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# The Art of Letting Go with Gratitude

Neha

Research Scholar, University of Delhi, Department of Political Science (nehaprajapati861997@gmail.com)

**Abstract**— The Art of Letting Go is an emotional and mental process that helps people to release their pain, anger, fear, frustration, and disappointment. It allows the mind to feel lighter and more peaceful. For women, this process is often more difficult because they carry many responsibilities in the family, workplace and society. Women are expected to be strong, caring, and patient, even if they are emotionally exhausted. Many women are taught to adjust, stay silent, and put others first. Because of this, they often hide their own feelings, which can lead to stress, sadness and loss of self-confidence. This article explores how the art of letting go along with gratitude; can help women to heal, grow and live with inner peace. The Bhagavad Gita teaches that we should do our duties honestly but not be attached to results. When we expect too much from situations or people, we feel disappointed if things do not go as per our expectation. The Gita also teaches us to stay calm and not to be controlled by anger, fear or worry. These teachings help us to understand that peace comes from accepting and maintaining emotional balance. From a mental health point of view, emotional suffering continues when we hold onto negative memories and painful experiences. Letting go does not mean forgetting the past rather it means accepting it without carrying emotional pain and holding any grudges. When we stop fighting these feelings and let them flow naturally, then healing begins. Gratitude plays an important role in this process; it helps us to focus on what we have learned from life instead of thinking about what we have lost. For women, gratitude is a powerful source of strength. Many women give their time, care and energy to others, but their efforts are often unrecognized. Because of this, they feel unappreciated and emotionally exhausted. Gratitude helps women to value themselves and feel proud of their journey. It reminds them that their struggles made them stronger and wiser. Letting go also helps women become emotionally independent. Many women define themselves as mother, daughters, as well as wives, care and in many cases as caretakers. All these roles of women reflect their various personalities which they live as per their daily lives. Sometimes these roles took significant toll and women begin to forget about themselves also. “Letting Go” teaches women that their happiness also matters. It helps them to care for others without losing themselves. It is the freedom from fear, anger and guilt; holding on to gratitude can help women to release those emotions. When we became thankful for how far we have come; we grow stronger from the inside, we gain confidence within ourselves, we stop beating ourselves up about the things we did in the past and start moving forward with hope. Forgiveness and accepting the things we cannot change about ourselves and others, allows us to become emotionally stronger.

This article will help us understand that Letting Go is not a weakness. It actually makes us brave and emotionally strong. Strength is not about hiding your pain rather it is about facing them. By forgiving yourself and others, accepting flaws and holding on to gratitude allow us to heal ourselves emotionally.

**Keywords**— Bhagavad Gita, Emotional Healing, Forgiveness, Gratitude, Inner Peace, Letting Go, Non-Attachment, Women’s Emotional Well-being

## I. INTRODUCTION

Women’s emotional lives are deeply shaped by expectations of care, endurance, and emotional availability. Women are often expected to manage family relationships, professional responsibilities, and social obligations while suppressing their own emotional needs. Over the time, this emotional suppression leads to unresolved pain, disappointment, guilt and emotionally exhaust. Emotional suffering occurs when individuals hold on to expectations and emotional attachment to past events (Hawkins, 2012; Purkiss, 2017).

Trenton (2021) emphasizes that holding on to emotional suffering leads to mental exhaustion, while letting it go leads to emotional clarity and inner peace. Women usually hold on to emotional pain because they feel responsible for maintaining harmony and relationships, even at the cost of their own emotional health. This tendency to prioritize others often leaves women emotionally depleted and disconnected from themselves.

The philosophy of letting go is the strong evidence of the Bhagavad Gita teachings, which provides guidance on emotional balance and detachment. One of the teachings of the Gita states:

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचना

*Karmanye vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana*

(You have the right to perform your duty, but not to the fruits of your actions)

(Bhagavad Gita, 2.47)

This verse emphasises on the principle of *karma-phala-tyāga* or detachment from outcomes. In women’s lives, emotional attachment, validation and expected outcomes sometimes becomes a source of suffering. When emotions go unrecognised, women experience disappointment.



Letting go of expectations, while continuing to act with devotion and compassion, allows women to protect their emotional well-being without withdrawing from responsibilities (Baruah, 2018).

