

LASTWORD

Farming forgiveness

eccentric. I guess forgiveness just didn't come easy for him, for reasons we'll never be privy to. Gosh I miss him.

But that's what I'm here to explore this time – forgiveness – because I know first-hand that if you can truly master it, it's an extremely powerful yet freeing muscle to flex. However, just like self-acceptance, it takes some graft to be able to achieve.

If we're honest with ourselves, forgiveness isn't straightforward – at least not the sort that's deep rooted and authentic. Niggles can often remain and resentment can slowly bubble away, particularly if it's perceived the individual doesn't necessarily deserve to be forgiven.

So what's the secret to absolution? While I'm no therapist, for me, it starts with recognising that pouring precious energy in the guise of hatred into a broken cup is pointless and a waste; the only person it hurts is you. As I've previously discussed, preserving my inner peace is paramount, so I simply have to let any anger go.

Furthermore, I believe how people behave towards me reflects them, not me; the decisions they make are theirs, not mine. It's all beyond my control. It's also not my given right to attempt to command others, or steer their chosen path. Equally, no one is perfect – humans make mistakes.

Forgiving someone for a wrongdoing isn't about forgetting or dismissing your own feelings, far from it. It's about acknowledging the impact it's had on you, digesting it and the associated pain, and identifying a way to move on in a positive manner. That is all in your control and



Completely unrelated, but I had the chance to grab a few days away from the desk recently and visited Montenegro. What a stunning place, I was blown away.

where strength comes in.

It's also important to remember that it's impossible to rewrite history, what's done is done. How you react to that incident and move forward has a more significant impact, particularly on your long-term mental wellbeing.

Now, this is important – I believe forgiveness is based on having a conscious level of empathy which supports you in recognising most individuals on the whole aren't bad people, they just sometimes do bad things. Because underneath the here and now, we all have a common humanity.

Even in my case where that mantra is stretched to the absolute limit, I strive to consider situations from a higher viewpoint. Doing this also helps to remove me from my own head so to speak, which is a rabbit hole of overthinking.

And I'm not talking about forgiving a broken family heirloom or treasured trinket (most of my Beswick animals are under lock and key, actually), it's big, life-changing stuff.

Trust, on the other hand, remains a laborious work in progress for me. So while in time I certainly have the capacity to forgive, I hugely struggle with the concept of trust. I guess that really is down to the other person to rebuild, should they wish.

I'm unsure what it is about farming and why it can be such a breeding ground for stubbornness and grudgery. It's incredibly twee, but love does win. The more we can offer that, along with kindness and forgiveness, the more united we stand. ●

YOUR EDITOR

Janine Adamson began her journalistic career writing obituaries for a local newspaper but fast found her stride within agricultural communications. Now, more than 15 years later, she finds herself at the helm of *CPM*. A proud Staffordshire girl from the Moorlands, Janine takes pride in tackling subjects which although aren't exclusively farming, affect everyone.



WITH JANINE ADAMSON

“Something I was exposed to very early on in life was how to bear an effective grudge, and while I loved him dearly, this was an attribute my grandad John was most skilled at.

Although I'm sure among those who'd had the misfortune of crossing him during his 86 years, there were some whom it was justified, in other cases, I'm not so sure. And the reason why I'm slightly dubious? My grandad once fell out with an individual because of an overdue book loan; the library of John did not take kindly to his agricultural literature going awol.

And rather than ask for said tome back, that was it, done, finito. In fact, it's become somewhat of a joke: 'you can always rely on a Heath to bear a life-long grudge...even when it's as stupid as a missing book'.

He regaled many a tale similar to this when we'd sit musing together on a Sunday afternoon. Regaled being the key word – even he'd started to see the amusing side of the decades-long, most enduring book-gate. Only took the bloke 30-odd years!

I also must stress that while he had his curmudgeonly moments, he was an incredibly kind and generous soul; the epitome of a rural