

“Anger is a strong feeling of displeasure and antagonism aroused by a sense of injury or wrong” (Walborn, 2018). According to the article by Wanda Walborn, “Why Am I So Angry,” the type of indirect anger that I used to struggle with is depression. When I was younger, I almost didn’t know what anger was. I thought anger had to look a certain way. So when someone did something or said something to me, I internalized it and tried to figure out everything by myself and then everything should be okay. I would think, “They probably don’t remember anyway.” Or I would also think “it’s not as big of a deal as I’m making it.”

Wanda Walborn writes “When [anger is] turned inward, the person seeks to contain the anger by taking it out on him/herself, and self-reflection and self-hatred results” (2018). This is exactly what had happened to me in middle school and I only realized the anger I’ve been harboring inside of me ever since the moment my friend told me that my presence doesn’t matter. Her exact words were, “it doesn’t make a difference whether you’re around or not.” What a thorn in my side that I’ve lived with all these years. It made me believe it even when nobody was telling me anything close to it. People would tell me I matter, and somewhere in the back of my mind I would think “they’re just saying that to be nice.”

In the Healing and Forgiveness lecture, Dean Ron Walborn goes over symptoms of unforgiveness and there’s only one that I felt whenever I was around this friend. I always replayed the scenario of her saying those hurtful words to me in my head. The reason I only experienced this symptom is probably a result of our close friendship. She came up to me to apologize that year at a youth group retreat and we cried together. What I told her was “Of course I forgive you. I don’t even remember.” What I tried to do in that moment was I tried to play God. The God who forgives sins. What I didn’t realize was that I am not God. I was just a

child who was hurt by a close friend that didn't know that hurt could fester and grow inside me into something that would cripple me for a long time. The truth was that I never forgot.

Actually, I guess I could also say there was another symptom of unforgiveness: I was easily offended by her every decision regarding me. If she chose to fight for me, didn't invite me anywhere, or if she said anything about me to me. She would compliment me and it would feel backhanded. She would tell me my presence matters but I would never get myself to believe her. I didn't even believe myself, why would I believe her, the person I believed to be the source of my hurt?

My process of forgiveness was not complete. To be completely free from the lies and the hurt, I had to believe the truth myself. The truth is that no one can dictate my worth other than God and I. I included myself, because God can present the Word to me, but I have the choice to take it for myself, truly believe it, and free myself from my internalized anger. The truth is I have forgiven her. I never forgave myself for believing her hurtful words and making those words my own. I may have subconsciously blamed her for saying those words, but it's my fault for believing them and believing that there's something wrong with me and hating myself for it.

My forgiveness was complete when I went to a retreat and I kneeled on the ground and Jesus led me to apologize to myself. I started to bless myself. My school Dean who spoke at the retreat came over to me and spoke two phrases that were definitely from the Lord. "God is giving you your voice back" and "God is pulling out these thorns from your side." I knew that I needed these thorns pulled out, but I didn't know at that time that I had my voice taken away and when. I believe that when my friend spoke those words over me, it was the enemy's final chance to kick me when I was down. I am no longer chained down by the lie that I don't matter. I am much

kinder to myself, my self-hatred turned into self-compassion, and I can now love my friend without holding back. Hallelujah!

*Bibliography*

Walborn, Wanda. "Why Am I So Angry?" *AllianceLife*, 2018.