Gratitude plays a crucial role in the process of letting go as it helps to release emotional pain; gratitude helps individuals to have experiences with meaning and acceptance. Naim (2017) and Hart (2019) emphasise that gratitude allows individuals to focus on personal growth rather than emotional loss. For women, gratitude becomes a powerful tool for self-recognition, especially in contexts where their emotional contributions remain unnoticed. Gratitude helps women to acknowledge their strength, resilience and journey.

Forgiveness is also an important dimension of letting go. Bartley Lenz (2020) highlights that the inability to forgive oneself keeps individuals emotionally stuck in the past. Letting go involves releasing self-blame and accepting human behaviour. The Gita highlights this idea by encouraging freedom from anger, fear and desire:

*विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्मुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।*

Vihaya kaman yah sarvan pumans charati nishsprihah

(One who abandons excessive desires and moves without attachment attains peace)

(Bhagavad Gita, 2.71)

From this point of view, letting go empowers women to develop emotional independence and freedom. According to Zahariades (2019), Jan (2020) and Niska (2021); Letting go is an act of strength that enables individuals to regain control over their emotional lives.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Understanding Letting Go: Emotional Burdens in Women's Lives*

Letting go involves being aware of a feeling, letting it come up, staying with it and letting it run its course without wanting to make it different or do anything about it. It means simply to let the feeling be there and to focus on letting out the energy behind it. Women are positioned differently within families, societies and communities. They are expected to nurture relationships and maintain peace in every situation even when they are suffering personally. Over the time, these expectations create emotional burdens that are hardly acknowledged but deeply internalised.

Women grow up learning that expressing emotional pain is a sign of weakness while bearing them silence is seen as a virtue; that is why emotional pain is often suppressed rather than processed. According to Hawkins (2012), suppressed emotions do not disappear instead they remain in the mind and body. These emotions shape patterns of anxiety, resentment, fear and emotional exhaustion. For women, this emotional burden becomes heavy because they are often discouraged from prioritising themselves. Letting go is not a casual act but a difficult process that requires courage and self-awareness.

Emotional burdens in women's lives usually arise from repeated disappointments and unmet expectations, which create similar patterns. Women are deeply invested in relationships in the role of daughters, wives, mothers or caregivers with the hope of emotional understanding and appreciation. When their expectations remain unfulfilled, women tend to suppress the pain rather than express it openly. Trenton (2021) believes that unfulfilled expectations eventually transform emotional suffering into long-term disappointment and self-doubt. Instead of questioning unfairness relationships, women question themselves which leads to guilt and self-doubt. Bartley Lenz (2020) states that women often struggle to let go because they feel that self-care is selfishness. This prevents women from forgiving themselves for their failures in fulfilling idealised roles.

Emotional burdens are also shaped by memory. Sometimes women hold on to painful memories, not because they want to suffer but because they feel responsible for remembering, forgiving and fixing what went wrong. Hawkins (2012) states that emotional pain occurs when individuals repeatedly relive past experiences without accepting it. For women, this process is crucial because their emotional histories are often intertwined with roles that are related to care and emotional sacrifices.

The emotional burden of consistent self-adjustment is another crucial aspect of women's lives. Women are always expected to adapt consistently changing family needs and social expectations. This adjustment leads to emotional exhaustion. Jan (2020) highlights that when women do not know how to let go of unnecessary responsibilities, burdens, experience emotional burnout and loss of personal identity.

Letting go does not mean to maintaining distance from relationships or responsibilities. Rather, it means releasing the emotional burden attached to expectations that cause pain.



Zahariades (2019) states that emotional freedom begins when individuals recognise that their peace should be independent from external validation. For women, this realisation can be transformative and it allows them to be caring for others without emotionally losing themselves in the process.

The Bhagavad Gita provides a foundation for understanding the process of emotional release. The process of detachment teaches individuals to act sincerely while remaining emotionally independent from the results. Lord Krishna's teaching to Arjuna offers a timeless reminder:

*कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।*

Karmanye vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana

(You have the right to perform your duty, but not to the fruits of your actions)

(Bhagavad Gita, 2.47)

This verse has deep relevance as we realise our value through results like successful relationships and emotional validation from others. Letting go involves being emotionally independent from results and continuing to act with care and responsibility.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches freedom from emotions that bound the individual. Krishna advises freedom from desire, fear and attachment:

*विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।*

Vihaya kaman yah sarvan pumans charati nishsprihah

(One who abandons desires and moves without attachment attains peace)

(Bhagavad Gita, 2.71)

This process of detachment promotes emotional clarity. In the case of women, releasing guilt, unrealistic standards and emotional demands enables them to rebuild their own strength and self-worth.

