

## Simplified Speech #086 – Forgiveness

### Episode description

Forgiving someone might be a difficult thing to do, but it is also a very healthy act. In this Simplified Speech episode, hosts Andrew and Kassy discuss the value of forgiveness and their personal thoughts on the subject.

### Fun fact

Forgiveness is a powerful tool for emotional healing. Countries that have gone through major traumatic events, such as South Africa, Rwanda, and Ireland, have had public hearings as part of the healing process. An important part of the hearings' success is people's ability to forgive.

### Expressions included in the study guide

- To wrong [someone]
- Don't cry over spilt milk
- To be hotheaded
- To be emotionally stunted
- Closure
- A slap on the wrist



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## Transcript

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Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

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**Andrew:** Hi, everyone, Andrew here. In this Simplified Speech episode, I'm joined by Kassy and we talk about forgiveness. You can get the study guide for this episode on Culips.com and follow along as you listen. But before we get started, here are three listening comprehension questions for you. Keep your ears open for the answers while you listen to our conversation. I'll share the answers at the end of the episode after the closing music is finished. OK, here are the questions:

1. Kassy tells us about her personality and temper. What kind of temper does she have?
2. Kassy says she doesn't really like to get revenge on people, unless it's one person in particular. Who is this person?
3. I mentioned a film genre that I like. What genre is this? What kind of movies do I like?

**Andrew:** OK, let's get started. I hope you enjoy this episode and learn a lot.

**Andrew:** Hello, everyone. My name is Andrew.

**Kassy:** And I'm Kassy.

**Andrew:** And you're listening to Culips.

**Andrew:** Today's episode is a Simplified Speech episode. This is the series where we have totally natural English conversations, but we speak a little bit slower than we do in our regular everyday lives. And we hope that by listening to our conversations, you can improve your English listening skills and become a fluent English listener. Today, I am joined by my cohost Kassy. Kassy, hello.

**Kassy:** Hello.

**Andrew:** Kassy, we finally got you a microphone. And we're all set up to record here. So, listeners, you can expect more content coming from Kassy here in the future, now that we finally got her a microphone.

**Kassy:** So exciting.

**Andrew:** Yeah, exciting for us, too.

**Andrew:** Kassy, our topic for today is actually a suggestion from one of our listeners who, coincidentally, is also named Andrew.

**Kassy:** What are the odds?

**Andrew:** What are the odds? I love it. So he wrote us an email, and I will share his message with everyone now. He says, "Hi, Andrew. I'm Andrew from Hungary, a regular listener of your podcasts. Now, I'm taking the opportunity to thank you for having helped me with my English a lot. I'd love to hear you speak about the topic of forgiveness. Is it easy for you to forgive others? Do you consider having a forgiving nature important? What kinds of impacts do you think it has on your life, not to let go of anger? Can you forgive others without wanting to take revenge? Thanks for covering the topic and have a wonderful day."

**Andrew:** OK, so a very interesting topic suggestion, and also a very well-written email message. Andrew's English is very good. So thanks for that message, Andrew. And that's what we're going to talk about today, forgiveness.

**Andrew:** The best way to study with this episode is with the study guide, which you can download from our website, Culips.com. In the study guide, there is a transcript, detailed vocabulary explanations and examples, a quiz, and more. And there are two options for you to choose from, a PDF option or a mobile-friendly option, which is perfect for all of you who listen to Culips while commuting to and from work or school on public transportation, or just for anybody who prefers to study on their phone. We put a lot of effort into making the study guides and we really focus on teaching you the things that you won't find in textbooks or dictionaries. So just visit Culips.com to start studying with our study guides.

**Andrew:** Kassy, maybe we should start with a definition.

**Kassy:** That's a good idea.

**Andrew:** Yeah. What does forgiveness mean to you?

**Kassy:** Forgiveness. It's a pretty deep topic.

**Andrew:** Yeah. It is not an easy one.

**Kassy:** I guess forgiveness means, to me, overcoming your anger towards someone and letting it go. Allowing yourself to overcome that anger and keep your relationship going with that person.

**Andrew:** Yeah, yeah. I think the same thing. Like when somebody **wrongs you** in some way, right? Maybe somebody hurts you or cheats you or makes you upset or angry then, as a part of the healing process, it's good to forgive other people. But oftentimes this is actually difficult to do. It depends on the size of the wrongdoing, right? Of the crime that was committed.

