

*Fill in the gaps with the words from the box:*

## **The Benefits of Forgiveness**

grudges let go malicious one-up vengeance

### **1. Forgiveness reduces anxiety, stress and hostility**

When you hold onto 1)\_\_\_\_\_, you carry the thoughts and expectations you had from a previous failed relationship to all your other current relationships. This leads to the expectation that the other party will hurt you even before they actually do anything wrong, which can cause feelings of stress and anxiety. Furthermore, we set the bar unfairly high for people who have not hurt us. A tiny careless mistake can be interpreted as 2)\_\_\_\_\_ and intentional, which inevitably results in the souring of the relationship. When we forgive, we release these negative emotions. We 3)\_\_\_\_\_ of the anger and resentment that often consume us. As a result, we experience less anxiety and stress, and our overall hostility diminishes.

### **2. Forgiveness stops the cycle of bad behaviour**

When people hurt your feelings, is your first impulse to retaliate with harsh words or actions that are intended to wreak 4)\_\_\_\_\_ for what they've done? "Getting even" may be satisfying in the moment, but it sets you up for a vicious cycle where you're each trying to 5)\_\_\_\_\_ the other. In some cases, you may hurt innocent bystanders in the process. This is especially true for parents. Remember that your children are looking to you to set a positive example for how to deal with conflict. Without forgiveness, life is governed by an endless cycle of resentment and retaliation.