Speaker 1 ([00:02](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=vlF0anIxTYyQ5MRtFYemVWwvdfLT-F64TTtXdqnI4dyrTJwKunjzDAsAkhH_aT4aawxUmsNRZXb6CxdRcmAEerf24O8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2.89)):

Hello everyone. And welcome to this episode of ASCA death doula. I am your host, founder of doula givers, international Suzanne. O'Brien welcome today. We're talking about forgiveness and I could talk about forgiveness every single day. It is that transformative. So today we're going to specifically talk about how to write a forgiveness letter and why that's so important, how that can change your life. So let's begin with going down the beautiful journey of talking about forgiveness and really what that is, because I don't think that everyone fully understands what forgiveness is and why it's so important and how it can absolutely change your life. So forgiveness is the act, the intentional act of letting go of something that's not serving you anymore. Most of you know, I've worked with end of life, patients for my whole entire adult nursing career, and now doula giver career. One of the things, the recurring theme that comes up with every single end of life, patient is forgiveness.

Speaker 1 ([01:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=5SnmKlfgrRM9R-4Z7uE6vSwduJ6uwEcZ6371I9_0cRMh1FDtsbmzqHFF6qZz27aM7AhHTnGj3REYcxGQYBTpJNIe_bc&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=74.9)):

Or may I say unforgiveness? In fact, there was a woman in my earlier years as a hospice nurse and she was young. She was in her fifties and she was dying and she said, I know why I got sick. I know I got why I got cancer. And I was, you know, just listening. And she said, because my anger towards my father, I've been so angry with my father for all of my adult life, at least maybe longer. And it literally caused her disease within her own body. And she knew this and it was fascinating to me that she was expressing this at the end. But now I understand exactly that we get our spiritual wisdom and a lot of clarity comes as we reach the end of life and that physical body's diminishing as that spiritual body and that wisdom is growing, but is also heartbreaking because here was a woman who was in her mid fifties dying, and she knew why.

Speaker 1 ([02:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=2uNFEaa2WkghB0iOOOGlyUZCFOqVeqsG0ZrZVw8kNXr5RmJpkTC7S7NPTOr2LArWX_nV1cQ_wtdUDPKC-rupVifFwa8&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=134.3)):

And if she sh she could go back in time and release that energy, it's not excusing. It's not forgetting, but it's releasing your energetic attachment to it, which is everything that I wanna share with you today. It's like freeing yourself. Forgiveness can free you. And she knew this, but it was too late for her. So what we wanna do is share this information so that we're not waiting and you don't have to have necessarily in end of life disease, that forgiveness is, you know, bringing upon your life. You could have just energetic blocks. You could have depression, you could have anger. You could have heaviness that you're carrying around with you fr from unforgiveness of things that have happened in our lives, which is part of the life's journey. So I'm gonna show you how writing that forgiveness letter can set you free and break those chains to allow you to have the future, to be anything and everything that you want it to be.

Speaker 1 ([03:14](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=q-K1Gu1uessTAkF8L5dDvHpCn7_xaYUY7JYlw4Ts0tFAt1tZlAbx8blcCIeOUjtVgU6GVkD14pRPAKear0lZUqeCoUI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=194.919)):

Cuz you deserve that. So forgiveness does not mean forgetting, nor does it mean condoning offenses. Everyone is held responsible for their own actions. When the pain is raw, you may feel that the other party does not deserve your forgiveness. In fact, this comes up many times in workshops and things that I'm teaching and sharing is that, well, they don't deserve the forgiveness and you could be absolutely right that they did something so awful and painful that they don't deserve the forgiveness, but the forgiveness is not for them. The forgiveness is for you. It's to set you free. They will have to deal with their own consequences of their own choices and actions. At some point in their life, it just is the way the universal laws work. So you don't even have to really worry about that. You need to worry about yourself and you need to take care of yourself and protect yourself.

Speaker 1 ([04:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=OmWx0ENWf9Kbw3U6ddXybUJjeWSdAFT4GtgPVYKcD-OHN4_ENgoyccknZ7R_H3RcurV5JMLKuvyhYVY8LC2sEfbr4uo&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=260.779)):

Remember forgiveness is not for the other person that did the wrong. It is for you. Everyone is responsible and is accountable for their own actions. Now, sometimes people do not even know that they hurt you. You know, many times this comes up when we're children, right? And we're so vulnerable and sensitive and something happens. It's like this frozen image in our mind that we carry around and carry around and carry around. And every time we think of it, understand that every time you think of an image in your mind, there's a chemical that's released and your body does not know the difference between it's something happening in this moment or something that happened in the past. And if we, we freeze frame, painful experiences like snapshots. And when we remember them, it brings on just like we were back in that moment. It brings on the, the hurt.

