

MORAL INJURY AND THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

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What is Moral Injury?



Events are considered morally injurious if they transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations which shatters moral and ethical expectations that are rooted in religious or spiritual beliefs, or culture-based, organizational, and group-based rules about fairness, the value of life, and so forth.



Moral Injury describes the harmful psycho-spiritual aftermath of exposure to such events.

Spiritual Injury

- Spiritual Injury may be the result of when an individual finds themselves wounded or offended by a trauma they believe could/should have been prevented, and results in a permanent or temporary loss of relationship to their Higher Power.



Morals

- Scott James proffers, “Part of what makes moral creatures moral, then, has to do with thinking that acting in ways that are forbidden deserves punishment while acting in ways that are (for example) selfless deserves praise.”



Moral Injury

Something either you have done, was done to you, or you may have witnessed that violates your Moral Compass.



Fruit vs. Root



- Fruit: Shame/Guilt
- Hopelessness
- Feelings of being betrayed
- Weakened or loss of faith
- Self-medication (Alcohol or Drug Abuse)
- Meaninglessness/Depression
- Anxiety
- Increased Suicide Risk
- Root: Trauma

The Forgiveness Process

- Forgiveness is for the one who is forgiving
- Forgiveness is a verb and not a noun – requires an action
- Forgiveness is a cognitive decision and not an emotion
- We must identify who we are forgiving
- Unpack what we are forgiving them for
 - When we refuse to identify the offense, we shut-down the forgiveness process.
 - The more specific you are to identify the offense, the more empowered you become to be set free.
 - An offense is like an onion, and is often layered.

RESOURCES

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