

## The Marriage of Heart and Soul

### *Reflections on the Core Practice Series*

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Inner conflicts, whether on a small or large scale, are part of my weekly routine, and more often than not, are uncomfortable to address. Some days they are easily identifiable; some others though, not as much. I have not always been aware that this recurrent feeling of chest contraction, to a painful degree, is a helpful indicator of what is going on at the time. Over the past year I have felt it both more often and intensively than I used to. Once I have made myself aware of that fact, my mind immediately started rushing and making conclusions: “I constantly feel down and anxious; I have

lost capacity to put things into perspective, and so on.” In retrospect, I am the same person I was last year, with the exception that I have moved from one side of the Atlantic to the other in September. Bingo! No wonder I feel vulnerable and predisposed to experiencing tough emotions, as my partner and I have just lost nearly all our anchors, apart from one another.



This was the starting point for my exploration into my inner world. I was fortunate enough to take part in ITPI's June Core Practice Series on Heart and Soul at a time I was both willing and ready to self-reflect. Sharing experiences openly with other participants made me consciously give thought to what both terms meant to me, and how they had been interacting with one another recently in my life. Firstly, I realized how abstract their interpretations can be. My view on the subject has proven to be subjective in that it wasn't shared by the other participants.

So, what do I personally associate the concepts of heart and soul with? To me, the heart relates to spontaneous feelings and desires; in other words, what we feel like doing at a given time, often absent wise judgement from past experience. In my eyes, it closely links with the element of fire in its metaphoric veiled references to passion, power and enlightenment, but also harsher aspects such as anger or, in more extreme cases, ravage and destruction. The soul, on the other hand, refers to the grounded being that finds its roots in profound values and authenticity. It is the reflection of our own person in any given circumstances, thus remaining more or less stable regardless of the variable situations arising in our life.

After being guided towards a lucid and personal grasp of these key words, and what they entail, I reflected again with fresh eyes on my longstanding anxiety. I realized that not being at peace with my current state was a perfect example of my heart and soul being at odds with each other. My soul was receiving recurrent signals of disorientation from my brain, yet my heart was rejecting such

feelings that I was perceiving as weaknesses. Shame, guilt, or at times even desperation and self-hatred are examples of the emotions that arise in response to this endless internal conflict. The lack of alignment between these two parts of myself has led to trouble in my energy field, sadly preventing my authentic self to thrive.

While this uncompromising disconnection between my heart and soul was largely the predominant one in my recent past, a lack of communication between the two also occurs on a weekly basis, although on a smaller scale. Quite the reverse, I can surely think of times when they also blended harmoniously! My husband and my decision to move to Canada is one good example, having gone through an emotionally challenging post-move period, I have never questioned its legitimacy. Taking action towards goals that are in accord with my true self and values has shown to prompt solid feelings of determination and confidence.

How do we get there though, and how can we learn to make the right decisions for ourselves, especially in delicate situations? I am far from knowing all the answers, however, attending the heart and soul workshop led me one step closer. Recognizing early signs of an inner disconnection is the first stage, next comes the time to address the angst before I feel too deeply embedded to react rationally.

The theme of intuition arose in the course of one-to-one and group discussions, which I define as personal truth(s) the soul knows, but not able to reach at times due to the brouhaha emitted by the mind. Listening to one's intuition is sort of an end result, though. I believe the purpose of the workshop was to lead us to find our own path, which I now have begun to do.