

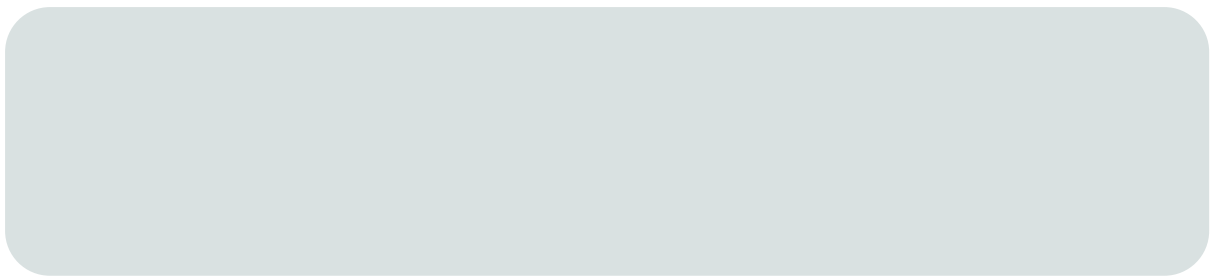
## HANDOUT 11.6: STORIES OF FORGIVENESS

Try reflecting on the following situations and inquiring whether you would be willing to forgive.

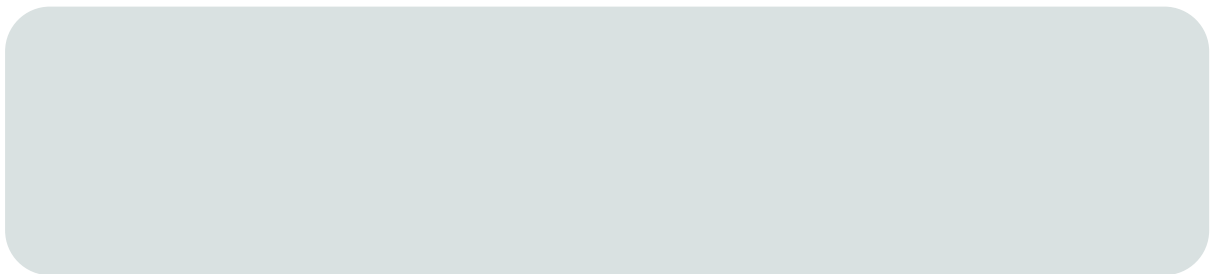
### ***Vignette #1***

Sally is 54 years old and married to Neil. Sally finds out Neil has been cheating on her for the last five years.

How willing would you be to forgive Neil if you were Sally?



Does anything change for you if we provide additional information, being that Sally has also been cheating on Neil for the past 3 years? Would you be less or more willing to forgive him? What might be the possible benefits of forgiving?

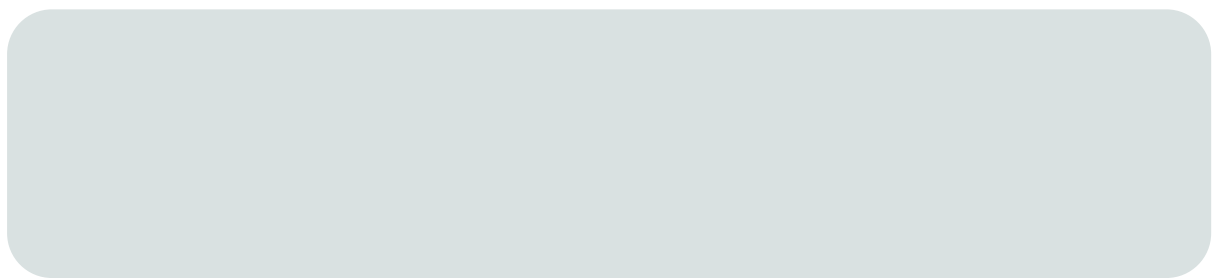


### **Vignette #2**

Joanne is 34 years old and is a stay-at-home mother; she is married to Andrew, who is 36 years old and is a retail worker. They have three children, Alicia, Oliver and Jeannette.

Joanne got really angry at Andrew about arriving home late, but she feels badly about it, she was just stressed.

