

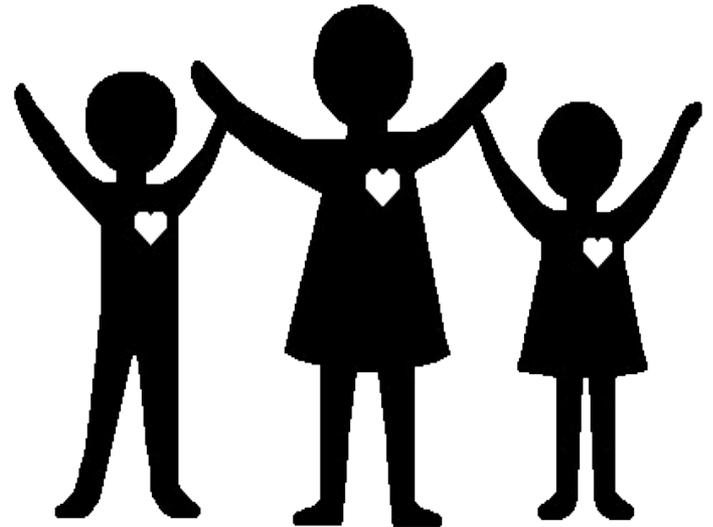
An Introduction to the Heart



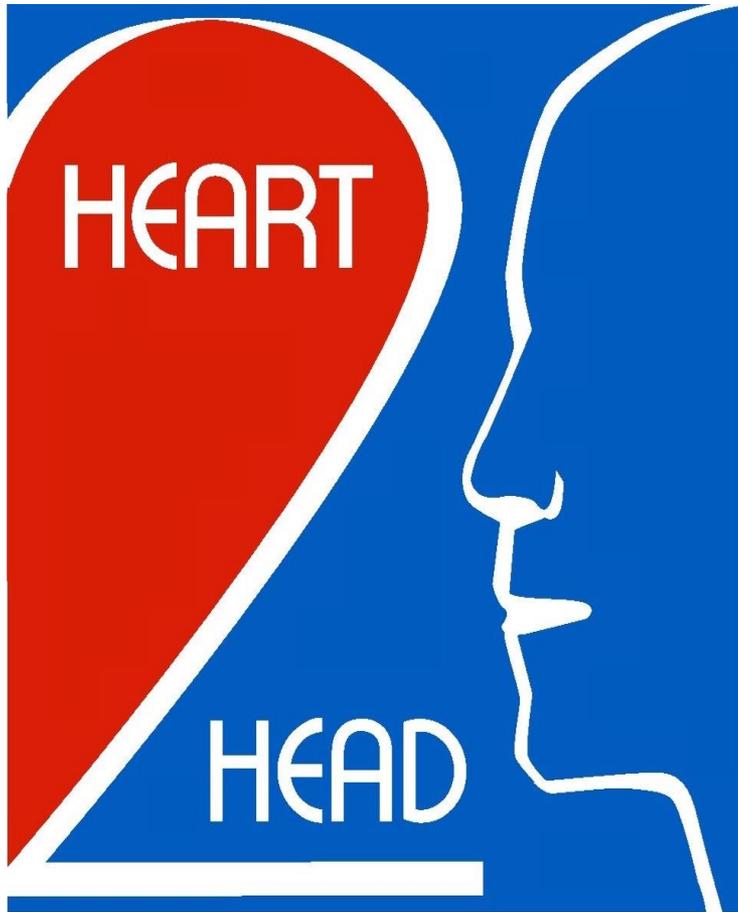
lesson one
Heart-to-Heart

Everybody has a heart

- The heart is a physical reality, pumping blood and life throughout the body.
- The word “Heart” also suggests something more than the physical heart. It points to the core, our center, the heart of who we are, or the heart of what is important to us.
- “Getting to the heart” of something is an invitation to get to what truly matters.



From the Head to the Heart



We associate the head with thought, and thought has its place.

But Thoughts are not the Heart, the Center, of who we are.

