

Art for Forgiveness' Sake: Releasing & Dissolving Resentment

Time: 30-45 minutes

For: Psychotherapists in a clinical setting; individuals who use reflective visual journaling on their own at home*

Materials:

- Thick paper (ideally, watercolor paper) 9x12
- Watercolor pencils
- Watercolor paints (liquid or dry palette)
- Oil pastels
- Brushes
- Water

References: www.gadatherapy.com/blog/what-you-need-to-know-about-resentment-and-how-to-heal-it

Part I:

Now that you have identified someone or something you'd like to forgive (pick 1), you'll start by writing out all of your past resentments about the relationship you'd like to heal using only watercolor pencils. [Exs: "the time she didn't take out the garbage for 3 whole months and I was super stressed at work" "the time he hurt my feelings by not showing up".] Fill the whole page, use a variety of colors and writing styles if you so choose. Do not become attached to how this part looks, as you will eventually transform it. Practice detachment. ☺

- Notice how you feel physically, energetically, and emotionally as you write.

Part II:

Ground in, get centered, take some deep breaths, and focus on your intention. How do you want to feel once this resentment has been released and resolved? Now, using only the white oil pastel, write out the positive affirmation/wish/intention in large letters across your page in any way you like. Press down firmly with the oil pastel. This will overlap some parts of the smaller written words from Part I and it may be hard to see (that's normal).

- Notice how you feel physically, energetically, and emotionally as you set your intention.

Part III:

Prepare to release and dissolve your past resentments. Pick up a paintbrush and start to paint over the entire page, mixing, layering, blending, and using the watercolors as you please until the list of resentments is barely visible (if at all). The white oil pastel words should resist the watercolor and start to show through.

- Notice how you feel physically, energetically, and emotionally—especially as only the positive words remain, and the anger and resentment has literally dissolved into the paint.

Part IV:

Optional- Using the other oil pastel colors, feel free to enhance and adorn your positive intention as you see fit. This is your chance to celebrate this powerful shift and commitment that you have made towards forgiveness. Let the colors and other imagery you choose reflect this!

- Notice how you feel physically, energetically, and emotionally.

Part V:

Take a moment to reflect upon, journal about, share, or explore what you learned in the process.

* This exercise is intended to enhance your personal self-help and/or visual journaling process. If you find this exercise to trigger an undesired emotional response, please seek the help of a licensed mental health provider. You can find resources at <http://www.gadatherapy.com/resources>