

The Inukshuk symbolizes compassion at work. It provides fellow travelers on the path with guidance, direction, and support in safely reaching their destination. It silently speaks, saying that ‘Someone was here’ and ‘You are on the right path’.

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Getting Ahead Through the Heart

A Compassionate Journey By Taron Puri, B.A., LL.B.

Compassion is the act of manifesting our divinity through our humanity. It engages both the heart and the head, together as one, giving unconditional love, acceptance, care and support to all beings, including ourselves. Pity is often confused as compassion, but differs in that it separates us from the other, and often involves a negative judgment which elevates us or denigrates the one being judged. When we consciously choose to be compassionate, we empower individuals by validating their humanity, acknowledging how fraught with hardships, or as a colleague puts it, ‘growth-opportunities’ the human journey can be. It is through practicing compassion however, that we overcome our challenges and attain lasting happiness, fulfillment and peace, all key ingredients for a life well lived. Yet, despite this, compassion seems to be an exception, rather than the rule in our world today.

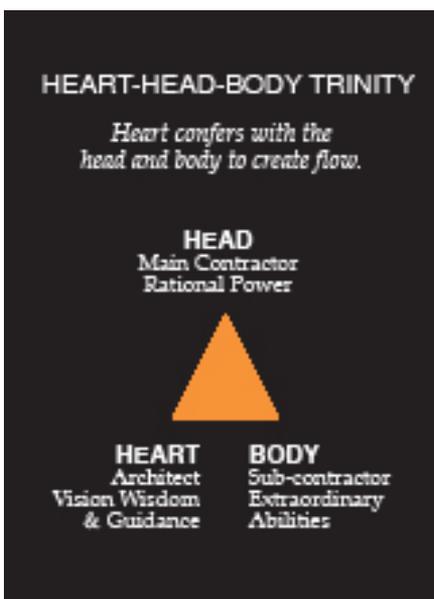
The Corruption of the Heart-Head-Body Trinity

At one time, the greatest Architect, Builder contractor and Sub-contractors in the world were brought together for a project. During the process of determining roles and responsibilities, the Contractor convinced the financiers that as he had extensive experience working with architects, and had completed hundreds if not thousands of jobs, that they could dispense with the architect and that he could handle the job himself. This is exactly what occurred and for some time, it appeared that the project was successful, until one day, just prior to the grand opening, it literally fell to pieces! Now if this sounds like a fairy tale to you, then you are right for it is preposterous. Yet let’s put it in the perspective of the Heart-Head-Body trinity, and you will see that this is the state of our world today.

By design, our heart was meant to be the architect, wisely designing spiritual blueprints and guiding us to live a life aligned with the values of love, harmony and peace. The head in this trinity was to be the master contractor. Being masterful in the realms of logic and reason, it was created to serve the heart and bring into physical manifestation its blueprints. And it did this by employing the body, whose extraordinary senses provided invaluable skills, much like sub-contractors, to get the job done.

This process however became compromised when the head took over the role of the heart, bypassing it completely. Deciding that it could do the job of the heart just as well, and reveling in how much more control and power it could have, it metaphorically took the heart hostage, and has unwittingly been running the show ever since! Thus, the original working trinity of Heart-Head-Body has been compromised, and more so as the head, without the heart’s protection, relentlessly drives the body without respite. The result – escalating stress resulting in suffering, unhappiness and ultimately premature aging and the breakdown of our systems.

Evidence of this head-centered approach to life surrounds us. For instance, despite all of our head extensions, such as cell phones and computers, we are more disconnected from each other, and from our environment, than ever before. We no longer choose activities centered around ‘being’, but instead, are hurried and always busy ‘doing’, in order to reach the holy grail of success. Yet the more we get, the less we appreciate it. Like a bottomless pit, our head constantly craves more, rarely conceding satisfaction. Instead, the continued unmitigated abuse of the body by the head in its lust for power, has caused tremendous harm to ourselves, with dire results physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. It is not uncommon today to hear



of hardworking, driven professionals suddenly falling seriously ill or dying, unable to enjoy the fruits of his or her labor. The fact remains that unless we secure the heart's release and reestablish a healthy relationship between it and the head and body, we may never reach happiness and fulfillment.

Awareness is the Key

Awareness is the key ingredient to reclaiming and reestablishing the trinity of heart-head-body! The head has cleverly convinced many of us that everything is going fine and that we are in control, to which I say, absolutely not! Interestingly enough note that control in and of itself is a head trip; for whereas the head seeks control, the heart seeks connection. And if you think about it, if we establish an authentic connection to someone or something in our lives, then control becomes a non-issue. How often do we go into our 'control games', when, upon honest reflection, we discover that all along, what we sought after was connection. We must become conscious of every thought we have, challenge it's origin and determine whether it is a judgmental, head-centered one, or a compassionate one which comes from an integrated place of head and heart. Only then can we know whether we are on the road to happiness or despair.

I have identified a multitude of such qualities in my quest for being a more integrated, compassionate human being. The list is long and growing, and includes qualities such as 'exclusivity' (head) contrasted with 'inclusivity' (heart); 'expectation' (head) contrasted to anticipation (heart); and 'self-centeredness' is of the head, yet when we come from the heart, we are 'centered in ourselves'.

Practically speaking, I find that expectation always sets me up for

disappointment. This was tested during a recent trip when everything was pre-arranged yet upon my arrival at the airport, things had changed. Accommodations had been shifted to another resort, along with pre-arranged excursions being either cancelled or shifted. At that moment, I made a conscious decision. I chose to stay centered and remain in 'anticipation' rather than act on my 'expectations'. Had I relied on my 'expectations' (reasonable as they were), I would have reacted with anger, frustration and blame, ruining my holiday. Instead, by choosing 'anticipation', I remained open to solutions and 'inclusive' of everyone's needs. I remembered to ask myself, "I wonder what the gift is in this situation?", rather than spouting off from the usual 'why me', 'oh poor me' script. Certainly, reason also dictates that making demands and going into a tirade would likely not produce positive results. In a sense, by staying calm and centered, I was kind to myself and others. By staying 'connected' to what was occurring, and not indulging my need to be in control, I ultimately enjoyed the journey, turning a potentially negative situation into a positive one.

Getting Ahead through the Heart with Compassion

I feel that we have sacrificed healthy values and behaviors endemic to the heart in order to get ahead. Today, speed is of the essence as profit rules over relationships and the 'me' replaces the 'we' as the guiding principle of life. Our Ego has conned us into believing that we can achieve happiness by gathering material things, for as the saying goes, "He who has the most toys, wins!" Yet this success at any cost often ends up costing us our health, our relationships and even our lives! And there is little

room for compassion to take root in this scenario.

Living consciously, let's recognize that both the head and the heart, in conjunction with the body, must equally participate in creating a harmonious and happy existence. Even our language speaks to the importance of the heart in supporting our happiness. For example, phrases such as, "You've touched my heart", "Let's get to the heart of the issue", "I've enjoyed hearty laughter", and "I've memorized the words by heart", all tell us that the heart holds great value in determining our quality of life I have chosen to work with all three aspects of the trinity, valuing their respective roles. I now approach life from a 'thinking heart', and a 'feeling mind', which lessens the separation between the head and the heart to create a powerful synergy. And when joined with the extraordinary abilities of a properly maintained body, I am carried effortlessly down the path of happiness, harmony, fulfillment and compassion for all beings. Won't you join me? **S**

Stress Management Expert and former Immigration Judge Taron Puri, B.A. LL.B, shows you how to deal effectively with stress and be happier and more successful in all that you do. Working with individuals and organizations globally, he excels at turning negatives into positives, reducing conflict and helping you make sense of life's most challenging issues. To learn more about Taron's presentations, training and coaching, including his "Getting Ahead through the Heart" program, visit www.energyinmotion.org or e-mail info@energyinmotion.org.

