

**Parenting Teens Just Got Easier! is a free monthly eZine for parents of pre-teens and teens
From Saso Seminars by Patt and Steve Saso**

**December Issue 2007
The Art of Forgiveness
By Patt Saso**

Parenting Tip This Month: Forgiveness is not for the weak. It demands courage and honesty. If you want peace of mind follow these steps.

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Announcement Hot Links

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Attention parents of 8th graders:

**Upcoming One-Day HSPT Review Course
Saturday, December 1, 8, 15 or January 5**

"My son attended last year and was accepted into both schools he applied. He indicated that this class was invaluable. This year I want to enroll my daughter." -- Jill Varvell

**Application Essay Writing Workshop
Saturday, December 1 or January 5 (just added)**

"I learned how to write an effective introduction and conclusion." --Demi Pace

"This class worked very well. I think that {my school of choice} would have turned me down immediately." --Jonathan Brodie

"I feel confident in my work now and I think have a better chance of getting in." --Kyle Gastin

For more information go to:
<http://www.sasoseminars.com/hspt.html>

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The Art of Forgiveness

Since marrying, Steve and I have put up our Christmas tree the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

It was the same this year. We play the soundtrack from The Muppet Christmas Carol and Christmas music by Kenny Rogers.

There is always a wave of nostalgia and vulnerability that settles in at this time of year when the day's light grows shorter.

Darkness is a time that invites reflection.

There is an office building in San Jose, California off Highway 17 that lights a giant "Peace on Earth" sign on its roof every year. That's a big order to fill, but I wonder

what would happen if every person took responsibility to live a life of peace.

Peace starts within.

Over the weekend, sitting quietly in my own darkness, I went deep within to look at myself truthfully while contemplating this concept.

It is shameful for me to acknowledge my jealousy and impatience, and how I am capable of harboring resentment.

The Art of Forgiveness

How do we develop peace within so we might contribute to peace on earth? The answer is by initiating forgiveness.

Just as athletes have to practice to perfect their skills, so we too must practice pardoning others and ourselves. Let me share with you my path for developing and cultivating a mind full of peace. It is adapted from "*The Art of Forgiveness, Lovingkindness, and Peace*," by Jack Kornfield. This exercise is three-fold.

Start with those you have hurt.

First, I reflect on the ways I have hurt my kids and husband, deliberately and by accident. I think of the ~~chance~~ cause pain when yelling, or making irrational decisions out of fear, or turning to blame to release my inner frustrations.

And in the silence of my mind and heart I ask each of them to forgive me for my arrogance and ignorance.

Forgive yourself.

Secondly, I contemplate the ways I have turned on myself. Just as I have caused suffering to others, in the same ways I have harmed myself. Many times betraying or abandoning myself in thoughts, words and actions. My internal negative self-talk is an example of deserting my true self.

Forgiveness allows us to release all the many ways we have wronged ourselves out of arrogance and ignorance.

Practice forgiveness of those who have hurt you.

And lastly, I open my heart to those who have caused me suffering and harm, intentionally and unintentionally.

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This, of course, is more challenging. While grieving losses and feeling sorrow, extend forgiveness.

And with mindfulness I say: "For a long time I have harbored hurt and resentment by the ways I was treated by you, both real and perceived mistreatment. I no longer want to carry within me this negativity because these feelings are not helpful. Therefore, I am letting go and absolve you from the ways you have caused me harm. I forgive you."

Some of you may find this exercise helpful.

During this holiday season remember to give yourself a gift. Practice the art of forgiveness. Transform hurt into love within you. And like concentric circles extend forgiveness out to others and help make peace on earth.

For more parenting resources on raising teens visit:
<http://www.sasoseminars.com>

Patt Saso is a licensed Marriage and Family therapist with a private practice in Milpitas, CA. Patt and Steve Saso are authors of the award winning books, **10 Best Gifts for Your Teen** and **Parenting Your Teen with TLC**. They are inspirational speakers and write a free monthly eNewsletter, **Parenting Teens Just Got Easier** on their web at www.SasoSeminars.com.

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Saso High School Prep (SHSP)

Our High School Placement Test prep courses offer more than getting accepted into a Catholic high school. They offer life long learning. Students who complete our programs report feeling more confident and motivated because they have the tools they need to succeed academically.

<http://www.sasoseminars.com/hspt.html>

Application Essay Writing Workshop is designed to successfully master the high school application essay. For more info go to:

<http://www.sasoseminars.com/hspt.html>

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To learn more about Scheduling a Parenting Seminar visit our web @
<http://www.sasoseminars.com/parenting.html>

You folks took the roof off last night! Everyone was enraptured by your enthusiasm, expertise, honesty and comprehensive tools you shared. The stories and anecdotes really brought the information home and reinforced that our lives are not unique or alone." --
Leianne Wong Lamb, Commonwealth Club of CA, Silicon Valley - San Francisco

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Until next time,

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