

# MY SUPPORT MAP

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## Support Systems are Success Systems

When I see successful people, I look for the support systems that buoy them. Often, they are hidden in the shadows. Invisible. They are found in supportive partners, overachieving assistants, community connections, domestic help, financial support from families, and many other social groups that surround and admire them. Despite this, some of the most successful people I know wave a proud banner proclaiming personal responsibility is responsible for their success. Intentionally or not, as they do so, they deny our human nature and interconnectedness. They may even twist it into a sign of weakness. They may wonder why you aren't achieving at their level. They may ask, "How are you self-sabotaging?"

Similarly, we live in a society that parents and educates by pointing out what was done wrong and how to correct it. Many of us seem to have adopted similar styles of internal dialogue. We have an excellent inner critic that points out what we have done wrong (doing) [and perhaps how we are inadequate (being)]. This leads to shouling and shaming, neither of which is motivating.

## Shame Systems

When these negative support systems--one, an expectation that we are able to achieve by ourselves, and two, being judgmental and shaming of ourselves--collide, it brews a perfect storm of negative support. Positive support buoys us and carries us forward, negative support sits on us (while asking, "Hey, what are you doing down there?").

## Support Systems

When we find we're stuck, rather than look for deficiencies within ourselves, let's look at our support map. To help orient, support comes in two major forms: nurture and structure. It comes from two major sources internal and external. You may acknowledge a third source: eternal.

Choosing to look through a support lens invites us to reframe concepts such as "self-sabotage." It allows us to let go of myths that run counter to our natural proclivities toward belonging, interconnectedness, and cooperation. Perhaps, rather than seeing fear as a fault within us, we can see it as a natural result of lacking belongingness.

Our internal alert systems perceive isolation and separateness as a threat to survival. If we feel we are alone, or if we have been conditioned to not accept help, then of course we feel fear and resistance--the very characteristics attributed to self-sabotage.

We can also shift the ways we devalue the time spent focused on tending to and supporting our being. We tend to describe time as a metaphor for money. We ascribe value to what people do (doing), and then we value

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people (being) accordingly. At the same time, we often view time spent tending to our needs for connection with ourselves, others, the environment, and even for rest, restoration, and healing, as wasted time.

We all need downtime, especially when we are healing.

## Categories of Support to Consider

**Nurturing Support** is the kind, caring, loving support we offer our being, the essence of who we are. I wrote more about nurturing support here.

**Structured Support** comes in the form of routines, habits, and schedules that support the doing of life. One of the main benefits of structured support is that as tasks become habits, we no longer deplete our mental/willpower reservoirs by deciding whether or not to do them. This frees up energy for tending to more vulnerable and difficult decisions/goals.

**Internal Sources of Support** come from loving and protecting parts of us that give us permission to tend to ourselves as well as we tend to others (nurturing) They also draw consistent boundaries (structured) around us and our resources, such as time.

**External Sources of Support** come from the people and experiences that fill us up and give us a sense of value and validation (nurturing). They are what we generally think of as our support system. They are the people we turn to who can help us out or lighten our load (structured). In return, we respond similarly, and cooperatively.

**Eternal Sources of Support** will come from your religious and/or spiritual values and beliefs, as well as cultural beliefs and practices. Particularly in regard to concepts related to a Higher Power, Prophets, religious writings, prayer, angels, ancestors, and our own souls.

Now that we have reviewed some forms of support above, take some time now to reflect on your support systems. I have provided some images below to help you. You can also download this information here.

- Acknowledge the sources of support from within each category that you are already using.
- Identify sources of support in each category that you would like to add to your support system.
- Make a plan.
- Implement the plan.
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The more our actions become habits, the less we have to think about them. They will not drain the limited reserves from which we make decisions. Therefore, we can use that reserve to further build and sustain our willpower.

