



Triumph of the Heart: Forgiveness in an Unforgiving World

Megan Feldman Bettencourt

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When Megan Feldman Bettencourt found herself embittered after a breakup and a string of professional setbacks, she met an extraordinary man named Azim. Azim had forgiven the man who killed his beloved only son, and even reached out to the killer's family. He truly seemed to be at peace.

As a veteran journalist, Megan recognized it for the amazing story it was. But as a self-admitted grudge-holder, she was perplexed. Was there something wrong with him, or was there something wrong with her? She wondered about our ability to forgive—why we have it at all, why we do it, and whether it can help us.

Triumph of the Heart is the story of Megan's quest to understand this complex concept, from both a scientific perspective and a human one. She draws on cutting-edge research showing that forgiveness can provide a range of health benefits, from relieving depression to decreasing high blood pressure. She examines situations as mundane as road rage, as painful as cheating spouses, and as unthinkable as war crimes. Through stories of people and even communities who have forgiven in the toughest of circumstances, she shows us how they're able to do it, the profound sense of freedom they feel afterward, and the evocative implications for peacemaking worldwide.

This journey takes Megan from recovered addicts who restarted their lives by seeking forgiveness, to a Baltimore principal who used forgiveness techniques to eradicate violence in her school, to genocide survivors in Rwanda who forgave the people who killed their families and perpetrators who are still trying to redeem themselves.

Along the way, Megan strengthens her own powers of forgiveness, altering her life in ways she never expected. With grace and compassion, she reveals that our human capacity for forgiveness not only makes us healthier and happier, but is the key to healing, growing, and living well.

From the Hardcover edition.

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