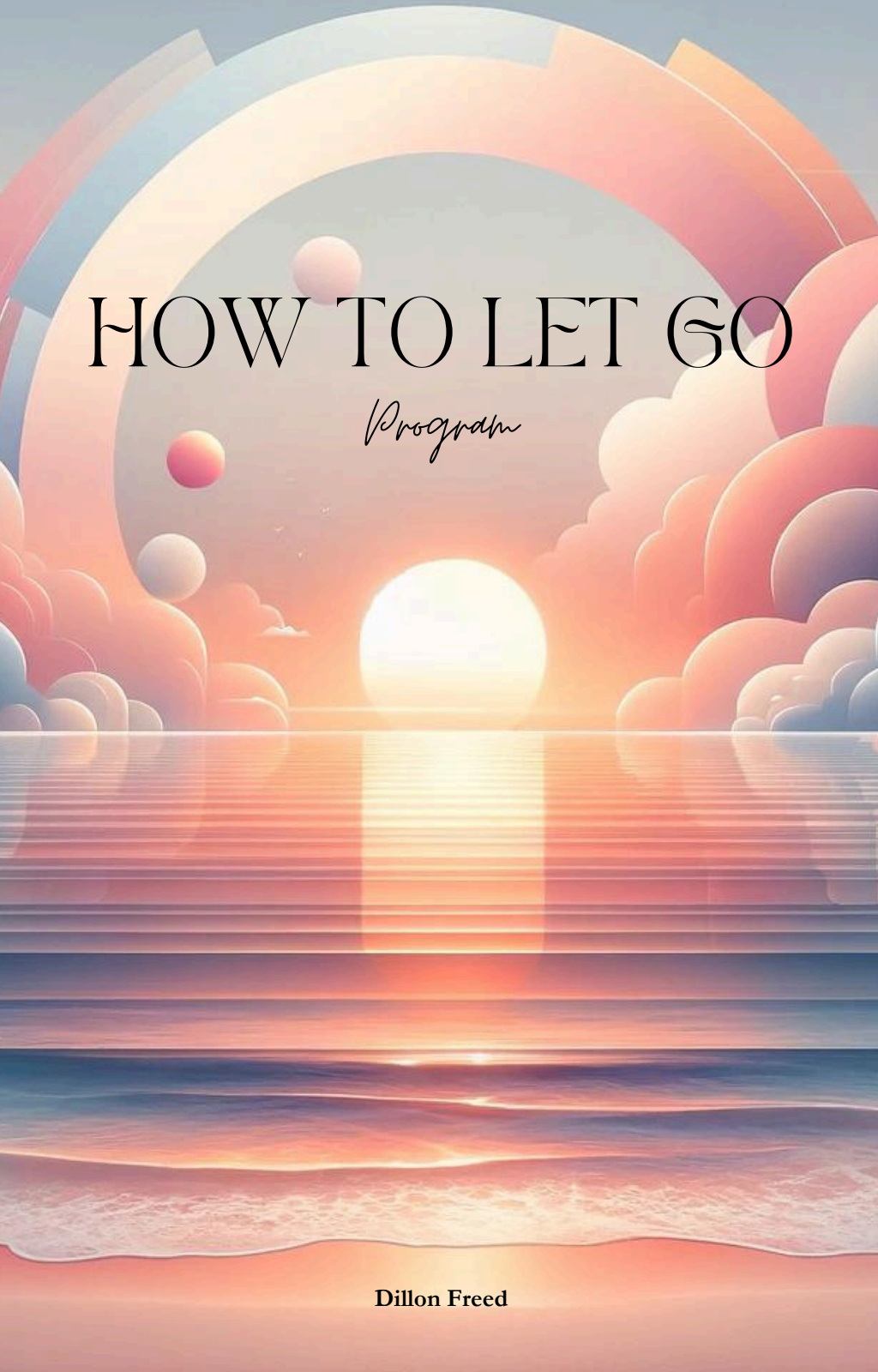


HOW TO LET GO

Program

Dillon Freed

Quick Cheat Sheet:

- *Everything is emotion:* Start to look at nearly everything as emotion, or emotion in disguise. Words, sentences, "I am" statements, stories, narratives; mental images, pictures, photos, gifs, videos; etc. —see them as emotions, or at least masks of emotion.
- *Emotions are limited in quantity:* Every emotion runs out, no matter how "large" the emotion seems.
- *Emotions are connected:* Therefore, releasing one "little" emotion may help you release other big emotions; no emotion is too small to let go of.
- *Both watch and feel at the same time:* This is the "art" of releasing: feeling fully, and witnessing.
- *Emotions are generated in the moment as well as repressed and stored:* Often, emotion is not caused by the environment but is already within and looking for an "excuse" to come out.
- *Repressed emotion has "eyes":* it's looking for an excuse to come out!
- E*motions come in layers:* Emotions are built of layers. Underneath anger, as an example, might be guilt for being angry, pride in your anger, hatred, jealousy, etc.
- *Emotions loop:* Releasing means confronting the emotions as they loop and as the layers loop. Be patient; keep releasing; the emotions and the loops of emotion do run out.

Benefits of Releasing

- No baggage/issues
- Lovingness ↑
- Boldness ↑
- Health ↑
- Energy ↑
- Healing ↑
- Rock for people
- Synchronicities ↑
- Fearlessness: because you no longer fear
- Spiritual experiences ↑
- Get over things faster
- Compassion ↑
- Wisdom ↑
- Better relationships
- You can tackle the “Big Scaries"—death, break-ups, the Four Noble Truths, etc.
- Done right, there is nothing you can't handle

What if all self-help is wrong?

