

Conscious Being

Exercise Eight: The Power of Forgiveness

I'm inviting you to consider how you can move from powerlessness to feeling empowered and discovering your *true* power. This power is different from *will* power, different from *force* or coercion; it's not "making things happen." It's tapping into the ultimate truth of who and what you are. As you grow in conscious awareness and begin to recognize that your core beliefs are really choices, as you find and participate in supportive communities where you feel safe enough to be vulnerable, to be authentic, as you begin to consciously choose to practice the principles of non-resistance, non-judgment, presence, and so on, you can begin to experience the power of who and what you truly are.

Releasing Statement

I release the need to give away my power.

Affirming Statement

I freely forgive myself and others.

Simple Meditation Practice

This module's meditation is an open-eyed meditation. Set the timer for 10 minutes. Find a comfortable place to sit. Once the timer has begun, simply allow your eyes to wander around the room. The intention is to simply notice. See if your eyes want to stop and stare at a particular object. Notice how quickly or slowly your eyes want to move. Trust that whatever you do, it is perfect. Once the timer has sounded, write about your experience.

1. Forgiveness Process: Think of a situation in which you find it difficult to forgive. Now write out your answers to these questions:

- What is the story you have been telling about that situation?

- In what ways have you been especially attached to that story—what belief does it support?

- What are some other ways to look at it?

- Keeping that situation in mind, what happens when you let go of the idea that one story is “right?”

- In what ways can you let go of your initial reactive story about the situation and open yourself to other possible perspectives?

- What happens when you do that?

- What would happen if you could approach what occurred with witness consciousness, with the neutrality of an observer?

- What does forgiveness mean to you?

- If you looked at it from a higher level of consciousness, where *"There's nothing to forgive because we can see that everything that's happened in our life has played a part in our transformation,"* what could that open for you?

- What would happen to any shame or judgments you have of yourself or others?

- What freedom might be available from this perspective?

Now, write a forgiveness letter to everyone you would like to forgive, even if you're not sure that you are ready to forgive them. You might or might not send these letters, so the invitation is to "get it all out."

Place the letter(s) under your pillow when you go to sleep tonight and ask for guidance from your dreams. Read the letter tomorrow and decide if you want to edit it, send it, or hold on to it.

Remember, the choice is yours. We are not suggesting you "pretend" to forgive if it does not feel authentic for you now.

2. Un-Awakened Living Exercise: From the “clear signs of un-awakened living” list below, choose 2-3 examples of when you've done un-awakened living. Describe them to a partner if you're in a group, or do it in writing if you're alone.

Clear signs of un-awakened living:

Blaming others for our unwanted experiences

Judging people or situations as “right/wrong” or “good/bad”

Wanting to control others

Feeling superior or inferior

Experiencing resistance to what is

Getting emotionally triggered by what others are saying or doing

Needing to express opinions

Now take one of those examples, close your eyes, and without having to change it, notice how that experience feels in your body. Does it feel light and expansive, or contracted and heavy? Is this a way that you would like to feel? The key to this exercise is not to remove or fix it, it is to simply recognize how it feels when you're doing this. Remember that the key here is awareness. Now answer the following questions:

- When did you first start thinking, feeling or behaving this way?

- What were some of the conditions that created this?

- Who taught you this?

- What made *them* behave the way that they did?

- How might it feel if you didn't have those thoughts or behaviors?

- What would happen if you were to let them go?

- What are some different ways you would like to function in the world?

3. Awakened Living Exercise: From the “clear signs of awakened living” list below, choose 2-3 examples of when you've done awakened living. Describe them to a partner if you're in a group, or do it in writing if you're alone.

Clear signs of awakened living:

- Experiencing oneness and connection
- Choosing acceptance and understanding
- Feeling comfortable in our “skin”
- Understanding a deep sense of belonging
- Expressing authenticity and vulnerability
- Being unattached to outcomes
- Knowing a deep sense of purpose

Now take one of those examples, close your eyes, and without having to change it, notice how that experience feels in your body. Does it feel light and expansive, or contracted and heavy? Is this a way that you would like to feel? The key to this exercise is to simply recognize how it feels when you're doing this. Remember that the key here is awareness. Now answer the following questions:

- What were the circumstances that supported that happening?

- Who in your life is a role-model for awakened living?

- How does it feel when you are practicing awakened living?

- What would it take to have more of that in your life?

4. Power of Language Process: Make a list of 5-10 words that do not support your awakened state (should, bad, wrong, must, etc.) Choose one that you're willing to work on letting go of this week and be aware of when you find yourself speaking the chosen word. Notice how it makes you feel.

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|

