

## **Ho'oponopono (ho-o-pono-pono) is an ancient Hawaiian practice of reconciliation and forgiveness (Wikipedia)**

More than thirty years ago in Hawaii, at the Hawaii State Hospital, there was a special ward, a clinic for mentally ill criminals. People who had committed extremely serious crimes were assigned there, either because they had a very deep mental disorder, or because they needed to be checked to see if they were sane enough to stand trial. They had committed murder, rape, kidnapping or other such crimes. According to a nurse who worked there in those years, the place was so bleak that not even the paint could stick to the walls, everything was decaying, terrifying, repulsive. No day would pass without a patient-inmate attacking another inmate or a member of the staff.

The people working there were so frightened that they would walk close to the walls if they saw an inmate coming their way in a corridor, even though they were all shackled, all the time –but more than once this wouldn't stop an aggression. The inmates would never be brought outside to get fresh air because of their relentlessly threatening attitude. The scarcity of staff was a chronic occurrence. Nurses, wardens, employees would prefer to be on sick-leave most of the time in order not to confront such a depressive and dangerous environment.

Enters Dr. Hew Len

One day, a newly appointed clinical psychologist, a Dr. Ihaleakala Hew Len, arrived at the ward. The nurses rolled their eyes, bracing themselves for one more guy that was going to bug them with new theories and proposals to fix the horrid situation, who would walk away as soon as things became unpleasant, usually around a month later. However, this new doctor wouldn't do anything like that. Actually he didn't seem to be doing anything in particular, except just coming in and being always cheerful and smiling, in a very natural, relaxed way. He wasn't even particularly early in arriving every morning. From time to time he would ask for the files of the inmates.

He never tried to see them personally. Apparently he just sat in an office, looked at their files, and to members of the staff who showed an interest he would tell them about a weird thing called Ho'oponopono. Little by little things started to change in the hospital. One day somebody would try again to paint those walls and they actually stayed painted, making the

environment more palatable. The gardens started being taken care of, some tennis courts were repaired and some prisoners who, until that time, were never allowed to go outside, started playing tennis with the staff. Other prisoners were no longer shackled, or would receive less heavy pharmacological drugs. More and more obtained permission to go outside unshackled, without causing trouble to the hospital's employees.

Eventually, the atmosphere changed so much that the staff no longer needed sick leave. Actually, more people than were required now wished to work there. Prisoners started gradually to be released. Dr. Hew Len worked there close to four years. In the end, there remained only a couple of inmates that were relocated somewhere else and the clinic for the mentally insane criminals had to close.

What did Dr. Hew Len do to the patients? How did he treat them that the results were so spectacular? He didn't do anything. Not a thing to them nor with them, except looking at their files. He only tried to heal himself, applying an old, traditional community problem-solving system from Hawaii, called Ho'oponopono, adapted to individuals by his Teacher, the late Hawaiian sage Morrnah Nalamaku Simeona. And what was he doing to himself? In his own words: "I was simply healing the part of me that created them".

He would sit in his office and look at the patients' files. While perusing them, he would feel something, a pain, an empathy. Then he started the healing on himself, taking full responsibility for what was going on with a given patient. That's how those people got better, because their doctor had the strange view that it was himself who needed the healing, not them.

Ho'oponopono simply put, is based on the knowledge that anything you perceive or anything that happens to you, the entire world where you live is your own creation and thus, it is entirely your responsibility. A hundred percent, no exceptions.

Your boss is a tyrant? It's your responsibility. Your children are not good students? It's your responsibility. There are wars and you feel bad because you are a good person, a pacifist? The war is your responsibility. You see that children around the world are hungry and malnourished if not starving? Their want is your responsibility. No exceptions. Literally, the world is your world, it is your creation. As Dr. Hew Len points out: *'didn't you notice that whenever you experience a problem you are there?'*

'It's your responsibility' doesn't mean it's your fault. It means that you are responsible for healing yourself in order to heal whatever or whoever it is that appears to you as a problem.