**Kassy:** Definitely. Like, somebody stealing my dessert is much different than, I don't know, somebody hitting my car or stealing my dog.

**Andrew:** Yeah, stealing a dog would be tough to forgive.

**Kassy:** So, Andrew, one of Andrew our listener's questions was, do you find it easy to forgive others?

**Andrew:** Yeah, that is a good question. To be honest, I do. I do find it quite easy to forgive other people. However, I also have to say that I don't have other people do bad things to me very often. So I don't have people that steal my dog or hit my car or break my heart, these kinds of things. That hasn't really happened to me in a long time.

**Andrew:** So, yeah, I think that it is easy to forgive other people, because usually when I get angry or upset at other people in my life because they've done something to me that made me upset or hurt my feelings or something, it was just over a small thing. And, yeah, I'm not one to hold a grudge over something that's small. You know, we have the idiomatic expression **don't cry over spilt milk**.

**Kassy:** I love that phrase.

**Andrew:** **Don't cry over spilt milk** means don't make a big deal over something that's not very serious. Yeah, so I think it's pretty easy for me to forgive others. What about you, Kassy?

**Kassy:** Me? I'm pretty good at forgiving others, too. However, I think forgiveness is kind of related to your temper in some ways. So I'm a little bit **hotheaded** with people I'm close to, so—

**Andrew:** Oh, really?

**Kassy:** Yeah, a little, so I quickly get, like, fire red angry and then shout it out and then quickly try to ask forgiveness and say sorry, I freaked out.

**Andrew:** OK, that's another interesting aspect, is asking for forgiveness, too. That's definitely part of it. So maybe if you are the perpetrator, you are the person that does something bad, then you need to ask for forgiveness.

**Andrew:** Do you think it's important to forgive?

**Kassy:** Definitely. I mean, holding that anger or sadness in your heart just kind of poisons your life, right? So even if it takes a little while, you feel so much lighter after you give forgiveness or accept someone else's forgiveness.

**Andrew:** So it's a necessary part of the healing process. Come to think of it, you know, maybe I'm kind of a stereotypical guy because, when I hang out with some of my guy friends, not all of them, but some of my guy friends are maybe **emotionally stunted** to an extent. They're not as open with their feelings. And, you know, some of my close friends are like this. And, because of that, it means that we don't actually talk about our feelings very often. Sometimes we do but, you know, some guys just sweep everything under the rug. And I feel like in these friendships, if one of us does something to upset the other one, then we usually just let time heal.

**Kassy:** Time heals all wounds.

**Andrew:** Yeah, like, I might be angry or frustrated with my friend one day but, you know, after a week, then we just forget about it. And it's a kind of unspoken forgiveness.

**Kassy:** Yeah, that's a little different from women. Earlier, you mentioned the phrase to hold a grudge. Women tend to hold a grudge a lot longer than men do, stereotypically.

**Andrew:** Yeah. There's lots of scenes in, like, comedy movies and stuff, where some couple will be having an argument and the wife or the girlfriend will bring up some issue from, like, 5 years ago. And the guy will say, like, "Can't you drop that already? That was 5 years ago. Do you have to hold this over my head?" Right? Do you have to threaten me with this mistake that I made in the past, even though it was 5 years ago? I don't know if many people are like this in real life, but it's definitely a kind of stereotype that you see in comedies sometimes.

**Kassy:** I think they're totally like that in real life.

**Andrew:** Thankfully, I don't have a girlfriend like that, which is good. My girlfriend is very good at forgiving and moving on, thankfully.

**Andrew:** OK, one of Andrew's other questions was, what kind of impact does not letting go of anger have on your life? So to make that a little bit more natural, because that question is like 99% perfect, but 1% awkward. I think we could say just what impact does not letting go of anger have on your life?

**Andrew:** That's something that's hard for me to know, because I'm not really an angry person because, like I said, I don't really hold grudges like this or have any situations, thankfully, that have caused me to be really, really angry.

**Andrew:** I could imagine, though, you know, somebody did steal your dog or cheat on you, or, you know, hurt somebody that you're close to, if you had a child or something. Well, then you could be really, really angry. I can only project here and predict, but I imagine that it would really take up a lot of your thinking time, you'd probably ruminate and think about that thing over and over again.

