

# I Release You, So Be It, Let It Burn: A Ritual With Susanna Harwood Rubin

*By Susanna Harwood Rubin*

There is something that you need to let go of. Right now. It is lodged in your muscles, hinted at by a clicking of your jaw or by a gripping sensation in your spine or belly.

Perhaps you can't figure out how to release it because you didn't even notice when it extended its roots from deep inside your heart and mind to colonize your entire body. Creeping quietly and so very slowly, you have just now recognized this hungry thing thriving inside of you.

How do you release it?

Once, at the very beginning of time, there was a lack of food because not enough had been made to keep up with the ever-expanding universe. As the universe grew increasingly crowded, the gods became so weak from hunger that they could barely function. As Indra's rains dried up, the earth became desiccated. As Surya's sunlight dimmed, the world was smothered in an uneasy darkness.

The gods appealed to Brahma, Lord of Creation, for help. Brahma arranged for a Homa, a fire ritual. During the Homa, the gods would be fed through offerings poured into the flames. In order to keep the gods fed and fully functioning, the fire would have to be lit.



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Paradoxically, Agni, the god of fire, was as weak and hungry as anyone else, and needed to be invigorated in order to ignite and receive the blessings that would consequently feed the gods, including himself.

The gods turned toward Brahma once again.

To ignite Agni, Brahma transformed Swaha, a nymph who was enamored of the fire god, into a full goddess, and the two were wed. With her energy, Agni was able to ignite, the fire burned, and the gods were properly honored through mantras and oblations such as ghee, grains, and herbs.

The gods were nourished. The universe continued.

In gratitude for Swaha's energy and grace, to this day, whenever offerings are poured into the ritual fire, her name is said. *Swaha*.

*Swaha can mean:*

*It is offered.  
So be it.  
I release you.  
And so it is.  
Let it burn.*

What in your life do you need to release? Throw it into the flames. *It is offered.* Was it hard to let go of? Of course it was; something about it once served you well. That's why you gave it a home inside yourself. Honor the letting go, but do it. *So be it.*

Write its name on a piece of paper then burn it in your sink. *I release you.* The smoke rises. The ashes are rinsed away. *And so it is.*

Light a candle. Say its name. Once it is spoken, its inner grip on you is disempowered, its chokehold released, its clutching tendrils ripped away. The thing exits you and dissolves in the fire. You have freed yourself. By feeding the flames, you honor what was and what will be. *Let it burn.*



Photo:  
[SusannaHarwoodRubin.com](http://SusannaHarwoodRubin.com)

The [ritual creates a catharsis](#). When one thing dissolves, you make space for something greater. When you release what stifles or oppresses you, you open up to new possibilities. You relinquish the past to step more fully into your present and move toward your future. Feed the flames. There is no creation without dissolution. And this is both frightening and beautiful, because everything is frightening and beautiful when it burns.

What do you need to let go of?

*I release you. So be it. Let it burn.*

*Swaha. Swaha. Swaha.*

**PS: Susanna is the author of the inspirational book: [Yoga 365: Daily Wisdom for Life On and Off the Mat](#).**

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