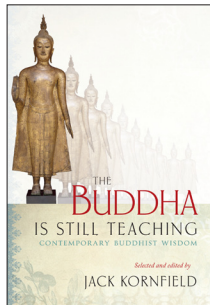


# MEDITATIONS

The following meditations have been selected by Jack Kornfield to accompany *The Buddha Is Still Teaching* (Shambhala Publications, 2010). May these practices be helpful and inspiring to you.



THE BUDDHA IS STILL TEACHING  
*Contemporary Buddhist Wisdom*  
Edited by Jack Kornfield

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## TAKE THE ONE SEAT

Let your body be seated comfortably in your chair or on your cushion. Take a posture that is stable, erect, and connected with the earth. Sit as the Buddha did on his night of enlightenment, with great dignity and centeredness, sensing your capacity to face anything that arises. Let your eyes close and let your attention turn to your breathing. Let your breath move freely through your body. Let each breath bring a calmness and an ease. As you breathe, sense your capacity to open in body, heart, and mind.

Open your senses, your feelings, your thoughts. Become aware of what feels closed in your body, closed in your heart, closed in your mind. Breathe and make space. Let the space open so that anything may arise. Let the windows of your senses open. Be aware of whatever feelings, images, sounds, and stories show themselves. Notice with interest and ease all that presents itself to you.

Continue to feel your steadiness and connectedness to the earth, as if you had taken the one seat in the center of life and opened yourself to an awareness of its dance. As you sit, reflect on the benefit of balance and peace in your

life. Sense your capacity to rest unshakable as the seasons of life change. All that arises will pass away. Reflect on how joys and sorrows, pleasant events and unpleasant events, individuals, nations, even civilizations, arise and pass away. Take the one seat of a Buddha and rest with a heart of equanimity and compassion in the center of it all.

Sit this way, dignified and present, for as long as you wish. After some time, still feeling centered and steady, open your eyes. Then let yourself stand up and take some steps, walking with the same centeredness and dignity. Practice sitting and walking in this fashion, sensing your ability to be open, alive, and present with all that arises on this earth.

—Jack Kornfield, *A Path with Heart:  
A Guide through the Perils and Promises of Spiritual Life*



## THE PRACTICE OF ZAZEN

Zen is the practice of coming back to the actual right-now-in-this-moment self, coming back to the naturalness, the intimacy and simplicity of our true nature. At the heart of Zen practice is zazen, seated meditation. Zazen does not involve complicated instructions. When one studies the ancient Zen meditation manuals, it is always surprising how brief and plain they are. While they speak of the possibility of attaining the freedom and naturalness of a tiger in the mountains or a dragon in the water, the actual instructions are so concrete. Sit in the proper posture and attend to the body, breath, and mind.

It is best to set aside a place for regular zazen. Whether it is a room or just a corner, the space should be clean and uncluttered. Place a mat on the floor (a folded blanket will do), and on it, a sitting cushion or a bench. If floor sitting is too difficult, simply use a chair.

When you do zazen, wear loose, clean clothes. At the beginning of a sitting period, it is traditional to bow to an altar, offer a stick of incense, and bow once more. The

incense is offered with the intention that this session is for all beings, for all creation, not just for oneself. When you are seated—whether cross-legged, kneeling, or in a chair—settle into the zazen posture: Place your hands on your lap or thighs in the cosmic mudra, your right hand holding your left one, palms up, with your thumbs barely touching, forming a circle.

Your posture in sitting is vitally important. Sit on the forward third of your cushion or chair, so that your hips are higher than your knees and your belly is free to move in and out without stress on your lower back. Your ears are in line with your shoulders, your head balanced gently on your neck; your eyes are slightly open, gazing down about three feet in front of you. Your chin is pointing neither up nor down, but is slightly tucked in. Place your tongue just behind your teeth on the roof of your mouth. Sway from side to side until you find your center point.

Now attend to the breath. Breathe naturally. Breathing in, allow the breath to fully enter your body until your lower belly expands; then, breathing out, softly allow the breath to ease out through your nostrils. Notice how the breath seems to travel through the main avenues of your torso. Your belly should rise and fall naturally with each breath. Let the breath fill your lower abdomen as if it were a balloon. Later, you may notice that even the bottoms of your feet are breathing in and out. As you relax into the

breath, you can begin silently counting each full cycle of breath, noting “one” on the out-breath, “two” on the next out-breath, and so on up to “ten.” When you reach “ten,” begin again with “one.” When you realize that you have stopped counting and are caught up in thinking, simply take another breath and go back to “one.”

