

Chapter 11

Conclusion

Facilitating forgiveness: an NLP approach to forgiving was an attempt at uncovering features of the blocks that prevent people to forgive. These blocks to forgiveness could be detected in the stories of real life situations of Wyatt, Frick, Creiddylad, Frieda, Leya, and Pearl. Their inner thoughts, feelings and the subsequent behaviour that prevented them from forgiving was clearly uncovered in their stories. The facilitation process highlighted the features that created the blocks in their past that prevented forgiving to occur. The disclosure of the blocks with their accompanying features indicated what needed to be clarified, changed, and/or transformed in order to eventually enable Wyatt, Frick, Creiddylad, Frieda, Leya, and Pearl to forgive those who had hurt them. The application of discourse analysis to their stories of hurt conveyed the deeper and wider meaning of their stories by creating links between their contextualised lives and the research findings of the existing body of knowledge. A more comprehensive understanding of Wyatt's, Frick's, Creiddylad's, Frieda's, Leya's, and Pearl's thoughts, feelings, and behaviours in conjunction with their developmental phases within their socio-cultural contexts was thus achieved..

Neuro-linguistic-programming (NLP) is the instrument with which forgiving was facilitated. Having arrested the process of reliving negative emotions required me to open up new ways of being in this world for Wyatt, Creiddylad, and Leya. The assumption that this can be learnt was based on the results from a previous study, in which forgiveness was uncovered by

means of the grounded theory approach as a cognitive process (Von Krosigk, 2000).

The aim of applying NLP to facilitate forgiveness comprised the following:

- **a demonstration of the principles involved in learning to forgive**
- **a description of the tools for turning problems into opportunities**
- **facilitating forgiving**

All three aims were attained.

From the systems perspective successful forgiving creates effects in the lives of those who forgive as well as in the lives of those who are forgiven (Von Krosigk, 2000). The effects in the lives of Wyatt, Frick, Creiddylad, Frieda, Leya, and Pearl ranged from gentle adjustments (Frieda, Frick) through peace and contentment (Wyatt, Pearl) to life changing revolutions (Creiddylad, Leya). The effects in the lives of others were evident in the feedback from Wyatt (He was able to interact socially with his ex girlfriend without experiencing any negative feelings towards her.); Frick (His social interactions were more relaxed, compassionate, and kind); Creiddylad (She was able to face her rapist without the need to hide.); Frieda (She was able to demonstrate compassion, kindness, and fiscal assistance to her ex husband.); Leya (She demonstrated understanding, gave attention to, and saw her family, in-laws, patients, friends and colleagues with compassion and kindness.); and Pearl (The absence of irritation made her interact in a more relaxed and positive way with her mother.). Wyatt's, Frick's, and Creiddylad's interventions demonstrated instantaneous dramatic relief from negative emotions that had prevented them from functioning effectively in their lives. Leya's interventions demonstrated holistic healing on the physical level (her asthma disappeared), the emotional level (she became more relaxed, loving, and compassionate), the cognitive level (she was able to integrate the information from her life, and make sense of it), the behavioural level (she was able to give attention to and interact positively with all the living beings in her life), and the spiritual level (she reconnected with God).

A model for understanding forgiveness, that has the capacity to map the dynamics of

forgiveness as close to reality as possible will be proposed now. The incomplete model, uncovered by the grounded theory approach in a previous research study which is presented in the box below (Von Krosgik, 2000) will be expanded to include the features that have been uncovered by this study.

INCOMPLETE MODEL OF FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness as a conscious decision.

Forgiveness as replacing bad thoughts with good thoughts.

Forgiveness as being able to remember the hurtful incident without feeling the hurt and experiencing the negative feelings.

Forgiveness as a release from focussing on the past by focussing on the future.

Forgiveness as a suspension of judgement.

Forgiveness as a way to pardon unalterable conditions.

A more comprehensive model of forgiveness needs to include the above alternatives to unforgiving behaviours, as well as the alternatives that emerged during the story telling and intervention sessions with Wyatt, Frick, Creiddylad, Frieda, Leya, and Pearl (evident in the hurts that were encountered by them). It would also need to offer specific hypotheses to stimulate research, and it would need to stimulate the application of forgiveness-promoting interventions.

