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Tonglen

Tonglen is a tibetan buddhist meditation practice that is near and dear to my heart. It is a transmutational process – meaning it is meant to transform your personal energies.

I find it is best used with hard to release feelings. For instance, if you've moved through something intense and are having a hard time letting go, this can be quite helpful! If you feel stuck in anger or victimhood, this process may just blow your mind.

You'll want to allow approximately 20 minutes for this process. Gather a journal, a pen, some water, perhaps tissues to have on hand.

Plan to bring to this exercise something that you are having a hard time releasing or something that you'd like to transmute. This can be anger or pain from a divorce, grief, depression, anxiety, etc. It can be highly specific or a more generalized state like depression or grief.

Pick one for your first try.

Sit in a comfortable position and prepare to use your imagination/imaginal skills/intuition/visualization gift for this. Write in your journal – I intend to transmute _____ through this exercise. Decide how you will visualize what you are transmuting.

Next, take a few breaths and allow your thoughts to quiet. Intend that the volume is being turned down on them. Gently close your eyes and visualize your thing/object of focus (grief, anger, etc.) a few feet in front of you. You are facing each other. Your focus will begin to move wholly, to this object. Continue to breathe consistently and evenly as you stare at this object in your mind's eye.

It is quite common for you to merge with these feelings of the object and become upset. Stay focused as you are feeling all of this in order to diminish this object's power over you. Continue to focus on this object and even go into hyper focus upon it.

As you build your energy and focus upon this object, imagine it becoming smaller in size. Diminishing. The more you focus your mind, intentions and energy upon it – it shrinks.

Do this for anywhere from 5-20 minutes depending upon your tolerance for the process.

I've found it to be most beneficial in reducing the emotional charge that a situation or old wound has over me.

When you feel complete, slowly pull your energy away from said object. Sip some water and take notes if you would like to. Then move into something more light and joyful, knowing that you've just done some deep transmutational work!

