

SOURCE TEXT FOR THE MUSICAL COMPOSITION:

LETTING GO – Jack Kornfield

A meditation on letting go, from my teacher, Ajahn Chah.

If you let go a little, you'll have a little happiness. If you let go a lot, you'll have a lot of happiness. If you let go completely, you will be free.

One of the essential tasks for living a wise life is letting go. Letting go is a path to freedom. It is only by letting go of the fears, the hopes, the pain, the past, the stories that have a hold on you, that you can quiet your mind and open your heart.

You don't need to fear letting go. You can trust the courage and vulnerability of your heart to meet life as it is. You can rest kindly where you are and as you let go. The tender ground of healing, honesty, and love will carry you.

Remember, letting go does not mean losing the knowledge you gained from the past. The knowledge stays with you. To let go is to release the images and emotions, the grudges and fears, the clings and disappointments of the past that bind your spirit.

Like emptying a cup, letting go leaves you free to receive in a refreshed, sensitive and awake state.

Letting go is not the same as aversion, struggling to get rid of something. You cannot genuinely let go of what you resist. What you resist and fear, secretly follows you even as you push it away.

To let go of fear or trauma, you need to acknowledge just how it is. Letting go begins with letting be. When you learn to let things be, they gradually lose their power. They cease to disturb you. And as you allow what is true, space comes into the body and mind. You breathe and soften and come to rest where you are. In accepting what is so, you become free.

As you approach letting go in your own heart and mind, you can ask yourself, do I have to continue to replay this story? Do I have to hold on to these losses, these feelings? Is it time to let this go?

The heart will know. There's an organic cycle to letting go. You will feel it as a wisdom that knows it's time to move on, to release the past, to release the concerns and fears and tenderly return to the present. When you let go, you come to an honest and simple openness just where you are.

Let's meditate together.

Let yourself sit comfortably and quietly.

Find a comfortable posture, steady yourself, relax.

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Bring a kind attention to your body and breath, and let yourself settle in the ground of the present.

And now bring into loving awareness, whatever story or situation or feelings and reactions that it's time to let go of.

You can acknowledge them gently—betrayal, sadness, anxiety—and allow these experiences the space to be, to float without resistance, held in a heart of loving awareness and kindness.

Continue to breathe gently and ask yourself—is it indeed wise to let go of what has come into the heart and mind?

Let yourself feel the benefit, the ease that will come from this deep letting go. Say to yourself, let go. Let go. Gently over and over.

Let go. Let go.

And as you do, soften the body and heart, and let any feelings that arise drain out of you into the earth. Sense how the feelings and images can be released like water draining out of a tub.

Feel the openness that comes as you let go, how the heart softens and the space of the body opens.

And now, envision the days of the future where this situation has been released. Sense the freedom, the innocence, the ease that this letting go will bring. Say to yourself again. Let go. Let go.

Sit quietly and notice if the feelings return. Often they will. And each time they return, breathe softly and as if to bow to them, say, kindly, I've let you go. I've let you go. I've returned you to the earth. I do not need to carry you any further.

I'm moving on. I've let you go.

Naturally, the images and feelings will come back sometimes over and over again. Yet as you continue to practice letting go, letting go gently and kindly, they will eventually fade. Gradually the mind and heart will come to trust the space of letting go. Gradually the heart will be easy, and you will find an opening to wellbeing and freedom, fresh to move on in your life as you learn to let go.

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