

Starr King School for the Ministry

PS-8430  
Online – 3 units  
Chris Fry

## FORGIVENESS & MORAL REPAIR

Fall 2019 Syllabus



*TED Talk, Forgiveness, National Public Radio*

*For me, forgiveness and compassion*

*are always linked:*

*How do we hold people*

*accountable*

*for wrongdoing*

*and yet*

*at the same time*  
*remain*  
*in touch*  
*with their humanity*  
*enough*  
*to believe*  
*in their capacity*  
*to be*  
*transformed?*  
*-- bell hooks*

**Course Description:**

Through this class we will meet people from all over the world, from a variety of religious and cultural traditions, who have practiced forgiveness as a means of healing, peace and liberation. We will strengthen our personal and pastoral skills in forgiveness by engaging in spiritual practice exercises and discussing texts and films. We will also explore moral repair: how we individually and collectively might apologize, repent and make amends after wrong-doing.

**Course Requirements:**

(A) **ATTENDANCE:** Students are expected to participate in class, on-line, *weekly*.

(B) **POSTING:** Students will need to engage with the texts related to that week's theme, writing at least 1 post and commenting on at least 1 classmate's post in the Texts & Conversation forum.

Students will also be asked to post on one spiritual practice exercise and comment on at least one classmate's Practice Circle post each week.

In sum, that means students will post at least 4 times each week.

**(C) BOOK & FILM REFLECTIONS.** In order to deepen their understanding and practice of forgiveness and moral repair, students will be expected to read at least 2 of the suggested books or watch at least 4 of the suggested films and reflect on them through words or art.

Students may substitute other books or films to meet this requirement, with the instructor's prior approval.

**(D) PROJECT:** Students, with the instructor's prior approval, will devote 10-15 hours over the course of the semester doing a project. Examples from past classes include: working with a therapist or spiritual director on a forgiveness matter; doing a series of paintings; writing a research paper on post-genocide Rwanda; giving a sermon on forgiveness; reaching out to someone who is estranged from them; and creating a healing ritual.

Projects will be due the next to last week of class.

**Learning Outcomes:** By the end of Fall semester, students will be able to: (1) demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the power, complexity and limitations of forgiveness; (2) explain how grievance stories are created and how they can be dismantled; (3) identify similarities and differences in the ways various religious traditions approach forgiveness, repentance, and repair; (4) reflect on their personal practice with forgiveness, repentance, and repair; and (5) point to the ways they listened and supported others in class on their journeys of forgiveness and moral repair.

### **Course Policies:**

**Class Meeting Time:** Because students live and work in various time zones, the format for this class is asynchronous. This means there will be no particular day or time the class meets. Instead, students may participate in the class at whatever times/days work best for them.

**Absences:** Students may miss up to two weeks of class – AFTER WEEK 6 - without needing to make up work. However, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor of their absence due to illness, travel, etc. as soon as possible.

**Keeping Up with the Work:** As explained in the Class FAQ's (see below), students will be expected to complete their weekly work in a timely fashion, usually within 7 – 10 days. If a student falls behind more than two weeks, they are responsible for contacting the instructor and making a plan for catching up. If a student continues to lag far behind, the instructor may ask the student to drop the course.

**Grading:** SKSM students will take this course Pass/Fail. If a student wishes to take the class for a letter grade, please register accordingly and tell the instructor.

**Other Course Details and Policies:** FERPA (the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) will be posted on the class Moodle site.

**Course Instructor:**

The class will be taught by Rev. Christine Fry, an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister. Chris has been teaching at Starr King for the Ministry for fifteen years offering classes on Forgiveness & Moral Repair; Spiritual Practices for These Times; Illness, Health & Healing; and Families & Spiritual Practice. Chris lives in Davis, California with her husband, Isao Fujimoto, a retired UC Davis professor and long-time community activist. Their daughter - Esumi - was born during Chris' second year at Starr King School for the Ministry . She is now living in Brooklyn, working as a registered nurse on the labor & delivery floor at New York University Langone Center, and studying to become a certified nurse midwife.

