

Ho‘oponopono Reflection Journal

FitInFlow.space · A forgiveness and self-reflection exercise. Not therapy and not a treatment for any condition. Updated October 2026.

Where it comes from

Ho‘oponopono means "to set right." Traditionally it was a Native Hawaiian family process, led by an elder, with discussion, confession, release and a shared meal (Pukui; Shook). The four-phrase version below is a modern self-help adaptation, popularized from 2007.

The four phrases

I'm sorry. Owning your part, without excuses.	Please forgive me. Asking for release from others, yourself, or the divine.	Thank you. Gratitude for the lesson or the relationship.	I love you. Goodwill toward the other person and yourself.
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A simple 5-minute practice

1. Choose one small, specific situation, not your deepest hurt.
2. Sit comfortably and take a few slow breaths.
3. Bring the situation to mind without replaying every detail.
4. Repeat the four phrases slowly, silently or aloud, for a few minutes.
5. Notice your response. Resistance, sadness or relief are all normal.
6. Write one line below: what you noticed, or one small real-world step.

Reflection prompts

I'm sorry: What part of this situation is mine to own? What part is not mine?

Please forgive me: Is there anyone I could sincerely apologize to, or something I could put right?

Thank you: What did this teach me, or what in this relationship am I still grateful for?

I love you: What would kindness toward myself, and toward the other person, look like today?

7-day practice log

Day	Date	Situation (a few words)	Minutes	What I noticed	One small step
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

Keep in mind

Forgiveness is a process, not a switch. You do not have to feel it yet.

Forgiving is not excusing harm, and it does not require reconnecting with someone, especially if contact is unsafe.

"100% responsibility" does not mean you caused harm someone else chose to do to you.

Private phrases are not a substitute for a sincere apology or making amends where you can.

When to seek support

Stop and reach out if the practice brings up overwhelming feelings, or if you are dealing with depression, anxiety, trauma or abuse.

In the US, call or text 988 (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline). Elsewhere, contact local emergency services or a crisis line.

A doctor or licensed mental health professional can help. Structured forgiveness programs studied in trials are often guided by psychologists.

Research note: one small 2008 dissertation studied ho’oponopono directly. Larger trials of other forgiveness programs (e.g., REACH, BMJ Public Health 2024) show modest benefits for forgiveness, depression and anxiety. The four phrases themselves have not been tested in large trials. Sources listed at fitinflow.space/hooponopono.