

Steve Carlson ([00:17](#)):

Child welfare ranks high on level of difficulty in all human service work. People in the helping profession who are strong in intrapersonal intelligence are really good at being aware of their own emotional state and their motivations for what they do. The work of child welfare is complex requiring a worker to have ability to balance the needs of the child while supporting the parent or caregiver in their recovery. For the next four, Mondays beginning today, we will be sharing with you a five minute podcast that will support you in your intrapersonal intelligence through a mindfulness meditation. Today, our topic is "Being Hope in the Midst of Despair".

([01:10](#)):

As we begin this meditation, take a moment to settle yourself into a comfortable position, whether you are standing or sitting. If you are driving, please be mindful of the road and your safety and the safety of others. Wherever you are, begin by taking in a slow deep breath. If it works for you, allow your arms to rest comfortably at your sides. You can either close your eyes or soften your gaze as you center yourself by simply paying attention to your breath. As you breathe, inhale and exhale, take note of how natural breathing is. There is no effort, no concentration necessary. It's as if the breathing breathes you. And this is the nature of hope, which is a quality of our true nature and is always accessible. While resting in simple awareness of the present moment, focusing on your breath, take all of the plans, tasks to get done, and even the worries that are taking up space in your mind and heart and place them all on the back burner of your consciousness, and simply attend to your breath.

([02:35](#)):

In this first day of supporting your inner state of peace, calm, and wellness, we will focus on our human capacity to experience hope. Even in the midst of despair, difficulty challenge and busy-ness, we have the ability to embody a sense of hope. While focusing on your breath, let's take a little mental trip together. Allow your mind to travel back in to a time perhaps over the past year or way back into the magic of childhood, a time in your life when you were inspired with a deep sense of hope. Spend a moment resting in this memory and all the feelings that come up for you. For those of you with children, who gave birth to a child or aunts and uncles have children, you likely know what it feels like to experience a profound sense of hope. After a long period of labor, the moment this miracle bundle of innocence and joy was laid on your belly or the first time you held your child or someone else's child in your arms.

([03:48](#)):

In that moment, you knew the power of hope found at the core of your being right there. Next to joy and love. Hope sometimes surprises us, even during those long workdays scheduled with routine tasks. And you step out for a while, perhaps a walk around the neighborhood or around a lake or through a darkened forest of trees on a cloud covered day. When suddenly the sun peaks its way through the clouds, overhead and long streams of light spread across the shadowed landscape. And as if by magic or divine expression, you become aware that hope exists apart from the repetitive routines of life and work. And you knew in that moment, all is right with the world. Even when it isn't. Hope is powerful. Hope helps us to know that everything in your life and even in the life of your clients is just as it should be just as it needs to be.

[\(04:55\)](#):

Even when it is obvious that it isn't. Just like the caregivers you work with, you may have experienced the period of your life that was difficult, that the storms of life circumstances were whipping up all around you. Could have been, you were dealing with a relationship loss, a breakup, a friend that moved on, or perhaps even the death of a loved one. Maybe you were struggling with a serious medical condition that unexpectedly was thrust upon you or someone you care about. Maybe the stress of work has been building up and reaching a near breaking point

[\(05:37\)](#):

And then just about the time you thought you could not take anymore. When the storm had reached a level of overwhelm, you let go of trying to control the circumstances and hope arrived. It was as if you reached the eye of the circumstantial storm and in that center, a ray of light illuminated the dark corners of your life and hope entered the room. From this hope came a shift of perspective, a change in mindset and a quality of peace and calm that enveloped you in the midst of a life storm. It was if an inner voice of strength showed up just in the nick of time, reminding you no matter what, life will go on. Hope is available all the time. The essence of hope is not limited to wishful thinking as helpful as it is to have a vision of a better future. This hope is a quality of our true nature. As Emily Dickinson reminds us "hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tunes without the words and never stops at all."

[\(07:01\)](#):

As you continue on with your day, as you do the work of protecting children and supporting recovery and parents and caregivers, take with you the power of hope. When the challenge of your work feels heavier than you can handle, pause for a moment and access the hope that is inside you and always available. When you hold the hope, even in the face of overwhelm, you are strong. And in your strength, you are holding the hope for parents and children who need you to be the hope to fill the gap between the frightened child and parent who is struggling.

Speaker 2 [\(07:49\)](#):

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