As Naim (2017) and Hart (2019) emphasise that letting go does not mean denying pain or pretending strength. It means acknowledging one's emotional experiences while choosing not to remain trapped by them.

Niska (2021) emphasises that letting go allows individuals to grow without carrying unnecessary emotional burden. For women, this process is valuable as it helps them to navigate complex environments while maintaining inner stability.

#### *B. Gratitude as Inner Strength in Women's Lives*

Gratitude is the practice of recognizing and appreciating the positive aspects of individual life.

It's more than just saying "thank you" it's about shifting your attention from what's lacking to what's present. It becomes a psychological and emotional tool that helps women to reinterpret their experiences, especially pain, sacrifice and emotional neglect. When women practice gratitude along with letting go; they are choosing to transform suffering into meaning and resilience.

Most of the time women give emotional labour which remains unnoticed and unacknowledged. They nurture families, maintain relationships and manage all crises without any recognition or support. The lack of acknowledgement creates the feelings of emptiness and resentment. Gratitude also plays a critical role in helping women to release emotional attachment.

According to Trenton (2021), emotional exhaustion is usually reciprocated not by giving but without feeling appreciated. Gratitude is one of the best methods of rediscovering emotional value through acknowledging own efforts and strength, even when appreciation by others is absent.

Zahariades (2019) mentions that gratitude shifts attention away from what is lacking toward what has been achieved. For women, this shift is empowering because of instead of feeling defeated by emotional loss, gratitude helps them to recognise personal growth, endurance and emotional maturity gained through experiences.

Hawkins (2012) notes that gratitude is closely linked to emotional surrender; surrender does not imply weakness or passivity rather it reflects the willingness to stop resisting reality. Gratitude allows women to stop fighting their difficult experiences and instead accept them as part of their life journey. This acceptance reduces emotional resistance and gradually restores inner peace.

In women's lives, gratitude also makes them emotionally independent. Many women are conditioned to derive their self-worth from relational roles like by being a good daughter, wife and mother. When these roles dominate their identity, women begin to feel invisible as individuals. Baruah (2018) highlights that gratitude helps women to reconnect with their inner selves by acknowledging personal efforts, emotional endurance and inner growth.

Another important dimension of gratitude is its role in emotional healing. Women often carry emotional pain for so long because they feel responsible for maintaining emotional harmony. Naim (2017) mentions that gratitude helps individuals soften their relationship with pain. Instead of allowing pain to define identity, gratitude reframes it as a source of knowledge. For women, this reframing is important as it allows them to honour their struggles without being emotionally stuck by them.



Gratitude encourages women in the process of forgiveness which is misunderstood as excusing harmful behaviour, but in reality, it is a release of emotions. Bartley Lenz (2020) emphasises that holding on to resentment keeps individuals emotionally bound to the past. Women, in particular, struggle with resentment because they are taught to suppress their emotions rather than express it. Gratitude helps women move beyond resentment by focusing on emotional freedom as it enables them to forgive not for others, but for their own peace.

The practice of gratitude further helps women let go of self-blame as women often blame themselves for situations beyond their control like failed relationships, unmet expectations or emotional conflicts. So, gratitude allows women to acknowledge that they did their best with the resources they had.

Jan (2020) and Niska (2021) emphasise that gratitude strengthens emotional resilience. Resilience does not mean absence of pain; it means the ability to continue moving forward despite pain. Women who practice the act of gratitude are better able to cope up with emotional loss because they are not solely focused on what went wrong but what lessons they have learnt.

Gratitude plays a crucial role in helping women detach from the need for constant approval as many women seek validation from others to feel emotionally secure. When such validation is inconsistent or absent then emotional instability follows. Purkiss (2017) highlights that inner peace develops when individuals stop outsourcing their emotional validation. Gratitude supports this process by helping women appreciate their own journey rather than asking for recognition from others; this shift encourages emotional independence and self-confidence.

Here we can say that gratitude does not eliminate pain rather, it changes the way pain has been carried. *Thought Catalog* writings on letting go often emphasise that gratitude allows individuals to coexist with pain without being overwhelmed by it (Thought Catalog, 2018). This coexistence is essential as their emotional lives often involve continuous sacrifices and compromises. Gratitude provides emotional stability, which enables women to remain compassionate without emotional depletion.

Hence, gratitude serves as an inner strength that complements the process letting go. Even though letting go releases emotional burdens, gratitude fills the emotional gap with meaning, self-respect and acceptance.