**Kassy:** Yeah, I have a friend who, you know, had a lot of things happen in her past, but she deals with a lot of anxiety or sleepless nights because of this anger that she feels from fights that haven't had a ...

**Andrew:** Haven't had **closure**?

**Kassy:** Yeah, that haven't had **closure**.

**Andrew:** You know, another thing that comes to mind is forgiveness on a societal level. So we're talking about personal relationships and forgiving, you know, people on a one-to-one basis, but there's also this kind of forgiveness that exists in society with, like, criminals, right? And if somebody commits a crime, especially a really brutal crime, then we often want to punish that person.

**Andrew:** And every society in every culture and country has different rules and laws about how they punish people and how they forgive people. Some countries may execute people for certain crimes. And other countries have relatively light sentences, right? Sometimes we say **a slap on the wrist**. And so you can also think about forgiveness on this level, too, right? Would you say your country, the USA, America, is it a forgiving country? Overall? I know that's difficult question to answer.

**Kassy:** I think it depends on the state. It's a giant country, right? Depends on the state and it depends on the severity of the crime. But I think, overall, the US tries to give people second chances, you know, if they make a mistake, do their time and then try to move on with their life.

**Andrew:** Right. Yeah, there's lots of idioms coming up in this episode. The other one is do the crime, pay the time, right? So if you commit a crime, then you have to spend some time in jail, but then, after, if you are really reformed, then society forgives you and you can start your life again.

**Andrew:** I think Canada is the same way. I think, in general, perhaps our justice system is more forgiving than the citizens would like. So a lot of times I read in the newspaper about people that think sentences or punishments are too light. Somebody can do something terrible, but then not spend that much time in jail. But I have to trust that our lawyers and our judges are more educated about this topic than just the regular Joe Blow citizen who's commenting on a news website.

**Kassy:** Yeah, those people on the internet, they all have an opinion, don't they?

**Andrew:** They all have an opinion.

**Andrew:** All right, Kassy, maybe we will wrap it up in just a moment. But let's talk about one last question here. And that is, can you forgive other people without wanting to take revenge? Do you like revenge? Are you vengeful, or can you just let it go?

**Kassy:** I think that also depends on the crime, or who it is. If it's my sister, like someone you're close to, it's really hard not to try to get that revenge on them. Or your mortal enemy, school bullies, something like that. But it's easier said than done, right? To forgive others without trying to get revenge.

**Andrew:** Yeah, yeah, revenge is sweet. I like watching revenge films, movies that, you know, show a character taking revenge are very satisfying to me to watch. So I guess I do like revenge. But, to be honest, I don't think it carries into my real life. So far, I haven't had any situations that are worthy of ruining my life or my reputation or my livelihood to take revenge on somebody else. And I gotta cross my fingers that that actually never comes true and that my life continues to be drama-free.

**Kassy:** Yeah, I think that's a good point, actually, with this topic, people who, you know, just try to live their life with positivity and treating others the way that you want to be treated and letting things go—it'll lead to a happier and more peaceful life.

**Andrew:** Indeed.

**Andrew:** Well, everyone, thank you for listening in to this conversation today. We hope you learned a lot. There was a lot of great idiomatic expressions that we used. And although this was a difficult topic, I think it was really interesting to talk about it here with you today, Kassy.

**Kassy:** Yeah, me too.

**Andrew:** Guys, if you would like to add to the conversation, if you would like to share your opinion with us, you can do that by leaving a comment on one of our social media sites. We're on Instagram and Facebook and YouTube and Twitter. Or you could send us a message to our email address, which is [contact@Culips.com](mailto:contact@Culips.com).

**Andrew:** Of course, if you have a topic that you would like to suggest and have us talk about here on Culips, you can do that, just like Andrew did. And, again, just send it to our email address, [contact@Culips.com](mailto:contact@Culips.com), and we'd be happy to try and make that suggestion become a reality.

**Andrew:** And, finally, our website, let's plug it. It is [Culips.com](http://Culips.com). It's the place where you can sign up to become a Culips member and study with our study guides, and it's also the place where you can listen to all of our past episodes. We've got hundreds of them on there. So please take a couple moments, check out our website.