The typical formation of most self-help and psychology is to change your thoughts to change your feelings and behavior, or it is to change your body/movement to change emotions then your thoughts. That's an oversimplification to an extent, but generally accurate.

Move away from thoughts as primary

THOUGHTS → FEELINGS→ ACTION

Move away from body movement as primary:

ACTION → FEELINGS →THOUGHTS

The new formulation that I would like you to think about is this:

Move towards emotions as primary:

THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, BEHAVIOR

↑↑↑↑↑

FEELINGS/EMOTIONS

Now, it's not that the top two formulations do not work, it's that they work even better if you first release emotions. (Note: I use feelings and emotions interchangeably here.)

Common Practices Lead to Repression

I know it seems strange, but positive psychology, re-framing, Jungian and Freudian therapy, meditation, stoicism, mindfulness, and other spiritual and psychological practices can actually lead to repression of emotion rather than a true release of it.

As an example, you may find the peace of a silent mind through meditation, but underneath is a cauldron of undealt with emotion. That's why sometimes, even after all the inner work you do, you still "snap."

After releasing emotion, the above methods tend to work much, much better. You get the most out of them.

The Release Method Never Stops Working

Another common issue is that new methods seem to work well for a few days or weeks and then suddenly stop functioning. People think they have it all figured out, only to find that a certain method loses its effectiveness. The release method, in my experience, works all the time, every time. More yet, it can "revivify" other practices that had lost their impact (e.g. affirmations).

Acting "Badly": What Releasing is Not

Acting "badly" with our emotions does not release them.

Blocking out emotions doesn't work. Suppressing emotions leads to more stress. Minimizing anger builds it up inside. Reframing thoughts positively, lying to ourselves about how we feel, using willpower, and so on—these all fail to release the emotion.

Acting out emotions doesn't work either. Crying, screaming, punching walls, talking, or writing it out—these provide partial release (in healthy and unhealthy ways), but then close off the emotion, repressing it and often creating more negative emotion (e.g., worry that it'll come back, etc.).

Dipping out of the emotions doesn't work. Avoiding emotions by running away or using unhealthy coping mechanisms like drinking does not resolve it. In extreme forms, this becomes something like depersonalization disorder - a flight from self and trauma.

Be Consciously Bad

However, sometimes we need to consciously choose to be "bad." Shift thoughts, cry it out, avoid for now.

How to release emotions

- *Witness and Experiencer at Once: At once* feel the emotion fully while remaining a calm observer.
- *There is a Limited Quantity of Emotion:* Emotions do run out if released.
- *Visualizations:* Use visualizations like imagining emotions as a fire you let burn out.
- *Let the Layers Come Up:* Releasing has layers like an onion. As you peel one layer, another emerges.
- *Layers and Emotions Loop:* The layers will loop again and again, but they will run out.
- *Background Release:* Allowing emotions to run in the background can be done.
- *Time Travel is Possible:* Go back in time and release on past memories as well as into the future for worries.
- *Watch for Subtle Emotions:* Many emotions are more in the "energy field" of a person, watch for those and release.
- *Release the Small Stuff:* Small releases can unclog bigger clumps.
- *You are in control:* You remain in control of the process; you can stop at any time and go only as deep as you want.
- *Post-Release:* Flood/avalanche positive thoughts, entertainment, music, etc.

Some Visualizations

1. *Slippery-ing*: Imagine the emotions covered in grease and the brain as “slippery hands."
2. *Dropping*: It’s kind of like you bundle up all the emotion, gather it, and then drop it mentally.
3. *Shrugging*: I like to imagine Atlas holding up a world of emotion and “shrugging” it off.
4. *Misting*: Allow the emotions to build up, and then turn to mist and disappear.
5. *Floating*: You can just float on the emotions as they run. (Good for anxiety)
6. *Backgrounding*: Allow the emotions to just be in the background all day long. (Good for major life events)
7. *Nope-ing*: If you allow emotions to come up and then just say “Nope, you can’t stay!”
8. *Burning*: Probably what I use most is to allow the emotions to be burned through. (Good for intense emotions)

Once more, make sure you feel all the emotion! As you get better, you can release more emotion faster.

Areas of Surrender

Having a list of things to surrender how, helps you know when you are holding onto something. It helps you from going "unconscious" and being unaware of stress. Remember to really seek the emotions in all of these.

- Opinions
- Beliefs
- Stories/Narratives
- Judgments
- Will
- Wanting others to be different
- Results/Outcome
- Identity
- Body and health
- The world and politics
- Money and work
- Time and aging
- Death and dying
- Friends
- Politics
- Lovers/Love Life
- Future/Past
- Subtles

More Hints

- You'll "forget" to surrender; as soon as you remember, start again. No big deal.
- "Nothing" is a feeling too, you can release it.
- "Blah-ness," "being tired," "not-wanting to" - are all feelings that can be released.
- Stuck is a feeling; you can release that.
- Be easy on yourself. Don't aim for perfection; aim for detection and quick correction!

About Me

Dillon Freed has a BA in Psychology and an MS in Cognitive Neuroscience where he examines consciousness, emotion, and the self. It's important to note the speaker is not a mental health professional, please seek professional help if you need it. You can find out more about me at DillonFreed.com. Also please visit LettingGoCenter.com.

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