It might sound crazy, or just plain metaphorical, that the world is your creation. But if you look carefully, you will realise that whatever you call the world and perceive as the world is your world, it is the projection of your own mind. If you go to a party you can see how in the same place, with the same light, the same people, the same food, drink, music and atmosphere, some will enjoy themselves while others will be bored, some will be over enthusiastic and some depressed, some will be talkative and others will be silent. The "out there" for every one of them seems the same, but if one were to connect their brains to machines immediately it would show how different areas of the brain coming alive, how different perceptions are from one person to the next. So even if they apparently share it, the "out there" is not the same for them, let alone their inner world, their emotions.

How do you heal yourself with Ho'oponopono? Three steps:

- by recognising that whatever comes to you is your creation, the outcome of bad memories buried in you mind;
- by regretting whatever errors of body, speech and mind caused those bad memories,
- and by requesting Divine Intelligence within yourself to release those memories, to set you free. Then, of course, you say 'Thank You'.

Dr. Hew Len himself uses the simplest of the formulas from Ho'oponopono. Whenever a matter arises and they arise incessantly– addressing the Divine within you, you only have to say:

***'I love You, I'm sorry, Please forgive me. Thank You.'***

It has already been shown that Ho'oponopono can bring about big changes; the healing of an entire ward of insane criminals seems a far greater task than any of our personal troubles. There are, no doubt, many testimonies from practitioners. Dr. Hew Len says, however, this is not fast food. The cleaning of memories requires a lot of concentration and persistence and is an unending job. But the result is what he calls *Zero Limits*, a state where one is free from the past, and suffused with Divine Intelligence and love.

(Adapted from an article by Rosario Montenegro), submitted by Barbara Tomkinson.

**Let Consciousness be your guide** is a Governing Concept worthy of adoption by anyone seeking guidance on the spiritual journey of life. 'LET' is an important first word, worthy of meditation and if we examine the word in the same spirit in which the Sanskrit language was divined, the spirit of the word is revealed. 'L' is representative of all linking and joining together and symbolises love. The 'E' is the symbol for energy and the field of life force, of which we are but modifications. The 'T' is the crossing place of two lines of free flowing energy which rotate and fold into a finite, and when viewed as the formal aspect of reality, is representative of Truth.

Energy and form flow together, from creative free spirit to its manifestation in the world. The knowledge and comprehension of this relationship arises out of the wisdom of *Jnana Yoga*. *Bhakti* and *Jnana* have a special relationship at the heart of *Yoga* and the following short meditation will be a helpful reminder.

Centring at Head Level (*Ajna*), meditate of the word Truth and reflect on its meaning. Truth is the formal aspect of reality; truth is whole and linked to every other truth and if you can tell the truth about even a small thing that is God speaking. Then Heart centred (*Anahata*), meditate on the word Love and feel for the love which is all embracing. Then in the light of consciousness, test your truth; there should be no disharmony between the way you think and the way you feel. At the belly level (*Manipura*), meditate on the word Good and feel for the highest Good which is to be your direction in life. Then as a flowing *Mantra*, and aware of each appropriate centre, from head to belly, repeat the words; True Love is Good and then ascending, it's Good to Love Truth. These three words ring true at every level from the highest to the lowest and will help to co-ordinate and unify the three levels of Head, Heart and Will.

Empirical knowledge is gained from time tested experiences in the physical world, and spiritual or intuitional knowledge comes from within. Intuition; the development of inner Self teaching power is the aim of yoga practice, and the ability to test the truth of each moment, against the heartfelt awareness of the infinite field of life. Truth is the form of love and the art of Yoga is expressing this highest Good. These concepts are not to be wrestled with intellectually as they arise from a simple faith and belief in the Divine Reality that underlies existence.

