

The release tool

Grab a piece of paper and some quiet space. This tool is for releasing the negative emotions of hurt and pain. I am going to run through how to prepare for the release by making a list of hurts and pain and then how to conduct your own release moment.

This release tool is based on two important principles:

- ▶ If you got hurt it matters. Minimising the pain does not help.
- ▶ Release from hurt is within your power because you have the choice to express forgiveness. All the while you hold on to hurt you remain connected to the pain.



Just because forgiveness is a choice you have it doesn't make it easy. It is normal for the release process to encounter some snags or get de-railed. I have included a trouble-shooting guide at the end to help you through the common snags.

Preparation

On your piece of paper make three columns and label them as in the example below. For every hurt, whether small or big, create a line on your page and fill in what happened and your feelings about it.

| <i>Name</i> | <i>What they did</i> | <i>How I felt</i> |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| | | |

| Name | What they did | How I felt |
|-------|--|----------------------------|
| Jamie | dumping me | rejected, alone |
| Jamie | excluding me from the snowboarding trip | rejected, isolated |
| Me | holding on to Jamie when I knew it was time to move on | pathetic, dependant, stuck |

An example release form.



Your list of names might have the names of groups of people (e.g my colleagues, her relatives, the management team) or it might have representational people in it (e.g those in power, the media). Try including 'me' as one of the names too.

The release

Now you are ready for your release moment. Go somewhere that you can't be overheard. Using your release form repeat the following affirmation out loud filling in the blanks.

"I choose to forgive _____(name) for _____(what they did), which made me feel _____(how I felt). I release them from everything I feel owed and from my right to judge."

Do this for every line on your release form.

Well done!

You have made the choice to release negative emotions of hurt and in the process forgive those that have caused you hurt. You have leveraged your power of choice to go to work on your release.

NAOMI LIGHT

Trouble-shooting guide

- ▶ I'm scared that if I forgive I will get hurt again.

Getting hurt again is a legitimate fear that holds people back from releasing forgiveness. And its true you may get hurt again. However, holding on to pain from the past is not a good way to protect yourself from future hurt. It just causes more pain.

To protect yourself from emotional pain estalish healthy boundaries. If you have a toxic person in your life who is likely to hurt you then work to remove them. Surround yourself with people who will do you good and practice release as a way to stay emotionally healthy.

- ▶ I have been badly hurt by someone and I just can't get the words of the release out. It's too hard.

The bigger the pain the more problematic the release. Imagine that your voice is the cork in a bottle. Uncorking the bottle lets out the liquid inside. Lots of fizzy liquid (especially if its been shaken up) comes out with quite a lot of mess. It is the same with your emotions. If they are big or have been in there a long time then it will be hard to say the words of the release. Perhaps invite a supportive friend to go through this with you or enlist the help of a therapist/counsellor.

- ▶ Doesn't forgiveness say that what they did to me was OK. I mean, they don't deserve my forgiveness.

Yes, they probably don't deserve your forgiveness, especially if they are unrepentant. But you do deserve the release. So do it for your sake not theirs.

The most satisfying pay back you can experience from a hurtful situation is to fully work through it and discover life beyond (not inspite) of what happened.