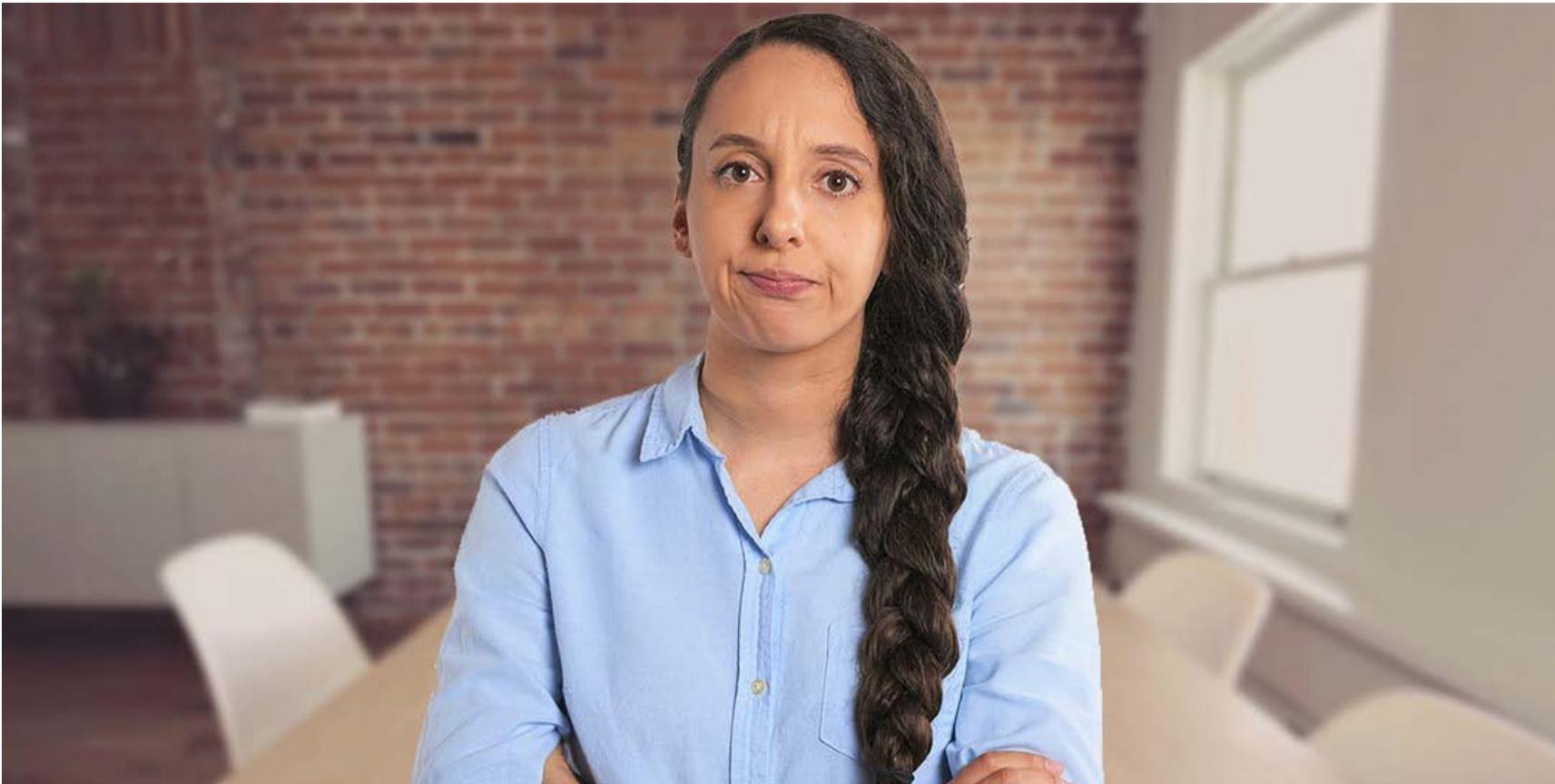


Let It Go!

How to release a grudge in 6 steps



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THINK about the last time someone really did you wrong. Maybe a family member forgot your birthday, or your boss passed you up for a promotion.

Now, take a moment to notice what you're feeling.

Does thinking about the event make your heart beat faster or your breathing become shallow? Does it leave a bad taste in your mouth?

