

[IMAGE]

Forgiveness for Your Health

Thinking negative thoughts and feeling angry are never good for your physical, mental and emotional health; often, these feelings are associated with harboring old grudges toward others. A recent article in the January issue of *Harvard Women's Health Watch* suggests that letting go of old resentment can improve your health. In a word, "forgiveness" is key.

The article, "Five for 2005: Five Reasons to Forgive," outlines how forgiveness can positively affect your health by helping to reduce stress; improve heart function; build stronger interpersonal relationships; reduce levels of pain and anxiety; and increase happiness. And a study published a few years ago in the journal *Circulation* concluded that angry people are three times more likely to suffer sudden cardiac arrest than their less angry counterparts.

If you are holding on to old feelings of bitterness and resentment, consider doing yourself a favor by extending forgiveness to those who have hurt you. Your mind, body and spirit will benefit in the long run.

Reference:

Five for 2005: five reasons to forgive. *Harvard Women's Health Watch*. Jan. 2005.

www.health.harvard.edu/hhp/publication/view.do?name=W

Williams JE, Paton CC, Siegler IC, et al. Anger proneness predicts coronary heart disease risk: prospective analysis from the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) study. *Circulation* 2000; 101: 2034-39.

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