

JOURNAL EXERCISE



SEARCH ME, O GOD,
AND KNOW MY HEART.

That I might shine your light.

by Dr. Karen Bergstrom & Tina Ratliff

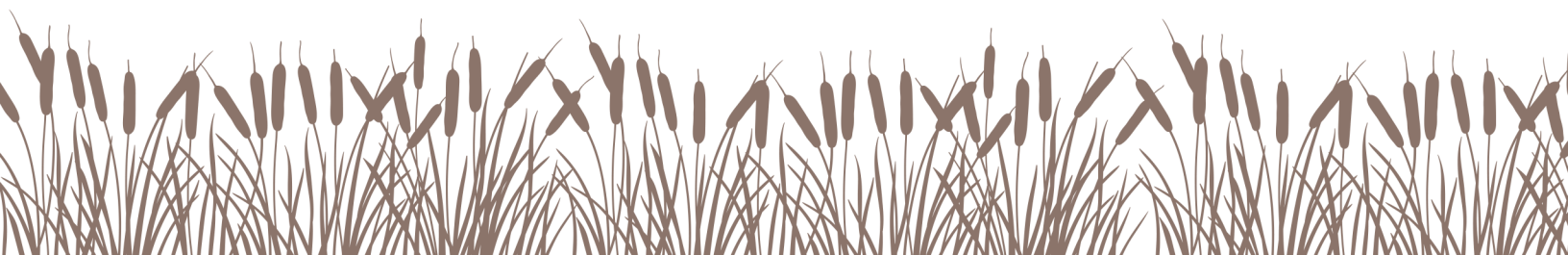


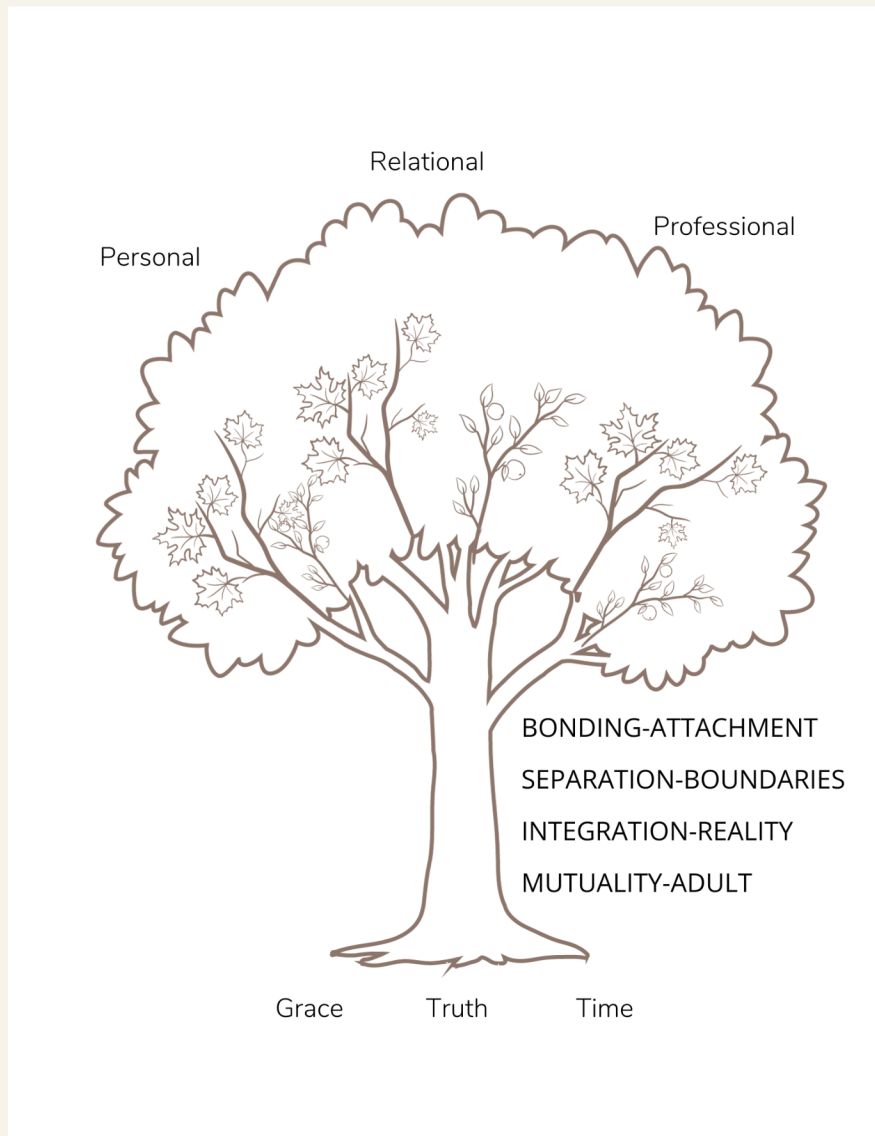
HELLO AND WELCOME!

