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Forgiveness is hard work.

This was the first sentence of the notes on these texts in the worship planning book I use. Forgiveness is hard work. It is lifetime work. It is just hard.

And it is especially hard when you are just angry and not quite at the place where you can look for forgiveness yet, or the hurt is so deep and so scared over that it seems impossible for forgiveness to be figured out.

I have a few people in my life I find it hard to find forgiveness for, and I am on a journey to find the gravel path that may lead to a road of forgiveness. I mean there are a few people that the hurt is too much, and I may have found empathy or understanding for the behavior or hurt. But as for honest forgiveness, the letting go of that weight and really giving it to God, I'm still holding onto a few weights for a few people—including myself in some situations.

Lots of therapy helps. But also so does reading about forgiveness and meditating or praying on the hurt and seeking peace.

These days it is too hard and too much is going on to find the time, to find the right people to read, or the right meditation or prayer to say. I am finding it hard, too. I find it hard to find the words to give guidance on forgiveness because there is too much weight in my heart right now about things happening in the world and in our country. It is hard to find the space because seeking and offering forgiveness is hard work.

When I don't know how I feel even when I can name the knot in my stomach, a knot of shame, which means I need to ask for forgiveness, or a knot of hurt (different from anger) which often means that I need to seek out forgiveness for the sake of the relationship. When I'm in these situations I sometimes need to step back and go to my foundation. I have a few authors and theologians that I reach for when I need to clear my mind and discover exactly what forgiveness looks like in the situation that I am in. Bellow I am sharing my go to videos.

The first is Rev. Fred Rogers (Mr. Rogers) with his thoughts on forgiveness.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DBvJmve16k>

Next is Brene Brown, a researcher that uses her faith to guide her work. She has studied forgiveness for 10 year and is quite insightful on the topic.

<https://www.facebook.com/theworkofthepeople/videos/10156154411390682/>

The last one is by Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber, and ELCA pastor that has tattoos and swears, but I like her views on forgiving yourself.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VhmRkUtPra8>