

**STEPS TO FORGIVENESS - *the victim***



**1**

- *I face my truth*
- *I move from denial to grieving the loss*
- *I open my wounds and begin to heal my pain and shame*
- *I forgive myself and cease blaming*
- *I accept God's forgiveness*



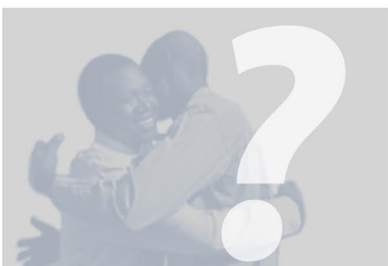
**2**

*the first hand of forgiveness...*  
*I let go of my bitterness and the right to revenge*



**3**

*the second hand of forgiveness...*  
*I confront the offender with a request to uphold my dignity*  
*by restoring something of what was lost*



**4**

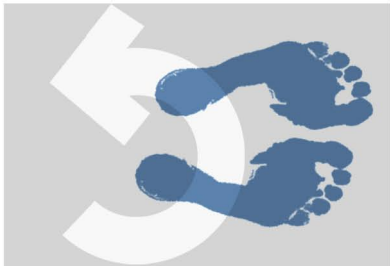
*I become open to accepting the humanity and dignity of the*  
*offender - and even the possibility of restoring the relationship*

**MOVING TOWARDS JUSTICE - *the offender***



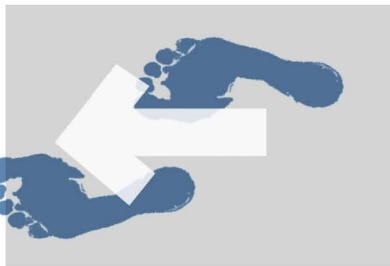
**1**

- *I face my truth*
- *I move from rationalising to grieving my losses*
- *I open my wounds and begin to heal my pain and shame*
- *I forgive myself and cease running away*
- *I accept God's forgiveness*



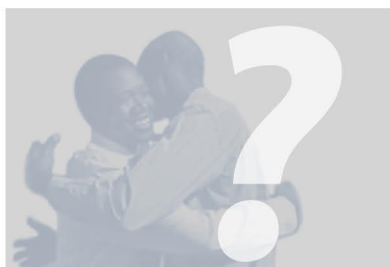
**2**

*the first foot of justice...  
I repent and turn to face the victim*



**3**

*the second foot of justice...  
I step towards the victim, apologise and make  
an offer of restitution*



**4**

*I become open to accepting the humanity and dignity of the  
victim - and even the possibility of restoring the relationship*

# S U M M A R Y

## FORGIVENESS

victim

*I feel the pain...  
healing  
openness*



*change  
inside*

## JUSTICE

offender

*I feel the guilt  
and recognise  
the wrong...  
healing  
openness*

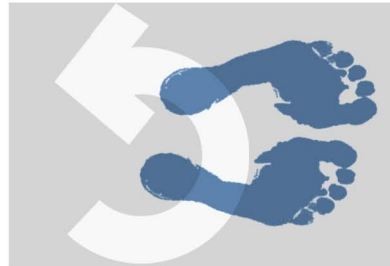


*I let go of  
bitterness and  
the right to  
revenge*



*change  
of direction*

*I repent and  
turn to face  
the victim.  
Confess  
the wrong...  
apologise*

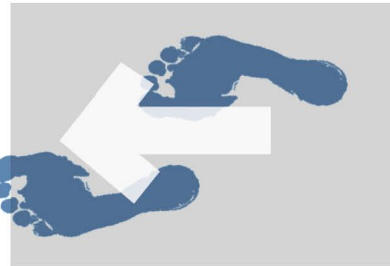


*I confront  
"What you did  
was wrong.  
What are you  
going to do..?"*



*change  
of action*

*I make an offer  
of compensation  
or restitution*



*When repentance  
and restitution meet  
forgiveness, mercy  
and truth...*



*...it enables acceptance  
and may lead to  
embracing the other*

## Guidelines for confronting

- 1 *Do it caringly* - primarily to express concern for the other
- 2 *Do it gently* - do not offer more than the relationship can bear
- 3 *Do it constructively* - express your intentions clearly and be sure they are credible; consider if they contain blaming, shaming or punishing aspects
- 4 *Do it acceptantly* - respect the other's intentions as good. Don't evaluate the motives, wishes or goals of the other
- 5 *Do it clearly* - state what is fact (observation), feeling (emotion), hypothesis (conclusion).

(Augsburger, *Caring enough to confront*, Marshall 1980, pp58f.)

*“ to care is to be there for another.  
Care enough and you will confront. ”*

## What forgiveness is not...

- 1 *saying it doesn't matter*, or condoning sin: all sin matters (Ex 34:7) God will not call the unclean 'clean'. We cannot excuse wrong.
- 2 *denying our feelings of anger and sadness*: because we are to forgive from the heart (Mt 18:35) we need to first face the pain and receive healing in order to be free to forgive
- 3 *forgetting* or being unable to remember: we will remember the incident, but find it has lost its painfulness
- 4 *cheap and easy*: the hurt person normally needs to take the initiative. Forgiveness is the hardest and most costly act in the universe - the only model we have is how God forgave us through Jesus. We go to that place where Jesus modelled it for us.
- 5 *refusing to cooperate with the judicial process*: forgiveness and justice go together (Rom 12:17-13:5). Some form of restitution is important and punishment may be necessary. Society has its established norms of forgiveness and justice and these must be upheld.
- 6 *avoiding necessary confrontation*: Mt 18:15-17; Rev 2:2; I Cor 5:12; II Cor 2:6-8; Gal 6:1

(Adapted from Lloyd & Bresser, *Healing the wounds of ethnic conflict*, 2000, pages 73-78)

## References

Linn, D. Linn, S. Linn, M. *Don't forgive too soon*, Paulist, 1997.

For further information on the Matthew 5 passage, do a web search for 'Walter Wink' + 'Matthew 5'