What do the four areas highlighted on the Townsend Personal and Relational Assessment Tool (TPRAT) you took actually mean? What can you know about yourself from looking at your TPRAT scores through the lens of the Growth Model? And how does being involved in group or individual coaching help develop these capacities? In order to answer these questions, and get the most out of the TPRAT results, we have created a journaling exercise for you!

We suggest you take several days to work through it. Perhaps even read through and journal about one of the four sections a week! That will give you time to dig in and really observe your own experiences and thoughts in each area.

Karen & Tina





Then Jesus told them this parable: "There was a man who planted a fig tree in his orchard. But every time he came to gather fruit from his tree he found none, for it was barren. So he said to his gardener, 'For the last three years I've come to gather figs from my tree but it remains fruitless. What a waste! Go ahead and cut it down!' But the gardener protested, 'Sir, we should leave it one more year. Let me fertilize and cultivate it, then let's see if it will produce fruit. If it doesn't bear figs by next year, we'll cut it down.'"

Luke 13:6-9



Let's discover how to nourish YOU so you can flourish & bring His light, expressed uniquely through you, into your corner of the world.

WHAT IS BONDING / ATTACHMENT

The TPRAT and this journaling practice, will give you a picture of what you think your life's capacities are. Let's dig a little deeper:

Let's start with the first score on the TPRAT - Bonding/Attachment

A term we might be more familiar with when talking about bonding is 'attachment'. This is about the beginning part of life. It is here where we develop our ability to connect, be vulnerable and be seen. We have our first chance at this as babies. This is the stage where we needed our moms to attend to us, to see that we were hungry or cold or needing connection. But because we live in an imperfect world, we leave home unfinished in bonding/attachment. The TPRAT score showed where you think you are in this area.

We are healthily attached or bonded when we have an abundance of experience being safe, seen, soothed and secure.



HOW DOES HEALTHY BONDING/ATTACHMENT SHOW UP AS ADULTS?

We know we are stronger in this area when:

- We find that we have several people available that we can readily approach to ask for and receive relational support.
- We can both give and receive connections within relationships. It is not one-way.
- We are able to be vulnerable and share our authentic selves with others, fostering deeper connections.
- Others find it easy to be vulnerable with us.
- We are comfortable when we are alone, having a secure sense of a loved self.
- We don't rely on the things we do or external validation for our value.
- We feel internally secure as a result of the great experiences we have had with people who have cared deeply for us throughout our lifetime.
- We are drawn to and maintain relationships with emotionally healthy and supportive individuals.

Journal Opportunity -

Where do you see healthy Bonding/Attachment show up for you?

WHEN PARTS OF OUR BONDING/ATTACHMENT ARE NOT SUFFICIENTLY DEVELOPED, WHAT WILL WE EXPERIENCE IN OUR LIVES?

When there is a deficiency in this area,

- We can have difficulty with our emotional needs.
- Our emotions can be too big for us and knock us over.
- We may rely too heavily on our cognitive abilities as a way to distance ourselves from the emotional aspects of our being.
- We can have a hard time being vulnerable, or not know how to connect with others when they are vulnerable with us.
- We can be functionally self-sufficient.
- We can be prone to focusing on meeting the needs of others when the very thing we are doing for the other is actually what we need in our own life.
- We can be prone to enmeshment with people who need us to need them.
- We find ourselves drawn to unhealthy people who gaslight, or are toxic.

Journal Opportunity

When you think about your capacity in the area of bonding, what do you notice in your life? How does this show up for you?

Journal opportunity #1

BONDING / ATTACHMENT

Over the next week think about what was happening in your family throughout your growing-up years.

What was your world like as a child? What were some of the major events that happened in your family as you were very young, a middle-schooler, a teen?

What was childhood like for each of your parents? Do you think this could have affected their ability to bond with you?

