



The
PBT® Institute

The Complete Forgiveness Toolkit

Companion Resource for the National Forgiveness Day Transformation Program



GUIDED MEDITATIONS

Meditation 1: The Release Meditation (12 minutes)

Best for: Beginning your forgiveness journey

Setup: Find a comfortable seated position. Close your eyes and take three deep breaths.

Script: "Begin by bringing to mind the person or situation you're working to forgive. Don't force any particular feeling - simply acknowledge what comes up.

Notice any tension in your body. Where do you hold this pain? Your shoulders? Your chest? Your stomach? Breathe into these areas.

Imagine yourself carrying a heavy backpack filled with stones. Each stone represents a hurt, a betrayal, a moment of pain. Feel the weight of this backpack on your shoulders.

You've been carrying this for so long, you've forgotten what it feels like to walk freely.

Now imagine yourself at the edge of a beautiful lake. The water is calm, clear, and peaceful. You realize you have a choice: you can continue carrying these stones, or you can set them down.

One by one, remove each stone from your backpack. Hold it in your hands. This stone represents [specific hurt]. You don't have to forgive this hurt right now. You just have to be willing to put down the weight of carrying it.

Drop the stone into the water. Watch it sink to the bottom, out of sight.

Continue with each stone. 'This is my anger.' Drop. 'This is my resentment.' Drop. 'This is my need for revenge.' Drop.

Feel your backpack becoming lighter with each stone you release.

When your backpack is empty, notice how your shoulders feel. How your back feels. How your heart feels.

You are not condoning what happened. You are simply choosing not to carry the weight of it anymore.

Take three deep breaths and slowly open your eyes."

Meditation 2: Self-Forgiveness Journey (10 minutes)

Best for: When you're struggling with self-blame

Setup: Lie down comfortably. Place one hand on your heart, one on your belly.

Script: "Feel your breath naturally flowing in and out. Feel your heart beating under your hand.

Bring to mind the version of yourself who made the decisions that led to this pain. See her/him clearly - younger, perhaps more naive, definitely doing the best they could with what they knew at the time.

Notice any harsh judgments that arise. 'You should have known better.' 'How could you be so stupid?' 'Why didn't you see the signs?'

Now speak to that younger version of yourself with the same compassion you'd show a dear friend:

'You trusted because you have a trusting heart - that's not a flaw, it's a gift.'

'You believed in love because you're capable of love - that's not naive, it's beautiful.'

'You didn't see the deception because you're not deceptive - that's not blindness, it's innocence.'

'You gave your heart because you're brave enough to love - that's not weakness, it's courage.'

Imagine wrapping that younger version of yourself in a warm, loving embrace. Feel yourself receiving that same embrace.

Repeat silently: 'I forgive you for not knowing what you couldn't have known. I forgive you for being human. I forgive you for having hope.'

Feel forgiveness washing over you like warm, healing light. Let it fill every cell of your body.

You are worthy of love. You are worthy of kindness. You are worthy of forgiveness - especially from yourself.

Take three deep breaths and gently return to the present moment."

Meditation 3: The Freedom Visualization (15 minutes)

Best for: When you're ready to step into your healed self

Setup: Sit tall with your spine straight. Imagine roots growing from your sitting bones into the earth.

Script: "Take a moment to ground yourself. Feel your connection to the earth beneath you.

Now imagine yourself one year from today, completely healed from this betrayal. See this future version of yourself clearly.

How does she/he stand? How do they move through the world? What's different about their energy?

Notice their eyes - they're clear, bright, no longer clouded by pain. Their shoulders are relaxed, no longer carrying weight that isn't theirs.

Watch this healed version of yourself interacting with others. See how they set boundaries with love. See how they trust themselves completely. See how they love without fear.

This future self turns to you and speaks:

'You don't have to carry this anymore. You never did. It was never your burden to bear.'

'The person who hurt you was acting from their own wounds, their own pain, their own limitations. It had nothing to do with your worth.'

'You are free to let go. You are free to heal. You are free to become who you were always meant to be.'

Feel this truth in every cell of your body. You are already free - you just need to remember.

Now imagine stepping into this healed version of yourself. Feel yourself expanding into this energy of freedom, peace, and wholeness.

This is who you really are underneath the pain. This is who you're becoming.

Carry this feeling with you as you slowly return to the present moment."



EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

Protocol 1: The STOP Technique (For Overwhelming Emotions)

Use when: Rage, panic, or overwhelming sadness hits

S - STOP what you're doing

- Literally pause whatever activity you're engaged in
- Step away from triggers (phone, computer, etc.)
- Give yourself permission to take a break

T - TAKE three deep breaths

- Inhale for 4 counts through your nose
- Hold for 4 counts
- Exhale for 6 counts through your mouth
- Repeat 3 times minimum

O - OBSERVE what's happening

- "I notice I'm feeling rage right now"
- "I notice my chest is tight"
- "I notice I'm in fight-or-flight mode"
- Name it without judgment

P - PROCEED with intention

- Choose your next action consciously
- Use one of the other emergency tools below
- Remind yourself: "This feeling will pass"

Protocol 2: The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Use when: You're dissociating, feeling "crazy," or losing touch with reality

5 things you can SEE Look around and name 5 things you can see right now. Be specific: "red coffee mug," "brown wooden table," etc.

4 things you can TOUCH Feel 4 different textures around you. Your clothes, a wall, your phone, a pillow.

3 things you can HEAR Listen for 3 sounds. Traffic, air conditioning, your own breathing.

2 things you can SMELL Notice 2 scents. Coffee, soap, fresh air.

1 thing you can TASTE What taste is in your mouth right now? Or take a sip of water and notice that.

This brings you back to your body and the present moment.

Protocol 3: The Ice Cube Reset

Use when: You need to interrupt an emotional spiral quickly

- Hold an ice cube in your hand or place it on your wrist
- Focus completely on the sensation of cold
- The intense physical sensation interrupts the emotional overwhelm
- When the ice melts, you'll be in a different emotional state
- Alternative: Cold water on your face or very cold drink

Protocol 4: The Quick Body Release

Use when: Your body is holding intense tension or trauma

Shake it out (2 minutes):

- Start with your hands, shake them vigorously
- Move to your arms, shake them out
- Shake your whole body like you're shaking off water
- This releases trapped energy in your nervous system

Progressive tension release:

- Tense every muscle in your body for 5 seconds
- Release and notice the contrast
- Feel the relief of letting go
- Repeat 3 times

Protocol 5: The Emergency Mantra Series

Use when: Your thoughts are spiraling and you need mental anchors

Choose one and repeat for 2-3 minutes:

- "This feeling is temporary. I am permanent."
- "I am safe in this moment. I am choosing peace."
- "Their actions belong to them. My peace belongs to me."
- "I release what I cannot control. I embrace what I can."
- "I am not my thoughts. I am not my pain. I am the observer."



Daily Check-In Prompts

Use these throughout your 21-day journey

Morning Questions:

- How am I feeling right now, without trying to change it?
- What do I need most today for my healing?
- What am I grateful for in this moment?
- How can I show myself compassion today?

Evening Questions:

- What did I learn about myself today?
- Where did I feel stuck, and where did I feel free?
- How did I grow today, even in small ways?
- What am I ready to release before tomorrow?

Deep Work Prompts

Use when you're ready for deeper exploration

Understanding Your Pain:

- If my anger could speak, what would it say?
- What is this betrayal teaching me about my boundaries?
- How has carrying this pain served me? How has it hurt me?
- What would I tell my best friend if they were going through this?

Exploring Forgiveness:

- What does forgiveness mean to ME (not what others say it should mean)?
- What am I afraid will happen if I forgive?
- What am I afraid will happen if I don't forgive?
- How would my life change if I was completely free from this pain?

Visioning Your Future:

- Who do I want to become through this healing process?
 - What kind of relationships do I want to create going forward?
 - How will I know when I've fully healed from this?
 - What gifts might come from this painful experience?
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BOUNDARY SCRIPTS

For Intrusive Questions

"How are you handling the divorce/breakup/situation?"

Gentle: "I'm taking it one day at a time and focusing on my healing."

Firm: "I appreciate your concern, but I'm not discussing that right now."

Redirect: "I'm working through it with professional support. How are you doing?"

For Unwanted Advice

"You should just get over it" / "Everything happens for a reason"

Response: "I understand you mean well, but what I need right now is support, not advice."

Boundary: "I'm working with a process that's designed for my specific situation."

Redirect: "What would be most helpful is if you could just listen."

For Pressure to Reconcile

"You should forgive and give them another chance"

Clear: "Forgiveness and reconciliation are two different things. I'm working on forgiveness for my own peace."

Firm: "My healing process doesn't require reconciliation."