We are all aware when the words on the tongue are out of phase with what is felt in the heart. The yogi works to unify Mind, Heart and Will and to clarify what is truly felt before action is taken. There is a Buddhist belief that

creation is the crystallisation of consciousness, that is the manifestation of what is in the Mind and Heart of God. We all have feeling; God has it infinitely; whatever awareness we have, God's awareness is infinite; He knows "All" and "Each". For Consciousness to be the guide we have to be able to make clear and act upon the wisdom that lies within.  
*Gordon and Pam*

***"We are not going to change the whole world, but we can change ourselves and feel free as birds. We can be serene even in the midst of calamities and by our serenity, make others more tranquil.***

***Serenity is contagious. If we smile at someone, he or she will smile back. And a smile costs nothing. We should plague everyone with joy. If we are to die in a minute, why not die happily, laughing?"***  
***(136-137)***

Swami Satchidananda, The Yoga Sutras



**Self Healing** becomes a possibility when the yoga technique of realignment occurs. This realignment is the union between *purusha* that is the individual soul in its purest form and its primordial nature, or *prakrti*, the subtle template that patterns the nature of each in the temporal world. The main cause of break down is stress from a variety of causes and yoga goes a long way in alleviating that stress, with relaxation techniques and exercises that rebalance and coordinate Mind, Feeling and Will.

The Self healing that occurs when there is harmony between soul and nature is further enhanced by yoga meditation and breathing techniques. The way we breathe is influenced by variety of factors as we constantly adjust to life in the world. Soul or Solar breathing is the return to the natural and untroubled rhythm of the breath, when the mind is still and we are at peace and in harmony with our surroundings. The Sidereal or Absolute breath are terms that may help explain the transition to a form of healing breath.

Most of us have experimented with, or seen that when particles are vibrated on a flat surface, they form patterns; which is not dissimilar to the energy patterns that characterise all things in nature. In a well toned body we are in tune with the energy pattern that ensures our perfect health and if we extend our awareness to the sound geometry of the entire universe and beyond, it is expressed in the all inclusive sound of the mystical *OM....*

Sound vibrations at each end of the spectrum can be either damaging or extremely subtle, well below the range of normal hearing. The word of God; that is the sound vibrations that order creation are intuited rather than heard in the normal sense of the word. They are the impulses that stimulate the heart beat and the breath and form the foundation that patterns life. The yogi and yogini who is able to attune themselves to their own unique energy pattern will go a long way in ensuring their own good health and possibly be able turn the tide against the onset of illness.

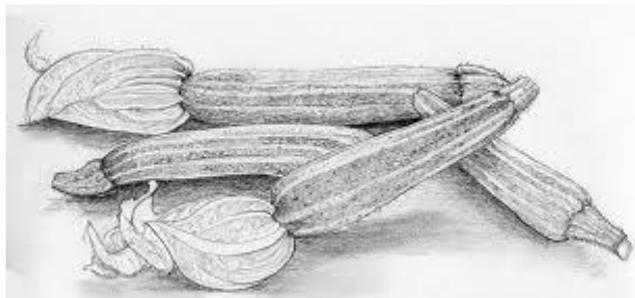
The meditation technique is far from dramatic and could not be simpler as it requires sitting for meditation in a manner that is most appropriate to your ability and watching and allowing the breath to guide you to deeper and more subtle levels of consciousness. First we quieten the breath and quieten the mind; we are reminded of a library reading room and the words Quiet Please; only this time it is inner Quiet we seek; each breath soothing and quietening the mind. The next step is the experience of Calm as the nervous system stops responding to mental impulses and the calm extends throughout the body. Once calm we are closer to a growing sense of detachment and a feeling of Peace and a level in which all life is able to work

in harmonious inter-function. It is only when we become Still that the breath is at its most subtle and we sense the subtle life enhancing rhythms conducive to our well being. It is at the level of the still Mind that we are able to stand between the two worlds of time and eternity and compare the stress related body that exists in time with its pristine purity that exists in the timeless.

It is by making real and re-adjusting to what is experienced at these subtle levels of meditation that brings change, so that in a sense we exchange new lamps for old.

