

# Chapter 8: Resolving

You've completed your Personal Story Timeline and your Relationship Memories Map or Chart. Good work! The work that you've done up to this point is already helping you to heal.

In *Chapter 6: Understanding* you were introduced to the bridge of pain and grief versus the bridge of love and gratitude. Through the process of resolving, you can choose to build the bridge of love and gratitude after the loss of a loving relationship.

In an adversarial relationship, such as the loss of trust one will experience because of abuse, you will want to set the intention to break down the wall of pain and grief, let go of the built-up resentment and animosity and let that person go, trusting that they too will find their own healing in their own way.

## Ho'oponopono

Dr. Joe Vitale brought light to Dr. Ihaleakala Hew Len's experience of miraculously turning around a state hospital, when he and Dr. Len co-authored the book *Zero Limits* in 2007. Dr. Len tells the story of his time working at a state hospital for the criminally-ill in Hawaii and curing the patients by practicing ho'oponopono (ho' o po no po no), which is an ancient forgiveness practice.

Each day he would go through the patient files and repeat the words "I love you" and "I am sorry". He continued this practice day after day many years – reviewing the patient files and repeating his love and apologies. Over a period of 4 years, the hospital transformed. Employees who hated going to work and would often call in sick, eventually loved their job and were eager to be there. Reportedly, within four years all the patients were healed. It's a remarkable story of love and forgiveness.

Dr. Len said, "The only purpose in your life and mine is the restoration of our Identity—our Mind—back to its original ...of purity of heart ... through nonstop cleaning."

The common words of the ho'oponopono prayer are, "I'm sorry. Please forgive me. Thank you. I love you." There is much more to this ancient Hawaiian practice but for our purposes we will be using a modified version of this standard supplication as a framework for resolving grief.

Ho'oponopono  
I'm Sorry. Please forgive me.  
Thank you.  
I love you.

## Expressing Your Pain

During the discovery process, you recorded many memories of your relationship with the central person (or in some cases, thing) of your loss, whether that loss was divorce, death, abuse, loss of job, loss of health or any other loss. As you review these memories, you will discover things that you wish you could thank them for, things that you wish you could ask forgiveness for, things that you need to forgive them for, expressions of regret and expressions of love that you would like to communicate. These items of love, forgiveness, regrets, and gratitude are the rocks and pebbles that make up the boulder of your grief.

Because of your loss, you may feel like you no longer have an outlet for communicating your thoughts and feelings. In the *Resolving* phase, you'll discover an outlet for that expression. In a loving and close relationship, there will be things that you wish that you could tell them now. There will be love and pain to express. In a painful relationship, there will be unexpressed feelings that are still festering within you. It's important that you have a vehicle for this expression.

# Assignment: Communications Chart

Your next step is to complete the communications chart. As you review your Relationship Memories Map or Chart, make a list of the *I'm Sorry for...*, *I Forgive You for...*, *Thank You for...* and *I Love You...*. A worksheet is provided to help you sort through these reflections. Short phrases that capture your thoughts will work best. For example, in the *Thank You for...* column you may list, "being at graduation" or simply "graduation." You'll have an opportunity to expand on the thought later. Your list does not need to be contained to one page.

In some cases, you may not have something for every column but in most cases you will. Your Unrealized Expectations may go under *I'm Sorry for...*, such as "I'm sorry we were never able to go on that trip you wanted to go on." Or it may fall under *I Love You*, such as "I would have loved to go on that trip you wanted to go on." You choose what feels best for you.

Communications Chart			
I'm Sorry for...	I Forgive You for...	Thank You for...	I Love You...

# Communications Chart

I'm Sorry for...	I Forgive You for...	Thank You for...	I Love You...

# A Word About Forgiveness

Forgiving others and asking for forgiveness can feel tricky or hard. Perhaps you understand the idea expressed here by T.D. Jakes, “I think the first step is to understand that forgiveness does not exonerate the perpetrator. Forgiveness liberates the victim. It’s a gift you give yourself.”

Forgiveness feels like a gift we’re giving the person we’re forgiving. As you understand forgiveness at a deeper level you understand that you’re giving a gift to yourself by releasing the unforgiveness, resentment and pain. The gift of forgiveness is particularly challenging, especially if you’ve experienced abuse on any level.

