

# “I know God has forgiven me for past sins, but how can I forgive myself?”

**H**ave you ever burned your finger on a hot stove and watched the healing process? At first the burn may be painful and ugly to look at. But in time the wound is healed, new skin appears, and the hurt fades. However, you remember the pain and will avoid touching a hot stove in the future.

Repentance is kind of like that. It may take time to heal from the experience and the pain of past sins, but because of Jesus Christ’s Atonement, that healing can come. Sometimes it takes time and effort to forgive yourself, but as you do, the memory will help remind you not to sin again.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) wrote: “Those laden with transgressions and sorrows and sin may be forgiven and cleansed and purified if they will return to their Lord, learn of him, and keep his commandments. And all of us needing to repent of day-to-day follies and weaknesses can likewise share in this miracle.”<sup>1</sup>

Through the Savior’s Atonement, you have the power to do all things that God wants you to do—even forgive yourself.

As you sincerely repent, keep your life clean, continue to obey the commandments, and come to know for yourself of the Savior’s mercy, the pain you feel when you remember your past sins will fade. You will find healing and the sweet peace of forgiveness. **NE**

**NOTE**

1. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (1969), 368.



**Pray to Forgive Yourself**

Forgiving yourself is never easy, even if Heavenly Father has forgiven you. Sometimes you have to pray a little harder to ask for the strength to forgive yourself. Other times you have to talk it out with a leader or parent.

*Miranda J., 14, California, USA*



**Focus on Doing Your Best**

Forgiving yourself is a big part of the repentance process. Once God has forgiven you for your sins, the scriptures say that a big part of fully repenting is forsaking your sins, which means distancing yourself as far as possible from them. Focus on being the best person you can be now instead of dwelling on the past. I think once you’re focused on only doing good and living righteously, you’ll be able to forgive yourself.

*Lincoln L., 15, California, USA*

**Do Not Cause Yourself Misery**

If you have messed up, as we all have, do not cause yourself any more misery. Repentance is a beautiful thing. Through the Atonement of Jesus Christ we all can be clean. We can



be forgiven, we can learn to forgive ourselves, and we can put the past behind us. How blessed we are to have second chances. How blessed we are to know we can start all over and be provided the strength to do so through the Holy Ghost.

*Alexandrea R., 21, Utah, USA*



### Ask God for Help

If you pray to be forgiven and feel forgiven, you should pray to be comforted, and you will feel comforted. I know the Holy Ghost is a great companion and can help you with anything that you are struggling with. Also, if you still have a hard time forgiving yourself, you can ask for a priesthood blessing.

*Simon S., 14, Indiana, USA*



### Follow the Right Path

When you're driving through a tunnel, it's dark. You might feel like you're going in the wrong direction and it can be scary, but when you see a peek of light at the end, you get a feeling of comfort and relief. This can relate to the gospel. If we get lost, scared, or headed in the wrong direction we can turn to

our Savior, Jesus Christ, for forgiveness and comfort. He is there to forgive us for those sins we repent of and help us get back on the right path so we can live with Him again. If we can remember the commandments and the gospel in our daily lives, we can live with our Savior and have everlasting happiness and joy. Our Heavenly Father and Savior want nothing more than for us to make it to the celestial kingdom and live with Them again.

*Emilee N., 15, Utah, USA*

*Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.*



### HEALING TAKES TIME

“For those who are truly repentant but seem unable to feel relief: continue keeping the commandments.

I promise you, relief will come in the timetable of the Lord. Healing also requires time.

“If you are concerned, counsel with your bishop. A bishop has the power of discernment. He will help you.”

**Elder Neil L. Andersen, “Repent . . . That I May Heal You,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 42.**

## UPCOMING QUESTION

“How do I make good friends? I try to be nice, but they turn me away.”

Send your answer and photo by April 15, 2016.

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Responses may be edited for length or clarity.