



Journal Reflection 1: Transforming Loss, Illness and Failure into Gold

Two quotes from Helen Keller:

*"Everything has its wonders, even darkness and silence,
And I learn, whatever state I may be in, therein to be content."*

*"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet.
Only through experience of trial and suffering
Can the soul be strengthened,
Vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved."*

Here we put the principles of Goddess Kali into practice by reflecting on past losses. The purpose of this exercise is to identify and clarify the soul learning harvested from the most challenging times in your life. When you can reflect back on such times with love and tenderness, you will find a richness, depth, and wisdom greater than you ever imagined.

These are the strengths and gifts you bring to life, often your GREATEST strengths! Understanding what you have learned from past challenges supports you the next time you face such a challenge, as you will remember the blessings you have received from Goddess Kali in the past, and put up less resistance to her transformations in the future. Further, you will clarify some of your greatest gifts, gifts you can name and celebrate in your work and relationships with others.

1. Center yourself and prepare to go inside. Invite Loving Presence to be with you. Feel Mother Kali holding and caring for you.
2. Let your mind relaxedly notice some of the bigger losses in your life. For this exercise consider past or recent past, not something you are currently in the middle of. Stay very gentle in your awareness, and don't go into detail, but simply bring to mind some of the things you have gone through. Include physical illness, relationship losses, supporting someone close to you through a crisis, the death of a loved one, loss of job, moving to a new town or changing communities, or appearing to fail at something where you desperately wanted to succeed. Gently scan and hold with these events with love in your heart.

3. Let one event rise to the top of your awareness. The first time you do this, choose a loss that was NOT your biggest loss. As you gain familiarity with this exercise, you can come back and repeat for larger challenges. The event that rises to the top might surprise you. Don't "force" it or choose the one that seems to be most logical to start with; let it be an intuitive process.

4. Now look back in detail at the circumstances of this event, the physical sensations, the life circumstances, the emotions, the thoughts, the interactions. What were you really losing? Just notice and continue to breathe. Feel your body as your mind remembers.

5. Now ask yourself the following questions about the situation. As you ask these questions, let the mind be quiet, and notice what comes up. Remember. Breathe into your observations without judging yourself for how you responded to the situation.

Where did I put up a struggle? How did I fight the loss? In what ways did I surrender to it? How did I go with the flow? Where did I accept the release?

How did I nourish myself? In what ways did I take care of myself better than usual? Where was I tender with myself? Where did I receive tenderness from others? Where did I allow others to support me? Did I let myself cry and be held like a baby?

Where did I let down my hair? In what ways did I let myself get a little wild and kick up my heels with Kali? How did I let myself loose? Where did I try something new, something fun or completely out of the ordinary for me?

Where did I show great courage in this situation? How did I show determination? In what ways did I face my fears?

What amazing gem of insight and wisdom and strength came from this experience? What did I learn about myself, and how did this contribute to who I am today?

6. Finally, if there is any part that remains unresolved about this situation, allow yourself to form a question in the mind about this piece. So if you would like more clarity and understanding, notice what question might be in your heart. Just let the question arise. Hear it. As you sit quietly with the question, allow yourself to hear a response. Take some time to sit and receive the response. And then pick up your journal and write yourself a letter, starting with "Dear . . ." and then your name, allowing Loving Wisdom Presence to flow through you and into your pen. Write yourself a letter from the Loving Wisdom part of yourself, answering that question.