

APRIL 2016

EYDIS

A LETTER
TO YOUR
INNER
CHILD

THE 3
WORST
THINGS
YOU CAN TELL
YOURSELF

HAVE A HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIP
WITH FACEBOOK
WHAT DOES
SOCIAL MEDIA
MEAN TO YOU?

THE CONSTELLATION
OF HEALING
TODAY IS
A GIFT



DR. SHAWNE DUPERON

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE NOMINEE



THE GIFT OF *Forgiveness* Dr. Shawne Duperon

by Mary Meldrum

***“I am clear that I am a bold
contribution to the planet.”***

—Gary Weinstein

Some may remember Gary Weinstein's story. His wife, Judy, and his sons, Sam and Alex, were killed by a drunk driver in Farmington Hills, Michigan in 2005. For Gary, there was shock, sorrow, and grieving. And then there was something more. Gary's remarkable reaction to the man who caused this unimaginable loss in his life is one of forgiveness. In a world where blame and condemnation are expected and accepted, he sidestepped it all and began his new life journey alone without his family.

The act of forgiveness from Gary Weinstein to Tom Wellinger, the convicted drunk driver who killed his family, is an act of courage and faith that might challenge and possibly elude most of us. For Gary, it was an opportunity to decide to react in a way that would honor his family and help him overcome his loss.

A five-minute video featuring Gary Weinstein talking about the death of his entire family was the catalyst for Project: Forgive, a striking documentary by six-time Emmy winning

producer and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Dr. Shawne Duperon.

Shawne Duperon also happened to be friends with the Weinstein family and friends with Tom Wellinger's family. This put her in the crosshairs of destiny to explore the dynamic of these relationships and the act of forgiveness in a very unique way, through her documentary.

One of the lesser known details about this story is that Wellinger's family was flying in from Minnesota to do an alcoholic intervention for Tom the next day. They were one day too late. But the tragic story about Gary Weinstein and Tom Wellinger was

just the tip of the iceberg. Once Shawne Duperon got started, the project began to bloom into something much bigger.

The film focuses on many real and compelling stories, like Weinstein and Wellinger's, and dives into conversations around forgiveness. Duperon's objective is to raise awareness around the power of forgiveness and ignite a global shift in the consciousness around the act of forgiveness, and show all it can bring to humanity.

Starting with the five-minute video that went viral and a Kickstarter campaign, Project: Forgive shifted from the idea of a documentary film to something



NSHMBA presentation in Cincinnati, National Society of Hispanic MBA's.

more expansive. In response to the enormous positive feedback, Project: Forgive became a non-profit foundation in order to create an organization that will live on beyond the film and build on the message and

conversation that it sparks.

Dr. Shawne Duperon created the project, but her participation in the project is as a volunteer. This is her contribution to the project as a philanthropist.

As an incest survivor, Shawne is no stranger to forgiveness.

"Being molested was one of the best things that happened to me. I never promote molestation. What I mean by that is it's more about certain things happen to us and for us, for evolution of our soul. My journey has turned me into one of the most compassionate and loving people you may meet. I certainly do not take things so personally anymore and I love to help others find their part in making a difference in the world."

During any lifetime, everyone is eventually faced with tragic or devastating circumstances that plunge a person into debt, grief, illness, or some type of major struggle. Events like these also bring forth the greatest stories



Photo above: Dr. Shawne Duperon and General Colin Powell.

Photo to the left: Dr. Shawne Duperon with Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm



of survival, hope, courage, and strength. People overcome these circumstances in many ways. How they move on speaks volumes about their personal recovery and, ultimately, how they are able to leverage their experience into something that can teach and help others.

“Every ending is a new beginning. Through the Grace of God, we can always start again.”

-Marianne Williamson

The goal of Project: Forgive, the film, is to begin to discuss forgiveness in a way that reduces the political, gender, racial, and sexual orientation tensions that typically dominate the subject and interfere with the act of forgiveness. The film will touch on heartbreak, humor, passion, and character. The Project: Forgive Foundation is non-partisan and non-religious. It promotes harmony and tolerance through conversations based in peace, acceptance, inclusion, and forgiveness. It is a proactive effort to eliminate discrimination and prejudice, and to make the world a better place for everyone.

“We are not what happens to us. Who we get to be is who we say we are going to be in the world.”

-Gary Weinstein

As a species, we have developed an enormous appetite for imagery of all kinds. With the almost limitless reach of the internet, videos and photos have taken on a life all their own inside our waking moments of each day. While Dr. Duperon, a well-known producer, knows a thing or two about making a video that gets some attention, it took her three tries to get a short video to go viral. The story of Gary Weinstein was that viral video.

“I don’t know if losing your entire family is something you ever

get over,” says Dr. Duperon. “You do go through many stages of forgiveness, like shock, anger, grief, and acceptance. My personal experience is that forgiveness is a process, not an event. It is a skill that you master.”



Dr. Shawne Duperon interviewing Morgan Freeman.



Dr. Shawne Duperon and Gary Weinstein on CNN.



University of Athens, Greece.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Naomi Judd saw the video and endorsed the film that is due out later this year.

Through the Project: Forgive Foundation they will be able to offer thoughtful leadership workshops for high schools and universities. These workshops teach the five pillars of leadership: integrity, compassion, diversity, collaboration, and forgiveness in the workplace. It is leaders who are willing to take calculated risks. The workshops expand on this idea and teach young leaders how to embody these leadership skills to make a difference on a global scale.

"There is a new thought leadership that is taking over the planet and it involves forgiveness. This is not political or religious. Forgiveness passes any conversation about religion or partisanship. We don't care about a person's faith. This is about a capacity to love, to be kind, to forgive, to lead, to take risks." Part of the Project: Forgive

documentary film will take place in prison, where Tom Wellinger and Gary Weinstein meet and talk. Shawne conveys that it is a bittersweet, sad, and

lovely journey for those who have done something regrettable. We are all faced with some sort of dilemma at some point in our lives. The film will show the steps of moving through forgiveness, growing, and expanding.

Dr. Duperon relates, "I want to say this with the most humility that I can. It is my pleasure and honor to lead this movement. We have been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. That nomination is very humbling and validating. It is a beautiful gift that highlights we are committed to a global shift."

A new website for Project: Forgive is going to launch soon. Clips of the film are being

shared on Facebook.

"The interviews for the film are jaw-dropping. There are people facing all kinds of events and tragedies, but this is not a movie about tragedy. It is a documentary that explores the concept of forgiveness. It is about what happens to us physiologically when we forgive or don't forgive."

Stories are to inspire people and help them face their challenges. While the exact date that the documentary will air is still being determined; it will be on PBS sometime in the fall of 2016. The film is fully funded through donations, philanthropists, and corporate giving. Because of generous donors and corporate sponsors, the film will be free of charge.

Sponsors include: CryoDerm, Verizon, Ford Motor Company, Michigan Works, Henry Ford Health System and The Holistic Chamber of Commerce International, to name a few.

For more information and to follow the progress of Project: Forgive, go to <http://projectforgive.com/>

Downriver Federal Credit Union workshop series.



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