

President Gerald R. Ford's handwritten reflections, 1977 or 1978

Scanned from the collection **Gerald R. Ford: Materials from the writing of *A Time To Heal*** at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

While writing his autobiography, *A Time to Heal* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), President Gerald R. Ford composed a series of personal reflections on twenty-seven topics. What makes these documents so unusual is not only their introspection but also their form. President Ford recorded these observations by hand, writing in blue ball point on his favored yellow writing tablets. He did not expend time and energy to polish and edit his writing, apparently planning to do so when incorporating them into the book. Therefore occasional spelling or grammatical errors or incomplete thoughts appear.

For each reflection the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library has scanned President Ford's handwritten document and added a Library-produced transcription below to aid in reading the reflection.

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Revenge or Forgiveness - Have I attempted revenge
or attempted forgiveness.

To my best recollection I have never attempted
revenge. Revenge in the malicious sense is an
anathema to me. I like to give & I expect to
receive or vice-versa but it is never in the
sense of getting even.

Forgiveness, on the other hand is a trait that
I was brought up with under my Mother's guidance.
Some of my friends, especially in the political arena,
believe I overdid it. I was taught forgiveness
is a good religious principle and I believe it. I
also found as a pragmatic principle it made good
friends & enhanced friendship. However, it is important
to insist that the benefactor knows that it is an act
generosity - not to embarrass the person but for him to
understand it is a voluntary act.

Revenge or Forgiveness – Have I Attempted Revenge or Extended Forgiveness

To my best recollection I have never attempted revenge. Revenge in the malicious sense is an anathema to me. I like to give & I expect to receive or vice versa but it is never in the sense of getting even.

Forgiveness, on the other hand is a trait that I was brought up with under my Mother's guidance. Some of my friends, especially in the political arena, believe I overdid it. I was taught forgiveness is a good religious principle and I believe it. I also found as a pragmatic principle it made good friends & enhanced friendship. However, it is important to insist that the benefactor knows it is an act of generosity – not to embarrass the person but for him to understand it is a voluntary act.