

This resentment was against my mother, and it was twenty-five years old. I had fed it, fanned it, and nurtured it as one might a delicate child, and it had become as much a part of me as my breathing. It had provided me with excuses for my lack of education, my marital failures, personal failures, inadequacy, and of course, my alcoholism. And though I really thought I had been willing to part with it, now I knew I was reluctant to let it go.

One morning, however, I realized I had to get rid of it, for my reprieve was running out, and if I didn't get rid of it I was going to get drunk -- and I didn't want to get drunk anymore. In my prayers that morning I asked God to point out to me some way to be free of this resentment. During the day, a friend of mine brought me some magazines to take to a hospital group I was interested in. I looked through them. A banner across one featured an article by a prominent clergyman in which I caught the word *resentment*.

He said, in effect: "If you have a resentment you want to be free of, if you will pray for the person or the thing that you resent, you will be free. If you will ask in prayer for everything you want for yourself to be given to them, you will be free. Ask for their health, prosperity, their happiness, and you will be free. Even when you don't really want it for them and your prayers are only words and you don't mean it, go ahead and do it anyway. Do it every day for two weeks, and you will find you have come to mean it and to want it for them and you will realize that where you used to feel bitterness and resentment and hatred, you now feel compassionate understanding and love."

It worked for me then, and it has worked for me many times since, and it will work for me every time I am willing to work it. Sometimes I have to ask first for the willingness, but it too always comes, and because it works for me, it will work for all of us. As another great man says, "The only real freedom a human being can ever know is doing what you ought to do because you want to do it."