Speaker 1 ([05:20](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=P_0s4ihX5MdzihygrFSZ6cC0Cipns2-zOqgo5dNUjp5UYnQjnbqY0XFlxlHdZOJT6CUABXNLhYQaU_WWXavSYQ0C4uI&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=320.08)):

It brings on the terror. It brings on the depression. And so you deserve and need to be able to shift that energy and change that image and release it so that it's not something that is keeping you prisoner every single day, because when you're kept prisoner in that energy, you deny yourself, your future. You know exactly what I'm talking about. This is when we talk about being stuck, this is when we talk, I can't release that feeling. I can't, it happened to me. And so a lot of times we think that we're damaged goods or that were victims of our circumstance. That happened were not, we're not, you can change this. You are in control, it does take work and it takes courage. And I'm here with you to guide you every step of the way to be able to do that because I've seen it with end of life patients, I've seen it, I've done it myself.

Speaker 1 ([06:16](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=iLq9oXDNST2bVj2tryrcDTTAMsTKWyIQKRfMYFOY68S4S58YbrqkK16MqvJdXp0dIcJWRx3NUseV6wr1shB_b2L5HyE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=376.06)):

It frees you to have your life be everything and anything that you want it to be, but you've gotta make that choice to do it. It's gotta be a conscious decision. So the irony here is that sometimes the people that are the ones that hurt you are not even aware or don't even remember that they did that. So if you are waiting for that person to say, they're sorry, or to, or to take ownership of that situation, first of all, they may not even be alive and they may not remember. Or they may be somebody who actually is somebody who your safety is at risk, that you can't have interaction with them, or shouldn't have interaction with them. You can still achieve this no matter what the circumstance, the person doesn't need to be alive. And that's, what's so beautiful about the forgiveness letter. The person doesn't need to be alive.

Speaker 1 ([07:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=8SrfnagoDRyLiZ7T6L6RN82hq1QTOFfPa0BkNJE9S8WhG4WZs8b6293aJe6kd1eCH5aK3JsG9RdBytpupLR7SgqSs5k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=432.02)):

They don't need to even be part of this and you can still achieve the beautiful transition to release the attachment to the unforgiveness. So this is about your journey. And at some point in their life, people will be held accountable for what they do. We are changing the way we are attached to this memory. That's what, this is gonna be. This forgiveness letter. Some painful experiences can become ingrained in our cellular DNA, for sure. And sometimes it is so ingrained that your body, again, doesn't even know if it happened today or 20 years ago. And that's what those memories are. Those what those subconscious memory bank is. And I think, you know, we do a lot of talking about this, but your subconscious mind holds all that trauma and brings it up multiple times triggers or multiple times a day. Or even if you just feel heavy and stuck and you can't move forward.

Speaker 1 ([08:09](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=SO1gg_iuW31UrN_qmr8c4U0DPpyiSAxOP4HsmvX_P-scj4bLUZu_7xTv_MnOsqwVBayh4awxe3uYmRb-r3U765MtVOA&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=489.57)):

That's what this subconscious mind is. And that's, what's carrying the unforgiveness and we're gonna be able to shift that. So why is forgiveness important? It is for your own growth and happiness. When we hold onto hurt and pain and resentment and anger, it harms us far more than it harms. The offender. Forgiveness frees us to live in the present and forgiveness allows us to move on without anger or contempt or seeking revenge. Forgiveness is the secret to an extraordinary life. I wanna share with you a story about when I was in Thailand and I had the privilege and honor to be doing 14 doula givers trainings all over the country of Thailand, 2019. And one of the last places that I did the doula give training was a temple and the temple was caring for those at the end of life. And so many incredible people there, all different ages, too.

Speaker 1 ([09:12](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=zM5Knz8ku-zaqgRvEmMTw39LM6YPh0Iz6ZQrfOylow8sldJ3ZC16nBG7-Mi_E6EtaG_RhfI0lDnC0pXanfCs_mi6H0U&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=552.85)):

They had a way that they did their treatment for this end of life. There were four different categories. One was to eat only, um, vegetables and organic meals. One was to do meditation. Another part was to do yoga and the last part was forgiveness. And what they had was when the person would come with the illness, they would have them write down everything that they wanted to forgive someone for and everything that they wanted to be forgiven for. And they would read that in privacy with the Abbott or a trusted, his trusted, um, assistant. And then they would burn that paper cuz burning is a, um, gesture of trans transformation. And I will tell you that sitting in circles with these beautiful patients at this temple, they would say that the time that they were at the temple was the happiest time of their life.

