AN ALL COMMON GROUND LESSON · PILLAR II — HEALING & FORGIVENESS

Let the Wound Close Clean

A wound that closes isn't the same as a wound that's healed.

Key verse: Ephesians 4:26 · Resonates with Celebrate Recovery Principles 4 & 6 (Steps 4–5, 8–9) · **Different views. Shared humanity. Real community.**

THE ONE PLACE THE WATER DOESN'T REACH

The young fish went looking for water — and the old fish told him he'd never once been outside it. It's in his mouth. It's in his gills. He was swimming in the thing he went hunting for.

> *"The kingdom of God is within you."*
> Luke 17:21 (KJV)

So here's the harder question, one layer down: **if the water is already everywhere — how come there's one place in you that never gets any wetter?** Because there is. A spot that stays dry and sore no matter how much grace pours over the rest of your life.

THE SPLINTER

A man splits wood and a splinter drives deep into his palm. Digging it out would hurt — so he leaves it, and the skin closes right over. In a week you can't see where it went in. *From the outside: healed.* But the body knows something's in there that doesn't belong, so it walls it off. Years later there's a hard knot that fires like fresh pain every time it's bumped — a name, a song, a certain holiday.

That wound never healed. It just closed. And a wound that closes over something dirty doesn't get better with age — it gets quieter, and meaner. Scripture named this long before there was a word for infection:

> *"They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace."*
> Jeremiah 6:14 (KJV)

Every walled-off wound was once an act of survival — don't let anyone shame you for it. But what saved you at nineteen can be running your life at forty-five. **Hurt people hurt people** — what stays buried leaks out sideways, onto people who never held the knife. And the second half is the door: **healed people heal people.**

THE BIG IDEA

Forgiveness doesn't mean what they did didn't matter. It means what they did doesn't get to keep wounding you.

Keep it going.

Scan to revisit this lesson during the week, download it again, or send it to someone who needs it.
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THREE THINGS FORGIVENESS IS *NOT*

1. Not saying it was okay. You can only forgive a *real* debt. Naming the wrong at full size is the first half of forgiving it.

2. Not forgetting. "Forgive and forget" isn't Scripture. The memory may stay; what leaves is the venom. A scar you can point to, not a knot that fires.

3. Not letting them back in. Forgiveness takes one person; reconciliation takes two, and the other one being safe. Some you forgive from across the room — that's wisdom, not failure.

THE BETTER QUESTION

Not *"What do they deserve?"* — you can stand in that fair question for thirty years. Ask instead: **"What is carrying this costing me, and who else is paying?"** The payments come out of your sleep and your sobriety — and the ones closest catch what leaks from a wound they didn't make.

> *"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath."*
>
> Ephesians 4:26 — don't give it a bed

> *"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."*
>
> Romans 12:19 — it stops being yours to collect

An old teaching says two arrows hit a wounded man: **the first** is what happened — nobody chooses that — and **the second** he fires into the same wound himself, every replay and midnight argument. The first struck once; the second you've fired for years. Jesus goes furthest: He forgave with the nails still in Him (Luke 23:34), and He forgave *you* first. Forgiving isn't paying from your own thin account — it's passing along what you were handed.

THIS WEEK — TWO THINGS TO CARRY

1. Name one splinter. One name, one wound — on paper, or out loud to God. Not your whole history. One. You can't clean what you won't look at.

2. The sundown check. Each night before sleep: *"What am I still gripping from today?"* Set today's down before the sun goes down on it — so nothing new closes over.

Harder for me — forgiving them, or forgiving myself? _____

We are not here to be right. We are here to be real.
We are not here to win. We are here to understand.
We are not here to fix each other. We are here to walk together.
God is Love.

CR Principle 4: openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust. Principle 6: evaluate all my relationships; offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me, and make amends for harm I've done — except when to do so would harm them or others.