

Memories: The Benefits of Forgiveness and Love

Recently my daughter asked me why bad memories are so much easier to remember and visualise in her head than the good memories that she would much rather think about.

The reason is that when something really upsets us it is natural to replay it in our minds, a lot; thinking about what we could have said or done differently or just feeling aggrieved by the unfairness of it all. But the more we fixate on an event, the more deeply and vividly we burn it into our memory. We tend not to replay and fixate upon even half as many memories of nice things that have happened; and so, of our most vivid memories, most are of events we would rather not remember.

Jesus teaches us about the importance of Forgiveness; and now we find that it could have mental health benefits too! The more we are able to practice Forgiveness, the more we may be able to 'let go' of unpleasant things that have happened to us, replay them less in our heads and as a result have a higher proportion of nice things haunting our bank of memories.

Forgiveness is hard, very hard, and takes a lot of practice; but the more often we succeed, the more benefits we should start to feel.

As well as reducing the number of bad memories we burden ourselves with, we can also try to actively burn more good memories into our minds. Whenever something nice happens, even small things, relive and hold them in your mind. The power of Love is amazing; and the more we can fill our memories with it the better we will feel.

Proverbs 17:9 "Love prospers when a fault is forgiven, but dwelling on it separates close friends."