Speaker 1 ([10:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=YwIMVd9kDFqrJplJE13Bz1dR2XQUw8Y_tCu5y0Y7GwtFJRfH336zd6TtBPU3vuSpL30vdP8DoDH2IA5qm2jLfNgtz2k&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=622.2)):

The time that they have spent in that temple for maybe weeks or months was the happiest time of their life. And I know a huge part of that if not solely responsible for that happiness was forgiveness. And they also, some of them went home. Some of them did not have their end of life. Some of them got better. And when we talk about spontaneous recovery, we could do a whole other podcast on this. And I'm sure we will. When we study spontaneous recoveries from illness, one of the biggest components of the shift is to forgive, is to accept, is to forgive is to let go and then your body starts to heal itself. So I cannot stress enough how important this is. I've seen it in play. I've done this myself in my life and it changes everything. So I want this for you. So we're gonna talk about how to do that.

Speaker 1 ([11:21](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=86GJdW-wfSmTJeMjPt3BfyBCOUPMoPYvFFsAOZXQWkCh7rw-2A24JdRTBf7gFzlJydSUJPwpcjLWWKlb5zQEeQ8eg3Q&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=681.35)):

Now there are two types of two main types of forgiveness, forgiveness of others and forgiveness of yourself, which do you think is the harder one to do forgiveness of yourself? We're really hard on ourselves. So interesting today before I was gonna record this podcast, I was scrolling through my feed and this video came up of, um, Mr. Rogers talking about forgiveness and talking about forgiveness of yourself. And I was like the universe, you know, we talk about synchronicities, but there's no such thing. So the universe you're always aligned once you're in that vibration with like things. And it's just such a beautiful clip about him talking about two children, which I think that so many times that we have such complication and we're so detached in our world that talking to each other in simplistic ways from the heart is the best way we can connect.

Speaker 1 ([12:24](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=B_CGKK5tGXWhqW0o9QOLfyk-LL6_5qjooSY6uqkH4_pByct2QtYETJVMu9fHwjaxb_rPk3lu-zaGGLQimfvmua2m4Xs&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=744.88)):

So he's talking to children, but it's apropo for all of us, I believe. Um, so it's really important that we understand what forgiveness is about. And also that forgiveness of self is one of the most important things. And the hardest thing that we can do. So how do we write a forgiveness letter? So I wanna first start with a little exercise if I may, and I want to invite you in, if you'd like to join me in this to bring you into your heart space, okay? Cuz this is a huge part of changing your perspective on how you look at a situation. There are only two states of being that we have only two states of energy being. One is the ego mental mind. That is the three lower chakras. That is the survival. That is where we hold the anger and resentment and trauma and all of the human part of us.

Speaker 1 ([13:17](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=f5xyTLWSstLt6-01jaBZKreNXN4iRfEcHatIp0tTmIw6e-CpASZp1bE7Nb5fhjKQ9VxhJD9dUmmG_yhfkIRyQriPN7A&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=797.2)):

And then there's the heart wisdom. That is the unconditional loving that has been guiding us. That is always again full of compassion and peace. And there's those two energies that we have to understand how to access them. And also that they're both going to direct you when that one is, you know, in charge when that one is the most dominant energy that you're living your day with. Now here's something that I really want you to hear that 95% of the time, the ego and analytical mind is running. The show is running your life. And that's why we're carrying around all of those heavy images. And we're not even conscious of it. We might say, I don't want to, I wanna forgive that. Or I don't, I wanna leave that in the past, but we can't leave it in the past unless we change it. And if we don't live consciously and we don't do the things to access our heart, our wisdom, our peacefulness, then the unconscious is gonna be the dominant energy.

