

What will help: Giving responsibility and mentorship

1. It's probably a 'no brainer' but what will help is for **those who are in a position to have responsibilities to give, to give it**. My friends and peers talk about being handed responsibilities early, even being pushed into it and how growthful and inspiring that is.

2. At the same time as being pushed, and given responsibility, **mentorship** is very important. In my life and orbit, Nandavajra, Subhadramati, Maitreyabandhu and Vidyadaka are very important exemplars of this. They really hand things on, and they also make sure you are up to it by raising you up.

I think this is an important counter to the idea of "don't do too much too soon" which can be around, particularly in the Dharmacharini Sangha. I think it's better to say, as I was told on my ordination retreat by Padmasuri and Subhadramati "**do much sooner!**" and alongside that to really really help people to do much. Help them spiritually, help them practically, and also invest in skills.

3. Three more ancillary things about passing on responsibility:

- a. **Be bold in spotting future leaders:** Patrick who is filming me right now is 20 and got involved at 19.
- b. **Invest in a generation:** Patrick is part of a cohort of younger people who we're bringing on. It's quite a pressure if you feel like you are the only one who has to fix everything. People who get asked get asked a lot. On top of being finance director at FDF, I'm also a trustee of Karuna, Abhayaratna Trust and Windhorse Trust - all the grant making and lending arms of Triratna. It's good, but I also want these groups to diversify
- c. Don't just pass over execution responsibilities, but also **pass over creative responsibility**. Most of us are happiest when we're

engaged in creating, bringing our ideas into being. So give people the reins. I wouldn't be that bothered about taking responsibility in situations that want to run 'business as usual'.

Barriers: Bureaucracy and Money

I think it is important that **we stay nimble and quick on our feet** as we grow as a movement. I think especially for younger people, it's not very attractive to be involved in things that take ages to shape and come into being. A friend of mine was noting, not without complaint, that some jobs in the movement can take months to be advertised, interviewed for and appointments made.

Bureaucracy is not just **unattractive, it is also costly, and rather dangerous** in that we stop growing and responding to the needs of the world. A management consultant friend of mine once said to me that innovation in large corporates or large organisations can be hard: they are like human beings, that have white blood cells that target and kill off anything that is new, that they do not recognise or seems foreign, surrounding foreign things and suffocating or starving them. I like that image, and I find it helpful when I encounter new ideas - in practising the bodhisattva pratisamvid of communicating with promptitude: not to kill things off too early!

2 issues around money:

1. **is there enough for each person in TBRL / movement jobs?** It's often on people's minds in terms of whether they can earn enough money to live on a right livelihood job. Social security system in the UK and I imagine in other parts of the world is quite different from when the movement started in the UK in the 60s. Women worry about whether they have enough money to start a family. People in their 40s start thinking about pensions.
2. **is there enough for the movement as a whole?** There is a lot of work to be done, but no funding for it. I know this from FDF and the

difficulty of funding jobs. Perhaps we need a bigger 'lay' community to support us, and also a more generous one. FDF is advocating for a change of culture in this area, and better knowledge throughout the movement of how things are funded and doing this culture change through mitra study and ordination training.

An aside on training in culture: A couple of years ago when I moved from working in a local situation that is the LBC to FDF, I noticed that actually there is a small group of dharmacharinis who are my peers who were taking on quite a lot of responsibility in different areas. I wondered if actually what would help is if there is a 6 month job rotation so that we could understand how different bits of the Triratna community worked. A bit like how an internship would work. I'm not sure if this is a workable idea, but it did appeal to me then.

Perhaps we need more income generating projects and businesses.

Having said all that, I do also want to end on a note of **abundance and confidence**: It isn't simply that because people who work in TBRL or work for the movement earn only a little, their contribution is only that much. thinking of myself, I cost FDF about £20k per year. But I feel confident to say that my contribution to the movement, my contribution to changing the world, to making the dharma available in the world is more than that. Had I continued as an investment banker, I think I would be likely to be earning at least £0.5m if not more. I think that this is a better reflection of the energy that I'm putting into the order and movement, through FDF, LBC, my other trusteeships as well as my care in friendships. I know I'm not the only one doing this and all of you who I am speaking to are doing this as well. So in many varied ways, **we are an incredibly resourced force for good in the world.**