

Learning to Forgive and Letting Go

By Phyllis V. Du'Gas

How do we begin to forgive? It takes courage.

Helen Schuman wrote beautiful words when she said, ***“we forgive by simply looking at all the things that have stood in the way of forgiveness.”***

It will be 11 years, next month that my son was brutally murdered. As is the case in any tragic situation we face in life, I went through a plethora of emotions which all turned to outrage. I wrote letters, I called the D.A.'s office and I even threatened to come to the D.A.'s office and stand on someone's desk until someone put pressure on the Tuscon, Arizona Police Department to find my son's killer(s). My son was NOT going to be a statistic. I called the investigating officer twice a week for almost a year.

He said, “We've interviewed every person involved in this known street gang.” They had several leads but nothing that could stick. He finally told me one day, early on, that they followed a strong lead to the house of a *15 year old* known gang member. The Detective said his mother answered the door and after flashing their badges her reply was, “He hasn't been home for days.” He had also not been to school or been seen by anyone since the shooting. What he said next would change my life forever, “You know.....even if we found him, we don't have a murder weapon. Unfortunately, we will get a call one day and drive out to find him lying in the street riddled with bullets. I'm sorry because I know that's not what you want to hear.”

I had to let it go! What good was going to come to me going to a court house, sitting through a trial with poster size pictures of my son lying in the street bleeding to death? I would have had my opportunity to look into this young boy's face and say what? “Why? Why did you shoot my only child?” What possible answer could he give me that would make me feel better? *Ma'am I'm sorry I was out of my mind. I was seeking the love I wasn't getting at home...* there was NOTHING that would have made me feel better or bring my son back. That was the last time I talked to Detective Raul Olivas from the Tuscon, Arizona P.D. I hung up the phone and began praying.

I didn't pray for me. I prayed for the mother of that 15 year old. My

son had given me 18 years of love and laughter – this boy was giving his mother a life of hell! My son was tucked away safely in the Lord’s arms. Her son was out living by the sword. I also prayed for the 15 year old and anyone else who was involved. (The police department may not have had any solid leads, but I know that **GOD knew**) My healing began from that moment. My spirit was set free and God’s abundance poured through my life and the life of my family. Believe me when I say: “God does not close a door without opening a window.” He makes everything beautiful in time! Even tragedy!

That was life changing - catastrophic!

But what about the petty things we don’t forgive? So many of us are holding on to small inconsequential hurts that have long outlived the energy we give them. The man that’s been hurt by an ex and is making every woman pay for her mistakes. She’s been with 5 men since she was with you - isn’t it time to move on? Women are just as guilty of this, which is why we aren’t having successful relationships. We need to treat people like we want to be treated and not like we’ve been mistreated. Forgive yourself for judging the person and open your spirit to receive the love you want and deserve. Be grateful for the love you did share. It wasn’t all bad, or you wouldn’t have been there as long as you were. Take responsibility for your part in the demise of the relationship, forgive yourself, learn from it and try not to repeat the behavior. This is forgiveness.