

Reflections on Step 9

Step 9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

“I don't know if you read my article from last month: Step 8. In it, I expressed that I was apprehensive about writing anything for step 8, where we make a list of all persons we had harmed and become willing to make amends to them all. Notice the word all. Well, I had been holding on to some unforgiveness. I know this step, Step 9, is about asking people to forgive us for the harm we did them, but in the case of my mom, in particular, I was holding so tight to the pain she caused me that it was blinding me to the part I played in our relationship. So after seeing my part and considering her walk, I was able to forgive her and then make amends for my part. This could be at least 50 pages long, I'm 50 years old, but the short of it is that I really try hard to behave differently toward my mom and I'm learning to hold my tongue. The latter is the most difficult and those who know me would absolutely agree. This, holding my tongue, has been one of the hardest lessons I've had to learn. It's more confusing than anything. Because I have trouble distinguishing between the things I need to speak up about and the things I need to keep quiet about and the when and the where. With my mom though, I am just learning to mostly keep quiet. Even though I am an adult, she is my mother and the least I could do is hear her out. I don't have to agree, but I could at least let her talk. And the good news about my situation with my mom is that I am not alone. So many women struggle with this very thing, and I say women because men/boys have a different relationship with their moms; the same as we women/girls' relationships with our fathers are different from that of boys with their fathers. It may not be much different, but different nonetheless. That's all I have for now on the topic of Step 9. Thank you for listening. I appreciate that and all of you.”

— Derita P., EAI Treasurer