Speaker 1 ([14:22](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=1PysR_8pnhoJ8-MR2NaKbs0ilERi7rMvXODhhSVdE16tRVYKFukZsaYDMXtOvolps8b9th0-WmLRv9AmUCT7rTpDzOQ&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=862.66)):

That's all around us. And of course you're gonna be living day after day after day with that same heaviness, that same feeling of being stuck so, or anger or whatever is attached to that. So this is incredibly important. So I'm gonna bring you on a little exercise with me and if you'd like to join me, I'd love to have you a quick exercise on how we can actually access the heart energy. If you feel called you can close your eyes and I want you to do three deep breaths. I want you to breathe through your nose. Like you're smelling a beautiful rose and then out through your mouth. And when we breathe out of our mouth, I want you to with intention, say that I'm letting go of everything and anything that is not serving my highest consciousness. Okay, here we go. We're gonna breathe in and hold and let it go again, breathe in and hold and let it go and breathe in and hold and let it go.

Speaker 1 ([15:30](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=LAmR1tCbHz-tg6kF5a5T-emcL2vJU1hwbmgaTFMNcoSajQQGWPr18mTHFk0y_jsW-TBUwOh6WKK2nF0hEWLUeKYdu7g&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=930.58)):

And now I want you to imagine your heart and I want you to imagine a time in your life. If you feel like putting your hands over your heart, you can do that. I want you to remember a time in your life that you were so blissfully happy and joyful. It may be playing with your dog on the beach or playing with a young child or having your child or whatever moment of high loving frequency. We know we have them. I want you to remember a time in your life. That was such a beautiful moment. And I want you to just feel that go back to that place. What did you see? How did you feel? What did you hear? All that goes along with that? And then I want you to take that and watch in your mind's eye. Your heart, just expand with that love. I want you to feel that love and connection and with every breath that you take now, I want you to just expand that bubble of love and light larger and larger and larger until everything is just in a space of love.

Speaker 1 ([16:51](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=gloqTL3re9qkIFBr0Fy9q8sOt8Mo9ldgTnKzSrf5e_lg7MwElTE3YosqO8pqeamKRQypeD-yRv9YFktGVROemxJDcmU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1011.25)):

And this is your heart chakra, just opening up and your heart wisdom. And now from this space, from this beautiful space, I want you to think about forgiveness. And I want you to think about writing a forgiveness letter. I want you to pick somebody or yourself that you would like to write a forgiveness letter to. And here's something that's critically important when we come from a space of love and we are looking to forgive. I want you to ask this question. Let's use yourself for an example. When we look back on our lives and we wish we had done something different, or we wonder why maybe we hurt somebody or did a certain thing or even abused ourselves. When we look at that, I want you to look at the whole scenario and I want you to ask yourself, this was I doing the best I could with where I was at the time.

Speaker 1 ([17:56](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=SIgkr_tOcSV716wkYXH2sDe8V78DMoyjBryBroZd9f5qHGYXOjeDqdElqN5tjQ00JCIVBalKuCyaw38xt7m6Sq1wF_w&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1076.42)):

And I will tell you that the answer will always be yes, and this could I use this example. Let's just say somebody was a heroin addict and lost possession of their children and stole money. And all those things that are really, really intense. Were they doing the best they could with where they were at that time? And the answer is always going to be, yes, people carry burdens that we have no idea. Even our own family members. We don't know the trauma or the burdens or the pain that they carry from childhood or from different things that they had in their life. And a lot of times unprocessed emotions like that will come about in ill behavior or self-medicating or acting out all of those type things. So from that place of heart centered, love and compassion, and this goes for you and for others.

Speaker 1 ([19:05](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=xyPzn1v-M3sc28V0iYSnD9vbtKgQ_qF09ey9IXx0vE4C0UruK2OejFPI-vgAWZpRCybSoIw4P67crDwHyyegnvvi7mg&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1145.66)):

When you're writing this letter, I want you to be in that space of love. And I want you to, again, when you're looking at the situation that you want forgiveness to give or forgiveness to receive, I want you to come from a place of understanding that that person, and if it was yourself, yourself was doing the best they could with where they were at the time. And they deserve forgiveness. The universe, God source, whatever your belief system is forgives. You has no judgment on. You always wants the best for you. And when you feel detached and when you feel separate and when you feel anxious, it's because you're, you're farther away from that beautiful part that is connected to your soul self, to your heart self. It's trying to remind you, get back, go this way, get back on track. And forgiveness is a huge part of it.

