

**Being Your Own Support Person**  
**May 2020**  
**by Melissa Moore**

Dear Karuna Training Community,

Supporting and nurturing yourself is so important during these intense times. So our next installment in our series of online talks and emails, we will be on...

[How To Be Your Own Support System](#)

If you'd like to explore this topic with us more, you can join Senior Teacher Sandra Ladley on May 30th for an online interactive [talk](#) on the topic, and/or read a little in depth discussion about it here from Karuna Training Founder Melissa Moore:

Reflecting on the past month of social isolation and the extreme intervention on *life as usual* the Coronavirus has offered everyone globally, we probably have employed or at least thought about what we can do for ourselves that is truly self nurturing. What can we do for ourselves that doesn't depend on others? Those who had their routines of running to the gym or yoga class, attending spiritual meditation centers, community acupuncture, etc. have been completely thrown back on themselves to find other ways to destress and foster genuine self-support. What we are really talking about here is how are we truly our own best friends.

We do not always practice self-soothing activities to nurture ourselves whether our routines have been interrupted or not; instead we might find we are vegging out for hours online, or somehow doodle the day away ingesting substances we wish we hadn't, even though we know better. Some of us who spent their time doing *who knows what?...* being busy ... are perhaps tasting space perhaps for the first time. This experience can be both refreshing and bewildering.

*The usual ways we ritualize ourselves to the world have been drastically disrupted and there is a great opportunity in this moment to see something about how we truly provide support toward oneself.*

I've heard from a number of people that their focus is not there, that reading, listening, watching is simply not rewarding, that they have no bandwidth of attention and that they are not that motivated to exercise either. On the other hand, Some of us are finding we're happier than ever, as I heard one professional man say, " I am never going back to the office." The grind of commuting and finally being home with the kids and free from schedules, or the social pressures to be out and about. We might be finding that our world is finally in balance.

Nevertheless, wherever we find ourselves in this Pandemic era, we have been thrown back on ourselves to find genuine remedies to ‘resource’ ourselves. Learning to resource ourselves could be one of the greatest blessings of this time if we begin to discern deeply what truly is a nurturing activity and what is not.

### ***Discovering Resources in Yourself***

Resourcing is a word used to mean finding what is needed to accomplish a job; however in trauma informed psychology circles, ‘*resourcing ourselves*’ is a term that means finding synchronization and stability in the moment, so that one is not operating out of a habitual adrenaline reaction, but able to respond to events from a truly centered space and able to meet the situation with a feeling of sanity.

*We are all different and finding out about ourselves and how we truly find nurturance and ‘resource’ ourselves is a path. Many would call it a path of privilege, and that is probably true, and at the same time being ‘resourced’ is ultimately a way to be more available to others and what the world needs.*

In Karuna Training we investigate and learn to trust in our unconditioned nature, which is called *intrinsic health*. Learning to tap our intrinsic health in the present moment is another way of resourcing ourselves. Sitting meditation practice is our primary method, along with a plethora of centering and stabilizing contemplative mindfulness awareness disciplines. For some meditation is difficult due to past trauma, so there are ways to practice mindful embodiment to work up to more formal sitting meditation. But the main point is that intrinsic health is discovered when we synchronize our body breath and mind in the present moment.

All synchronizing contemplative disciplines requires a certain amount of bravery, because it means we have to feel ourselves directly, often something we are proficient at ignoring. We have to be daring to truly feel into what we are feeling and this often makes us feel vulnerable and queasy. Ironically, from a contemplative psychology perspective, this is where our greatest strength lies, in the messiness of our vulnerability..

### ***A Contemplation for the Times***

This pandemic era also may be making us feel a little bit queasy if we really feel into what is happening fully, but feeling into it from a contemplative perspective is the path to resourcing ourselves. I propose that this pandemic era is an opportune time, a limited mirror if you will, to investigate and ask ourselves how we really treat ourselves.

Try taking some time for this contemplation yourself, meditating or journaling on the following questions:

How do I treat myself with kindness and friendliness?

Am I feeling reckless toward myself when left to my own means? If so does this happen in one part of the day?

