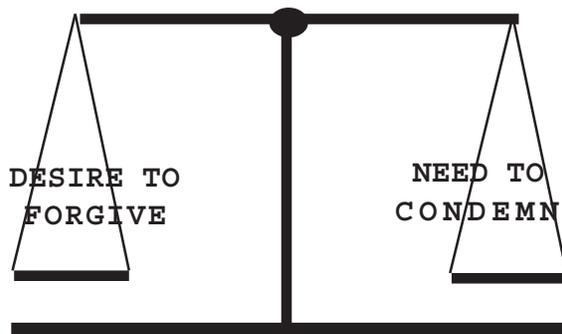


# Types of Forgiveness

## There Are Three Types of Forgiveness

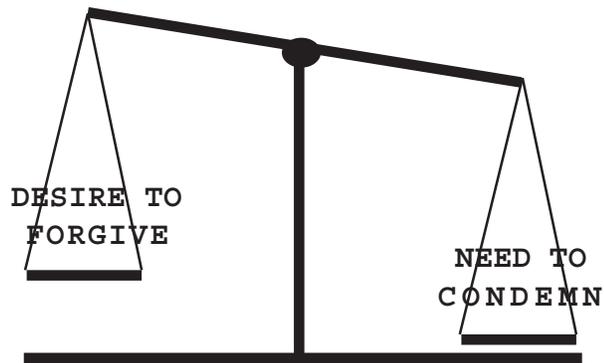
1. Traditional Forgiveness
2. Extraordinary Forgiveness
3. Radical Forgiveness



### 1. Traditional Forgiveness

Traditional forgiveness is ‘letting bygones *be bygones*.’ And that’s OK as far as it goes. However, because we believe that something *bad* happened, we still think of ourselves as having been victimized no matter how hard we try to forgive. It can only play itself out as a struggle between two conflicting energies: the need to condemn versus the desire to forgive.

The more you were hurt or damaged, the more the scales will naturally tip towards the need to condemn. Years of therapy will help, of course, but so long as there is any residual regret — not to mention pain — true forgiveness will remain elusive no matter how much compassion we bring to the situation and no matter how much we try to “*just let it go*.”



Not surprisingly then, it takes many years to achieve and cannot be forced. You cannot will it. With this kind of forgiveness, only time will heal — if it ever does.

### 2. Extraordinary Forgiveness

There are people, and they are rare, who have managed to achieve extraordinary levels of forgiveness using traditional forgiveness. These are the kind of people you might see interviewed on TV, who have truly forgiven someone who committed an awful crime against them or someone in their family. They are clearly wonderful people who are able to achieve this kind of forgiveness, but they are interviewed on TV precisely because this is so rare and so unusual. **The problem is this underscores the belief that most people hold, that forgiveness is extremely difficult and can only be achieved by very special human beings.**