

Forgiveness Practices

Taking the steps to set yourself free through the practices of forgiveness. Now that we've identified where we need to practice forgiveness, we may feel like we're not quite sure how to actually forgive. Even when we've made a conscious decision to forgive someone, resentment may creep back in. So how do we take the actual steps toward forgiveness? It takes some diligence and rigor, and there are practices to support you through it.

And while forgiveness doesn't necessarily change our past, it changes our present and transforms our future. We'll start with **Self forgiveness**. Then **seven forgiveness practices** that will support us in stepping into forgiveness.

Self Forgiveness Practices

- I. Say to yourself - everyday in everyday I am getting better and better.
- II. When you find you are judging yourself -
 1. Acknowledge without judgement
 2. Show gratitude and compassion for yourself.
 3. Ask - what can I learn from this?
 4. Ask - what am I willing to do in the future to be kinder to myself?
- III. Look in the mirror and say - Thank you for everything all the way to here.
- IV. Notice your self judgement thoughts and use the AIRR method to reframe them.

The Practice of Tonglen

Buddhist practice of loving kindness.

The core of the practice is understanding that **everything is energy and everything is connected** – there is no separation. So, this exercise is to benefit all sentient beings throughout all space and time. One thing to consider as you look at this. Know that as we breathe in, we acknowledge another's pain, and we do so in order that they can be well and find peace. And then, when we breathe out, we send them a blessing of compassion, healing or whatever you feel would bring them relief and happiness. This practice has three aspects:

- First, we start with **our self**. We breathe in and acknowledge our own pain, anger, resentment, and then we breathe out compassion, healing, love, and joy for our self.
- Then we move to **someone we know**. We breathe in and acknowledge the challenges of a person we wish to help. For instance, if you know someone who is facing a challenge, you breathe in and acknowledge the situation with the intention to resolve their discomfort. Then, as you breathe out, you send that person happiness, joy, or whatever would relieve their challenges or discomfort.
- Then we move on to someone that we feel has hurt or wronged us, as with someone we may consider **one of our sacred friends**. We breathe in and acknowledge the discomfort and the pain of the relationship, and we breathe out love, compassion, and healing for that person, ourselves, and for the circumstance.

This practice of Tonglen is powerful and transformative.

Namaste

Let's look at **Namaste** as a practice.

1. Namaste is an understanding that "The divine in me recognizes and honors the divine in you." If we seem to have a hard time forgiving the person, finding a way to connect with the Spirit or Divine Nature of that person can help us experience compassion toward them.
2. We recognize that there is really only one of us here. We are in this one presence, one power, one life. You and I live and move and have our being in it. So does everyone else. We are all part of this quantum field. It's all one presence, one life.

- In essence, as Jack Boland endeavored to forgive the hurt in his relationship with his brother-in-law, he practiced the Namaste concept through first visualizing the face of his son to evoke unconditional love, before then imagining his brother-in-law.

Dali Lama's Loving Kindness Meditation

This Metta meditation is another powerful practice. We have access to this loving kindness practice to support our own forgiveness that we would like to send toward any of our sacred friends.

1. Here is the meditation.

- First, you think toward yourself:
 - **May I be truly happy.**
 - May I live in peace.
 - May I live in love.
 - May I know the power of forgiveness.
 - May I live in recognition that my life has deep meaning, and good purpose.
- Then, think toward **another whom you love**:
 - May you be truly happy.
 - May you live in peace.
 - May you live in love.
 - May you know the power of forgiveness.
 - May you live in recognition that your life has deep meaning, and good purpose.
- Then, think toward **another with whom you've had some difficulty**, or think through a circumstance in which you still have some regret or resentment. Now, repeat the meditation toward this person or that situation, in the same way you said it toward the one you love.

2. And be grateful that, over time, this meditation will **shift the energy** and, as Mary Morrissey says, "You will feel peace, and that gift of peace will take the form of more access to the understanding, the awareness, and the abundance that supports all life and your dream."