If so, you're holding a grudge, which can be bad for your health.

The negative emotions that come with holding on to a grudge are actually a stress response. Just thinking about the event sends your body into fight or flight mode.

When a threat is imminent, this reaction is essential to your survival. When a threat is ancient history, holding on to that stress wreaks havoc on your body and can have devastating health consequences over time.

Holding on to a grudge means you're holding on to stress, and researchers at Emory University have shown that holding on to stress contributes to high blood pressure and heart disease.

Learning to let go of a grudge will not only make you feel better now but can also improve your health over time.

There are six steps to letting

go. Follow them closely and watch your grudges disappear (and your emotional intelligence improve).

Step 1: Take control

You need to take control of your life and decide that you are ready to let go of the grudge.

This means no more waiting for the other person to apologise or somehow make it right. When you're waiting for someone else to act, you're giving him or her control over you.

Letting go of the grudge is about your own health and well-being. It's essential you do it on your own terms.

Step 2: Make it for you

The process of forgiveness and letting go is for you, not the person you're forgiving.

Forgiving can be hard to do when the person you're forgiving doesn't deserve it.

You're choosing to let go for your own health and happiness, and the other person doesn't need to know that you've forgiven him or her.

You're not letting the person off the hook or inviting him or her to repeat the offence – you're just letting the past be the past.

Step 3: Step into his or her shoes

Take a moment to think about the situation from the other person's

perspective. This will help you understand why he or she acted that way.

Sometimes, you'll discover extraneous circumstances that make the other person's actions easier to take.

Other times, you'll find zero justification for his or her actions, and that's okay.

Either way, you'll improve your perspective and possibly develop some empathy to assist you in letting go.

Step 4: Acknowledge your feelings

You cannot let go of a grudge until you acknowledge how bad the offence made and makes you feel.

If you ignore or deny your feelings, you won't process them, and they will resurface when you least expect it.

The more honest you are with yourself about exactly what you felt and feel, the easier it is to prevent these feelings from having a hold on you.

Step 5: Don't do it alone

This simple step is the most difficult one for many people.

When you've been wronged, it can be embarrassing to reveal to another person exactly what happened and admit how sore you are about it.

The simple act of talking it out with a friend is a great way to acknowledge your feelings (thus

taking away their power). It's also a great way to get some new insight into your situation.

You aren't the only person who has been treated poorly by others, nor are you alone in being bitter or hurt about it.

This happens to everyone, and you'll be surprised how quickly a good friend will admit he or she has experienced the same thing.

Step 6: Verbally forgive

You don't have to say it to the person (there are many instances when doing so is a bad idea), but you must say it out loud.

Literally verbalise your forgiveness, and the fact that you are letting the wrongdoing go.

Just as writing something down makes it easier to remember even if you never revisit what you wrote, verbalising your forgiveness is an action (not just a thought), which makes it "real" to your brain.

Bringing it all together

Grudges can be tough, especially when it's hard to justify the other person's actions or your own inability to let it go.

Since even a small grudge can be detrimental to your health, do yourself a favour and give these six steps a try.



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Bosses. They are human too. And to err is human! But just because the person is your boss, that doesn't mean you cannot correct his/her mistakes. You can, but try a more subtle or diplomatic approach. After all, your boss is still the boss! Check out this original video on our YouTube channel: bit.ly/T10vidcorrectboss

We have heard of the saying that children are like white canvases and parents are responsible for creating a masterpiece. Human mind and souls are terrible things to waste. Leaderonomics offers parenting courses to help you balance work, life and home matters while raising children with the right values. We have Smart Parenting workshop particularly designed for busy parents in their quest to create a happy home and successful kids. This course is a timely intervention that provides a well-balanced formula for parents to manage their work and home front. It also provides newer perspectives to parenting and re-emphasises value-based parenting, an aspect that has been long ignored due to our over-ambitious objectives in bringing up children. For details on this programme and other parenting programme, email info@leaderonomics.com

■ Dr Travis Bradberry is the award-winning co-author of the #1 bestselling book, *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*, and the cofounder of *TalentSmart*, the world's leading provider of emotional intelligence tests and training. His bestselling books have been translated into 25 languages and are available in more than 150 countries. What did you think of this article? Let us know at editor@leaderonomics.com.

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