



Ho'oponopono Meditation

Repentance, Forgiveness, Gratitude and Love. The forces at work with the Ho'oponopono, though few in number, hold immense power to heal.

What is it and what is the purpose?

Ho'oponopono (pronounced [HO-oh-po-no-po-no](#)) is a beautiful Hawaiian practice of forgiveness and restoration of harmony. The word *ho'oponopono* can be translated as "to restore balance" or "to make things right again." At its essence, it invites us to ask, "Who am I?" and to move beyond stored memories in order to reconnect with our True Self.

"The main purpose of this process is to discover the Divinity within one's self. Ho'oponopono is a profound gift which allows one to develop a working relationship with the Divinity within and learn to ask that in each moment, our errors in thought, word, deed or action be cleansed. The process is essentially about freedom, complete freedom from the past." -Morrnah Nalamaku Simeona

Miracle of the Ho'oponopono

There is a well-known story associated with Dr. Ihaleakala Hew Len, often shared in discussions of Ho'oponopono, in which he worked with a ward of criminally insane patients and reportedly saw significant improvements in their condition without direct, conventional therapeutic contact. In this account, the focus is placed on his own inner process of Ho'oponopono as the means of healing.

Ho'oponopono is understood as a practice of cleansing and restoring balance within one's own consciousness. Through its process, individuals work with awareness of unconscious fear, emotional imprints, and conditioning that may no longer be serving them. In doing so, the practice invites a release of inner disturbance and a return to a more connected state of love and presence.

From this perspective, Ho'oponopono becomes a pathway for inner reconciliation –supporting a felt sense of peace, harmony, and reconnection with what many describe as Divine Source.

A Simple Yet Profound Practice.

To practice Ho'oponopono meditation, begin by gently closing your eyes and taking several slow, steady breaths to settle your awareness. You may then bring to mind a situation, thought, or feeling you feel ready to work with – something you are willing to take full inner responsibility for, in the spirit of self-inquiry rather than blame.

When you feel ready, softly repeat the following phrases in a steady rhythm:

"I'm sorry. Please forgive me. Thank you. I love you."

You can repeat this cycle for several minutes, allowing the words to move through you without forcing meaning or analysis.

After completing the repetition, return to your natural breath and allow a few moments of quiet stillness. Notice any shifts in your internal state without trying to change or interpret them.

When it feels complete, gently open your eyes, take a final breath, and simply observe how you feel in this moment.

Breakdown of the Phrases

Step 1: Repentance - I'm sorry

It is common to resist the idea that we may have any responsibility for the difficulties we experience, especially when they appear to originate outside of ourselves. Yet as we begin to turn inward and explore our inner world, we can start to recognize the extent to which our own mind holds, replays, and reinforces painful experiences.

From this perspective, we begin to see ourselves as participants in our inner reality – where thoughts, memories, and emotional imprints shape how life is experienced moment to moment. As awareness grows, there can be a natural softening into acknowledgement of this inner role, along with a sense of sincerity and humility.

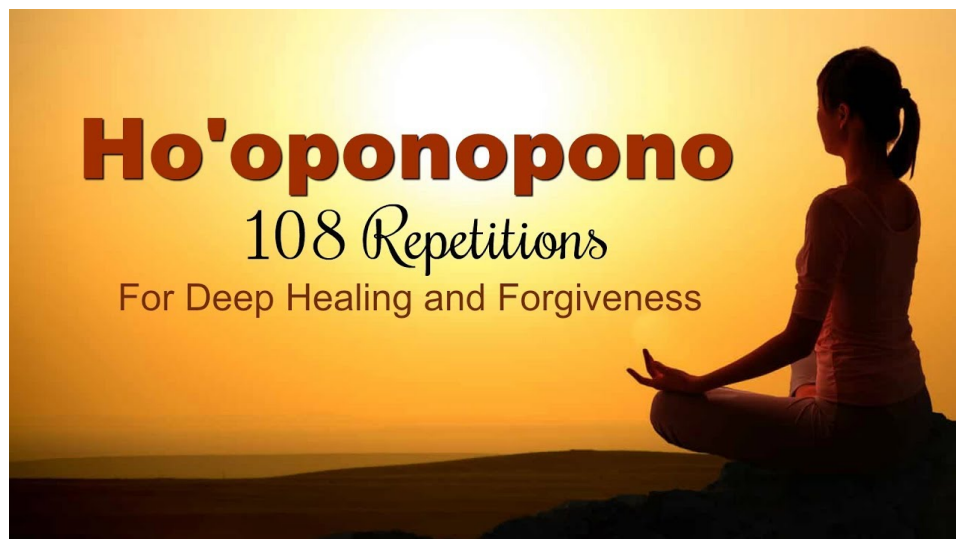
From here, the practice begins simply with the words: "I'm sorry."

