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## A Practice for Authentically Transforming PAIN into GRATITUDE

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This is an evolution of a practice that I initially learned from Robert Gonzales, who is a Master Teacher of NVC. Like any practice, I encourage you to try it and adapt it according to what feels most ALIVE for you. Many of my clients and friends have reported that this practice has dramatically helped them. It is a common human challenge for us to stay “stuck” in the very real emotional pain that we experience. When you are consistently hurting from something that has happened (ranging from an argument to the loss of a loved one), this practice can help you to genuinely shift your experience.

**STEP ONE:** Identify the UNMET UNIVERSAL HUMAN NEEDS of your experience. Look over the NEEDS list (provided by Scott and also available at CNVC.org), and choose between 1 and 3 of the words that represent what you are missing the most (in relation to the painful experience you are processing).

**STEP TWO:** Prepare to MOURN (purge). Deep emotional pain needs to be released from the body; just as we pass gas, or sometimes need to throw up when we have eaten something toxic. In order to prepare, here are a few important questions/thoughts to consider:

- 1) How can you best mourn? By yourself OR with a close friend/guide/therapist OR in community?
- 2) What would be your most dynamic ways of mourning (purging the energy)? It could be pounding pillows, deeply crying, dancing, moving OR a more still experience (perhaps in nature)?
- 3) Are there places in the body where you can feel the pain? (some people can identify places where they feel the “stuck” energy; if you cannot, no problem. Everyone is different when it comes to how they perceive pain and their bodies. If you do notice a place or places where you can imagine the energy being stuck, carry that consciousness into your purging/mourning practice)
- 4) Make a specific time that you are going to dedicate to a process of mourning / purging. Allow yourself more time than you might need. After it’s over, you may need to rest / relax.

**STEP THREE:** Do the process of mourning. Allow yourself to go as deep as you can INTO the pain, and then move it through your body. Remember that you are both MOURNING (feeling the pain) and PURGING (moving it OUT of your body). Perhaps imagine that you are giving this energy to Mother Earth (Gaia) to compost. OR call upon any archetypal guides/teachers/icons to support you. Mourn and Purge UNTIL you feel that you have moved as much energy out of your body as you are capable of.

**STEP FOUR:** Immediately after you have completed the mourning/purging process, think of the unmet needs that were most alive for you. Choose memories of when those needs were MET. For example, if you had an argument with someone who didn’t meet your need for respect, recall a time in which you did enjoy an experience of respect. It does not need to be a memory of the same person that you are currently in pain with. If you do not honestly have a memory of when that specific need has been met for you, then IMAGINE how wonderful it will feel when it is fully experienced. ANCHOR in these memories and make a “holy vow” to choose the GRATITUDE MEMORY over the painful memory. Love yourself by choosing the memory of fulfillment over the memory of deficiency. This may require discipline, but it is a life transforming practice. We are learning to choose LOVE over Fear, CONNECTION over Separation, COMPASSION over Judgment, GRATITUDE over Deficiency.