

Tips for the Road: Tip #22

Lead Yourself with Compassion

with Eric Bowers

Substitute Inner Leader—the term I use below—with whatever term works best for you: Inner Parent; Inner Grandmother; Inner Elder; Compassionate Companion; Highest Self; etc.

A. Spend some time each day (even a few minutes helps, more is better) giving yourself nurturing attention from the position of your Inner Leader. Welcome all the parts of yourself, give them empathy, send them love, acceptance, and compassion and tell them nurturing messages (see below).

B. Build your awareness of when an activated inner part is taking over—a wounded child part; a victim part; an inner critic; an inner monster part; etc. What do you feel and how do you act when any given part is taking over?

C. It can be challenging to be nurturing toward every inner part, and it can be challenging to be nurturing toward yourself each time an inner part tries to take over. Turn to support—counsellor, empathy buddy, etc.—whenever you have trouble holding yourself compassionately.

1. When you notice an inner part taking over, find some space to yourself as soon as you can. Call forth your Inner Leader (IL).
2. Have your IL welcome whatever part is activated. Offer it some nurturing messages (see below).
3. Have your IL welcome whatever sensations and feelings you find in your body.
4. Have your IL offer empathy to the activated part—make needs guesses.
5. Have your IL validate the activated part's feelings and needs, "Of course you're feeling angry, you need _____ (trust, respect, etc.). And you've experienced many times when you didn't get respect, so no wonder you're so angry." Offer more nurturing messages.
6. Continue empathizing and validating until you feel a shift for the activated part. Give it empathy for past memories that arise.



7. Ask it what gift it has to give you now. How can it contribute to your life now? If there is a specific thing you would like to work toward, ask it if it would be willing to help you with that and how it could use its gifts toward that goal.

8. If you are having difficulty calming an inner part, bring to mind a time when the needs of this inner part were fully met and breathe your gratitude for that experience into your heart. Or, find anything from your life that you are grateful for and breathe that gratitude into your heart. Keep acknowledging the inner part and keep generating the feeling of gratitude.

Nurturing Messages

1. I love you.
2. I've got you.
3. I'm with you. I'm right here with you.
4. You are special to me.
5. I see you and I hear you.
6. You can trust me.
7. You can trust your inner voice.
8. I love you for who you are, not what you do.
9. You don't have to be alone anymore.
10. You don't have to be afraid anymore.
11. You belong with me.
12. I welcome all your feelings.
13. I care very much about your needs.