Fill in the gaps with the words from the box:

The Benefits of Forgiveness

own up   grudges   conducive   remorse
olive branch   wronged   harbour   let go

1. Forgiveness is an act of self-care

In a perfect world, everyone would 1)_____ to their mistakes. It would be wonderful if the people who've hurt you decided to offer a heartfelt apology, but you don't have to let their lack of 2)_____ keep you from moving forward. The decision to forgive is yours alone — and choosing to be the bigger person is the ultimate act of self-care. Multiple studies have shown that people who find it in their hearts to forgive have lower levels of anxiety and depression as well as stronger immune systems and improved heart health.

2. Forgiveness can free you from the past

Many people get stuck in the habit of ruminating about the past because they can't forgive someone who's 3)_____ them. Years or even decades could have gone by, and yet, they still 4)_____ bitterness due to past incidents. Some people feel vindicated in holding onto 5)_____ — as if their anger is doing harm or punishing another person. However, the decision to keep the flame of resentment burning is only going to do harm to the person who refuses to 6)_____ of their negative feelings for the other. No matter how "right" you feel in continuing to identify as the "wronged" party, you are keeping yourself from living more fully in the present and moving more freely into the future. Refusing to let go of unforgiveness is going to keep you locked in the past and it reflects what you are doing to yourself in the present.

3. Forgiveness promotes healthier relationships

When you hold onto grudges, it's like carrying around heavy bags of negativity. By overcoming anxiety and refraining from anticipating harm from others, we create an environment 7)_____ to cultivating healthier and more fulfilling relationships. These healthier relationships provide a foundation for trust, open communication, and mutual support, fostering personal growth and a more positive overall well-being. Therefore, when you forgive, you lighten your emotional load. This makes it easier for you to build healthier connections with others. You can become more open, understanding, and kind. By letting go of resentment, you create space for empathy and trust to grow in your relationships. If someone is important to you in the present or potentially in the future, offer an 8)_____ to them to ensure that the relationship is maintained.

The Elegant English Club
C1 & C2