That alone is enough. Spoken or repeated gently, it serves as an opening of awareness and acceptance.

As familiarity with the process develops, you may choose to bring more specificity into the phrase, such as:

"I accept responsibility for this experience in my awareness, and I'm sorry for whatever within my consciousness has contributed to how it is showing up for me."

The intention is not self-blame, but a deeper willingness to meet experience with honesty, presence, and inner willingness to restore balance.



Step 2: Forgiveness - Please forgive me

Before we can truly practice forgiveness, it is important to understand what forgiveness is—and what it is not. Many people assume forgiveness means excusing harmful behaviour, granting absolution, or denying that pain occurred. In this view, emotional wounds are often bypassed rather than acknowledged, which can leave underlying hurt unresolved.

True forgiveness does not deny pain or wrongdoing. Instead, it begins with an honest recognition of what has been experienced and the impact it has had on us. From there, forgiveness becomes a process of creating space for healing and gradually loosening the grip that past experiences hold within our inner world.

At its core, forgiveness involves a shift in how we relate to our internal experience. While events may arise externally, the ongoing imprint of those events is carried within the mind and body until it is consciously witnessed and released. In this sense, forgiveness is less about condoning what happened and more about freeing ourselves from being bound to it.

Within Ho'oponopono, this understanding is taken further. The practice invites us to recognize that we participate in our experience through perception and internal patterning, and that healing arises through inner awareness and transformation. As perception shifts, so too does the way we relate to ourselves, others, and the world around us.

Forgiveness in this context is not passive or dismissive. It is a conscious act of intention and attention that asks us to meet our inner experience with honesty, compassion, and responsibility.

Over time, the focus often shifts from who we are asking forgiveness from to the simple willingness to engage in the process itself: "Please forgive me."

While forgiveness may initially feel directed outward, Ho'oponopono gently turns this inward as well. We begin to recognize and release the ways we have carried pain, remained disconnected, or held suffering unconsciously.

You may feel drawn to repeat the phrase many times. Allow it to be spoken slowly and sincerely, as often as needed. With time, it becomes less of a repetition and more of a lived experience of softening, release, and inner reconciliation.

Step 3: Gratitude - Thank you

As you move into step three, begin allowing the feeling of gratitude to gently arise within you. Rather than forcing the emotion, simply create space for it. Gratitude often emerges naturally as we soften, release resistance, and reconnect with ourselves more compassionately.

Begin saying, "Thank you."

Thank whatever within you has begun to soften and heal. Thank the part of you that was willing to look inward. Thank your body for carrying you through pain and experience. Thank your heart for remaining open despite hurt. Thank your mind for its attempts to protect you, even when those protections no longer served you. Thank your Higher Self, Divine Source, Spirit, or whatever sacred connection resonates most deeply for you.

You may also choose to thank the experience itself – not because the pain was desirable, but because it revealed something needing healing, awareness, or transformation within you.

Allow gratitude to move through you slowly and sincerely. Let it settle into your breath, your body, and your awareness. Continue repeating "Thank you" for as long as you feel guided, noticing how gratitude can begin shifting the emotional and energetic state within you.

Over time, gratitude becomes more than words; it becomes a state of openness that creates space for peace, reconciliation, and deeper inner freedom.

Step 4: Love - I love you

Finally, move into the last phrase: "I love you."

Allow these words to be more than a statement – let them become an experience. Speak them gently to yourself, to the parts of you that feel whole, and especially to the parts that still carry pain, fear, shame, or sorrow. Offer love to your body for all it has endured and all it continues to do for you each day. Offer love to your breath, to the air sustaining you, and to the healing process unfolding within you.

You may also extend these words outward – to the people you care about, to the experiences that shaped you, to your passions, your growth, and even to the challenges that have invited you deeper into self-awareness and transformation.

Within Ho’oponopono, love is not viewed as weakness or avoidance; it is understood as a restoring force. Love softens what has become hardened within us. It reaches into the places where pain, grief, resentment, and fear have been held and gently begins to transform them.

