



## 100 Percent On Your Own Side

*“A moment of self-compassion can change your entire day. A string of such moments can change the course of your life.”* — Christopher Germer\*

Support from others helps you develop a kind, supportive internal voice.

My Inner Nurturer knows I always deserve respect and love. She helps me trust my perceptions rather than taking a vote from the people around me. She replaces “should” with “could” every time I hear it or say it to myself. She is deeply, unhesitatingly compassionate about my pain.

My Inner Critic (page 48) has a lot to say on the subject of Inner Nurturers. “Silly. Self-indulgent. Dangerous. What will other people think?” My shoulders hunch defensively toward my ears.

**Calm at the core.** My Inner Nurturer helps me breathe through my defensive reaction and observe the criticism without letting it knock me off course. When I connect with being 100% on my own side, I feel settled and calm at my core, even during emotional storms.

Your Inner Nurturer may have a different name. Robyn Posin calls hers Mommy Inside\*\*. In her book *The Obsidian*

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\* Christopher Germer, *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion*, Guilford Press, 2009.

\*\* Robyn Posin, “Love Yourself.”

[www.forthelittleonesinside.com/mpage/lovyrs1f.html](http://www.forthelittleonesinside.com/mpage/lovyrs1f.html)

*Mirror*, Louise Wisechild calls hers Carrie.\* Yours might be your Inner Ally, Inner Healer, or any other name you choose.

**A door into sanctuary.** Inner Nurturers are solidly convinced that you are doing it right, whatever “it” is. They know that you are doing your absolute best with the resources and information available to you, and if you could do better, you would. When your back is to the wall, they open a door into sanctuary.

Your Inner Nurturer contains your self-trust and confidence about your place in the world. Our right to be here cannot be proven, only assumed, and Inner Nurturers confidently assume it.

**Absorb acceptance.** Some people’s Inner Nurturers develop by internalizing the consistent, loving care they received in childhood. Others received abusive or neglectful parenting and develop an Inner Nurturer later as part of healing. Both as children and as adults, our Inner Nurturers gleefully absorb accepting language whenever we hear it.

A friend told me once, “Don’t go to the hardware store for milk.” It had not occurred to me before that maybe no one is at fault when there is a mismatch between a situation and my expectations, just as there is nothing wrong with wanting milk, nor with a hardware store for not stocking it. Now my Inner Nurturer reminds me when I forget.

**Practice nurturing.** In addition to absorbing non-judgmental ideas wherever you find them, develop your Inner Nurturer by practicing on your own.

- Meditation builds the nurturing skills of noticing reactions and accepting what is.

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\* Louise Wisechild, *The Obsidian Mirror*, Seal Press, 2003.

- Supportive voices on your internal committee (page 146) create more room for your Inner Nurturer to emerge.
- Your sensitivities encourage you to honor your preferences.
- When you notice self-doubt, imagine that you support yourself 100%. What would you do differently if you trusted yourself?

**Inner Critics worry.** If you think that you “should” be more on your own side, and that if you were just more healed this would be easier, and that your own quiet (or loud) Inner Nurturer does not measure up, you are hearing your Inner Critic’s voice instead. Inner Critics worry about the power and vulnerability of being 100% on our own side, and do their best to protect us from it with their usual tools.

Notice your responses to your Inner Critic’s concerns. Do you shrink away, argue, tense up? Listen for your Inner Nurturer’s voice in your responses. What would someone say if they had your back? Your Inner Nurturer is right there in that knowledge of your inner truth.

**From self-doubt to self-trust.** When a tiny voice inside says, “I want... (something wildly new and different),” or “I don’t want... (something you have tolerated for years),” your Inner Nurturer celebrates the information about your boundaries. When your intuition and your feelings react strongly but “unreasonably”, your Inner Nurturer knows there is always a good reason.

Being 100% on our own side gives us a solid place to stand when someone tries to sway us with manipulation. Best of all, it interrupts the vicious cycle of self-doubt and self-justification with the sweet relief of self-trust.