

# Positively Speaking

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## The Circle

The poet, Edwin Markham, had put aside a great sum of money for his retirement. When he went to the bank to withdraw from the account, however, he discovered that a “trusted friend” had plundered his nest egg, leaving him penniless.

Edwin now needed to write again in order to survive. He sat at his desk day after day but was unable to produce anything. He could think only of his loss. Bitterness and resentment were walls, shutting out his creativity. It was destroying his life. One day, he began to doodle on the blank page before him. As usual, he could think of nothing to write. So, he drew circles on the paper. Suddenly, as he gazed at the circles, he knew what he must do. Bowing his head in prayer, he poured out his resentment to God and asked for the strength to forgive.

Then he picked up his pen and began to write:

He drew a circle that shut me out,  
Rebel, heretic, a thing to flout.  
But love and I had the wit to win,  
We drew a circle that took him in!

Has someone wronged you? Have you been hurt by a harsh word, a cruelty, a betrayal, or a snub? If so, you need to let go and forgive. Forgiveness really is a choice – and it’s for your own good.

“But she owes me an apology!” you might say. It doesn’t matter. You must forgive anyway.

Forgiveness means adjusting our attitude. It is dealing with the bitterness so we can smile again. It is resolving the issues rather than allowing them to fester. You don’t need “permission” from the one who offended you to do that.

The Jewish philosopher, Hannah Arendt, remarked, “Forgiveness is the only power which can stop the stream of painful memories.”

The Lord’s Prayer says, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Can you honestly say these words? Are you able to release your resentment and forgive the one who hurt you?

Never is a human soul so strong as when it dares to forgive an injury.