

Self-Forgiveness Technique

(based on the work of Mary Hayes-Grieco, adapted from *Unconditional Love and Forgiveness* by Dr. Edith Stauffer)

We always have an unlimited source of love and capability to forgive in our Greater Self. From this transpersonal Self, we can grant forgiveness to our personal, everyday self. Begin with minor self-criticisms and errors and work your way the more complex issues. This exercise doesn't negate healthy guilt, which reminds us that we have violated our own ethics. Healthy guilt is our conscience speaking to us, asking us to make amends. This exercise is for after we have done our best and still can't let go of things.

Step 1: Sit on the floor or on a chair. Picture your Greater Self standing above you, listening compassionately and waiting to grant you the relief of forgiveness. (Use your own image -- a globe of light will do. Or you might want to picture Jesus, the Goddess, an angel, a sacred oak tree - whatever embodies the power of the Transcendent Self for you.)

Step 2: Choose an issue you have been beating yourself up about. Take a few minutes and speak your troubles to this Higher Power - allow your full misery to surface and express it with trust and vulnerability. Picture a plate unto which you heap your disappointments and sorrows. Hand it over to your Higher Self.

Step 3: Now stand and assume the position of the Higher Power. Do this by meditating on and embracing its qualities of peace, wisdom, compassion, unconditional love, tolerance, joy, humor and expansive perspective.

Step 4: When you feel you are in this higher consciousness, look down upon where you were sitting and picture your personal self there awaiting your help. Speak out loud to your self from your new perspective. You have wisdom, knowledge and advice to lend yourself. Sometimes it won't come in words, but you feel a blessing and silent understanding flowing out to your personal self. When you feel complete, make a statement like, "I forgive you completely," or "I release you from shame."

Note: If during this communication in Step 4, you are expressing any judgment or criticism of your personal self - you are still in your personal self. Go higher, literally. Stand on a chair and try again. Your mind understands this metaphor and will usually cooperate.

Step 5: Take your sitting position again and quietly allow this experience to settle and integrate. Note the relief and perhaps new understanding. Say, "Thank for this compassion and forgiveness."