Do this—counting your breath, maintaining your posture, sitting still—for the twenty-minute period of zazen. Notice that urges to move—to scratch your nose, to tug on your ear—are usually ways to move away from the energies in your body. Instead of moving, stay with them, observe them, and bring your focus back to the breathing. Learn to notice how these urges fall away, only to be replaced by others, demonstrating the second noble truth: the cause of suffering is craving. All the disparate ideas, thoughts, impulses—everything comes and goes, and yet you sit. And little by little, the chatter drops away and your body, breath, and mind are one.

Zazen is simple. Focus on your posture and on counting your breath, and in a natural way this will develop samadhi, a unified mind. The practice is not about reaching “ten.” It is about training the body and mind. Let the body settle, let the breath settle, let the mind settle. Don’t worry about whether your practice is working, don’t judge your performance, don’t tell yourself stories or find other ways to avoid this very moment. These are just ways of

separating from our deepest intention and our zazen. When you do zazen, just do zazen. That's enough.

All of us yearn to experience ourselves as whole and complete, to live our lives fully and freshly in each moment. But something blocks us, and Zen training is one way to see that, all along, we have what we need. This is called the realization of the original self.

The zazen period we recommend is twenty minutes. You may find that you will want to do more—or less—and that is fine. What is important is consistency. To keep your practice consistent, remember what the famous Nike ad says: “Just do it.” Don't concern yourself with trying to get to some particular place or state of mind. Each day's zazen will be a little different, just like the rest of life. We practice steadiness in our daily meditation—alert, sleepy, focused—we just practice each day through the high points and the low.

When you mess up—and you will—just say, “Okay, back to my cushion.” When you are sitting, you may realize that you are thinking about something else. At that moment, take a deep breath and recognize that, in that moment of realization, you have come back to now. As an old meditation manual says, as soon as you are aware of a thought, it will vanish! When we are thinking of a thing, we are lost in it, lost in thinking about “x.” But when we become aware of our thinking, then we are in a secondary



state. The actual thinking of “x” is gone, and there is either just awareness or we begin a new thought based on that awareness. Either way, the original thinking is gone. If we practice daily, soon we are able to stay more often in that space of pure awareness without an object. Just breathing, just being present—we call this being naturally unified.

Zazen is a form that allows us to practice the no-form of boundless emptiness. The outer form helps us by organizing and directing our energies. But we can carry our form lightly, with respect and appreciation for its gifts. This subtle discipline—settling, unifying, letting be—is called the dharma gate of peace and joy.

There is one more thing to keep in mind. While these instructions can help you establish your own daily meditation, Zen is not a solitary practice. Sitting with others, studying with others, working with others, talking with others—all these are integral to the life of Zen. So I encourage you to join with others whenever possible. Go to a Zen meditation center or a similar group and sit with other people.

Let Zen Master Dogen have the last word:

The dharma is amply present in every person,  
but without practice, it is not manifested;  
without realization, it is not attained.

—Pat Enkyo O’Hara, “An Introduction to Zen”



## INSIGHT MEDITATION

The practice of *Vipassana*, or Insight Meditation, is the effort made by the meditator to understand correctly the nature of the psychophysical phenomena taking place in his own body. . . . One should, therefore, begin with [mindfully] noting those happenings which are conspicuous and easily perceivable.

With every act of breathing, the abdomen rises and falls. . . . This [movement] is the material quality known as the element of motion. One should begin by noting this movement. . . . Do not alter the manner of your breathing. Neither slow it down nor make it faster. . . . Breathe steadily as usual and note the rising and falling of the abdomen as they occur. Note it mentally [as “rising,” “falling”].

Your attention may wander elsewhere while you are noting the abdominal movement. This must also be noted by mentally saying, “Wandering, wandering.” When this has been noted once or twice, the mind stops wandering, in which case you go back to noting the rising and falling of the abdomen. If the mind reaches somewhere, note as

“Reaching, reaching.” Then go back to the rising and falling of the abdomen. If you imagine meeting somebody, note as “Meeting, meeting.” Then back to the rising and falling. If you imagine meeting and talking to somebody, note as “Talking, talking.”