Were your caregivers available? Were there times they were not available?

What were your relationships to siblings and parents like?

Did comfort flow easily in your home?

Was home a safe place to share feelings? Were you safe, seen, soothed and secure most of the time?

As an adult, do you encounter challenges in regaining a sense of calm after experiencing feelings of unease?

What is the tool for developing Bonding/Attachment in our lives?

The tool we need for developing our bonding is vulnerability with connection. And for vulnerability and connection....we need others. We can not do it alone. Bonding isn't a one-person solution.

How would being involved in a year long coaching group develop this part?

TLP is a place where we can safely identify our emotions, communicate them, and learn to ask for what we need based on those emotions. Opening up in this small group environment, with safety and structure, helps us develop our ability to be vulnerable which leads to healthy emotional intelligence. In this structured group setting we learn and experience the template of healthy connections which we can then comfortably transfer to the culture of our families, friendships, and workplaces.

If you were to be part of a TLP group, what would you hope to gain in the area of Bonding/Attachment this year?

Journal Opportunity - Looking forward

What is your mental highlighter pointing out as you think on these things?

What do you feel it may have cost you to not have stronger, secure Bonding/Attachment?

If you were to be part of a coaching group, what would you hope to gain in this area year?

WHAT IS SEPARATION/BOUNDARIES?

The second score on your TPRAT assessment is Separation/Boundaries

Another term for Separation/Boundaries is individuation. This pertains to establishing oneself as distinct from those around you. Boundary development typically commences around the age of 2 when toddlers begin to assert their 'no' to explore and grasp the concept of being distinct or 'separate' from their mothers. The formation of our boundaries is influenced by the type of attachment we developed as infants, establishing the groundwork for securely attached relationships. The extent of our progress in the bonding realm contributes to how the separation process unfolds.

Healthy development of Separation/Boundaries occurs when our parents acknowledge and support our need to explore, fostering our individuality. They actively seek our opinions, solutions, and ideas, allowing us to express ourselves and even push back without damaging the connection. Conversely, if they were absent or resistant to our 'no,' it could indicate a deficit in this area. If our parents depended on us for care or lacked well-defined boundaries themselves, it might have led to poor boundary modeling in our home, potentially hindering our progress in developing this life skill.



WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO HAVE HEALTHY BOUNDARIES?

If we have good practice of being separate, we will have clarity in our life, our opinions, and our limits. We take ownership of our own emotions, habits, values, thoughts, behaviors, talents, time, and money without assuming responsibility for those areas in the life of others.

You can tell you have healthy boundaries if you can clearly articulate your needs, desires, and limits to others. You can say ‘no’ without feeling guilty, and respect the limits set by those around you. You can maintain a balance between independence and connection in your relationships. You feel comfortable pursuing your own goals and needs while also engaging and connecting with others without feeling overwhelmed or like you are losing your sense of self. You have the ability to regulate your emotions effectively. You can express your feelings without becoming overwhelmed, and you handle emotional challenges without relying on others to manage your emotions. You generally feel empowered to make decisions that align with your values and needs. You have a strong sense of agency over your life and can make choices without feeling pressured by external influences.

Journal Opportunity -

What are the healthy boundaries you see in your life?

WHEN OUR LIFE CAPACITY OF BOUNDARIES/SEPARATION IS DEFICIENT, WHAT WILL WE EXPERIENCE IN OUR LIVES?

When we are deficient in this area:

- We may lean towards codependency, rescuing, and enabling others.
- We may have porous boundaries leading to inappropriate over-sharing or unbridled self-expression
- We may be attracted to needy individuals, resulting in getting lost in the relationship.
- We may lose ourselves in our roles, neglecting the development of other gifts and talents.
- We may avoid conflict or the discomfort of disappointing others.
- We may experience difficulty expressing anger in healthy ways, making decisions, or being comfortable in solitude.
- We may put other's needs before our own, leading to neglecting self-care.
- We may feel responsible for the emotions and problems of others.
- We may have a fear of abandonment, leading to an excessive need for reassurance and validation from others.
- We may accept disrespectful or inappropriate behavior from others without setting clear boundaries.

Journal Opportunity -

When you think about your capacity in the area of Boundaries/Separation, what do you notice in your life? How does this show up for you?

Journal opportunity #2

SEPARATION/BOUNDARIES

Over the next week think about ,.....

How were boundaries established in your early life, and how have these experiences influenced your current approach to setting boundaries?

