

## Research Facts About Forgiveness and Health

- **“Forgiveness of self and others has been the most powerful predictor of both depression and suicide ideation.”** Journal of Applied Sciences 2009, Vol.v9, Issue 19, pgs. 3598-3601
- **“Forgiveness therapy is recognized as a powerful method of breaking cycles of hostility, anger and hatred.”** Elliot 2010
- **“Most of the diseases of abnormal immune function are remarkably linked to psychological stress.”** Robert Scaer, MD, from *The Trauma Spectrum*
- **“We can no longer hide behind the argument that there is insufficient proof that mind/body methods have an impact or are effective. Studies indicate, in fact, the opposite is true.”** David Servan-Schieber, MD, PhD from *AntiCancer*
- **“In nurturing a patient's will to live, the first step is locating and treating past traumas. These poorly healed scars drain a significant portion of energy, and they hamper the body's capacity for self-defense.”** David Servan-Schieber, MD, from *AntiCancer*
- **“Recent research reports that “a number of chronic health conditions have been identified as health conditions with social and interpersonal etiologies (originations) and consequences. Forgiveness interventions offer important insights for management and treatment of these conditions.”** Elliott 2010
- **“It is not that stress makes you sick but that it increases the likelihood of contracting a disease that makes you sick. Stress related disease arises because the defending army of the stress response runs out of ammunition.”** Robert M. Sapolsky, *Handbook on Forgiveness*
- **“One can't begin to address the topic of healing trauma without dealing with the fact that trauma is an aberration of memory. It freezes us in a past event that thereafter dictates our entire perception of reality.”** Robert Scaer, MD, *The Trauma Spectrum*
- **“Chronic unforgiveness causes stress. Every time people think of their transgressor, their body responds. Decreasing your unforgiveness cuts down on your health risk. Now, if you can forgive, that can actually strengthen your immune system.”** Everett Worthington, PhD
- **“Sixty to 90 percent of visits to physicians are for conditions related to stress. Harmful effects of stress include anxiety, mild and moderate depression, anger and hostility, hypertension, pain, insomnia, and many other stress related diseases.”** Herb Benson, MD, from *The Relaxation Response*
- **“Inwardly, the emotional wound affects deep vital processes. A psychological wound sets off mechanisms of the stress response...release of cortisol, adrenaline... (including) a slowdown in the immune system. ..which contributes to growth and spread of cancer.”** Dr. David Servan-Schieber, MD, *AntiCancer*
- **“We find that the endocrine system—and the hormone cortisol in particular—is closely linked with immune system: High levels of cortisol inhibit immune responses. Most diseases of abnormal immune function are remarkably linked to psychological stress.”** Robert Scaer, MD, *The Trauma Spectrum*
- **“Over an extended period of time, unforgiveness can be experienced as negative emotions that result in a cascade of biological and brain responses. Findings about the body's hormone response to unforgiveness reveal that unforgiveness is reflected in specific cortisol levels, adrenaline production and cytokine balance (Worthington et al 2005) with patterns that parallel those reported in people living with high stress. These hormone patterns are known to compromise the immune system (Berry and Worthington 2001; Seybold et al. 2001) with the long-term consequence of leading to several identified chronic illnesses (Danese et al 2007).”**

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