In short, whatever thought or reflection occurs should be noted. If you imagine, note as “imagining.” If you think, “thinking.” If you plan, “planning.” If you perceive, “perceiving.” If you reflect, “reflecting.” If you feel happy, “happy.” If you feel bored, “bored.” If you feel glad, “glad.” If you feel disheartened, “disheartened.”

Because we fail to note these acts of consciousness, we tend to identify them with a person or individual. We tend to think that it is “I” who is imagining, thinking, planning, knowing (or perceiving). We think that there is a person who from childhood onwards has been living and thinking. Actually, no such person exists. There are instead only these continuing and successive acts of consciousness.

When you have sat meditating for long, sensations of stiffness and heat, of pain and tiredness, will arise in your body. These are to be noted carefully too.

The noting in *vipassana* meditation should be continual and unremitting, without any resting interval between acts of noting whatever phenomena may arise. If one goes on perseveringly noting thus, the momentary concentration

of mind will become strong, the thought process of noticing becomes well concentrated.

When that knowledge has come to maturity, the meditator understands thus: "At the moment of breathing in, there is just the rising movement of the abdomen and the knowing of the movement, but there is no self besides; at the moment of breathing out, there is just the falling movement of the abdomen and the knowing of the movement, but there is no self besides." Understanding it thus in these and other instances, he knows and sees for himself by noticing thus: "There is here only that pair: a material process as object and a mental process of knowing it. . . . But apart from that dual process, there is no separate person or being, I or another."

As mindfulness grows yet stronger, the meditator experiences each moment's experience as arising and then passing away, leaving no trace.

Seeing how every sensory or mental experience, even while being noticed, comes to an end and disappears, the meditator comprehends it as *impermanent* in the sense of undergoing destruction. He further comprehends it as *unsatisfactory* in the sense of breaking up after each arising. Further, he comprehends the object as consisting of mere *impersonal* phenomena without a self, in the sense of

not arising of themselves, but arising subject to conditions and then breaking up.

This spontaneous comprehension of each experience noticed as being impermanent, unsatisfactory, and [empty of] a self, by means of simply noticing, is called “knowledge by comprehension through direct experience.” This is the practice that leads to equanimity and freedom.

—Mahasi Sayadaw, “Instructions to Insight Meditation”  
and “The Progress of Insight: A Modern Treatise  
on Buddhist Satipatthana Meditation”



## THE PRACTICE OF LOVINGKINDNESS (METTA)

In doing metta practice, we gently repeat phrases that are meaningful in terms of what we wish, first for ourselves, and then for others. We begin by befriending ourselves. The aspirations we articulate should be deeply felt and somewhat enduring (not something like “May I find a good show on television tonight”). Classically there are four phrases used:

May I be free from danger.  
May I have mental happiness.  
May I have physical happiness.  
May I have ease of well-being.

You can experiment with them, alter them, or simply choose an alternative set of three or four phrases. Discover personally in your own heartfelt investigation what is truly significant for you.

*May I be free from danger.*

We begin to extend care and lovingkindness toward ourselves with the wish that we may find freedom from danger, that we may know safety. Other possible phrases are “May I have safety,” and “May I be free from fear.”

*May I have mental happiness.*

If we were in touch with our own loveliness, if we felt less fearful of others, if we trusted our ability to love, we would have mental happiness.

*May I have physical happiness.*

You might also use a phrase such as “May I be healthy,” “May I be healed,” “May I make a friend of my body,” or “May I embody my love and understanding.”

*May I have ease of well-being.*

This phrase points to the exigencies of everyday life—concerns such as relationships, family issues, and livelihood. With the expression of this phrase, we wish that these elements of our day-to-day lives be free from struggle, that they be accomplished gracefully and easily. Alternative phrases could be “May I live with ease,” or “May lovingkindness manifest throughout my life,” or “May I dwell in peace.”

Sit comfortably. You can begin with five minutes of reflection on the good within you or your wish to be happy. Then choose three or four phrases that express what you most deeply wish for yourself, and repeat them over and over again. You can coordinate the phrases with the breath, if you wish, or simply have your mind rest in the phrases without a physical anchor. Feel free to experiment, and be creative. Without trying to force or demand a loving feeling, see if there are circumstances you can imagine yourself in where you can more readily experience friendship with yourself. Is it seeing yourself as a young child? One friend imagined himself sitting surrounded by all the most loving people he had ever heard of in the world, receiving their kindness and good wishes. For the first time, love for himself seemed to enter his heart. Develop a gentle pacing with the phrases; there is no need to rush through them or say them harshly. You are offering yourself a gift with each phrase. If your attention wanders, or if difficult feelings or memories arise, try to let go of them in the spirit of kindness and begin again repeating the metta phrases:

May I be free from danger.  
May I have mental happiness.  
May I have physical happiness.  
May I have ease of well-being.