**Office Hours:**

Chris will be available to meet with students individually through email, phone, zoom, and, on occasion, in person. Please email Chris ([cfry@sksm.edu](mailto:cfry@sksm.edu)) ahead of time to schedule a meeting.

**FALL 2019 CALENDAR**

*Please Note: You only need to read TWO of the following books or watch FOUR of these films or some combination thereof (1 book= 2 films) over the course of the semester! You may also substitute other books or films with the instructor's prior approval.*

*The prices below are based on new books or DVDs on Amazon. They often can be purchased used, on kindle, or through other sources. Some may be borrowed from GTU library or the instructor.*

*Films available through Amazon Video are marked AV, those for purchase are marked Amazon. Films that may be borrowed from the instructor are marked CF.*

### **Week One: September 3-8**

#### **THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS**

##### **Suggested Books:**

Briggs, Kenneth. The Power of Forgiveness (based on a film by Martin Doblmeier, 2008), \$3.94. ISBN-10: 0800662253

Lamott, Anne. Hallelujah Anyway (2017), \$13.32. ISBN-10: 0735213586

##### **REQUIRED Film:**

"The Power of Forgiveness" by Martin Doblmeier, (2008), Amazon purchase, \$9.97; or CF; ASIN: B000YVB2NO

### **Week Two: September 9-15**

#### **FIERCE SELF-COMPASSION**

##### **Suggested Books:**

Neff, Kristin. Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself (2015), \$10.67. ISBN-10: 0061733520

Ortiz, Naomi. Sustaining Spirit: Self-Care for Social Justice (2018). \$16.95. ISBN: 9781947647138

**Suggested Video:**

"Fierce Self-Compassion with Kristin Neff" (link will be given)

**Week Three: September 16-22**

**FAMILY FIGHTS**

**Suggested Books:**

De Salvo, Louise. Crazy in the Kitchen: Food, Feuds and Forgiveness in an Italian American Family (2004), \$4.94. ISBN-10: 1582342989

Thompson, Sue. The Prodigal Brother: Making Peace with Your Parents, Your Past and the Wayward One in Your Family (2010), \$13.25. ISBN-10: 144970053

**Suggested Films:**

"Around the Bend" with Michael Caine (2004), \$3.99 AV

"Our Little Sister" (2015), \$9.99 AV

**Week Four: September 23-29**

**GRIEVANCE STORIES**

**Suggested Books:**

Izzeldin Abuelaish, I Shall Not Hate: A Gaza Doctor's Journey (2011), \$11.00, ISBN-10: 6307358895

Luskin, Fred. Forgive for Good (2003), \$10.59. ISBN-10: 006251721X

**Suggested Films:**

"Les Miserables" by Bille August, \$3.99 AV

"The Spit-Fire Grill" by Lee David Zlotoff, \$3.99 AV

**Week Five: September 30 - October 6**

## PREPARING TO FORGIVE . . . MAYBE

### **Suggested Book:**

Isenhardt, Myra and Michael Spangle. Forgiving Others, Forgiving Ourselves (2015), \$16.97. ISBN-10: 15947360006

Luskin, Fred. Forgive for Good (2003), \$10.59. ISBN-10: 006251721X

### **Suggested Films:**

"An Unfinished Life" with Robert Redford and Morgan Freeman (2006) \$6.99  
Amazon ASIN: B00SEUJOQ

"Journey Toward Forgiveness," documentary including segments on Oklahoma City Bombing and Hospice Care (2008), \$3.99 AV

### **Week Six: October 7-13**

## THE SUNFLOWER

### **Suggested Book:**

Kallos, Stephanie. Broken For You: A Novel (2004), \$15.00. ISBN-10: 0802142109

Wiesenthal, Simon. The Sunflower: On the Possibilities & Limits of Forgiveness (1998), \$10.53. ISBN-10: 0805210601

### **Suggested Film:**

"Forgiving Dr. Mengele: The Eva Korszak Story" (2005), \$17.95 Amazon or through CF