Such a model would look as follows:

GROUNDING THEORY MODEL OF FORGIVENESS

Alternatives to unforgiving behaviours

- ***Forgiveness seems to be a conscious decision.*** (By **thinking** in a state of **relaxation**. Having requested assistance with regard to the process of **attaining the goal** of forgiveness, the individual is **ready for learning a new behaviour**, namely to forgive their perpetrator.)
- ***Forgiveness seems to be a process of replacing bad thoughts with good thoughts.*** (By **thinking**, the individual distinguishes between positive and negative thoughts by way of the **feelings** they generate in the body. Positive feelings in the body **move the individual toward experiencing a positive state**, away from pain.)
- ***Forgiveness seems to entail being able to remember the hurtful incident without feeling the hurt and experiencing the negative feelings.*** (The individual is **thinking** about the incident **without** physically **feeling the pain** in the body, as a result of being **motivated to learn the new behaviour** of remembering the event without becoming emotionally involved.)
- ***Forgiveness seems to release us from focussing on the past by focussing on the future.*** (By **changing our focus from** having thoughts about the **past to** having thoughts about the **future**, our capability level is addressed. How do we do that? Can be answered in a variety of ways, of which one option is **accepting the assistance** of the facilitator.)
- ***Forgiveness seems to suspend our judgement of others' behaviour.*** (By **seeing without interpreting** the behaviour, we objectively acknowledge the existence of the behaviour, while we simultaneously refrain from constructing and attaching personal meanings to the behaviour.)

- ***Forgiveness seems to be a way to pardon unalterable conditions.*** (By seeing the past behaviour without feeling the pain, by refraining from constructing and attaching meanings to the past behaviour, and by accepting that the past cannot be changed, we consciously decide to release ourselves from the past, by focussing on the future.) **This complex construction is an integration of all the previous aspects of forgiveness.**
- ***Forgiveness seems to be the result of seeing the world holistically.*** (By seeing the integrated big picture, it becomes impossible to polarise the situation and assign blame to one part of the whole. The totality of mutually interactive systems remain the focus of attention by experiencing the creative state of integration which is marked by relaxed physiological, emotional, and behavioural states.)

Hypotheses to stimulate research

Is it possible to forgive without focussing on the goal of wanting to forgive?

Can forgiving be achieved by continuing to think negative thoughts?

Can forgiveness be achieved while the hurtful incident is remembered?

Can forgiveness be achieved without accepting assistance of a facilitator?

Can we see behaviour without automatically interpreting that behaviour?

Can an integration of having thoughts without feelings, seeing without interpreting the past, accepting the past, deciding to release ourselves from the past, and by only focussing on the future, retain our humanness?

Can forgiveness be achieved when we are in a stressed and traumatised physiological, emotional, and behavioural state?

The application of forgiveness-promoting interventions

In this study, NLP interventions were applied in order to promote forgiveness. All interventions

were successful in the sense that all participants forgave their perpetrators and /or themselves. All interventions and comments on the interventions with regard to Wyatt, Frick, Creiddylad, Frieda, Leya, and Pearl were documented in chapters 5 to 10.

The aims of this thesis have thus been fulfilled.

When we are confronted with blocks in our lives, we are usually required to make changes in our thinking, feeling, and/or behaviour. Blocks can be understood as possible resources that point the way for us to change, requiring from us a new way of being in this world. Since we cannot change reality, the only option we have is to change the way in which we perceive reality. Perceiving reality in a different way usually requires communicating with someone who can communicate effectively. Since old unresolved injuries tend to have the habit of continuing to live within us, colouring our present experiences through a veil of painful past experiences, we are blind to the possibilities that lie within us. By changing our perceptions of our present reality with the help of a communicator creates a space that enables us to see the present and past in a new, more mature way. Forgiving others also enables us to create such a space. A space that grants us a new beginning from which a new wholeness can emerge. This new wholeness is able to accommodate the positive as well as the negative. It is able to grant us the peace we long for, and the strength to deal with the turmoil we so desperately tried to avoid. The following empty page is a symbol of that empty space, which we all need for enabling a new way of being to emerge. When we have that space, we are ready, and a new beginning can dawn.