There are times when feelings of unworthiness come up strongly, and you clearly see the conditions that limit your love for yourself. Breathe gently, accept that these feelings have arisen, remember the beauty of your wish to be happy, and return to the metta phrases.

There is no need to worry about what has gone by or to anticipate what has not yet come, not even the next phrase. Don't struggle to manufacture a feeling of love. Simply repeat the phrases, thereby planting the potent seeds of intention, and trust that nature will take its own course.

Next extend your lovingkindness to a benefactor, someone for whom you feel gratitude and respect. It is best to start out using the same phrases you have directed toward yourself, to begin to break down the barriers between self and other: "Just as I want to be happy, so do you want to be happy. May you be happy." If over time the phrases modulate to fit the particular being, that is fine.

We say the phrases as though cherishing a fragile, precious object in our hand. Were we to grab on to it too tightly, it would shatter and break. Were we to be lax and negligent, it would fall out of our hand and break. We cherish the object gently, carefully, without force but paying close attention. Try to connect to each phrase, one at a time.

Now use the same phrases you have used for a neutral

person. Choose someone whom you tend to see occasionally, since that will bring them and your changing feelings for them into clearer focus. He or she is a generic living being, wanting to be happy just as all of us do, making mistakes just as all of us do. Reflect on the neutral person's wish to be happy, identical to your own, and direct the metta phrases toward them.

Over time, it is common to discover an increase of caring and warmth toward the neutral person, as they seem closer and closer to you. They are, after all, a kind of nonerotic secret love.

Now send your metta to a person with whom you experience conflict, fear, or anger—known in the traditional texts as the enemy. You can reflect on this line from Rainer Maria Rilke: “Perhaps everything terrible is in its deepest being something that needs our love.”

It is useful to begin with someone with whom the difficulty is relatively mild—not starting right away with an attempt to send metta to the one person who has hurt us the most in this lifetime. It is important to approach increasingly difficult people gradually.

Perhaps you can most easily feel metta for a difficult person if you imagine them as a vulnerable infant, or on their

deathbed (but not with eager anticipation—be careful). You should allow yourself to be creative, daring, even humorous, in imagining situations where you can more readily feel kindness toward a difficult person.

Gently continue to direct metta toward the difficult person, and accept the different feelings that may come and go. There may be sorrow, grief, anger—allow them to pass through you. If they become overwhelming, go back to sending metta to yourself or a good friend.

When you can, return to directing the metta phrases toward the difficult person. You can go back and forth between yourself, a friend, the reflections, and the difficult person.

As an alternative to choosing a difficult person, you can experiment with directing metta toward a difficult aspect of yourself. There may be physical or emotional aspects of yourself you have struggled with, denied, avoided, been at war with. Sit quietly, sending yourself metta. After some time, turn your attention to the loneliness, anger, disability, addiction, or whatever aspect of your mind or body you feel most estranged from. You can use phrases such as “May I accept this,” [or] “May I use the pain of this experience for the welfare of all.”

Begin [extending your lovingkindness to all beings] by sitting and extending the feeling of metta, which is friendship, caring, and kindness, to yourself. Then you can reflect on the fact that all beings want to be happy: “Just as I want to be happy, all beings want to be happy.” Then begin to direct metta to all beings, including yourself.

Extend your metta phrases: “May all beings be free from danger. May they have mental happiness. May they have physical happiness. May they have ease of well-being.” Repeat the metta phrases you have chosen and extend them to all beings everywhere, without division, without exclusion, and without end.

—Sharon Salzberg, *Lovingkindness:  
The Revolutionary Art of Happiness*



## THE PRACTICE OF TONGLÉN

In order to have compassion for others, we have to feel compassion for ourselves.

In particular, to care about other people who are fearful, angry, jealous, overpowered by addictions of all kinds, arrogant, proud, miserly, selfish, mean—you name it—to have compassion and to care for these people means not to run from the pain of finding these things in ourselves. In fact, our whole attitude toward pain can change. Instead of fending it off and hiding from it, one could open one's heart and allow oneself to feel pain, feel it as something that will soften and purify us and make us far more loving and kind.

