



Eva Grayzel

Motivational Storyteller

FORGIVENESS: UNBURDEN MYSELF FROM BETRAYAL

A personal story by Eva Grayzel

It was impossible not to bump into the doctor whom I sued for my late cancer diagnosis. He dropped the ball and ignored my classic symptoms for oral cancer. His inaction nearly cost me my life. We lived in the same neighborhood, enjoyed the same restaurants, frequented local theater, shared mutual friends and belonged to the same synagogue. Over the years avoiding each other became an awkward dance with an unsustainable rhythm. How exhausting this became!

Eight years after the trial, the day came when I couldn't avoid him. It was Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year in Judaism, also known as 'The Day Of Atonement.' The irony was not lost on me. The Rabbi concluded services with a sermon on forgiveness. 'The act of forgiving isn't as much for the other person as it is for yourself.' Holding on to anger and bitterness, he explained, creates a vacuum for unhappiness and despair. Forgiveness is not a function of justice; it's a matter of the heart. Absolve them for their transgressions - NO. Unburden ourselves from the weight of the betrayal - YES.

The Rabbi made a distinction between forgiving and forgetting. We should remember the pain, learn from it and safeguard ourselves from it happening again. It was time to forgive the man for my own sanity. As I made my way to the exit, Dr. G. was in my line of sight, speaking to another person across the aisle. A surreptitious pass was unavoidable. As I approached, it took all the courage I could muster to meet his gaze, hold out my hand, and wish him a happy new year, which is customary on Yom Kippur.

In response, all he could do was nod in acknowledgement with pursed lips. No word was uttered. No hand extended to meet mine. With a pounding heart in my throat, I headed to the exit. Eight years worth of pent up feelings were threatening to erupt. As soon as I returned home, my pen hit paper and I wrote him a letter. No response. Six months later, he died of a rare blood cancer. I will never know if he read my letter. What I do know is I did my part. It's no longer between me and him. Now, it's between him and his maker.

eva@evagrayzel.com