Forgiving a loved one may feel freeing and honoring to you. You may feel comfort in the idea that you can offer that forgiveness now. However, do not let the comfort of a promised forgiveness cause you to feel like you can’t acknowledge and express the pain of the hurt at the time of injury. It’s not *either/or*; it’s *both*. In other words, it’s not *either* I acknowledge the pain, *or* I forgive; instead, it’s, I acknowledge the pain *and* I choose to forgive. Acknowledging and expressing your pain and expressing forgiveness will eventually release the triggering emotions of an event and allow you to feel that forgiveness fully in your heart and not just in your head.

Many times, acknowledging that there was both love *and* pain in a loving relationship is the most challenging part of resolving, especially after they have departed this life. Remember that recognizing the full range of experiences and feelings in any relationship is an essential piece in resolving. You cannot resolve what you are unwilling to see. And in any close relationship, love, gratitude, injury, and pain will be present.

An adversarial relationship will offer its own unique forgiveness challenges. On some level, you may understand that forgiveness is not letting them off the hook for the wrongs they have done, but instead it’s letting yourself off the hook of carrying the hurt and pain. However, as attractive as being able to set down that hurt and pain may appear, don’t shortchange the process by believing that just offering a spoken forgiveness will lift it all from your heart. It is not necessary to your healing to force an intellectual forgiveness, but it is necessary that you open your heart to the possibility of forgiveness.

Best-selling Author Carol Tuttle wrote in her book, *Modern Chakra Guide*, “Forgiveness is not a mental act, but a byproduct of emotionally letting go of the pain, hurt, and wounds that have been carried throughout your life. When this emotional shift takes place, your heart chakra opens the energy of forgiveness in you and your mind is opened up to a higher awareness. You become aware that those who hurt you were also hurt.”

Forgiveness may start as a mental act. Then through the mental act you are setting an intention to forgive. Intentions are powerful and overtime you will feel the healing balm of forgiveness. True forgiveness comes from your higher self as you do the work of healing.

# Opportunity Assignment: Letter of Forgiveness, Gratitude and Love

Now you are ready to write a Letter of Forgiveness, Love and Gratitude, to communicate everything that you've discovered to start resolving and therefore to start your healing process.

Open your heart to the intention of expressing and sharing the important elements that will bring you to greater resolution and recovery.

## Instructions:

1. Set aside an hour and find a quiet place without distractions.
2. Close your eyes, put your hand on your heart and take 3-5 deep breaths as you breathe into your heart and access your higher self.
3. Open your eyes, and take another deep, cleansing breath as you refer to your Communications Chart to help guide you through writing.
4. Start your letter by addressing the person, such as *Dear Dad*.
5. You may add a few words of introduction.
6. Then referring to the *I'm Sorry for* section of your chart, begin expressing your apologies without excuse.
7. Then referring to the *I Forgive You for* section, begin expressing your forgiveness without excuse. For example, say "I forgive you for not showing up for my wedding" instead of "I forgive you for not showing up for my wedding, but I know it was hard for you." If you're not ready to say, "I forgive you for...", say something like "I am willing to open my heart to the idea of forgiving you for..." If you have questions about this, please ask.
8. Continue to the *Thank You for*
9. And lastly, express your I Love You statements.
10. Conclude your letter with any other communication you wish to express, such as I miss you.
11. Close your letter.
12. Share your letter with your grief coach. Reading your letter out loud to a compassionate witness is an important element of the power of this letter to start the healing process. First, there is healing that takes place when you use your voice. Second, you will have expressed yourself to another person who stands in proxy for the person you wrote the letter to.

Most of the time your letter will have all four elements from the Communications Chart. However, this may not be the case always. Talk to your grief coach about exceptions.

# Resolution

Having completed your letter and read your letter aloud, you have made significant progress in your own healing. Congratulations on putting forth the effort, following through and giving this mighty gift to yourself.

You may or may not feel a shift in the energy through this process. It's ok, whether you did or didn't. Regardless, the shifts are happening. Have faith in the process of healing.

As memories or concerns about the loss come up in your mind in the coming weeks, remind yourself of the work that you did and that you've offered your forgiveness and love. Rather than ruminate on past mistakes or hurts, express yourself again with simple statements of reminder. *I'm sorry...I forgive you...Thank you...I love you...* Overtime, you will continue to feel the energy shift in your story of loss as you focus on these simple statements. The emotions will diffuse until eventually you will feel the peace of resolution.

If at any time you remember something you wished you had included in your original Letter of Forgiveness, Gratitude and Love, simply write an additional letter to express these feelings.