

ITPI Spring Newsletter 2020

Working Theme: COVID-19 as Practice Partner: Learnings from the Experience and Practices for Staying on your Path

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1. What are you learning about yourself at this time?



What am I learning about myself at this time? Possibly because I was brought up in the country by a basically loving family I have always had a strong sense of personal security. My husband wasn't so sure this sense of mine was fact-based, so he influenced me to study martial arts. I'm eternally grateful to him for this.

These days of possible virus exposure have shaken my sense of safety. I look out my window and

wonder when I'll feel secure doing the activities that have been in my life for years and have given me such joy. I love getting my 8 hugs a day, the ITP quotient for health! How will I feel safe doing this in the near future? I'm in a state of not-knowing, which is a powerful practice partner.

2. What practices are supporting you?

For the first 6 weeks of stay-home I exercised, practiced on my own, and learned new practices. I was reasonably happy. Then, in the 7th week I lost my mojo! I just felt tired and listless. In ITP we call it homeostasis, but that's just a word. The feeling was draining me of energy, a cloud over my life. Everything was flat. I cooked a box of mac and cheese for dinner. From a box. (A low point for the grown-ups in my world.)

3. What insights and tools do you have to share with the ITP community?

Yesterday I forced myself to do the kata. Outdoors! Inwardly I groaned during GRACE. It felt so superficial and unreal! By the meditation, though, I did feel a resurgence of some of my previous enthusiasm for life. I could see the beauty of springtime out my backdoor. Then I dared to mask up and walk outdoors far further afield than I had gone during the past 6 weeks. The combination of integrating myself through kata practice and aerobic exercise brought me a new energy flow. Those 2 practices are supporting me these days. And, should you get into a homeostatic funk, I recommend the kata and walking, doing both outdoors if possible and especially if you don't feel like it!

Update offered on 5/12/2020:

These days I'm learning to be more present with myself and with the 3 other people I live with. Each of us has feelings, proclivities, and needs. This is natural, however, as we've never spent this much time together, the harmony of the home entails understanding, presence, and love. At times I need to step aside, be quiet, and calm myself. Stepping aside links me to my Aikido training. In class we practice "getting off the line of attack" in many different ways. At home my main "get off the line" method is to breathe deeply and get busy cleaning. Cleaning is a good activity in these situations because when you finish you've made something more beautiful. That act of creation takes me from any kind of negativity or fear into happiness.

I'm also learning about my sense of control and safety. I've usually felt quite safe most of the time, and when I didn't feel safe there was, perhaps, a good reason. Nowadays, with the invisible virus floating around looking for a home, I notice I'm feeling less safe. This has resulted in occasional emotional lability, lack of concentration, and listlessness. My practice is to stay aware of my feelings and bring understanding, love, and gratitude into my heart.

I'm very grateful for my ITP practices, the 9 Commitments, and the community. Practicing awakens my connection to Spirit, opens me to the beauty of each day, and settles me. I've been practicing with our community for a while, so that I feel a strong connection to all of you when I see you on Zoom or even when I just think of you. I'm very fortunate in this respect and I thank you for going on the ITP journey with me.