Tonglén practice is a method for connecting with suffering—our own and that which is all around us, everywhere we go. It is a method for overcoming our fear of suffering and for dissolving the tightness of our hearts. Primarily it is a method for awakening the compassion that is inherent in all of us, no matter how cruel or cold we might seem to be.

We begin the practice by taking on the suffering of a

person whom we know to be hurting and we wish to help. For instance, if we know of a child who is being hurt, we breathe in with the wish to take away all of that child's pain and fear. Then, as we breathe out, we send happiness, joy, or whatever would relieve the child. This is the core of the practice: breathing in others' pain so they can be well and have more space to relax and open—and breathing out, sending them relaxation or whatever we feel would bring them relief and happiness.

Often, however, we cannot do this practice because we come face-to-face with our own fear, our own resistance or anger, or whatever our personal pain happens to be just then.

At that point, we can change the focus and begin to do tonglen for what we are feeling and for millions of other people just like us who at that very moment are feeling exactly the same stuckness and misery. Maybe we are able to name our pain. We recognize it clearly as terror or revulsion or anger or wanting to get revenge. So we breathe in for all the people who are caught with that same emotion, and we send out relief or whatever opens up the space for ourselves and all those countless others. Maybe we can't name what we're feeling. But we can feel it—a tightness in the stomach, a heavy darkness, or whatever. We simply contact what we are feeling and breathe in, take it *in*, for all of us—and send *out* relief to all of us.

People often say that this practice goes against the grain of how we usually hold ourselves together. Truthfully, this practice *does* go against the grain of wanting things on our own terms, wanting everything to work out for ourselves no matter what happens to the others. The practice dissolves the walls we've built around our hearts. It dissolves the layers of self-protection we've tried so hard to create. In Buddhist language, one would say that it dissolves the fixation and clinging of ego.

Tonglen reverses the usual logic of avoiding suffering and seeking pleasure. In the process, we become liberated from very ancient patterns of selfishness. We begin to feel love for both ourselves and others; we begin to take care of ourselves and others. Tonglen awakens our compassion and introduces us to a far bigger view of reality. It introduces us to the unlimited spaciousness [that Buddhists call] *shunyata*. By doing the practice, we begin to connect with the open dimension of our being. At first this allows us to experience things as not such a big deal and not so solid as they seemed before.

Tonglen can be done for those who are ill, those who are dying or have just died, those who are in pain of any kind. It can be done as a formal meditation practice or right on the spot at any time. We are out walking and we see someone in pain—right on the spot, we can begin to breathe in that person's pain and send out some relief. Or,

more likely, you might see someone in pain and look away because it brings up your fear or anger; it brings up your resistance and confusion.

So *on the spot* you can do tonglen for all the people who are just like you, for everyone who wishes to be compassionate but instead is afraid, for everyone who wishes to be brave but instead is a coward.

Rather than beating ourselves up, we can use our personal stuckness as a stepping-stone to understanding what people are up against all over the world.

Breathe in for all of us and breathe out for all of us.

Use what seems like poison as medicine. We can use out personal suffering as the path to compassion for all beings.

—Pema Chödrön, *When Things Fall Apart:  
Heart Advice for Difficult Times*





## FEEDING THE DEMONS

The method that I call feeding your demons—based on the principles of Chöd—is a simple five-step practice that doesn't require any knowledge of Buddhism or of any Tibetan spiritual practices. In the first step, we find where in the body we hold our “demon” most strongly. This demon might be addiction, self-hatred, perfectionism, anger, jealousy, or anything that is dragging you down, draining your energy. To put it simply, our demons are what we fear. As [the first teacher of Chöd] Machig said, anything that blocks complete inner freedom is a demon. She also spoke of gods and god-demons. Gods are our hopes, what we are obsessed with, what we long for, our attachments. God-demons occur when a hope and a fear are closely attached to each other; when we shift back and forth between hope and fear, this is a god-demon.

In the second step we allow the energy that we find in the body to take personified form as a demon right in front of us. In the third step, we discover what the demon needs by putting ourselves in the demon's place, becoming the

demon. In the fourth step, we imagine dissolving our own body into nectar of whatever it is that the demon needs, and we let this flow to the demon. In this way we nurture it, feeding it to complete satisfaction. Having satisfied the demon, we find that the energy that was tied up in the demon turns into an ally. This ally offers us protection and support and then dissolves into us. At the end of the fourth step, we dissolve into emptiness, and in the fifth and final step, we simply rest in the open awareness that comes from dissolving into emptiness.

