



## *In Bounds: Forgiveness*

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Christmas! What a festive time of year with smells and sounds which evoke fond memories of yesteryear. Glimpses of the past brought ahead in time through the cutting of a fresh tree to décor the living room, a light blanket of snow upon the ground and a flutter of the heart once the mistletoe is hung. Such is the Holiday time of year.

Fifteen years ago I received a different kind of gift, one that left me breathless, mystified and trembling with emotions unspent. Fifteen years ago my wife announced a separation from me after seven years of marriage. But please, no woes for me my friends, for my personal tragedy afforded me the opportunity to mature and learn and grow.

The new year of 1992 brought bitterness and anger, sadness and rage. Interesting how a broken heart can peel away layers of kindness and display hatred; pure and unadulterated, to the bone, frosty enough to chill an individual through a long and hot summer. Hatred, my new found companion rode my shoulder and helped me vent my frustrations with a vengeance I was unaware I had inside of me.

**Clearly now, I look back upon those times and lament the energy I used in reconciling the phantom issues that lead to my divorce.** I can remember how the quagmire of misery clung to my sole like the stench of rotten eggs, to be shared with everyone whom I had contact with. I bitched and moaned, pissed and ranted about the injustice, the humiliation, the defeat to anyone who would listen. Those individuals grew fewer as time went by.

**My salvation came Christmas of 1994.** A gift was placed under the tree from one of my few remaining friends. Adorned in gold and silver paper with a green velvet bow, I knew it was a book just by feeling its identifiable shape. Great, I thought, probably another guide to unraveling the secrecy of my golf game. But no, I opened a treasure that would soon change my life.

*A Return To Love*, by Marianne Williamson, revealed knowledge I had

long locked away and a key to opening my heart to a healthy perspective of how my life could be. Her commentary and

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thought provoking wisdom stirred my mind and caused me to reflect upon me; who I was, how I acted and the manner in which I lived. Her conversation with me, as I found it to be quite personal, solicited a new direction in my life.

The premise of the book is based upon giving yourself to love. And the greatest gift I took from the account was practicing the art of forgiveness. Perhaps you may be skeptical about the power of forgiveness. I know that for two years in the early 90s I sure was.

Williamson's work inspired me to develop the courage to meet with my former wife and ask her forgiveness for my part in our marital dissolution and forgive her for her actions. Not unlike being "saved" at the Jesus People Church in 1976, my heart soared with emotions I had hidden in the center of my chest. I was free again. The lead chains that weighed me down and were drowning me in the languid depths of self-pity melted and I rose once again to life. Beautiful and wondrous life.

**It is amazing what the act of asking forgiveness can do for a person.**

Acknowledging and apologizing for acts, both intentional and unintended, can free wasted energy spent on anxiety and worry. And accepting forgiveness can liberate those requesting it. In fact, I believe it compounds the emotional release.

To bring my heart relief, I have since tried to practice forgiveness whenever it was necessary. Even the act of asking forgiveness from those whom I cannot physically talk with brings me solace. And finally forgiving myself for sometimes

doing idiotic things, thinking dumb thoughts or saying something stupid allows me to move forward with comfort.

Peace, reassurance and harmony. The great equalizer is forgiveness.

Christmas is a happy occasion for me. Introspections upon my life's journey cause me to smile and be very thankful for my capacity to forgive. Since 1995 the revelations of forgiveness have provided my former wife and me the ability to raise our children as thoughtful parents. We communicate on a sincere level and share the good parent/bad parent skills sometimes necessary in disciplining our children. We attend school functions together and celebrate holidays as a family. We have the capacity to hug and laugh and share.

**This Holiday Season I wish each and every one of you a quiet moment** to reflect upon

your life. Within yourself, celebrate your accomplishments and take pride in your good deeds. Review your "not so polished moments" and consider righting any wrong. And perhaps as you take a personal inventory, there may be an opportunity for you also to share the greatest gift of all, forgiveness.

## *Letter to the Membership-*

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Furthermore, we plan to keep in close contact with the MTGF and University of Minnesota. There are big changes happening at both of these entities. MTGF is working hard at "branding" themselves and promoting the turf and grounds industry through the wide spread presentation of an in-depth Economic Impact Statement. And the University of Minnesota has just signed on a new Dean of Agriculture. It is imperative that these two organizations be in the scope of this project.

Finally, the BOD is committed to keep the membership informed about its intent to continue moving forward with a very progressive idea.

Who knows, someday you may have a pathologist just one phone call away. Maybe you will come up with a new idea and may want to try it out on the RCGC. Or perhaps you will be bringing your Green Committee or course owner out to the RCGC to demo a variety of sands and review bunker liner options. The possibilities are endless. Together we can achieve them.