Consider your current relationships: In what areas of your life do you find it challenging to set clear boundaries, and why?

How do you typically feel when expressing your feelings and needs or saying "no" to others? Are there patterns or emotions that emerge?

Recall instances where your boundaries were crossed. How did you handle these situations, and what did you learn from them?

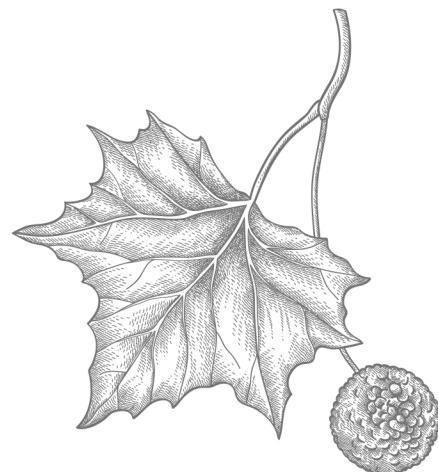
What values are important to you when it comes to setting boundaries in your personal and professional life? How do these values guide your boundary-setting decisions?

How well do you prioritize self-care, and in what ways do you enforce boundaries to protect your well-being?

Reflect on situations where you tend to engage in people-pleasing behaviors. What are the motivators for these actions, and how does this impact you?

What is the tool for developing our capacity of Boundaries/Separation?

The tool we need for developing our capacity of Boundaries/Separation is “No”, and increasing your sense of value.



How would being involved in a year long coaching group develop this part?

Within this structured group setting we can begin knowing and expressing our opinions. We can gain experience in healthy confrontation outside of the complication of long time relationships. We practice giving and receiving feedback that is not always affirmative. Through engaging with the stories of others in the group, we can recognize more clearly our current dependency on others, our defenses and interpersonal coping style that prevents us from fully showing up in our lives. We can begin to enjoy intrinsically gratifying activities, take on new responsibilities, and confidently take new risks. With the support of the other group members, with their affirmations and warm but honest feedback, we increase our sense of value, allowing us to go all in as a gardener, tending the garden of our lives in a way that is truly and authentically YOU.



Journal Opportunity - Looking forward

What would you like to develop in the area of boundaries?

What has it cost you to not be defined & have weak boundaries?

If you were to be part of a TLP group, what would you hope to gain in the area of boundaries this year?

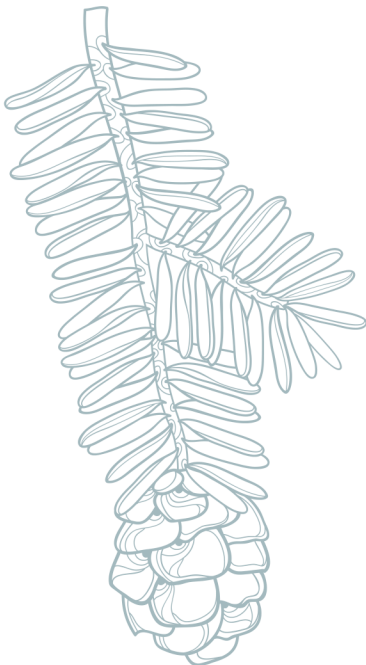
WHAT IS INTEGRATION/REALITY?

The third score on your TPRAT assessment is Integration/Reality

Integration involves befriending reality. It is the space where we encounter both the positive and negative aspects of life and blend them together. We can experience disappointment or frustration and still approach it with curiosity and compassion. It's about embracing every aspect of reality. All of it.

This developmental task really starts to form during our school-age years as we start understanding distinctions and grappling with both the positive and challenging facets of life. We become aware of imperfections in situations and the people around us and must learn the skill of integrating these aspects into our understanding of reality. It is a period where we recognize that life and interactions with others can bring both joy and pain. We fully embrace both. We accept our own imperfections and limitations as well as those of others.

Receiving the comfort of an arm around our shoulders when facing the challenges of reality, teaches us the skill of integrating difficult experiences. Growing up in a household where parents exemplified expressing a diverse range of emotions in healthy ways contributes to this learning process. Conversely, when emotions are suppressed, and the expression of sadness or acknowledgment of life's difficulties is discouraged, it hinders the development of integration. Being shielded from harsh realities or not being allowed to encounter failure and learn the resilience of bouncing back also obstructs the development of integration.



WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO HAVE A HEALTHY CAPACITY OF REALITY/INTEGRATION?

When we are integrated & embracing reality:

- We have a wide range of emotions, including both the positive and challenging feelings life brings.
- We can approach life's difficulties with curiosity and compassion rather than avoidance, fear or judgment.
- We have realistic expectations about life, ourselves, and others.
- We have resilience in the face of setbacks, understanding that failures are opportunities for growth and learning.
- We seek out relational feedback.
- We have long term, connected relationships that are fulfilling.
- We have a balanced self-perception, acknowledging strengths and weaknesses without undue harshness or idealization.
- We are comfortable with being 'good enough'.
- We maintain meaningful and connected relationships, navigating conflicts with openness and adaptability.
- We can tolerate being disappointed by others and remain connected and relational.
- We do not hide the hard parts of life from ourselves or others.

Journal Opportunity -

What are the strengths you see in yourself in the area of Reality/Integration?

WHEN OUR LIFE CAPACITY OF REALITY/INTEGRATION IS DEFICIENT, WHAT WILL WE EXPERIENCE IN OUR LIVES?

When we are deficient in this area:

- We might hide or separate ourselves from negative realities, have difficulty with it, make it seem overly positive, get completely knocked over by it.
- We find it hard to get back up when we get knocked down.
- When life knocks us over, we get up in a way that is disconnected and 'just move on'.
- We might not want to face the truths about our relationships, finances, needs or health and hide those parts from ourselves and/or others.
- We might have split off from many friendships over the years and tend to only have few, short term or shallow relationships.
- By ignoring some of our realities, our body can take on the effects of it, creating health issues or anxiety that seem unrelated.
- This is also where entitlement issues show up in us.
- We tend to be harsh or critical with others and/or ourselves.
- We have perfectionistic tendencies.

Journal Opportunity -

When you think about your capacity in the area of Integration/Reality, what do you notice in your life? How is this showing up for you?

Journal opportunity #3

INTEGRATION/REALITY

Over the next week think about ,.....

Reflect on your childhood experiences. How were hard realities or challenging situations handled in your family?

Did your family system involve concealing or avoiding certain aspects of reality? Was it open to addressing and processing challenging aspects of life? Was everyone able to discuss their own shortcomings in ways that were appropriate?

Were you encouraged to express your feelings and opinions about difficult topics?

Do you tend to embrace and make friends with reality, or do you find it challenging to accept certain aspects? Do you ignore or hide reality from yourself or others?

Reflect on your ability to handle disappointment and failure. Do you see failures as opportunities for growth, or do they significantly impact your sense of value?

Explore your awareness of your weaknesses and limits. How comfortable are you with acknowledging and working within them while maintaining a positive, realistic attitude and connection with others?

Do you have the kinds of friends who will grieve the hard parts of life with you? Do you seek them out?

What is the tool for developing our capacity of Reality/Integration in our lives?

The tool is **grief**. I know. This is a hard one. But, falling back on our bed and allowing the tears to flow is truly the path to healthy reality. Or crying into the arms of someone who gets you. If grief is not allowed, then true integration doesn't develop in our children and is left unfinished in us. Allowing grief through embracing hard realities is the required life skill.



How would being involved in a year long coaching group develop this part?

Reality is a profound area. So we really need to do it with people in a safe and structured environment. TLP would provide you with a safe group of people who can grieve with you, as well as give you healthy feedback and realistic perspective about your failures. You can create growth opportunities through identifying with other group member's hardship experiences. You can open up about your disappointments, failures, and harshness toward yourself in a safe small group environment. You can practice the art of grieving necessary endings and create space for new beginnings that are based in reality. You will build a new internal template of healthy coping practices through training, role playing and practicing with your group. You will gain new voices to combat your inner critic, reshaping your reality with truth and warmth. This skill transfers into your relationships and workplace, bringing new life and beauty into all of life.

JOURNAL OPPORTUNITY - LOOKING FORWARD

What would you like to develop in the area of Reality/Integration?

What has it cost you to not be able to take in or grieve the hard realities of life?

If you were to be part of a TLP group, what would you hope to gain from the other members that will help you develop your capacity of Reality/Integration this year?

WHAT IS MUTUALITY/ADULT?

