

HEALS FOR HOPE

Intention: create experience of HOPE

What is hope? And how do I keep hope alive?

What makes hope tricky is that at first sight, it seems to look only beyond the present, into the future. It seems to focus on what is not present. That does not have to be the case. Yes, hope is about aspiration, desire, anticipation, wishes, aims, plans even, and so much more. The archaic definition of 'hope' was more expansive and present. Hope was defined as a sense of trust and therefore feelings of trust. Seeing hope as the experience and consciousness of trust, somehow seems to make it something that is more accessible in any given moment.

Accepting 'trust' to be a crucial component of hope, creates the invitation to direct your attention to the present and within. By directing your attention within, you can find a real hope at the core of your being that will give you the strength, clarity, and purpose to navigate these turbulent times. In this way, one's overarching, all-encompassing sense of well-being and a wish for it to continue forward, becomes the wish for this moment and therefore releases the wish for it to be anything other than it is now.

Hope really is what you can connect to now, and in any given moment - when you do this, you are better able to look forward with hope. Looking forward with hope is the definition of prosperity. What if you were to adopt this as your centering thought and mantra today? "I look forward with hope".

Futile hope only leads to expectation hangover - when one wishes things were other than what they are. And what about the insanity and futility of

regret - when one wishes the past was other than what it was? That only leads to suffering.

Perhaps, hopelessness and despair come from expectations created from adverse childhood experiences... where your needs were not met, you had experiences of abandonment, being dishonored and dehumanised... and other ways you were treated that sent you the message that you did not matter. These are the kind of hurts and harms that can be healed and you can bring your hope to this... this is a more honorable hope. What if it is safe now to expect fulfilment here?

When you bring your hope to your sense of agency, and give yourself permission to dream, to desire to actualise your potential, to focus on making the most of what you have now, to be the best version of yourself... you are harnessing agency hope. When you do this, you are releasing yourself from the clutch of clinging. Here, there is no greed, no possessiveness and instead of holding onto the past and wishful, idle and dangerous expectations, you can hold onto those feelings of fulfillment in your core. This allows you to feel whole inside and rest at ease within your own generosity with yourself and this paves the way and gives your strength to benefit experientially from the true generosity you are able to extend to others.

So we want to let go of futile hopes instead of holding onto them. For hope to happen, let's start by embracing the **H of heals**. H is to hold your own light and awareness as you hail freedom. You can notice any presence of positive expectations, senses of trust such as noticing any resources you can trust in this moment... be here with this now. Give yourself permission to be present to the present in the present. You can have and hold these experiences that are a relaxed consciousness awareness of contentment, trusting, confidence, and resourcefulness in the background and even the foreground in many ordinary moments. Hope can be present whilst brushing your teeth, flossing, putting on your shoes, smiling at someone,

looking through the window, reading a book - there is already a sense of well-being present, with no desire for anything else.

How else can you create hopefulness? By calling up memories - thinking of those past times where you proved trustworthy to yourself, where you kept your word, where your resources and resourcefulness served you. You can remember fortunate and uplifting experiences that you can hope to have in the future. **E of heals** then is to start expanding and enriching such experiences, including engaging the desire for these to continue to be available to you in the future. Staying to savor these experiences, noticing how it feels in your body, helps you extend the experience of hope.

Similarly, in the **A of heals**, you can engage your appreciation muscle. We all know from experience the appreciation rule: that appreciation, appreciates... it is the gift that keeps on giving. When you appreciate what you have, you have more appreciation for it. You can invoke a sense of hope and fulfillment by simply noticing that your body has plenty of air available to it. You can give it sufficient water and food and these will nourish you to flourish. You are able to appreciate that within yourself, you have plenty and from this sense of 'plenty' instead of 'empty', you can experience enjoyment.

Drawing on any one or more key experiences of satisfaction that is present in the moment, perhaps expressing gratitude and thanks for it... and you want to definitely express gratitude and thanks for yourself for all the efforts you make to help yourself. You can increase hope by noticing you are trustworthy... you do this when you acknowledge yourself for right thinking, that certain sort of thinking that leads to useful action. You can acknowledge yourself for being present in a certain kind of way. When you appreciate yourself in these ways, while letting go of anything that hinders such a way of being present with yourself, you are freeing yourself of the past... you are opening to infinite possibilities... you are choosing to stop being a prisoner of the past... you are owning up to be the pioneer and

prospector of possibility. All of this helps connect you with the source of hope and fulfilment and lets it grow strong, everlasting and enduring. **The L for healing** then, is about this letting go, letting be, letting in and then living in these feelings of wholeness and satisfaction. Living in hope happens when you freely bring your heart into it - and you are free to do this, you can do this in any given moment.

In this given moment you can reflect: “What if I allowed myself to bring my awareness and interest to notice how it feels in my body that I am doing this work for me now?” What if you extended gratitude and appreciation for yourself here and now and then paused to notice how this feels in your body... stay and savor. This is the **S of HEALS**, simply smile, stay and savor.

Hope is a state of mind, not a state of the world. In an interview that was later published in *Disturbing the Peace*, Vaclav Havel iterated:

“ . . [T]he kind of hope I often think about (especially in situations that are particularly hopeless, such as prison) I understand above all as a state of mind, not a state of the world. Either we have hope within us, or we don't. . . . Hope is not prognostication. It is an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart. It transcends the world that is immediately experienced, and is anchored somewhere beyond its horizons. . . . I feel that its deepest roots are in the transcendental, just as the roots of human responsibility are...”

As we bring this guided reflection to a close, think of ways you can continue to keep this hope generated alive... all kinds of movement helps...be it the movement of the breath, or of sound... listened or spoken as when you chant, invoke, recite your mantras, roar, play a certain kind of music. You can further hope in your life through moving your body, through play and creativity. Energise hope through walking and thinking certain kinds of thoughts, through ceremony and celebration. What else might you try?

You can create hope as you continue your day by doing what you can - you can start envisioning yourself with more contentment moving through the rest of your day and the next day when you dream on how your life would be different with more hope and with a hope-filled consciousness, this recharged state of mind, you can envisioning your greatest possible self while allowing this desire, hope and aspiration to exist, and by surrendering to it. Notice what grows in and around you that allows you to prosper. These new energies within you are fuel for this prosperity consciousness that you are creating now. Let hope become you, let hopefulness be your state of mind and it will transform you, through and through.

When memories of hurt do arise, do not resist these. In hope, you are in a strong position to look at those hurts with new eyes, to acknowledge them is honoring yourself and the suffering you have endured. By holding hope, even while addressing hurt and harm, you learn to trust yourself and your capacity to surpass. Hope liberates your resources and keeps you steady and strong in your connection to your own inner wisdom that you can grow to trust through openness, acceptance and allowing. Being present in this way, you can show yourself compassion and loving understanding.

It is time to complete this healing for hope meditation. Go forward with the heroic and honorable hunger to heal and help yourself. As you make your way through your day especially in the next hour while this experience is still alive and opened to be enriched and strengthened, relax your stance, breathe easier and feel yourself embraced by thoughts of what you can hope to... what you can hope for... and what you can hope that...As the creator that you are, you can hope to create beautiful thoughts and take hope aligning actions. You can show up and hope to show up courageously for you.

May you be safe, may you be well and may you create prosperous healing and helping practices. Be well, Go well, Stay well. And Thank you for your presence. ©2020, Aneesah Wilhelmstätter