

The Forgiveness Project

Topic 2: Why do people forgive? - Instructions

What to do beforehand:

- Download the resources from our website.
- Read through each lesson plan thoroughly and watch the films by following the link to our website in the PowerPoint presentations of lesson 1 and lesson 3.
- Print student booklets, enough for one per student. The booklets can be printed in black and white or colour.
- Make sure there is a projector available to present the PowerPoint presentation in class.
- Make sure that there is internet connection in order to watch the films with students. Check that the internet connection in the classroom is fast enough to stream the films. Contact TFP if you require the films on DVD.

During the PowerPoint presentation:

- Click with the cursor or use the arrow keys to navigate through the slides.

Emotional well-being of the students:

The Forgiveness Project Education Resources explore real-life stories which some students may find distressing or confusing. ***Some of the films contain descriptions of violence, therefore please ensure staff have watched the films and read the resources beforehand to ensure it is suitable for your students.*** We recommend lessons are facilitated by a staff member who knows the class well and is able to direct responses and use prompt questions to encourage healthy discussion, whilst maintaining a safe environment for all young people.

Lesson 1 – Why do people forgive?

Students will hear Mary Foley's first-hand account of how she lost her child in a violent attack at a 16th birthday party. They will explore some of the benefits of forgiveness on people's physical and emotional well-being and start to think about empathy and how this can influence people's ability to forgive.

Lesson 2 – Does compassion for an offender influence your decision to forgive?

Building on the previous lesson, students will explore compassion and empathy and how Mary's feelings towards her daughter's attacker influenced her journey of forgiveness. Using a statement from Mary regarding 'What happens next', students will explore the emotional well-being of the offender and how Mary's forgiveness could impact her future.

Lesson 3 – A cycle of forgiveness

Students will hear Barry Mizen's first-hand account of how his son, Jimmy was killed. They will explore Desmond Tutu's cycle of revenge and forgiveness and build on ideas from lesson 2 looking at how empathy for an offender / the offender's family can impact a journey of forgiveness.