John Maxwell in *Failing Forward* – List the negative events from your past that may still be holding you hostage. For each item on the list, go through the following exercise:

1. Acknowledge the pain.
2. Grieve the loss.
3. Forgive the person.
4. Forgive yourself.
5. Determine to release the event and move on.

Bob Proctor Gratitude Practice – send love to your sacred friends

Come Apart Awhile – pray this every night before going to bed for 21 days

- I am willing to release all condemnation I may be holding against others or myself.
- I forgive myself for all past mistakes and present shortcomings.
- I forgive all others who may have harmed me.
- I let go of all fears, resentments and judgments.
- I release them to God.
- I focus on my heart and willingly make a decision to let go, let God and allow myself to experience in my heart, not my head, whatever comes next.
- I am a Divine Child of God.
- And so it is.

How to Practice Ho'oponopono in Four Simple Steps

Have you heard of the Hawaiian therapist who cured an entire ward of criminally insane patients, without ever meeting any of them or spending a moment in the same room? It's not a joke. The

therapist was Dr. Ihaleakala Hew Len. He reviewed each of the patients' files, and then he healed them by healing himself. The amazing results seem like a miracle, but then miracles do happen when you use Ho'oponopono, or Dr. Len's updated version called Self I-Dentity Through Ho'oponopono (SITH). I had the pleasure of attending one of his lectures a few years ago and started practicing Ho'oponopono immediately. The results are often astounding. Do you need a miracle?

What you might wish to understand is how this can possibly work. How can you heal yourself and have it heal others? How can you even heal yourself?

Why would it affect anything "out there"? The secret is there is no such thing as "out there" – everything happens to you in your mind. Everything you see, everything you hear, every person you meet, you experience in your mind. You only think it's "out there" and you think that absolves you of responsibility. In fact it's quite the opposite: you are responsible for everything you think, and everything that comes to your attention. If you watch the news, everything you hear on the news is your responsibility. That sounds harsh, but it means that you are also able to clear it, clean it, and through forgiveness change it.

There are four simple steps to this method, and the order is not that important. Repentance, Forgiveness, Gratitude and Love are the only forces at work – but these forces have amazing power.

The best part of the updated version of Ho'oponopono is you can do it yourself, you don't need anyone else to be there, you don't need anyone to hear you. You can "say" the words in your head. The power is in the feeling and in the willingness of the Universe to forgive and love.

Step 1: Repentance – I'M SORRY (I APOLOGIZE)

As I mention above, you are responsible for everything in your mind, even if it seems to be "out there." Once you realize that, it's very natural to feel sorry. I know I sure do. If I hear of a tornado, I am so full of remorse that something in my consciousness has created that idea. I'm so very sorry that someone I know has a broken bone that I realize I have caused.

This realization can be painful, and you will likely resist accepting responsibility for the "out there" kind of problems until you start to practice this method on your more obvious "in here" problems and see results.

So choose something that you already know you've caused for yourself? Over-weight? Addicted to nicotine, alcohol or some other substance? Do you have anger issues? Health problems? Start there and say you're sorry. That's the whole step: I'M SORRY. Although I think it is more powerful if you say it more clearly: "I realize that I am responsible for the (issue) in my life and I feel terrible remorse that something in my consciousness has caused this."

Step 2: Ask Forgiveness – PLEASE FORGIVE ME

Don't worry about who you're asking. Just ask! PLEASE FORGIVE ME. Say it over and over. Mean it. Remember your remorse from step 1 as you ask to be forgiven.

Step 3: Gratitude – THANK YOU

Say "THANK YOU" – again it doesn't really matter who or what you're thanking. Thank your body for all it does for you. Thank yourself for being the best you can be. Thank God. Thank the Universe. Thank whatever it was that just forgave you. Just keep saying THANK YOU.

Step 4: Love – I LOVE YOU

This can also be step 1. Say I LOVE YOU. Say it to your body, say it to God. Say I LOVE YOU to the air you breathe, to the house that shelters you. Say I LOVE YOU to your challenges. Say it over and over. Mean it. Feel it. There is nothing as powerful as Love.

That's it. The whole Ho'oponopono practice in a nutshell. Simple and amazingly effective.