

Real Freedom is in Letting Go

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Nelson Mandela

“Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice”. (Ephesians 4:31 E.S.V)

In an interview with Mandela, former President Clinton asked him, "That was pretty smart of you to have your jailers come to the Inauguration and all of that, but let me ask you something. Didn't you really hate them for what they did?"

Mandela said, "Oh, yeah, I hated them for a long time. I stayed alive on hate for 12 years. I broke rocks every day, and I stayed alive on hate. They took a lot away from me. They took me away from my wife, and it subsequently destroyed my marriage. They took me away from seeing my children grow up. They abused me mentally and physically. And one day, I realized they could take it all except my mind and my heart and I decided not to give that away."

Clinton asked, "Well, what about when you were getting out of prison? I watched you walk down that dirt road to freedom. Now, when you were walking down there, and you realized how long you had been in their prison, didn't you hate them then? Didn't you feel some hatred?"

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Mandela said, "Yes, I did a little bit. I felt that. Frankly, I was kind of afraid, too, because I hadn't been free in so long. But as I felt the anger rising up, I thought to myself, 'They have already had you for 27 years. And if you keep hating them, they'll have you again.' And I said, 'I want to be free. And so I let it go. I let it go.'"

We cannot be really free and have inner peace unless we practice forgiveness. We should throw away everything that hinders our happiness and success and allow ourselves to flourish. We need to look forward to the future and not backwards to the past which can render us stagnant.



"Simplify your life. You don't grow spiritual, you shrink spiritual." □ Steve Maraboli, Life, the Truth, and Being Free