Final: "This decision is mine to make, and I need you to respect that."

TRIGGER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

The Trigger Map

Step 1: Identify Your Triggers

- Certain songs, places, dates, smells
- Social media posts or mutual friends
- Similar stories on TV or in conversations
- Specific words or phrases

Step 2: Create Your Response Plan For each trigger, decide in advance:

- Will I avoid this trigger for now? (That's okay temporarily)
- Will I face this trigger with support?

- What specific tools will I use when triggered?
- Who can I call if I need help?

Step 3: The RAIN Technique for Triggers

- **Recognize:** "I'm being triggered right now"
- **Allow:** "It's okay to feel this way"
- **Investigate:** "What exactly am I feeling and where?"
- **Nurture:** "What do I need right now to feel safe?"



COGNITIVE REFRAMING TOOLS

The Story Flip Exercise

Transform victim narrative into survivor story

Instead of: "I was so stupid to trust them" **Reframe to:** "I trusted because I have an open heart - that's a gift"

Instead of: "I can't believe this happened to me" **Reframe to:** "I survived something that would have broken many people"

Instead of: "I'll never trust again" **Reframe to:** "I'm learning to trust myself first, which makes me wiser"

Instead of: "My life is ruined" **Reframe to:** "My life is being reconstructed on a stronger foundation"

The Perspective Zoom

When stuck in the pain

Zoom out 1 year: How will this situation look in 12 months?

Zoom out 5 years: What will matter most to me five years from now?

Zoom out to your deathbed: What will I wish I had spent my energy on?

Zoom out to your legacy: How do I want to be remembered?



GROWTH TRACKING TOOLS

Weekly Progress Indicators

Rate yourself 1-10 each week

- **Sleep Quality:** How well am I sleeping?
- **Energy Level:** How much energy do I have for daily activities?
- **Emotional Stability:** How regulated do I feel most of the time?
- **Hope Level:** How hopeful do I feel about my future?
- **Trigger Intensity:** How intense are my reactions to triggers?
- **Self-Compassion:** How kindly am I treating myself?
- **Boundary Strength:** How well am I protecting my peace?

Healing Milestones Checklist

Celebrate these victories

- ☐ I went a whole day without thinking about the betrayal
- ☐ I can talk about what happened without my body reacting
- ☐ I genuinely wish my betrayer healing (for their sake, not mine)
- ☐ I can listen to "our song" without falling apart
- ☐ I'm excited about my future again
- ☐ I trust my own judgment and intuition
- ☐ I'm open to love again (romantic, friendship, or family)
- ☐ I see the growth that came from this experience
- ☐ I can help others who are where I used to be
- ☐ I feel grateful for who I've become through this process

CRISIS RESOURCES

When to Seek Additional Help

Contact a mental health professional if you experience:

- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide
- Inability to function in daily life for extended periods
- Substance abuse as a coping mechanism
- Complete isolation from all support systems
- Severe depression that doesn't improve with time

National Crisis Resources

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

Creating Your Personal Crisis Plan

My warning signs that I need extra support:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

People I can call:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Professional resources:

- My therapist: _____
- My doctor: _____
- Crisis hotline: _____

Self-care activities that help:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



QUICK REFERENCE CARDS

Print and keep these handy

Card 1: In the Moment of Rage

1. STOP what you're doing
2. Take 3 deep breaths (4 in, hold 4, out 6)
3. Name it: "I'm feeling rage right now"
4. Use ice or cold water
5. Shake your body for 30 seconds
6. Repeat: "This feeling will pass"

Card 2: When Missing Them

1. Remember: You miss who you thought they were
2. List 3 red flags you can see now
3. Write in your journal for 10 minutes
4. Call someone who supports your healing
5. Do something that makes you feel strong

6. Repeat: "I deserve authentic love"

Card 3: When Questioning Your Decision to Heal

1. Read your "why I started this journey" letter
2. Look at your week 1 vs. current progress
3. Remember: Healing is for YOU, not them
4. Connect with your support community
5. Review your healing milestones checklist
6. Repeat: "My peace is worth the work"

Remember: This toolkit is designed to support you, not replace professional help when needed. Use what serves you, adapt what needs adapting, and trust your own inner wisdom about what you need most. Of course, we're here to help! You can find all of our incredible PBT® resources: private coaching, live classes, our programs and more, in our Reclaim program: <https://thepbtinstitute.com/reclaim/>