DR *Emily* KELLER

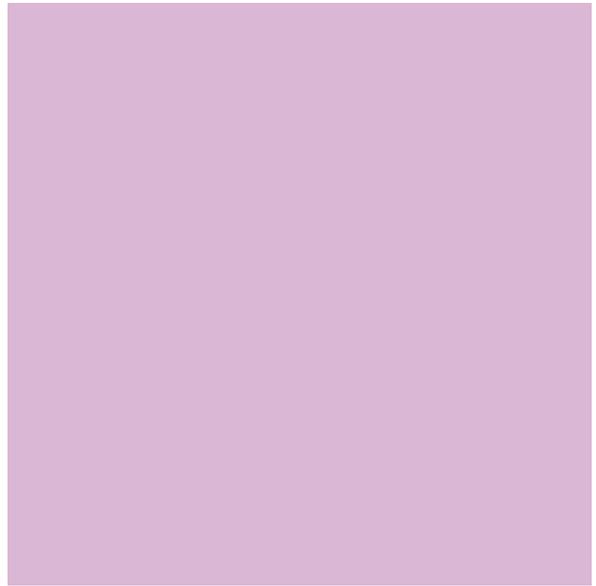
# SUPPORT I HAVE

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*Nurturing*

*Structured*

*Internal*



*External*



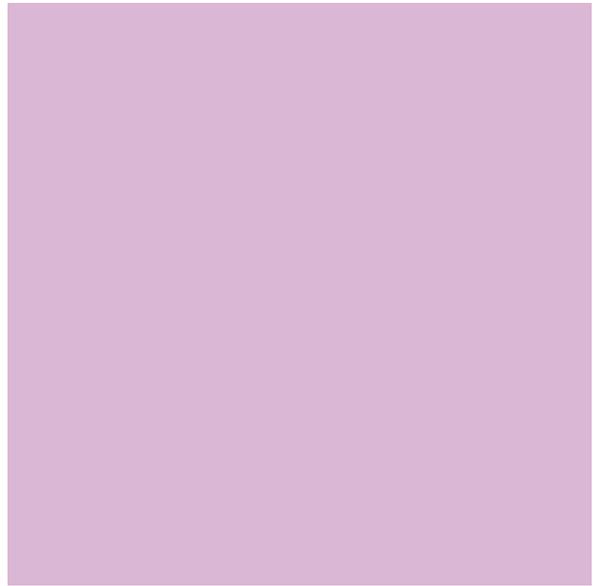
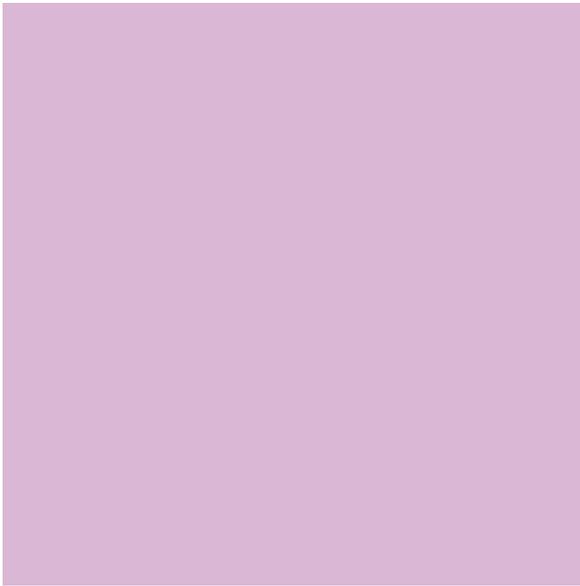
# SUPPORT TO ADD

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*Nurturing*

*Structured*

*Internal*



*External*



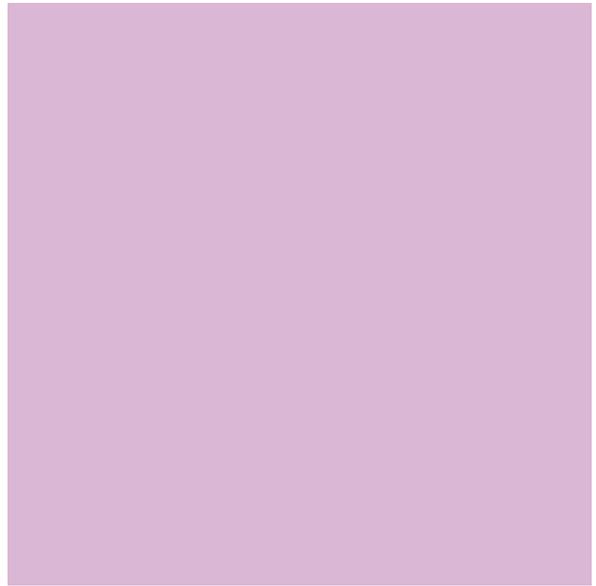
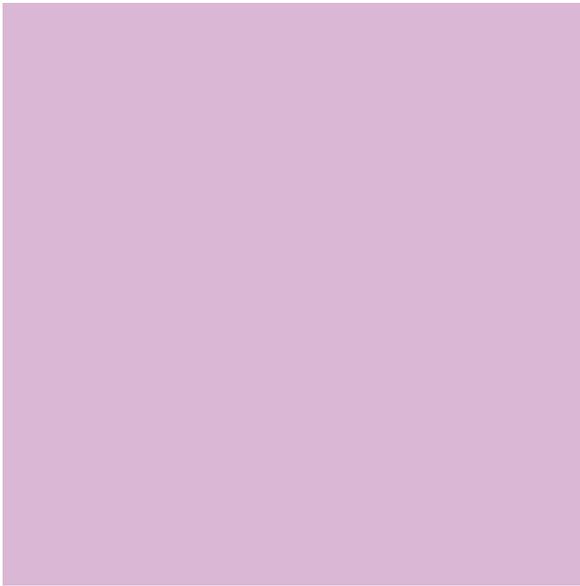
# ETERNAL SOURCES

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*Nurturing*

*Structured*

*Eternal  
--I access*



*Eternal  
--To access*