**Andrew:** And that's it for us for now. We'll be back soon with another brand-new Culips episode and we'll talk to you then. Goodbye.

**Kassy:** See you next time.

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**Andrew:** Here are the answers to the listening comprehension questions.

1. Kassy tells us that she is a little bit of a **hothead**. So this means that she quickly gets angry.
2. Kassy says that it's hard not to want to get revenge on her sister. So when her sister does something that makes her angry, she tends to want to get revenge.
3. The movie genre that I like is revenge films. I enjoy watching films that deal with the theme of revenge.



## Detailed Explanations

### To wrong [someone]

Phrasal verb

In talking about forgiveness, Andrew uses the expression **to wrong [someone]**. **To wrong [someone]** is to do something bad to that person. It could be a physical injury, an emotional one, or even a financial one. If your actions or words end up hurting someone else, you have **wronged them**. You can also say **he did me wrong**, which means the same thing.

Here are a couple more examples with **to wrong [someone]**:

**Kent:** I saw a picture of you and your brother on Facebook. I thought you weren't speaking to each other?

**Darren:** We had a bit of a falling out a few years ago, but we've since patched things up.

**Kent:** That's good to hear. What happened?

**Darren:** It was dumb family stuff. I thought he had **wronged** me, and he thought I had **wronged** him. So finally we got together and talked about it. We're good now.

**Rosemarie:** How forgiving would you say you are?

**Nick:** I think I'm a fairly forgiving person.

**Rosemarie:** That's good. When's the last time someone **wronged** you and you forgave them?

**Nick:** Let me think. Last year, a friend of mine took money from my wallet at a party. He denied it for months and months. But finally he admitted it and paid back the money. He was very sorry, so it was easy for me to forgive him.

## Don't cry over spilt milk

Proverb

In this episode, Andrew talks about the importance of forgiveness and not holding grudges. He doesn't put much value on small injuries from the past and says he **doesn't cry over spilt milk**. **Don't cry over spilt milk** means that it is of no use to be saddened by something that has already happened. Since you cannot change the past, there is no use being too concerned about it. A common longer variation is to say **there's no use crying over spilt milk**.

Here are a couple more examples with **don't cry over spilt milk**:

**Vicki:** Sorry to hear about your basketball game. Your father told me it came down to the final possession.

**Pat:** Yeah. I had the ball, too. I could have won the game for my team, but I missed.

**Vicki:** Oh, **don't cry over spilt milk**. You can't change the past.

**Pat:** I know.

**Vicki:** And you're going to be playing plenty more games in the future. Cheer up!

**Evelyn:** Do you ever think about your divorce and whether you should have gotten married in the first place?

**Tomas:** Not really. It really hurt at the time, but I'm OK now. I'm not too concerned about past mistakes.

**Evelyn:** **No use crying over spilt milk**, right?

**Tomas:** That's right. I've moved on.

## To be hotheaded

Phrasal verb

In this episode, Kassy mentions that she can be a bit **hotheaded** with people who are close to her. That means she gets angry quickly. Think of a cartoon where the character's head gets very red and steam shoots out of his or her ears. That's a good image of someone who is **hotheaded**. This expression also works as a noun. You can call someone or yourself a **hothead**.

Here are a couple more examples with **to be hotheaded**:

**Sally:** Do you want to watch the basketball game with us tonight?

**Donald:** I don't think that's a good idea.

**Sally:** Why not?

**Donald:** Our team isn't very successful this season. I get really **hotheaded** when they lose.

**Sally:** Yeah, they just lost eight in a row. Maybe you should wait until they play a little better.

**Muriel:** I see that John is part of our research team.

**Heidi:** That's right. Is that a problem?

**Muriel:** It might be. He gets a bit **hotheaded** when he works in a small group. He gets especially frustrated when he's not in charge.

**Heidi:** I'll tell you what. I'll deal with him if things get out of hand.

**Muriel:** OK. You're the boss.

## To be emotionally stunted

Phrasal verb

In this episode, Andrew mentions that some of his friends are possibly **emotionally stunted**. That means those friends haven't developed the emotional side of their personality. They are not as in touch with their emotions as other people. The verb stunted means to have your development halted. For example, some people have had their growth stunted by some kind of illness. That means the person's physical body has not reached its full potential. The same can apply to emotional development.

