

HANDOUT 11.3: WHAT FORGIVENESS IS AND IS NOT

Forgiveness **IS**:

- A deliberate, personal intentional choice to release feelings of anger, resentment and vengeance and experience a greater sense of freedom
- An opportunity we offer ourselves
- A process
- Emotionally challenging, as it brings us to contact feelings of loss and grief
- Done for ourselves, not for others

Forgiveness **IS NOT**:

- An outcome
- Condoning or approving a harmful behaviour
- Forgetting
- Reconciliation with another person (it could be safer to maintain distance, or the other person might not be alive anymore)
- An invitation for friendship
- Something we do for others (either because others expect us to forgive or because we don't like to be seen as people who still hold grudges)

Would you add anything to this list?

Which of these distinctions struck you the most? Why?

Which of these distinctions helps you the most?

