiritual leaders through the ages that forgiveness isn’t a noble virtue reserved for the few— it’s a necessary quality we can and should all work to cultivate, given the benefits of well-being for all consumers.

On the other hand, holding on to grudges, fostering on revenge and hanging on to bitterness serves only to drain the energy of the individual holding the grudge, and prolonging a difficult situation that could be better put to use moving forward when people aren’t preoccupied with past hurts.

There are many moving examples of the kind of strength that comes with forgiving horrific acts of betrayal and wronging-doing—and each of them shows the kind of power that comes with letting go of total animosity to an open hand rather than a closed fist.

When Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani activist for female education and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, was released from the Taliban prison where she was held captivity, she had to make a decision that would define her legacy.

When she was released, she decided to write a book, “The Hiding Place,” the story of her time, challenging situations always offer the seeds of forgiveness, and yet is so often replaced by grudges, fixating on revenge and harboring animosity that can colour individual and animosity that colour individual and organizational functioning,” she explains in an INSEAD working paper, “The Art of Forgiveness: Differentiating team and organizational functioning,” as Kels De Vries explains, forgiveness is an essential quality we can and should all work to cultivate, given the benefits of well-being for all consumers.

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