



# The Ho'oponopono Prayer

## What is Ho'oponopono

It is an ancient Hawaiian practice for forgiveness and reconciliation, of repairing your relationships, with others, with ancestors, with your god (if you have one), with the earth, or just with yourself. It can play a role in your relationships and your own physical and emotional healing when you speak and manifest into your life the four restorative principles of: repentance, forgiveness, gratitude, and love.

The partners or families can work through their problems together using the simple intentions captured by Ho'oponopono, which can help repair their relationships. Participants can build up to releasing each other from the burden of guilt, blame and other negative emotions by each speaking and channelling the emotional intention toward the other of: "I am sorry. Forgive me. Thank you. I love you."

Whilst Ho'oponopono is the act of offering repentance, forgiveness, gratitude and love together, and each towards the other, you can also practice this just with and toward yourself.

## Philosophy behind Ho'oponopono

The philosophy behind this practice is that we are all flawed and each of us are, at least to some degree, responsible for what manifests in our reality. And we are 100% responsible for how we react to and interpret what happens to us. We need to own our feelings, experiences and reactions and take responsibility for what transpires in our relationships. This does not mean holding on to blame or guilt ourselves, or expecting the other to hold on to blame and guilt, but to forgive is to release both the other and the self of blame and guilt. As these negative emotions tend to have destructive consequences if not addressed, developing an intention of Ho'oponopono can start the healing process.

When we want to achieve reconciliation and to repair a relationship that is important to us, taking responsibility for our experience means that we can legitimately say to the other: "I am sorry. Forgive me. Thank you. I love you." and the concepts of apportioning blame and guilt become things of the past replaced with mutual respect, understanding, trust, forgiveness and love.

## Ho'oponopono with Others

The healing, reconciliation, repair, release and restoration that comes from engaging in Ho'oponopono as a couple or family can take time to positively affect the relationships and lives of those involved. It is not a quick-fix, although you and your partner/family member may feel some emotional benefits straight away as the spoken intention toward self and others is profoundly beautiful and can be healing in and of itself. As all parties develop their ability to put into practice the four principles in their interactions with the other(s) and move away from toxic blame and recriminations, the healing benefits will start to manifest.

A ceremony of Ho'oponopono might be planned when each member of the couple or family are ready, where specially prepared words can be shared, with forgiveness and love flowing



both ways and the burden of negative emotions are symbolically released for all. This can be marked with a special meal or feast, perhaps with flowers or gifts or in whatever way seems appropriate to those involved. It is important not to rush into a ceremony before everyone is ready but to allow the process to unfold naturally.

### **Ho'oponopono By Yourself**

When the other person(s) is not yet ready, it is possible to reflect on Ho'oponopono alone in order to remind yourself that you deserve your own forgiveness, gratitude and love, and to remind yourself that this is your intention toward your partner or family member(s) and the guiding principles governing your interactions with them. With time your partner or family member(s) may come to emotionally understand your intention and be ready to engage with you in the practice of Ho'oponopono so you can, together, take your relationship towards reconciliation, repair, release and restoration.

In addition to enacting Ho'oponopono towards your loved one(s), you can go over the words silently to yourself in relation to a specific relationship, or in relation to your past, your relationship with the earth or just with your relationship to yourself. You could sit quietly for a few minutes to reflect and meditate upon the words: "I am sorry. Forgive me. Thank you. I love you." directed towards yourself. You can perhaps say the words out loud, or in front of a mirror, or write them down in a journal, whatever seems right for you.

### **Limitations of Ho'oponopono**

Ho'oponopono, as adopted and adapted into Western culture, is not a complete antidote to difficulties in relationships, we may still need professional guidance in individual and/or couples/family therapy. However, it can be profoundly healing in a damaged relationship and the start of a process that leads to eventual reconciliation, repair, release and restoration.

### **Remember ...**

You are allowed to move forward, to forgive and be forgiven, to be released from the past and from the burden of blame and guilt. The four guiding principles of Ho'oponopono: repentance, forgiveness, gratitude, and love can help you move your relationships away from a past-focus and towards a present-focus, which is the place from where you can move forward together in mutual forgiveness, gratitude and love.

*I am sorry. Forgive me. Thank you. I love you.*