The fourth score on your TPRAT assessment is Mutuality/Adult

This is our ability to engage in mutual relationships as adults, treating others as equals, recognizing neither superiority nor inferiority. We are not filled with angst nor crippled with a sense of helplessness. We stand as an adult, holding ourselves shoulder to shoulder with others, and at the same time function appropriately within our roles as leaders or directs.

It is also about understanding our purpose and developing our unique talents.

This capacity leads to having agency and authority over our own lives. We have the ability to go and do. Think of it like “The wheels on the bus”, giving us the ability to move our lives forward with purpose and adult power, leading to creating a meaningful life.

We begin this developmental task when we are teens as we become clear on our mission, gifts and talents. Here is where we cultivate a strong work ethic, succeed in structure and develop a healthy view of sexuality, mutuality & life purpose.



WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO HAVE A HEALTHY CAPACITY OF MUTUALITY/ADULT?

We are strong in the capacity of Mutuality/Adult:

- When we feel a sense of mutuality with other adults. We are neither one-over nor one-down. We see our own value and the value of others.
- We use our voice in collaboration and leading.
- We experience both mutuality and intimacy within relationships.
- We feel adequately respected by others in authority structure.
- We take risks and set stretch goals with success.
- We are intrinsically motivated. We do not need others to motivate us.
- We create and sustain a sense of organization in our lives through structure.
- We set stretch goals and have the capability to achieve them.
- The “wheels on the bus” work. We have what it takes to GO.
- We are energized by and excited about our vocation and purpose.
- We are comfortable with our life’s mission, talents, passions and the path we are headed down.

Journal Opportunity -

What are the strengths you see in yourself in the area of Mutuality/Adult?

WHEN OUR LIFE CAPACITY OF MUTUALITY/ADULT IS DEFICIENT, WHAT WILL WE EXPERIENCE IN OUR LIVES?

When we are deficient in this area:

- We are often critical like a parent, or helpless like a child, or filled with angst like a teen.
- We find that we defer to others in making decisions for our lives.
- We need a lot of management, or to be told what to do next.
- We struggle with feeling inferior or superior to other colleagues.
- We might only feel comfortable when we are in control.
- We are unable to handle anger and frustration in healthy ways.
- We feel stuck in knowing and executing our life's purpose.
- We can feel ill equipped to do our job, as we are a better starter than finisher, and find it hard to stay on track.
- We avoid taking calculated, healthy risk to build our career or to grow personally or relationally.

Journal Opportunity -

When you think about this unfinished part of your inner self in the area of Mutuality/Adult what do you notice in your life? How do you see this showing up for you?

Journal opportunity #4

MUTUALITY / ADULT

Over the next week think about ,.....

In your current closest relationships do you engage shoulder to shoulder in mutuality even when conflict arises?

Do you maintain a sense of mutuality while navigating roles where authority might be involved?

Reflect on situations where you tend to feel superior or inferior to others.

Can you think of times where you felt either helpless like a child, or angsty like a teen? Which situations or people bring out the micromanaging critical parent in you?

Do you effectively establish and adhere to structured plans and commitments?

Do you have a clear understanding of your purpose and mission, and are you actively working on developing them?

Do you feel a sense of agency and authority in your life, as if you have 'the wheels on the bus' actively moving you towards a purpose and your adult power? Or are there parts of you that feel stuck and unclear?

What is the tool for developing our capacity of Mutuality/Adult in our lives?

The tool is Mutuality and Go. Learning to live in a state of mutuality and experiencing the practice of making your life happen is how we develop the capacity of Mutuality/Adult.



How would being involved in a year long coaching group develop this part?

You would experience and develop your sense of mutuality within the context of this team. As all of the previous areas are developed your adult authority and power, naturally increases. Through the work of spending an entire year of intentional growth within a coaching group, your capacities in all four areas will all evolve. By working on these things and practicing them through the experience of a structured day, coaching time and building relationships in the structured model, you can learn what your potential is. We do not know what our full potential is outside of the context of relationship.

Being in this group setting will help you have conversations in new ways that will transfer into your home and work setting. In this group you will build your emotional intelligence as you experience the connection and feedback and emotional nutrients extended to you, and extended by you. TLP applies research driven solutions to the personal and professional limitations we have surrounding our potential.

Journal Opportunity - Looking forward

What would you like to develop in the area of Mutuality/Adult?