Quiet, Calm, Peace and Stillness are representative of different levels of consciousness and are stepping stones into more profound levels of 'Self' understanding. (Gordon Smith, Founder Member)

## **Courgette Soup**



**Make the most of your courgettes with a simple courgette soup. Whether you're a keen grower or buy your courgettes from a shop, it's time to begin thinking about those yummy warming recipes again and it freezes well if you have a glut of courgettes to use.**

### **Ingredients:**

450g courgettes thickly sliced  
700ml vegetable stock  
1 medium onion sliced (freshly dug if poss)  
¼ teaspoon oregano  
¼ teaspoon rosemary (I use fresh out of the garden)  
salt and pepper to taste!

### **Method:**

Place all ingredients into a large saucepan and bring to boil. Reduce heat and cover and simmer for 15-20 mins. Blend in blender/processor till smooth, reheat when ready to serve, or chill and serve cold.

**The Lotus** represents spiritual enfoldment, and each chakra or principle energy centre is represented by a lotus, which when its petals are downturned, are coloured and influenced by the external world, and when bright and upturned, as toward the Sun, are bright and life enhancing. The heart lotus is central and viewed as the seat of the Divine, and when enlivened by the light of the Divine Sun, will enlighten and refine the whole body.

The lotus is symbolic of a spiritual and developmental process; and one of the most profound experiences possible during meditation, is the awakening of the heart chakra. This awakening process can be expressed through the form of a Rose, or any other natural living object of significance and beauty. Beauty is something that is felt when aware of a perfectly balanced form; and such is the nature of this heartfelt experience, that we can feel the possibility of expressing this, even before we have discovered its final form and shape.

When meditating on the heart chakra, start to feel for the beauty that is within; then refining the breath, let the light of the breath further energise the experience. This is essentially a Bhakti Yoga meditation that explores the heavenly within, and does not rely on what has gone before. Practise calm inward looking and that which you feel will gradually express itself in levels of consciousness, best described as other worldly. It is natural that at the start you will recall memories of that which you have experienced as beautiful, this in itself will be rewarding. Continue to return to centre with open heart and mind.

The mystical experience of 'awakening the heart chakra' is usually presaged by an increase of creativity, and occasionally by a visionary link that will transform consciousness and our perception of the world. This is not dissimilar to what happens when the light of the Sun, reaching down to the earth, transforms the earth with developing life-forms. It is the inner light of consciousness that crystallises the beauty within, manifesting as an unfolding Rose or Lotus.

To whatever degree we awaken to the harmony that lies within, it will not only change the way we feel, but also refine our perception of the world. The beauty that lies within, when acted upon, becomes a way of expressing the heavenly or Divine in the world. No matter what problems we have to face, there is always a best way of doing things; and by feeling for the beauty within will help modify our actions and establish beneficial karma.

The yantra at the level of the heart chakra is two interlaced triangles in the form of a six pointed star. One points upward to the heavens and the other down toward the earth. This is an important guide to a continuing meditation that can take place day or night. The inflowing breath representing the upward pointing triangle and transcendent breath, which can be consciously refined as it reaches upward toward light and consciousness. The out-breath represents a return to earth, when with a still mind we extend our experience of peace and light to the whole body.

Consciousness is a catalyst, and not unlike the light of the Sun that transforms the earth, so similarly does the light of consciousness have the power to refine, transform and heal. The interlaced triangles are a reminder of the important link between heaven and earth with the heart chakra, which when awakened is experienced uniquely in the unfolding lotus of the heart. The Chinese refer to the Secret of the Golden Flower; it is only secret in the nature of its enfolding, which is unique to each.

The lotus of the heart gives form to spirit and acts as a link between the all comprehending light of eternity and the apparently mundane world of our daily lives. The experience when it comes, if not cloaked by private purpose, holds the key to the gradual transformation of the chakras and energy systems of the body. To avoid adverse affects to the nervous system, it's important to lead the best life that you can, and be guided by the Yamas and Nyamas.

If all the world understood and practised yoga and were guided by the subtle light within, it would transform the world in which we lived and make peace and harmony between peoples and nations become a real possibility.

(Gordon Smith, Founder Member)



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