

भावन

Yoga Practice is about a re-turning towards our inner life.

However, even without outer obstacles,
we can encounter inner feelings that arise
and manifest as if obstacles to that re-turning.

Here it might be helpful to reflect on how to cultivate the
four pillars of Maitrī, Karuṇā, Muditā and Upekṣā and the role they can
have in helping to transform the unhelpful aspects of these inner feelings.

*"Bhāvana is a beneficial attitude
that is consciously cultivated
despite tendencies to the contrary"*

- T Krishnamacharya commentary on Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 33

With the spirit of Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 33 in mind,
the cultivation of the four pillars is an inner practice that can support
a stepping, rather than stymieing, onto our practice mat or seat through:

Maitrī -

Cultivating a feeling of friendliness
towards our own attempts,
let alone other's demands,
to distract ourselves.

Karuṇā -

Cultivating a feeling of compassion
towards our bodies and minds,
whatever state we find them in.

Muditā -

Cultivating a feeling of looking,
from a joyful space in ourselves,
at what we can do well and now,
rather than what we can't do well or now.

Upekṣā -

Cultivating a feeling of holding a distance from
the self-deprecation that can so often accompany
our attempts to elevate the quality of our inner life
and old responses to inner tensions and memories.

- Personal reflection on Yoga Sūtra Chapter One verse 33