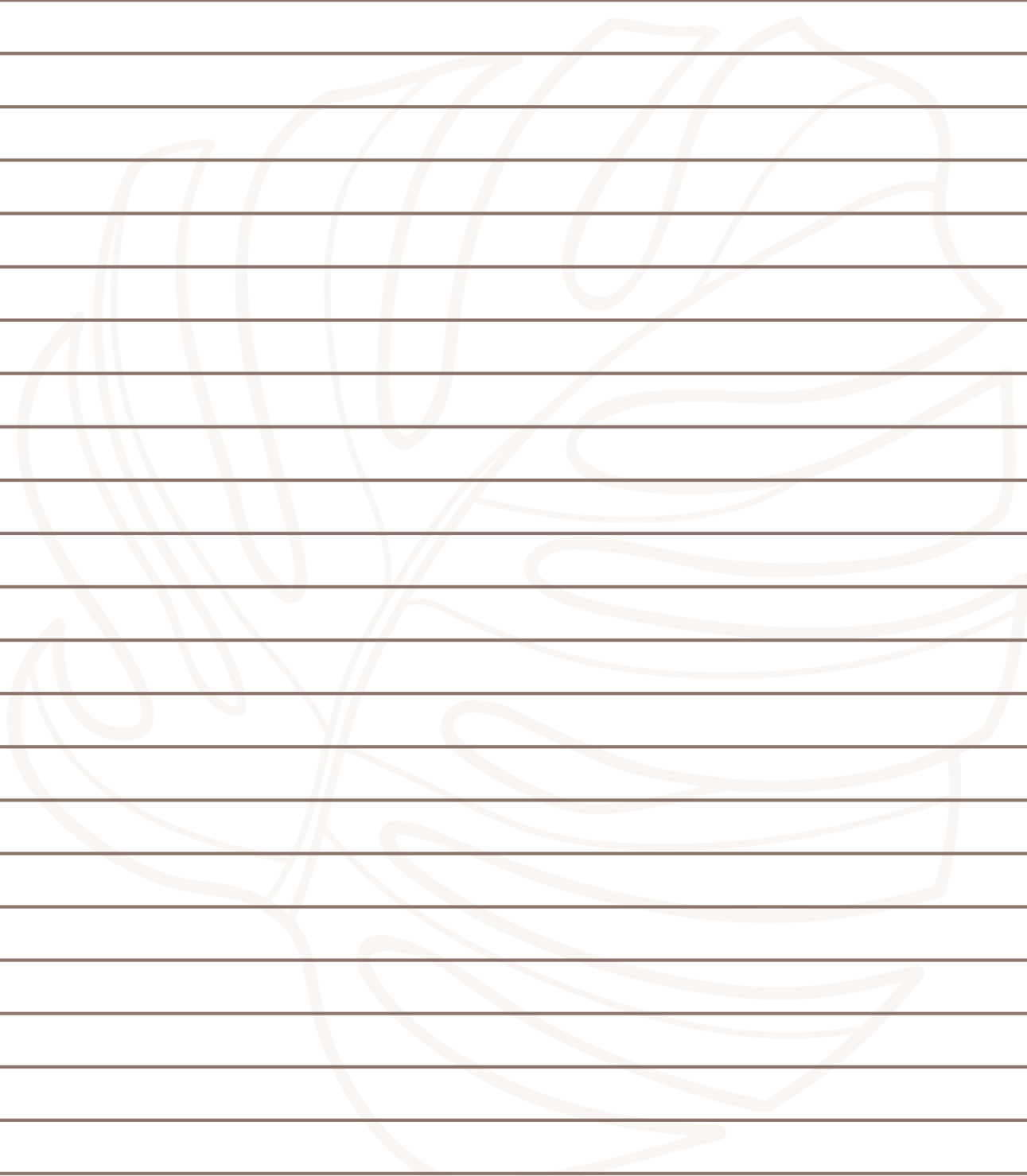
What can you see that it may have cost you to not have stronger Mutuality/Adult capacity?

As a member of a TLP group, what would you hope to gain in the area of Mutuality/Adult this year?

What is next?

What would you like to give more attention to developing this year?

- *Bonding/Attachment*
- *Boundaries/Separation*
- *Integration/Reality*
- *Mutuality/Adult*



A series of horizontal lines for writing, overlaid with a large, faint, stylized leaf or feather graphic.

THANK YOU!

"We truly hope that you found value in this journal exercise! Embracing and applying this growth model has been and continues to be a transformative experience to many individuals, families & organizations. We are thrilled to share this experience with you."

Karen & Tina



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