Paradoxically, feeding our gods or demons to complete satisfaction does not strengthen them; rather it allows the energy that has been locked up in them to become accessible. In this way highly charged emotions that have been bottled up by inner conflict are released and become something beneficial. When we try to fight against or repress the disowned parts of ourselves that I call demons, they actually gain power and develop resistance. In feeding our demons, we are not only rendering them harmless; we are also, by addressing them instead of running away from them, nurturing the shadow parts of ourselves, so that the energy caught in the struggle transforms into a positive protective force.

—Tsultrim Allione, *Feeding Your Demons:  
Ancient Wisdom for Resolving Inner Conflict*



## FORGIVENESS MEDITATION

Forgiveness is a letting go of past suffering and betrayal, a release of the burden of pain and hurt we carry. Without forgiveness, our lives are chained to the sufferings of the past. Forgiveness is not naïve; it does not condone the past. We may resolve to never again permit such harm. Then forgiveness allows us to move on; it restores dignity to the heart. Whenever we forgive, in small ways at home, or in great ways between nations, we free ourselves to renew our lives.

To practice forgiveness meditation, let yourself sit comfortably. Allow your eyes to close and your breath to be natural and easy. Let your body and mind relax. Breathing gently into the area of your heart, let yourself feel all the barriers you have erected and the emotions that you have carried because you have not forgiven—not forgiven yourself, not forgiven others. Let yourself feel the pain of keeping your heart closed. Then, breathing softly, begin asking and extending forgiveness, reciting the following words, letting the images and feelings that come up grow deeper as you repeat them.

## ASKING FORGIVENESS OF OTHERS

Recite: *There are many ways that I have hurt and harmed others, have betrayed or abandoned them, caused them suffering, knowingly or unknowingly, out of my pain, fear, anger, and confusion.* Let yourself remember and visualize the ways you have hurt others. See and feel the pain you have caused out of your own fear and confusion. Feel your own sorrow and regret. Sense that finally you can release this burden and ask for forgiveness. Picture each memory that still burdens your heart. And then to each person in your mind repeat as many times as necessary: *I ask for your forgiveness, I ask for your forgiveness.*

## OFFERING FORGIVENESS TO YOURSELF

Just as you need to ask forgiveness of others, so too you need to forgive yourself.

Recite: *There are many ways that I have hurt and harmed myself. I have betrayed or abandoned myself many times through thought, word, or deed, knowingly and unknowingly.* Feel your own precious body and life. Let yourself acknowledge the ways you have hurt or harmed yourself. Picture them, remember them. Feel the sorrow you have carried from this and sense that you can release these burdens. Extend forgiveness for each of them, one by one. Repeat to your-

self: *For the ways I have hurt myself through action or inaction, out of fear, pain, and confusion, I now extend a full and heartfelt forgiveness. I forgive myself, I forgive myself.*

## OFFERING FORGIVENESS TO THOSE WHO HAVE HURT OR HARMED YOU

We have all been hurt and betrayed by others. With courage and compassion you can finally acknowledge these hurts, release them, and move on.

Recite: *There are many ways that I have been harmed by others, abused or abandoned, knowingly or unknowingly, in thought, word, or deed.* Let yourself picture and remember these many ways. Feel the sorrow you have carried from this past and sense that you can release this burden of pain by extending forgiveness whenever your heart is ready. Now say to yourself: *I now remember the many ways others have hurt or harmed me, wounded me, out of fear, pain, confusion, and anger. I have carried this pain in my heart too long. To the extent that I am ready, I offer them forgiveness. To those who have caused me harm, I offer my forgiveness, I forgive you.*

Let yourself gently repeat these three directions for forgiveness until you feel a release in your heart. For some great pains you may not feel a release but only the burden and the anguish or anger you have held. Touch this softly.

Be forgiving of yourself for not being ready to let go and move on. Forgiveness cannot be forced; it cannot be artificial. Simply continue the practice and let the words and images work gradually in their own way. In time you can make the forgiveness meditation a regular part of your life, letting go of the past and opening your heart to each new moment with a wise loving-kindness.

—Jack Kornfield, adapted from *The Wise Heart:  
A Guide to the Universal Teachings of Buddhist Psychology*

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