As you continue repeating, “I love you,” allow yourself to fully receive the words as well as offer them. Let love move through your forgiveness, your gratitude, your healing, and your becoming. Over time, this practice can help cultivate a deeper sense of inner safety, compassion, connection, and peace.

“The only enemy is the memory playing that you experience as a judgement, anger, resentment, hate, annoyance... The Ho’oponopono is about... saying to the memory that replays the anger, I love, thank you for showing up and giving me one more chance to free you.” -Len



Traditional Ho'oponopono in Hawaiian Culture

Traditional Ho'oponopono is an Indigenous Hawaiian practice of restoring balance, harmony, and right relationship within families and communities. The word *ho'oponopono* literally means “to make right” or “to restore balance,” from *ho'o* (to cause or make) and *pono* (rightness, harmony, integrity, alignment). In its original form, it was not a personal mantra practice, but a structured, communal healing process guided by an elder or respected kahuna.

Ho'oponopono was traditionally used when conflict, tension, illness, or disruption arose within a family system. It was understood that emotional, relational, and even physical imbalance could emerge when *pono* had been disturbed. The purpose of the process was to bring all parts of the family or group back into alignment through truth-telling, accountability, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

The practice typically began with a prayer or invocation, calling upon a higher spiritual presence to support the process. From there, participants were guided into open and honest communication, where grievances, misunderstandings, or hidden resentments could be spoken aloud in a safe, structured way. Each person was given space to acknowledge their part in the disharmony, often through expressions such as “*E kala mai ia'u*” (forgive me) and “*Mahalo*” (thank you), reflecting humility, responsibility, and gratitude.

Forgiveness within this process was central, but it was not symbolic or rushed. It was relational and reciprocal—something that unfolded through dialogue, emotional expression, and mutual understanding. Phrases such as “*E kala aku au*” (I forgive you / I release you) were spoken as part of the process of letting go of grievance and restoring connection. The emphasis remained on clearing relational disturbance so that *pono*—balance and right relationship—could be restored.

Unlike modern adaptations, traditional Ho'oponopono did not rely on a fixed repetition of phrases such as “I'm sorry, please forgive me, thank you, I love you.” Instead, language emerged naturally within the guided process. Words of apology, forgiveness, gratitude, and reconciliation were spoken as needed within the lived context of the healing work.

The process would often conclude with shared acknowledgment that the issue had been resolved, followed by a closing prayer or symbolic act of completion. In this way, Ho'oponopono functioned as both a psychological and spiritual practice of

reconciliation—restoring harmony not only between individuals, but within the wider family and ancestral line.

At its core, traditional Ho'oponopono reflects a deeply relational worldview: healing is not isolated or individual, but something that happens through reconnection, honesty, responsibility, and the restoration of *pono* within the whole system.

Modern and Traditional Context

Modern Ho'oponopono, often expressed through the four phrases, is an adaptation that shifts the focus from communal reconciliation to individual inner clearing. While traditional Ho'oponopono is relational and collective, the modern form is more introspective, using repetition as a way of engaging awareness, responsibility, and inner release.

Both approaches share a common essence: the restoration of balance, the clearing of emotional disturbance, and the return to a more harmonious state of being.

Ho'oponopono, in both its traditional and modern expressions, invites a movement from separation toward reconnection. Whether practiced through dialogue, ritual, or inner repetition, it points toward the same possibility: that healing arises through awareness, responsibility, forgiveness, gratitude, and love.

In this way, the practice is not about fixing what is broken, but about remembering what has always been whole.

Taking it deeper: Connecting with Divinity

Many people struggle with the idea of religion or with their relationship to God or a Higher Power, often because of past experiences, beliefs, or feelings of disconnection. Ho'oponopono offers a different perspective – one that invites us to recognize a Divine presence within ourselves, however we personally understand or experience it.

Rather than focusing on external doctrine, the practice encourages an inner connection with wisdom, love, and consciousness. Through reconnecting with this inner Divinity, many people experience greater clarity, healing, inspiration, and personal growth.

Within Ho'oponopono teachings, there is often discussion of returning to "zero" – a state of inner stillness and openness beyond the memories, conditioning, and emotional patterns that create suffering and limitation. From this place, we become more receptive to insight, intuition, peace, and guidance.

The following videos explore these concepts further, including how Ho'oponopono practitioners work toward releasing memories and returning to a state of openness where inspiration and healing can emerge more freely.

The first interview was done in the 1986 with Mornah and Ihaleakala's,



the second was recorded many years later with Ihaleakala.