### *C. Letting Go as Empowerment: Healing, Identity, and Inner Freedom*

Letting go, sometime is misinterpret as a passive act of surrender or emotional detachment.

In women's lives, letting go serves as a powerful tool of empowerment. It enables women to heal from emotional pain, redefine their identities and experience inner growth. Letting go does not arise from denial of pain but from conscious engagement with emotional experiences and the decision to release what no longer nurtures growth or peace.

Women's lives are often shaped by emotional endurance. From the beginning, women are taught to adjust, tolerate discomfort and prioritise needs of others. Over the time, this emotional conditioning leads women to internalise their pain rather than express it. Hawkins (2012) explains that emotional suffering continues when individuals resist reality or remain attached to their own narratives. Letting go help to channelise emotional energy towards healing and self-development.

Healing through letting go begins when we acknowledge that holding on to pain does not honour our strength. As Trenton (2021) states that true emotional strength does not lies in holding on, but in knowing when to release. This release becomes an act of self-respect which allows them to heal emotionally without forgetting their past and struggles.

Letting go plays an important role in formation of identity. Mostly, women define themselves based on the roles that offers to them like caregiver, nurturer, supporter or mediator. Although these roles are significant but restrictions to these roles reduce self-expression. Baruah (2018) states that women often lose touch with their aspirations when their identities become role-bound. Letting go empowers women to separate themselves from imposed roles and rediscover their desires, values and purpose.

Naim (2017) explains that letting go helps individuals to detach their identity from their emotional wounds. For women, this detachment is necessary for allowing them to recognise that pain which they have experienced is different from what they are. Letting go enables women to gain self-confidence from within rather than from others; this internal development encourages emotional autonomy and resilience.

Marcus Aurelius emphasised that inner peace arises when individuals focus on what lies within their control and release attachments. While it does not reject emotion, but it encourages emotional discipline and acceptance. This perspective aligns with modern understanding of letting go, where women learn to heal by releasing emotions (Purkiss, 2017).

Letting go is another form of empowerment which helps in releasing fear of loneliness, rejection or failure. Fear tends to keep women emotionally attached to undesirable situations.



According to Hart (2019) letting go helps to reduce emotional fear by building trust in inner strength and personal growth. For women, this belief is especially empowering, as it reminds them that they can confront change, loss and uncertainty without losing their identity.

Inner freedom is the ultimate outcome of this process which does not mean freedom from responsibility or relations, but freedom from emotional attachment. Niska (2021) states that inner freedom allows individuals to engage without being emotionally detached. For women, this freedom enables them to love without fear, give without depletion and develop without emotional restraint.

In essence, letting go creates balance between emotional engagement and self-preservation. It enables women to heal without forgetting, redefine their identity and experience freedom from isolation. Through letting go, women transform emotional pain into wisdom and vulnerability into strength.

### III. CONCLUSION

Hence, we can say that letting go is not about giving up but it is about choosing peace over pain. And it is also about understanding that holding on to anger, guilt, fear or disappointment only makes the heart heavier. For women, this process is not easy as they are always taught to stay strong, adjust and prioritise others. In doing so, they often forget their own emotional needs. Over the time, this creates silent suffering.

We can say that letting go of the past is a step toward emotional freedom. It means accepting the past without allowing it to control the present. It means fulfilling responsibility with honesty but not attaching to outcomes or approval. The teachings of the Bhagavad Gita also remind us that peace comes when we focus on our actions and let go of attachment. This message is especially important for women who often measure their worth based on relationships and societal expectations.

Gratitude strengthens the journey of letting go which helps to reduce emotional suffering. It helps women to see their strength, courage and growth. It shifts attention from what was lost to what was achieved.

When women begin to appreciate their own efforts and struggles, they no longer depend on any validation and they start valuing themselves. Forgiveness is also part of this healing; it does not mean forgetting pain or accepting unfairness. It means releasing oneself from emotional bondage. When women forgive themselves for not being “perfect” and others for their shortcomings then they create space for inner peace and self-respect.

Letting go with gratitude, becomes a path to inner strength. It allows women to care for others without losing themselves. It helps them love without fear and grow without guilt. And it also teaches us that true strength is not in silent suffering but in honest acceptance and emotional balance. In nutshell, letting go is an act of courage. It is a gentle but powerful decision to choose healing over suffering. Through acceptance, gratitude and forgiveness, women can move forward with confidence, clarity and a peaceful heart.

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