

## Acknowledgement of Past Wrongs and their Aftermaths

„No Future without Forgiveness“ is the name of the book by Desmond Tutu published in 1999.

The concept of forgiveness is a deeply philosophical and psychological one. It is meaningful and challenging to realize. Many victims find it difficult to think of forgiveness when the pain and suffering is still prevalent.

Forgiveness can be seen as the theoretically optimal process at the end of a path, but often the time has not yet come.

Working on reconciliation, which is also a challenge, is within reach and more realistic.

Reconciliation with a possible/necessary apology, is based on the prior acknowledgement of past wrongs happened by the perpetrators.

*“What does not exist cannot be excused.”*

Without a specific acknowledgement, the necessary expression of compassion cannot be authentic.

Understanding and empathic compassion to the point of repentance is key to victims' willingness to engage in dialogue. Only with this emerging connection can all involved parties become part of the process.

### Avoidance of Objectification

Those who suffer must be seen as human beings and not degraded to objects. Putting the human being in the center, taking into account fairness and equality at eye level is essential, otherwise any attempt to apologize by the perpetrators is just an attempt at absolution.

What are the real needs of the victims, what kind of support do they need most at the present moment?

### Is Money Everything?

It is important to listen consciously without counter-speech and defense, even if monetary demands come first. These have their justification, but carry the danger of free-buying, which does not create lasting emotional peace. Everything else lies in the dialogue. This requires the honest acknowledgement of what has happened and the suffering of the individual people.

