

Care of the mind

Living well with illness Healthy relationships

People are by nature interconnected and therefore rely on feelings of belonging to maintain a sense of wellbeing. Unhealthy relationships with any of your family and friends will negatively impact on your wellbeing and block the harmonious and peaceful environment you need when living with illness. On the other hand, healthy relationships will improve your quality of life and peace of mind.

When you are ill you can feel like withdrawing from ordinary social contacts, but doing so can reduce your access to the wellness that comes from these important relationships. Spending time with others who are going through a similar experience can expand your mind and heart. Reading about others' journeys can also provide new perspectives.

When you require the care of others you can feel distressed that you are a burden. Some ways of thinking about this that will support your wellbeing include:

- Your family and friends will usually want to do all they can for you to improve your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.
- You will feel better about the situation if you can reframe “feeling a burden” to “providing an opportunity for them to love and care for you”.
- Caring for you *can* be an added strain for your family. However you can repay them by expressing your gratitude for their efforts.

Care requiring close and constant contact with your family may intensify existing discord or create new conflicts due to differences of opinion. Your family may cope by withdrawing, leaving you feeling unsupported and isolated. Healing discord will give you and your family peace of mind. Gracious communication and considering the needs of others can be a good place to start. Seek professional help if necessary.

Karuna also has experienced people you can talk with on:
07 3632 8300 or karuna@karuna.org.au



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