Session 14: Receiving Forgiveness: Letting the Verdict Land

PHASE 2 — HEALING: MIND, HEART, AND PAST (WEEKS 2–4) · WEEK 3 — SHAME, GUILT, AND GRACE

Date: _____ My craving today (0–10): _____ One word for my week: _____

Handout for this session: the Session 14 handout (Receiving Forgiveness) — in the Handouts Packet.

What we're learning

Many of us believe other people can be forgiven — we just cannot believe we can. We keep re-trying our own case in our minds, as if feeling bad enough will pay the debt. But a debt that has been settled does not get more settled by suffering, and a harm that has been faced honestly does not need a nightly retrial. This session is about letting that land: naming the case we keep re-trying, stating the facts plainly, and practicing a concrete way to receive a settled outcome each day this week. This session names the five steps of the REACH forgiveness workbook — Recall, Empathize, Altruistic gift, Commit, Hold on — as the steps for decisional forgiveness practiced here.

- Settled is a fact before it is a feeling Building on feeling means a bad morning can reopen the case by lunch. We build on the facts instead: what was owned, what was repaired or is being repaired, and what people further along can confirm from their own experience.
- Self-punishment is not humility Refusing to accept a settled outcome does not repair anything. It keeps us at the center of the story and stuck in place. Owning behavior honestly — and then moving — is the work.
- Honest naming stays in the toolkit Naming specific actions, specifically and honestly, stays useful all through recovery — as maintenance and repair, not as a way to re-earn a settled outcome.
- Received people become safer people A person no longer defending their worth can finally listen to those they harmed (Week 5) without collapsing or counterattacking.

Goals for this session

☐ I can describe the difference between knowing about forgiveness and receiving it

☐ I can identify my personal forgiveness-blocker — self-punishment, disbelief, fear of presuming, or an unsettled debt

☐ I can practice a spoken response of reception (not a request for feelings)

Check-in

If the case were actually settled, why do you think you keep putting yourself back on trial?

Discussion — write your answers

Write what you would say out loud — and more, if it comes. There is no right-length answer; there is only an honest one.

1. Which blocker is yours — and where did you learn it?

2. Who in your life has modeled actually believing they are forgiven? What looks different about them?

3. If you stopped re-trying your case every night, what would you do with that energy?

4. What scares you about being fully forgiven — honestly?

Session 14 — Skill Practice

Facilitator leads a short written exercise: 'The case I keep re-trying is _____. The facts I have faced and the repair I have made or am making are _____. Today I practice receiving that by _____ (a concrete act: telling my coach, putting the written statement in my workbook cover, doing the next right thing on my plan).' Volunteers read only the second and third blanks aloud.

The case I keep re-trying is:

The facts I have faced, and the repair I have made or am making, are:

Today I receive it by (one concrete act):

My takeaway

The one thing from this session I most need to remember — in my own words:

Homework — this week's application

☐ This week, practice the reception act you named, daily. Each time the old case reopens in your mind, say the verdict sentence aloud once and log it. Notice — without judging — how many times a day the trial tries to reconvene.

My log for the week:

Day / date	What happened — what I did	Notes

An optional Scripture handout for this session is available from your facilitator on request.