

You will need to carefully read the selection below and complete various activities using the essay as your basis.

Using the highlight function on your computer, you will need to mark the essay below. It will be necessary for you to read the essay several times to fully understand the essay and complete the markings in such a way that demonstrates a close reading of the essay. You will need to use the following chart to correctly mark the essay.

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| Highlight Color | Item to be identified | Use an X to indicate you have accomplished this task. Use NA if this task did not apply to this essay. |
| PINK | Mark the main idea of the essay. |  |
| AQUA | Mark key examples/ support for the main idea/ theme of the essay. |  |
| GREEN | Mark statements that you agree with . |  |
| YELLOW | Mark statements that are new to you or make you think in a new way. |  |
| RED | Mark statements in the essay that you disagree with. |  |
| GRAY | Mark terms/ concepts that you found difficult to understand. |  |

The time I began reading and marking this assignment was:

I believe in the power of forgiveness.  
  
I never really understood what forgiveness meant. When I felt treated badly, it seemed natural to hold on tightly to the anger and resentment.  
  
I never expressed anger outwardly. Instead, I let it stew. My righteous indignation toward those who hurt me was a shield from my pain. Most of this indignation was directed at my father. I blamed Dad for everything bad that happened to me.  
  
Over the years, his misdeeds and shortcomings became the scapegoat for my own. The fact that I hadn’t become an alcoholic like him was justification for being irresponsible, dishonest, and thoughtless.  
  
Throughout years of struggle, dysfunctional relationships, and little to no career advancement, I never took responsibility for anything. I laid all my troubles on Dad.  
  
Then a few years ago, something shocking happened to me: I became a father.  
  
One night, as I watched my newborn son sleep, studying his beautiful face, I suddenly became filled with fear. I was convinced I would screw him up—that all my problems would wash over him, tarnishing his perfect soul. Strangely, while panicking about my son’s impending doom, Dad popped to mind.  
  
I sat there in the dark, surrounded by the soothing sounds and smells of my baby’s room, and I thought of how Dad must have felt when I was born. I knew at that moment that he never intended to hurt me. I realized that he loved me just as I loved my son. I knew that he had done the best he could, even if it wasn’t always very good.  
  
I forgave my father that night—for all the times he got drunk, embarrassed me, or hurt my mother. I forgave him for not being around. I let go of the resentment I’d held toward him for so many years. I stopped blaming him.  
  
Maybe my reasons were not very noble. Maybe I was afraid my son would blame me for whatever problems would inevitably fall his way. But whatever the reason, for the first time, I saw my dad as a real person. I knew he didn’t drink to hurt me. He drank because he was flawed and hurting. I knew that if I didn’t forgive him, I would never have the kind of relationship I wanted with my son. If I kept blaming him I would never start living my life.  
  
Dad hadn’t asked for my forgiveness; he’s never acknowledged that he’s done anything wrong. But I realized that in forgiving him, what I was really doing was taking responsibility for myself and my own actions.  
  
Forgiving my dad changed my life. I accepted him for who he was and that set me free. My eyes are open now to my own failings. And I discovered that forgiving someone is both an innately spiritual act that brings us closer to a higher power, and a uniquely human act that connects people in a way that strengthens us all. It is a powerful thing. This I believe.

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| Your response should be self-contained. When someone reads your responses, they should be able to tell which question you are responding to.  In marking the essay you should be clear in what idea and item you are reacting to. The markings should indicate a close and personal reading of the essay. Excessive markings or lack of markings may indicate a failure to have closely read and comprehended the essay. |  |
| Based on your reading and marking of the essay identify the main idea of the essay as well as support including direct quotations and evidence from the essay. Your response should be limited to no more than one (1) well written and adequately edited paragraph. |  |
| Using at least two (2) of the writing prompts below and in no more than three (3) well written and adequately edited paragraphs create a response to the essay:   * The part (s) of the essay I agreed with were * The part (s) of the essay I disagreed with were * This essay reminded me of/ made me think of * This essay made me think in a new way * This essay was similar to another essay |  |
| What question (s) would you like to ask the author of this essay? Explain your reasoning for wanting to have the answer to this question. |  |
| Having now read this essay I… |  |
| **Presenters Only:** You will need to have three (3) questions that you would like to present to your classmates during your seminar. |  |

The time I completed reading and marking this assignment was: