

February 2020

Head and Heart in Harmony

What does it mean to be called together spiritually to harmonize head and heart?



Definitions (from Google Dictionary)

Harmonize // VERB

Add notes to (a melody) to produce harmony; produce a pleasing visual combination; make consistent or compatible.

Head // NOUN

The upper part of the human body, or the front or upper part of the body of an animal; regarded as the location of intellect, imagination, and memory.

Heart // NOUN

A hollow muscular organ that pumps the blood through the circulatory system by rhythmic contraction and dilation; the region of the chest above the heart; regarded as the center of a person's thoughts and emotions, especially love, compassion, or loyalty; one's mood or feeling; courage or enthusiasm.

Thesaurus:

Equanimity//NOUN: "Equanimity is a state of psychological stability and composure which is undisturbed by experience of or exposure to emotions, pain, or other phenomena that may cause others to lose the balance of their mind."

Defining the phrase:

"When your head and heart are in harmony, you are at peace and feel an inner balance. Conflicting emotions, excessive brooding, procrastination or scattered, unfocused action do not exist in the balance of head and heart." ~ Patrick Kilhenny

Photo taken by Mary Lyubomirsky at
Griffis Sculpture Park in East Otto, NY October 2020
Griffis is open to the public 5/1 - 10/31
<http://griffispark.org/griffis-sculpture-park/>

February packet writing team: Rev. Margalie Belizaire, Mary Lyubomirsky, Sue Roark Calnek, Tom Perry, Barb DeLeeuw

**First Unitarian Church of Rochester is on the traditional homeland of the Onondowagah (Seneca) Nation, Keepers of the Western Door for the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

*“We should take care not to make intellect our god.
It has, of course, powerful muscles, but no personality.
It cannot lead, it can only serve.” Albert Einstein*

It feels right to me to use an Albert Einstein quote at a time when science seems under attack, and is constantly treated as opinion instead of fact. It feels even more right for me to use a quote by a well-known science genius to discourage us from worshipping intellect or the workings of the mind. As much as intellect or the mind ought to be honored, it has great limitations; enters the heart. In this quote, Einstein flat out suggests that the intellect is not fit to lead. If I were to complete Einstein’s thought in this instance, I would do so by adding “it is the heart that’s fit to lead.” And, it needs the mind to do a good job at it. This brings me to our theme for this month: Head and Heart in Harmony.

Beloveds... When I think about head and heart in harmony, I generally reflect on what it truly means to be a Unitarian Universalist. Unitarian would be the head and Universalist would be the heart. Being of one accord would be such a beautiful thing for us as a faith tradition. I have heard it said that when the merger happened with these two radical faith traditions in 1961, that Universalism got swallowed up by Unitarianism. This is said because as UUs, we have a tendency to be more head focused and are prone to dismissing the heart.

Diane Rollert, in a prayer called “There Are Days,” puts it this way, “This faith of questioning is not easy, too nebulous at times, too easily shamed by fear of the illogical, too tied to the rational. Yet, I love reason, the simple beauty of logic, perfect numbers held in the spiraling of a rose.” The yin and yang of mind and head. It can provide us the security that clear mindedness and logic can offer, perhaps something solid to rest on. This works well with the tangible, the provable. At the same time, we can be left feeling lost and unsteady when faced with the illogical or even the intangible. And religion, this thing we do together, is mired in the nonrational.

Rollert continues, “still I thirst for the luminous connection to everything, to this place I hold, small on this spinning planet, to every atom, every element, every star.” That’s heart. Opening our hearts to the mystery, to what we feel or sense, and not necessarily what we see. Knowing that we are connected to everything. Being led by the heart is also a way of being guided by our morals and values to do what is right, and not necessarily what is popular.

May we lead with the heart using the advice of the head.
May our head and heart always be in harmony.
May we be so blessed

With Grace and Loving Kindness,
Rev Margalie Belizaire
Assistant Minister

SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

Select one of the exercises below to practice, and come prepared to discuss the experience and your thoughts and feelings about it with your group.

1. Indigenous Spiritual Exercise

Walk in Beauty: For traditional Dine (Navajo) people, Hozho means spiritual, emotional, thinking and physical being in balance and harmony with the world. Disturbance in Hozho is restored by the Blessing Way ceremony, closing with a “Walking in Beauty” prayer. For a taste of it, read aloud “I Walk in Beauty” below (From Sacred Texts), watch a short explanation by a Dine elder:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruYNI-emEic> or listen to this traditional Navajo song: Now I Walk in Beauty
<https://youtu.be/85nHEaolF7Q>

Take a short walk, as you are able (and the weather permits) or settle in to remember a walk that you’ve loved. Let your attention (or your memory) lightly rest on what you see, hear, smell and feel around you. Notice how each sense contributes something different to beauty. Reflect on how beauty is recognized by your heart and your head. Then reflect on one image from the “beauty all around you” as a unifying image for your inner life and a solace for the distress of our time.

2. Contributions from Rochester First Unitarians (Select whichever exercise speaks to you)

- ❖ Absorbing your Attention into Music:
 - Rich Wilder composed a piece called ‘Tranquility’, which he played for us at the October 25, 2020 service. Here’s the link: <https://youtu.be/9s0PeGVhsLQ?t=1549>
 - Seat yourself comfortably, close your eyes, and listen to ‘Tranquility.’ Try to focus only on what you are hearing. Can you feel the vibration of the notes in your chest? Does the melody access an emotion?
 - Journal your experience to share with your Soul Matters Group

- ❖ Using Zentangles to bring your head and heart into harmony (a contribution from Lisa Vanderhoff)
 - Read this article on Zentangles:
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/arts-and-health/201403/calm-down-and-get-your-zentangle>
 - Or watch this YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/XM1QTMHdP_k
 - Find a time when you can sit quietly and draw non-judgmentally using the guidance from the article or YouTube Video
 - Share your Zentangle and/or Talk about your experience with your Soul Matters Group

- ❖ Guided Meditation from the December 20, 2020 Service by Rev. Margalie Belizaire
 - Find a time when you can sit comfortably and quietly. Listen to Rev. Margalie’s Guided Meditation: <https://vimeo.com/496676255>
 - Journal your experience to share with your Soul Matters Group

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions aren't "homework" that need to be covered entirely. Instead, simply pick the one question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The questions often lead not to answers, but more questions.

1. Rev. Margalie's letter describes our UU history as one where "Unitarian would be the head and Universalist would be the heart". Read Rev. Thandeka on "A Roxbury Congregation", <https://revthandeka.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Affect-Theology-A-Road-Map-for-CGUUS-Thandeka.pdf> pages 9-10. Do you feel that our congregation leans in one direction more than another? Do you have a style of being in the world? How does that work for *you*?
2. What is it like to experience head and heart in disharmony? Have you ever struggled to make a decision because your head and heart could not agree on the way forward? Have you ever regretted ignoring the wisdom of your head or your heart?
3. How can we cultivate balance, harmony and equanimity? Do you have a personal "ritual" or mantra you find helpful in centering yourself or in times of stress?
4. An aesthetically beautiful musical piece often has moments of disharmony resolving to moments of harmony. Has there been a time of disharmony in your life which has served as a beneficial change agent?
5. A musical chord is made up of distinct notes. Can you think of an example where diversity teaches us richer, more harmonious ways of being in the world?

GROWING OUR SOULS

These questions are the same each month and invite us to connect this work of spiritual deepening ...

1. How will our discussion today cause you to be different in the world?
2. Within our church community, where can you help to make changes related to this topic?
3. How does this discussion relate to other activities in which you are engaged at church (e.g., parenting, religious education, social justice, worship, music)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

From Unitarian Universalism: Readings for chalice lighting / extinguishing

New Light

By Charles A Howe

(May be read responsively)

We light this chalice to affirm that new light is ever waiting to break through to enlighten our ways:

That new truth is ever waiting to break through to illumine our minds:
And that new love is ever waiting to break through to warm our hearts.
May we be open to this light, and to the rich possibilities that it brings us.
(Adapted from a unison affirmation by Napoleon Lovely.)

A Communion of Heart and Soul

By Bruce Southworth

For the gift of this day and for our community of spiritual nurture and compassion, we give thanks.

We light this chalice as a symbol of our faith.

May our many sparks meet and merge in communion of heart and soul.

A New Song, a New Harmony

By Richard S. Gilbert

*By our presence here with one another,
Hearing the harmony that is the music of the spheres,
May some of the harshness and discord of our human lives
Be transmuted into music.
A new song in our hearts may there be,
And a new harmony in our beings,
So that we shall return to our several duties
with fresh courage, and with eagerness and with rejoicing.*

Hymn in *Singing the Living Tradition*

36 When in Our Music

108 My Life Flows on in Endless Song

187 It Sounds Along the Ages

Hymn in *Singing the Journey*

1008 When Our Heart is in a Holy Place

1068 Rising Green

QUOTATIONS

Societies never know it, but the war of an artist with his society is a lover's war, and he does, at his best, what lovers do, which is to reveal the beloved to himself and, with that revelation, to make freedom real. ~ **James A. Baldwin**