Speaker 1 ([20:03](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=a975zZe6ec8MvogQfNxNAG-jcJMz9wUUANN4kR7ACtTrfOZ4SZfyk8rSpjff5rB4DpVMgERkcjdU79P4JZ-cThyag74&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1203.53)):

So forgiving yourself and releasing so that you can then again, be in that space of clarity of heart centered connection of not having those memories and energies and images every single day, weighing you down and keeping you forward from moving forward and forgiving others. Again, it's not excusing the person. It's not condoning their behavior. It's releasing your energetic attachment to it because when we have anger, it eats away at you. When we have guilt, it eats away at us. When we have shame, when we have all of those resentment, it's damaging you. And so we want to clear up that energy. So I want you to sit down and write a forgiveness letter. I want you to address it to the person. Now here's the beautiful part. What I had mentioned before, you don't need to have the person be alive. You don't have to see the person.

Speaker 1 ([21:00](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=p98U-K8TLEJ8LpXxLWM7tuvzL-C1Dy7ufJRszmGAzjT9ijKARP8mZtqBluQVGqUns9wbUEzMrkbE1ECFtncHR71JQdE&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1260.46)):

You don't have to mail this to the person. None of that. This is for you. So this exercise is gonna be you writing, but I want you to get it all out. I want you to get out everything that you wanna say in detail. And then what I want you to do is you can either rip it up. You can save it if you want, but if you never want somebody to see this, you can rip up that letter or you can burn that letter as a symbol of transformation. Either one would work great. Now, if it's somebody in your life that you love and that you want to have an exchange with that, you wanna say, Hey, you know, you really hurt me. That really hurt me. You should do that. Absolutely give them an opportunity. They may not remember. They may not own up to it.

Speaker 1 ([21:50](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=4fKitFHXMzzz51UtbJFbSp1YKWp1jZcuvK4bwucuLsMdYlG1GiUvlBGDTfHVDEwDITY6ogZkuVG3nl9-LaNcWNNhyY4&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1310.859)):

And again, remember that people were doing the best they could with where they are, but there are people that it's been a wonderful healing opportunity for them to be able to give their mother, give their father a chance to say, I'm really sorry. I didn't know that that hurt you that much. And I'm really sorry. It just changes everything. So if it's appropriate in the way that you know that if it is go into your heart and see if that is, but I will tell you that people are good. And many times they don't realize the pain that they inflicted, especially us as children, because we're so raw. And we're all just taking it all in that when our parent heard us, it's so intense and they may not know how intense that was. Give them the opportunity to say, they're sorry if it's appropriate.

Speaker 1 ([22:41](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=NlR1Tgx_wffQXdpbyYKN5cX6OYftIH1rkGkg8nDjZU1yoxfjK4V1bGpYFAhb4hEnbnkO3wc24kr_Bn10RUZTYhglpgY&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1361.75)):

And if it feels good to you. So I want you to write a forgiveness letter and I want you to put it all out there in detail, the more detail you can get on that paper, it gets out of your body. And then I want you, if you feel like you wanna share it, you can, but this is for you. So I want you to know that you can then just destroy it, or if you want to burn it in a fire, you can do that as well. This is about you. Unforgiveness is an actual medical diagnosis. It's in the medical journals. Now, unforgiveness, this is how critically important this is and how this releases your energy. So I've never seen the most beautiful end of life's the way I have when somebody has practiced forgiveness. And when somebody's in a terminal diagnosis and, and the end of life, this is it.

Speaker 1 ([23:31](https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/Edit?token=CN8y8GVy1jQbJhrlESe_YPxGX4mjLClHLyOpsW342TMVKmo-TdSvzsmosu8IRv2wDymIip0sQ8ljPTOVjt6YmkUgfaU&loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1411.88)):

This is the only time. So sometimes we're forced to kind of go there. But the other thing that really helps is that as the physical body is declining, the spiritual body's growing and that's the heart part of us. That's the part that allows us to see in a, a bigger perspective and from a place of compassion and love. And that's what that little exercise just did for you. So on top of writing the forgiveness letter, if you know about and use that exercise that quickly will bring you into heart alignment and perspective. You can look at things in your life with a completely different lens that can allow you to see things for the first time, in a way with wisdom that you may be again, were never able to access. So two things here is so important, the heart centered understanding of that guidance system, and also that forgiveness is your greatest tool to set you free and to create the future, the exact way that you want it. All right, everyone, I wanna hear your comments, please leave. And when you do this exercise, please let me know how it went. You can email us in, or you can leave a comment below forgiveness is the most transformative tool that we have. Let's utilize it today. I love you so very much. Thank you for being here. My name is Susan O'Brien and this was ask a death doula. I'll see you in the next episode.