

Decisions? “There is DO and DO NOT, There Is No TRY!” —Yoda
Raymond Bates

Every calendar month on March fourth of any year, decade, century or millennia (even in a galaxy far, far away) March 4th means MOVE FORWARD. If only every decision one has to make every day was so simple. Many times there is an obstruction, or we create one that STOPS us “dead in our tracks.” Or, at best, it lingers in our psyche, even while we attempt to MOVE FORWARD. How or if one chooses to March 4th comes down to choice. The decision to remain stuck or advance is something everyone faces, every day. Find a friend(s) if it is BIG or IMMEDIATE. DON’T GO IT ALONE. We all know our kryptonite and vulnerabilities. Some, (most) of our decisions or choices, if you prefer, are small and manageable. Others, not so much. A network of trustworthy friends is invaluable.

Forgiving oneself can be painful and sometimes extremely difficult, or so we have told ourselves. It may be for something said or done that has actually or potentially harmed another. Self-forgiveness is difficult, often painful, but not impossible or life-threatening. It certainly is necessary in MOVING FORWARD. Everyone is in need of Forgiveness for something by someone at sometime in their life. Forgiving others makes it easier to get unstuck and MOVE ON.

Everything can be forgiven, even if it cannot be forgotten. We can choose not to keep traveling down the same road of memories. We can choose to travel a different road. You only get to punish yourself for so long, then you have to come down off the cross so someone else can use the lumber. Crude and no disrespect intended. Some people use their “hurting someone” to receive empathy about how terrible a person they must be. Or that their pain in grief, anger, sorrow, is somehow more important or greater than that of someone else. I could insert a lot of expletives in this narrative at this time, but I won’t.

When forgiving others, individuals and groups of individuals with common bonds and interests all have their Nemesis. For many Viet Nam vets, that person is represented by “Hanoi Jane” Fonda during the Viet Nam War era. He was an anti-war activist during that era. She said and did some awful aggregious acts that many Viet Nam vets believed were treasonous and aided the enemy with much propaganda material when she went to North Viet Nam. History records

what she said and did on film and most vets can tell you, but with emotion. It has been said that in her later years in life she made a singular apology.

It was for one of her most egregious acts but not her activism against the war. There will never be a 100% consensus among Viet Nam vets to forgive her or not for her statements and actions. I had an uncle who suffered as a POW (prisoner of war) at the hands of the Japanese. He survived the ordeal. On a visit to his home fifty years after WW II, we were going to the cemetery so I could get some family data from the grave tombstones. The first statement he made to me as we started our trip was, "Well, at least you're not driving a G**Damn Jap car." At that time, I was glad I was driving my American made Ford Escort. No one ever talked much with my uncle about his war experiences, but they were as fresh in his mind and heart that day, as the sentiment about "Hanoi Jane" is to Viet vets, even halter 50+ years. The verdict to forgive her or not will have to be solely on an individual basis. I pass this on from what my education, training, and personal experience has taught me. Forgiveness extended to the offender committing the offense from the one offended IS NOT excusing their offense or letting them off the hook. It is so the offended one harmed can reassert control and MOVE FORWARD. The bell once rung, cannot be unsung. No apology by the offender to the offended will ever make things right.

1st Party: SAY IT!

2nd Party: HEAR IT!

Response is your choice.

1st Party: No Rebuttal!

Both Parties: MOVE FORWARD!

The decision is yours. You now own it.

Holding on—only keeps you STUCK.