Poetry and music are the best at the highest level of the human mind. Out of poetry, out of their need for poetry, human beings have developed the idea of God. And so when we sing, when we dance, when we speak poetry we are speaking out of God's mouth, each other out of the music from God's heart. ~ **Maya Angelou**

I've learned that whenever I decide something with an open heart, I usually make the right decision. ~ **Maya Angelou**

Although many of us think of ourselves as thinking creatures that feel, biologically we are feeling creatures that think. ~ **Jill Bolte Taylor**

Mind cannot tell you which things are worth having; it can only tell you how to achieve the ends accepted from intellectual sources. In most persons the mind accepts ends from the promptings of wants, but this means denial of the life of the spirit. Only when the mind accepts its ends and values from the deepest promptings of the heart does it contribute to the life of the spirit.
~ **Meher Baba**

In the language of theism, the experience of love beyond belief can be described as an experience of God. In the language of Humanism, the experience of love beyond belief can be described as a flash of insight and understanding bringing humanity together. These experiences mark the beginning of wholeness in our broken lives. ~ **Rev. Thandeka**

[...] When we talk about equanimity in Buddhism, it can sound really boring and something like indifference, but it's not. It's being able to hold everything, the dark and the light, and having a mind and a heart big enough and spacious enough to hold it all. [...] And that's really our task, is to somehow be able to hold it all, in a way that will allow us to not only survive, but go on in a way that we can stay connected and help others, as well. ~ **Sharon Salzberg**

We separate the mind as rational from the heart as relational, but ultimately the mind and heart are part of one unified intelligence...Our individual happiness and our collective well-being depend on the integration and collaboration of both our minds and hearts...Mindfulness and visualization ..are wonderful techniques for..journeying inward...When we go inward and our heart is open, we will connect with the heart, and the heart will compel us to go outward and connect with others. Our journey is one of transcendence, not endless self-reflection. ~ **James Doty, "Into the Magic Shop: A Neurosurgeon's Quest to Uncover the Mysteries of the Brain and the Secrets of the Heart"**

The head and heart need to work in harmony to attain our full potential. ~ **Jane Goodall, primatologist and anthropologist, 2018**

NEVER GIVE UP
No matter what is going on
Never give up
Develop the heart
Too much energy in your country
Is spent developing the mind
Instead of the heart
Be compassionate
Not just to your friends
But to everyone
Be compassionate
Work for peace
In your heart and in the world
Work for peace
And I say again
Never give up
No matter what is going on around you
Never give up

~ Dalai Lama XIV

Sermons:

<https://www.fuub.org/home/independent-thought-dependent-heart/>

First Unitarian Congregational Society, Brooklyn NY Rev. Jude Geiger [now with the UU Fellowship in Huntington NY], posted July 4 2010

<https://www.uufec.com/wordpress/sermons/head-and-heart-faith/>

UU Fellowship of the Emerald Coast [Valparaiso FL], Dennis Hale June 5, 2011 [podcast]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pH-rdy9db5> “Love after Love”

Rev Thandeka 1st Unitarian Church of Dallas Aug 23 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZk8eKiOaxw> “Inner Sunrise »Rev Thandeka 1st Unitarian Church of Dallas Aug 31 2020

POETRY EXCERPTS (complete poem is in the link provided)

“There is a place in the heart where everything meets.
Go there if you want to find me.
Mind, senses, soul, eternity, all are there.
Are you there?”

The Radiance Sutras, translated by Lorin Roche, PhD.

<https://www.tarabrach.com/meditation-spacious-loving-awareness/>

“In the shared quiet, an
invitation arises like a
white dove lifting from
a limb and taking flight.
Come and live in truth.”

Danna Faulds

<https://www.tarabrach.com/meditation-yes-our-moments/>

“Our first breath is followed by our first song
Lusty, loud and primal
A solo that announces to the world, “I have arrived!”
We are the music.”

We Are the Music By Renee Ruchotzke

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/we-are-music>

“There are two kinds of intelligence: ... with [one intelligence] you stroll
In and out of fields of knowledge, getting always
More marks on your preserving tablets.
There is another kind of tablet, one
already completed and preserved inside you.
A spring overflowing its springbox. A freshness
in the center of the chest.
This second knowing is a fountainhead
From within you, moving out.”

“Two Kinds of Intelligence” (Rumi, A Year with Rumi)

<https://www.thereader.org.uk/featured-poem-two-kinds-of-intelligence-by-rumi/>

FROM SACRED TEXTS

Buddhist Tradition

“According to Buddhism, for a man to be perfect there are two qualities that he should develop equally: compassion (*karuna*) on one side, and wisdom (*panna*) on the other.” - Walpola Sri Rahula. ***The Eight-Fold Noble Path: The Buddha’s Practical Instructions to Reach the End of Suffering***
<https://tricycle.org/magazine/noble-eightfold-path/>

Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu

“Empty your mind of all thoughts.
Let your heart be at peace.
Watch the turmoil of beings,
but contemplate their return.
Each separate being in the universe
returns to the common source.
Returning to the source is serenity.”