### **Week Seven: October 14-20**

## APOLOGY, REPENTANCE & MORAL REPAIR

### **Suggested Books:**

Chapman, Gary and Jennifer Thomas. The Five Languages of Apology (2006), \$1.97. ISBN-10: 1881273571

Newman, Lewis. Repentance: The Meaning and Practice of Teshuvah (2014), \$22.84. ISBN-10: 1459669622

**Suggested Films:**

"The Kite Runner" with Khalid Abdalla, \$3.99 AV

"28 Days" with Sandra Bullock (2000), \$3.99 AV

**Week Eight: October 21-27**

**READING WEEK**

**Week Nine: October 28 – November 3**

**WHEN A CHILD IS HURT**

**Suggested Books:**

Richards, Nancy. Heal & Forgive: Forgiveness in the Face of Abuse (2005), \$8.20. ASIN: B00D5R5E8S

McBee, Thomas. Man Alive: A True Story of Violence, Forgiveness and Becoming a Man (2016), \$12.06. ISBN-10: 0872866249

**Suggested Films:**

"Antwone Fisher" with Denzel Washington (2011), \$3.99 AV

"Mooz-lum" directed by Qasim Basir (2011), \$3.99 AV

**Week Ten: November 4 – November 10**

**INFIDELITY & ABUSE**

**Suggested Books:**

Abrahms Spring, Janis. After the Affair: Healing the Pain & Rebuilding Trust When a Partner Has Been Unfaithful (2012), \$10.43. ISBN-10: 0062122704

Fortune, Marie and Joretta Marshall. Forgiveness & Abuse: Jewish and Christian Reflections (2013), \$20.00. ISBN-10: 0307276538

**Suggested Films:**



"Redwoods" with David Lewis (2009), \$2.99 AV

"The Descendants" with George Clooney (2015), \$1.99 AV

**Week Eleven: November 11-17**

## **WE ARE CHARLESTON**

### **Suggested Books:**

Fraser, Herb and Bernard Edward Powers and Marjory Wentworth. We Are Charleston: Tragedy and Triumph at Mother Emanuel (2016). \$24.99, ISBN-10: 9780718077310

Risher, Sharon. For Such a Time as This: Hope & Forgiveness After the Charleston Massacre (2019). \$12.70 ISBN-10: 9780827243231

### **Suggested Film:**

"Emanuel" (2019) \$16.85 ASIN: B07STGZM29 (to be released)

**Week Twelve: November 18-24**

## **RACIAL INJUSTICE, FORGIVENESS AND REPARATIONS**

### **Suggested Books:**

Brooks, Roy L. Atonement & Forgiveness: A New Model for Black Reparations (2019). \$26.95 ISBN-10: 0520343409

Stevenson, Bryan. Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption (2015), \$9.42. ISBN-10: 08129849X

### **Suggested Films:**

House Judiciary Committee Hearing on Slavery Reparations 2019 (link will be given).

"The Cats of Mirikitani" directed by Linda Hattendorf (2010), \$19.99 Amazon. ASIN: BOO2ZMZBAA (or through CF)

**Week Thirteen: November 25 – December 1**

## **THANXGRIEVING & THANKSGIVING**

**Suggested Book:**

Edmund Wilson, Apologies to the Iroquois (1992). \$8.99, ISBN-10: 0815625642

**Suggested Films:**

"Dakota 38" (free online)

"We Shall Remain: America Through Native Eyes" (2009). \$22.16 ASIN:  
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**Week Fourteen: December 2- 8**

**RECONCILIATION**

**Suggested Books:**

Davis, Laura. I Thought We'd Never Speak Again: The Road from Estrangement to Reconciliation (2003), \$13.86. ISBN-10: 0060957026

Jones, L. Gregory and Celestin Musekura, Forgiving As We've Been Forgiven: Community Practices for Making Peace (2010). \$13.62. ISBN-10: 9780830834556

**Suggested Films:**

"A Straight Story" by David Lynch (2000), \$4.99 AV

"As We Forgive" directed by Laura Waters Hinson (2014), \$3.99 A

**Week Fifteen : December 9 - 15**

**CLOSING REFLECTIONS**