Here are a couple more examples with **to be emotionally stunted**:

**Yolanda:** You've been in a good mood lately. What's different?

**Felix:** I changed a few things in my life. I've been doing yoga and meditating.

**Yolanda:** That's great.

**Felix:** Thanks. It's really opened my eyes. I feel like I used to be somewhat **emotionally stunted**. But now I feel freer and more in touch with my emotions.

**Yolanda:** I'm glad to hear that. It sounds like it's a pretty healthy change for you.

**Todd:** I heard you broke up with your boyfriend. Are you OK?

**Nina:** Not bad. It was for the best.

**Todd:** How come?

**Nina:** It was like we were on different wavelengths. I don't want to be mean, but he was a little **emotionally stunted**. It didn't look like he was going to mature in our relationship.

**Todd:** I see. I guess it's like you said, it's probably for the best.

## Closure

Noun

In this episode, our hosts talk about the importance of forgiveness in getting **closure**. **Closure** is when you are finished with something difficult or challenging. You have accepted the outcome and are at peace with it. For example, the death of a family member is always very difficult. After grieving, you might come to a time of **closure** when you accept the person is no longer alive and you are at peace with it.

Here are a couple more examples with **closure**:

**Wilson:** After the civil war in your country, did they have some kind of reconciliation?

**May:** They did. There was a commission where people from both sides were invited to talk and share their experiences.

**Wilson:** Do you think it provided people with some kind of **closure**?

**May:** I think so. It was a difficult time back then, but I think the country is in a better place now.

**Annie:** This is the 2-year anniversary of your grandfather's death. How have you been?

**Claude:** It's still difficult.

**Annie:** The two of you were pretty close, right?

**Claude:** We were. But we got into a really bad argument the week before he died. I never got to tell him how important he was to me. I still think about it.

**Annie:** Do you feel you'll ever find **closure**?

**Claude:** Maybe. We'll see. Time will tell.

## A slap on the wrist

### Idiom

In this episode, Andrew talks about punishment for various crimes. Sometimes the punishment is very severe, like the death penalty. Sometimes the punishment is minor and is called **a slap on the wrist**. If you were to receive **a slap on your wrist** as punishment for a crime, you would think it's a very small penalty. This expression is not necessarily physical. It's usually not an actual **slap on the wrist**. It could be a simple reprimand, a verbal warning, or a parental talk.

Here are a couple more examples with **a slap on the wrist**:

**Ramona:** Did you get in trouble for your bad report card this semester?

**David:** A little bit. I couldn't use my phone for a week.

**Ramona:** What? That's **a slap on the wrist** compared to what my parents had me do. I had to clean the house for a week, plus no phone for a month!

**David:** Ouch. That's way worse than my punishment.

**Gary:** Do you think we'll get in trouble if we leave work early on Friday?

**Kristal:** I don't think that's a good idea. The boss has been monitoring when people leave work.

**Gary:** That sucks. I was hoping to see this movie at 7 p.m.

**Kristal:** I would advise against that.

**Gary:** At my old job, we used to get away with so much. And even if we got caught, the boss would only give us **a slap on the wrist**.

**Kristal:** That boss doesn't sound strict enough!

## Quiz

### 1. What does it mean to be hotheaded?

- a) you have a fever
- b) you are always angry
- c) you can get angry quickly
- d) you are wearing a wool hat

### 2. What is a slap on the wrist?

- a) always a physical punishment
- b) a small punishment
- c) a severe punishment
- d) a punishment for crimes only

### 3. Why should you not cry over spilt milk?

- a) because the milk will taste bad
- b) because you can't change the past
- c) because you need to mop the milk up first
- d) because you are not lactose intolerant

### 4. If someone has wronged you, they have \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) been unfriendly
- b) tried to help you but failed
- c) hurt you in some way
- d) given you the wrong answer

### 5. What does it mean to have closure?

- a) to no longer remember the past
- b) to no longer hurt someone
- c) to close the window
- d) to be at peace with the past

## Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Are you the type of person who can forgive other people?
2. If you have wronged someone else, do you ask for forgiveness?
3. How important do you think forgiveness is in the healing process?
4. Do you think there is place in society for revenge?
5. Was there a time in your life when getting closure gave you emotional peace?



## Quiz Answers

1. c   2. b   3. b   4. c   5. d

### Episode credits

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