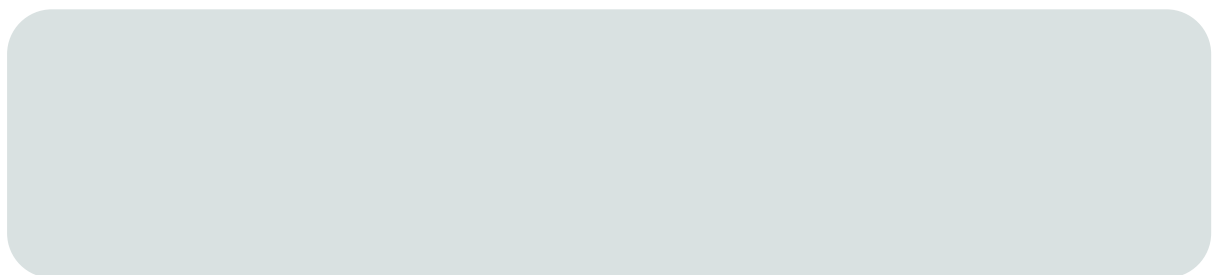
*As Andrew, how willing would you be to forgive Joanne? What might be the benefits of forgiving? As Andrew, under what circumstances would you be willing to forgive? What would you need?*



### **Vignette #3**

Tom is 34 years old and works in an office. A colleague at work, Paul, accidentally runs into him, and Tom spills his coffee all over himself. Paul apologizes and says sorry.

*As Tom, how willing would you be to forgive Paul? Why yes? Why not? What might be the benefits of forgiving? Under what circumstances would you be willing to forgive? What would you need?*

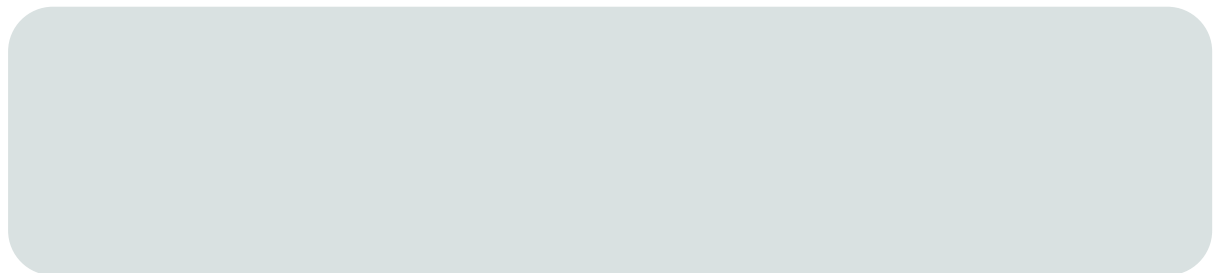


#### ***Vignette #4***

Racheal and Kate are good friends. Kate recently found out Racheal lied to her about something that she was embarrassed about.

Kate forgave Racheal because she understood.

*If you were Racheal, would you forgive yourself for lying to Kate? Why yes? Why not? What might be the benefits of forgiving? Under what circumstances would you be willing to forgive? What would you need?*

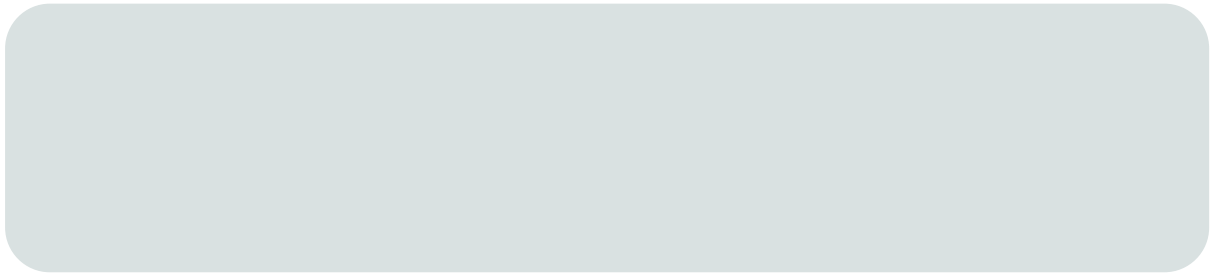


These brief vignettes highlight how there are many different nuances to forgiveness; try to reflect on how these different factors of forgiveness influence your willingness to forgive. Of course, the combinations of these ingredients are endless, making it really difficult to have just a single rule for how and when to forgive.

#### ***FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE FORGIVENESS:***

- Severity of Hurt
- Intentionality
- The Person
- Time
- Empathy
- Self-Identity

Think of a person you have been able to forgive in your life - Which of these factors have been important to you in facilitating the process of forgiveness?



Now think of a person who is currently difficult for you to forgive - Which of these factors are influencing your choice to forgive?