What and where are we today? At this moment?

During this down time of the virus, how are we genuinely treating ourselves?

*Whatever we meet in ourselves in these questions, whatever we feel, we can simply relax with the information as it is - let it in and feel it, without making ourselves wrong.*

The ability to stay with and hold the feelings, hold the information is a big part of supporting ourselves. We are leaning into our truth of the moment in a way that we can feel things as they are - and that in itself is an act of kindness.

### ***Offering Kindness To Yourself***

In Contemplative Psychology we practice taking the time to check in with ourselves first and ask ourselves probing questions. This requires stopping, feeling and utilizing mindfulness awareness practice, body awareness, and loving kindness as a lens to look and see. First we investigate what is going on with ourselves, and then with skill and training, we learn to extend our non-judgemental awareness toward others -- as an act of loving kindness. People can experience this instantly, without knowing what it is. Kindness is something most humans respond to favorably.

Contemplative psychology is the ultimate friendly path which requires genuine kindness, effort and courage to look, see, feel and acknowledge what we find without reaction and habitual blaming and shaming.

*This is cultivating non-judgemental awareness. We meet our awareness as 'just information' and with loving kindness and openness no matter what we are experiencing. This takes training and a lot of self love.*

I'm someone who has practiced and taught contemplative psychology most of my adult life; and I always say we teach what we most need to learn. During this pandemic, I've been grounded. My usual travel frenzy has been blessedly cut, and my schedule has been ripped apart. I am

home! This is something I've been aspiring toward, supplicating for actually, 'to be home more'. Watch for what you wish for! Of course I wanted to control how this reprieve from travel happened.

Although I do practice meditation regularly, and have fairly healthy habits of self-care; the total all out global *PAUSE*, has had a dramatic affect on my understanding of myself. I'm still in the middle of it and thus cannot possibly be comprehensive in my documentation of what I've found. But right now, more than any other time in my life of practicing and teaching on Maitri; loving kindness toward oneself and others, I've had to truly and genuinely 'resource myself' daily through the practices I've learned. I cannot just go through the motions. That has been a huge gift. The gift of space and time to practice what I know.

I understand that we are extremely permeable, changing and sensitive beings, we humans. With awareness we can begin to track and see our constantly changing emotional landscape and resultant physical energy, that is our life force. It manifests in all kinds of moods, blurts, shouts, spills, trips and insights. The mind/body is always moving, changing, initiating and responding. One needs to slow down enough to notice that there is nothing fixed or solid, nothing!

*I have discovered this again, that we humans are more like rivers than we are like trees; we are flowing and changing, not naturally rooted. However when we root, stand still, be still enough to listen to sensations and to breath and stay with the flow of energy... without interpretation, then we can draw on the life force within us and that is what is ultimately resourcing. That is tapping our intrinsic health.*

### **Noticing How You Treat Yourself**

I could offer ideas and advice about resourcing oneself, but there is a much deeper question on hand and one that only you can answer personally. Being your own support system has to do with how you are with yourself, by yourself. How you treat yourself physically, meaning how and what you feed yourself, and put back out into the world regularly. How you behave toward yourself first and toward others. How you treat your emotions, whether you suppress them, act them out, or feel them directly. Whether your self-talk toward yourself is gentle and understanding or ignorant and damning. We do all of these things at different times (most of us), and that is what it means to be human, there is no getting it right all the time.

*It is a process of coming back to ourselves again and again and synchronizing with the present moment -- drawing on our intrinsic unconditioned awake nature to feel and recognize, hold and stay open*

*toward. That is a lot actually. It takes training and repetition to learn to resource ourselves, and it's the heart of the path of contemplative psychology.*

It all starts with being there for ourselves, like any good support person would be. We can be with ourselves through meditation or other contemplative practices where we allow ourselves to really listen to our internal process like a good friend listening to another friend's hurts and processes; and also like a good friend we can offer ourselves kindness, appreciation and understanding without judgment or advice on how to make it better - - or any pressure to do or be something other than we are.

That's all from us for now! We wish you well in these challenging times.

Warmly,  
Melissa Moore and The Karuna Training Team