

The Spiritual Practice of Forgiveness

Every night before going to sleep or every morning before engaging in your various tasks, projects or interactions with others, review your life, recall who you feel has hurt or betrayed you and toward whom you are still holding resentment or anger. Then, find a place to say this out loud:

YOU, my ETERNAL FRIEND, Yud Hey Vav Hey, Shechinah, Adonai (or whatever name you give to the God or the spiritual energy of the universe), THE POWER OF TRANSFORMATION AND HEALING IN THE UNIVERSE, WITNESS now **that**:

I forgive anyone who hurt or upset me or who offended me

.....by damaging my body, my property, my reputation, hurting my feelings, shaming me, undermining my friendships or hurting my income or scaring me or making me angry or damaging people that I love — whether by accident or purposely — with words, deeds, thoughts, or attitudes. **I will continue to fight against social and economic institutions that oppress me or others, or hurt the earth's life-support system, but I will not do so with hatred in my heart but only love for those who have been wounded and empathy for those who have unknowingly acted unjustly or destructively.**

I think particularly of _____ (fill in here anyone in your life who may have done some of the above). I forgive (name each person) and every person who has hurt or upset me, whether or not I can remember them at this moment.

May no one be punished because of me. May no one suffer from karmic consequences for hurting or upsetting me.

Help me, Eternal Friend, the spiritual energy of the universe, to keep from offending You and others. Whatever sins I have committed, blot out, please, in Your abundant kindness, and spare me suffering or harmful illnesses. Help me become aware of the ways I may have unintentionally or intentionally hurt others, and please give me guidance and strength to rectify those hurts — and to develop the sensitivity to not continue acting in a hurtful way. Let me forgive others — let me forgive myself — but also let me change in ways that make it easy for me to avoid paths of hurtfulness to others.

I seek peace, let me BE peace. ***I seek justice, let me be just. ***I seek a world of kindness, let me be kind. ***I seek a world of generosity, let me be generous with all that I have and to everyone I encounter in my life and to those whom I do not encounter but who need my help. ***I seek a world of sharing, let me share all that I have. ***I seek a world of love — let me be loving beyond all reason, beyond all normal expectation, beyond all societal frameworks that tell me how much love is “normal,” — beyond all fear that giving too much love will leave me with too little. Let me be overflowing with love toward others.

And let me be open, aware, sensitive and receptive to all the love that is already coming to me: *** the love of people I know, ***the love of the universe that pours through all being and sustains life on this planet (also known as the love of God/dess for all Her creatures*** the love that is part of the human condition--the accumulated love of past generations that flows through and is embodied in the language, music, literature, art, agriculture & recipes for cooking or preparing food, technology, religions, agriculture, and family heritages that have been passed on to me and to us. Let me pass that love on to the next generations in an even fuller and more conscious way.

I commit to act lovingly in all my interactions, and to use some of my energy to participate in activities aimed at tikkun: transforming and healing our society and saving human and animal life on the planet. So this week or next I will _____ (fill in something concrete you will do to bring any part of the intentions you have just expressed come to fruition or at least start the path toward becoming the kind of person you really want to be).

Source of goodness and love in the universe, let me be alive to all the goodness that surrounds me. And let that awareness of the goodness and love of the universe be my shield and protector. And let it give me the energy I need to engage in the struggles that must take place to transform our economic, religious, and political systems, our media and our educational systems, our science and our technology, our legal system and our government, and all other practices and institutions including my own profession and work place, so that they reward and give sustenance to (rather than undermine) our capacities for love, kindness, generosity, and compassion. And let me bring to these struggles a spirit of generosity, love, forgiveness, and open-heartedness.

Hear the words of my mouth and may the meditations of my heart find acceptance before You, Eternal Friend, who protects and frees me. Amen.

Composed for Beyt Tikkun Synagogue-Without-Walls www.beyttikkun.org by RabbiLerner.Tikkun@gmail.com --inspired by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi (z'l) We invite you to join Beyt Tikkun as a member www.beyttikkun.org. And/or please also join our interfaith and secular-humanist-and-atheist-welcoming NSP--Network of Spiritual Progressives at To get the full overview of the worldview we are promoting, please read Rabbi Lerner's 2019 book *Revolutionary Love* which provides a strategy to overcome the selfishness and materialism of our society and create a society based on caring-for-each-other and caring for the earth. Please feel free also to circulate this Forgiveness Practice to Jews and non-Jews who are open to developing a regular spiritual practice of forgiveness, and invite them to adapt it in anyway that works best for them, plus invite them too to join the interfaith and secular-humanist-and-atheist-welcoming Network of Spiritual Progressives at www.spiritualprogressivs.org. To contact Rabbi Lerner go to rabbilerner.tikkun@gmail.com