Hebrew Bible

Psalms 133:1 GNB “*How wonderful it is, how pleasant, for God’s people to live together in harmony!*”
Psalm 51:10 “*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.*”

Christian New Testament

Luke 6:45 “The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”

Indigenous (Dine) Blessing Way Prayer: In Beauty I Walk

In beauty I walk

With beauty before me I walk

With beauty behind me I walk

With beauty above me I walk

With beauty around me I walk

It has become beauty again

*Hózhóogo naasháa doo Shitsijí' hózhóogo naasháa doo Shikéédée' hózhóogo naasháa doo Shideigi
hózhóogo naasháa doo T'áá' altso shinaagóó hózhóogo naasháa doo Hózhó náhásdlíí' Hózhó
náhásdlíí' Hózhó náhásdlíí' Hózhó náhásdlíí'*

Today I will walk out, today everything negative will leave me

I will be as I was before, I will have a cool breeze over my body.

I will have a light body, I will be happy forever, nothing will hinder me.

I walk with beauty before me. I walk with beauty behind me.

I walk with beauty below me. I walk with beauty above me.

I walk with beauty around me. My words will be beautiful.

In beauty all day long may I walk.

Through the returning seasons, may I walk.

On the trail marked with pollen may I walk.

With dew about my feet, may I walk.

With beauty before me may I walk.

With beauty behind me may I walk.

With beauty below me may I walk.

With beauty above me may I walk.

With beauty all around me may I walk.

In old age wandering on a trail of beauty, lively, may I walk.

In old age wandering on a trail of beauty, living again, may I walk.

My words will be beautiful...

<https://talking-feather.com/home/walk-in-beauty-prayer-from-navajo-blessing/>

PODCASTS, SONGS, ARTICLES, FILMS, & BOOKS

Podcasts:

On Being with Krista Tippett:

- Shelter for the Heart & Mind with Sharon Salzberg:
<https://onbeing.org/programs/sharon-salzberg-shelter-for-the-heart-and-mind/>
- No Separation - On Music & Transcendence with the Indigo Girls:
<https://onbeing.org/programs/indigo-girls-no-separation-on-music-and-transcendence/>
- The Magic Shop of the Brain with James Doty:
<https://onbeing.org/programs/james-doty-the-magic-shop-of-the-brain-nov2018/>

10% Happier:

- Cultivating Equanimity
<https://www.tenpercent.com/meditationweeklyblog/the-power-of-equanimity>

CERBERUS - A new blog series by Thandeka

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klfweacjqZE>

Music Videos:

1. Now I Walk in Beauty - Traditional Navajo Song <https://youtu.be/85nHEaolF7Q>
2. Billie Eilish - My Future https://youtu.be/Dm9Zf1WYQ_A
3. Khalid & Billie Eilish - Lovely <https://youtu.be/V1PI8CzNzCw>

Videos:

1. Quiet Mind, Steady Heart Meditation (Jack Kornfield)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yHTGjUksRqk>
2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEzzZ__ccgQ
Jill Bolte Taylor “My Stroke of Insight”: A neuroscientist reflects on her left brain stroke
3. Anyone with Half a Brain Can See That! (Iain McGilchrist, TED talk)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiPrM0DNI8w>
4. Certainty and Flow (Iain McGilchrist)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl1ngqwH5us>

Articles:

1. The Heart vs. The Mind (scientific explanation) – A false dichotomy by the mind.
<https://cognitiontoday.com/the-heart-vs-mind-battle-that-need-not/>
2. Resolving the Head vs. Heart Dilemma | Neuroscience Leadership Coaching with Jennifer Riggs <https://jenriggs.com/change/resolving-the-head-or-heart-dilemma/>

Books:

1. Twelve Steps to Compassion ~**Karen Armstrong**
2. Into the Magic Shop: A Neurosurgeon’s Quest to Uncover the Mysteries of the Brain and the Secrets of the Heart” [check out the guided meditations and exercises, including his “Alphabet of the Heart” practice] ~**James Doty**
3. The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row ~**Anthony Ray Hinton**
4. Flow ~**Mihaly Csikszentmihaly**

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UNLESS THE MOMENT IS UNPLEASANT,
IN WHICH CASE I WILL EAT A COOKIE.



Third-eye exams