

How to Deal with "Bricks"

Are there any particular things from the past that might be affecting our relationship or keeping us from being close? These things are like bricks that we carry around in a backpack, weighing us down. To get rid of our bricks, we need to go through a process of confession and forgiveness:

If you have hurt someone, there are four steps to confession:

Step 1: Identify the problem (be specific - see following list)

Step 2:

- "Some feelings you may have felt about this incident are..."
- "Am I right?"
- "What are more feelings you have?"

Step 3:

- "I am sorry that you felt..."
- "I was wrong for ..."
- "I promise to try hard and not do that again and this is my plan..." (you need to focus quite a bit of energy to come up with this plan).

Step 4:

- "Will you forgive me?"

If you have been hurt, you now have a choice. You may **forgive or not**.

If you have been hurt and you **choose to forgive**, both bricks are smashed into a million pieces.

That means:

"I will not hold it against you by bringing it up."

"If I am reminded of it, it will be another opportunity to forgive."

"I release my right for revenge."

That does NOT mean:

"I will forget about what happened."

"I have to let go of boundaries."

"You are a safe person." (time will tell)

If you have been hurt and you **choose not to forgive**, then you keep both bricks. The person who hurt you then says, "I can see that you are really upset, I will look forward to talking to you when you are ready."

Possible Ways We Have Hurt Other Family Members

Have we . . .

Criticized and not built up?

Communicated what they do is never good enough?

Not been grateful?

Broken promises or been unreliable?

Lied or not told the full truth?

Been disrespectful (yelled, called names, cursed at, sassied, mocked, made faces, etc.)?

Withdrawn or "pouted" when we don't get our way?

Ignored or not listened?

Not been available to help or "enter the other person's world?"

Rejected (threatened removal of love, support, etc.)?

Discounted the other's feelings ("You shouldn't feel that way.")

Rejected when the other person has "blown it?"

Been harsh (abusive) or disciplined in anger?

Rebelled against parent's authority (disobeyed)?

Been selfish (only thought of our own needs, feelings, etc.)?

Been unfair (not applying "rules" or resources equally)?