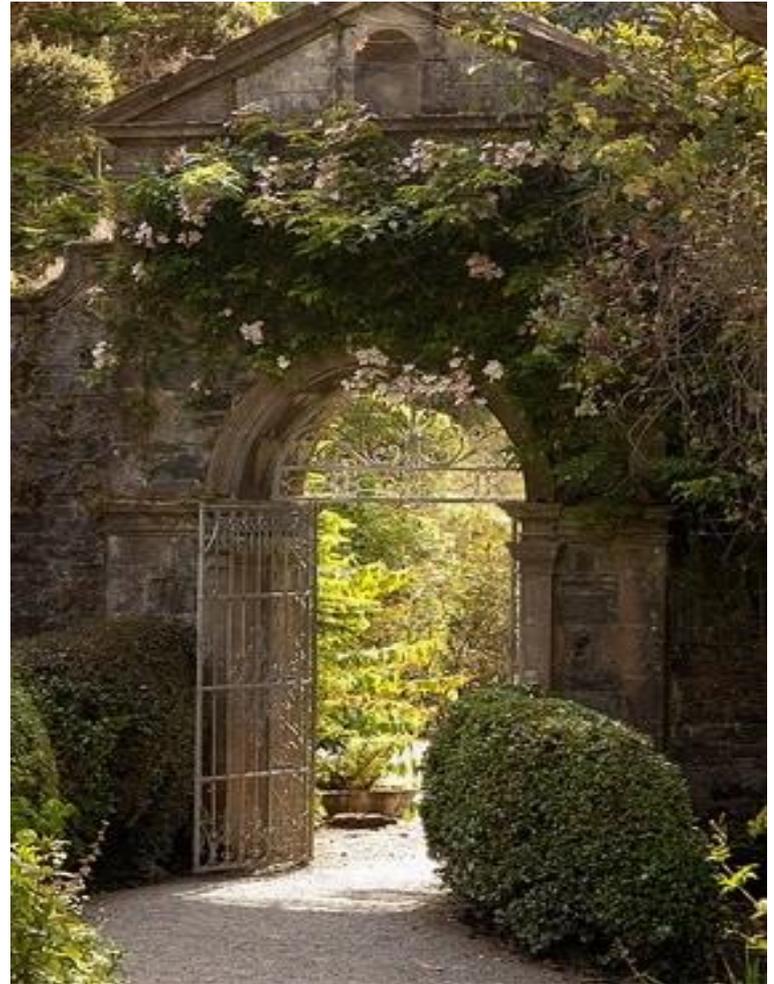
Two Doorways to the Heart

We humans are made
with two key doorways
to the Heart.

These are two entry
points to the Life that is
within us.

These two entry points
are:

Feelings, and,
Needs, or Heart's Desires.



In Our Hearts Are Feelings



- Feelings come in two varieties. Feelings we enjoy and feelings we don't enjoy.
- Feelings we enjoy may include joy, peace, contentment, or warmth.
- Feelings we don't enjoy might include feeling sad or anxious or irritated.

Feelings Point to the State of Our Needs

- Feelings are core indicators of our inner life, pointing us more deeply into our hearts.
- Feelings we enjoy tell us that a vital need or needs are being met.
- Feelings we don't enjoy tell us that a vital need or needs are not met.
- This means that all feelings, the ones we enjoy and the ones we don't, the "positive" and "negative" feelings, are important because they point more deeply into ourselves, by telling us the state of our needs.

Understanding Needs

- ❖ Every human has a core set of needs shared with all other humans. These are Universal Needs.
- ❖ Universal Needs include what we need to survive, such as air and food.
- ❖ Universal Needs also include what we need to thrive, such as respect, freedom, understanding, belonging, and purpose. This second set of Universal Needs, the ones we need to thrive, can also be called our “Heart’s Desires” or “Heart’s Longings.”

Attending to Our Inner Life

- > Paying attention to one's own feelings and needs is attending to one's inner life.
- > Through connecting to the Heart, and to the feelings and desires that are alive in the Heart in the present moment, we connect to Life's longings as they live in us.



Attending to Our Inner Life

- Our attention, then, can move gracefully from awareness of a thought... to the Feeling that is stimulated by that thought ... and to the Need, met or unmet, that arises.
- Or, we can simply start with awareness of a Feeling:
 - > I might feel sad and this feeling may connect me to my longing for friendship or companionship.
 - > I am with, then, not only my feeling of sadness, but also a felt sense of how important companionship is to me.
 - > I am now with my own heart and its longing for companionship. This is a deeper self-connection than what occurs with looping thoughts and emotional collapse.

The Longings that Create



- We humans are all created with this same set of universal needs. This is an essential part of being human – that we carry these heart’s longings in our bodies.
- These universal heart’s desires do not seem to be created by us. Moreover, they seem to lead us to create our life. Some may call them part of our nature or “God-given.”

When I connect to my own heart and its longings, I am connecting to Life Itself.



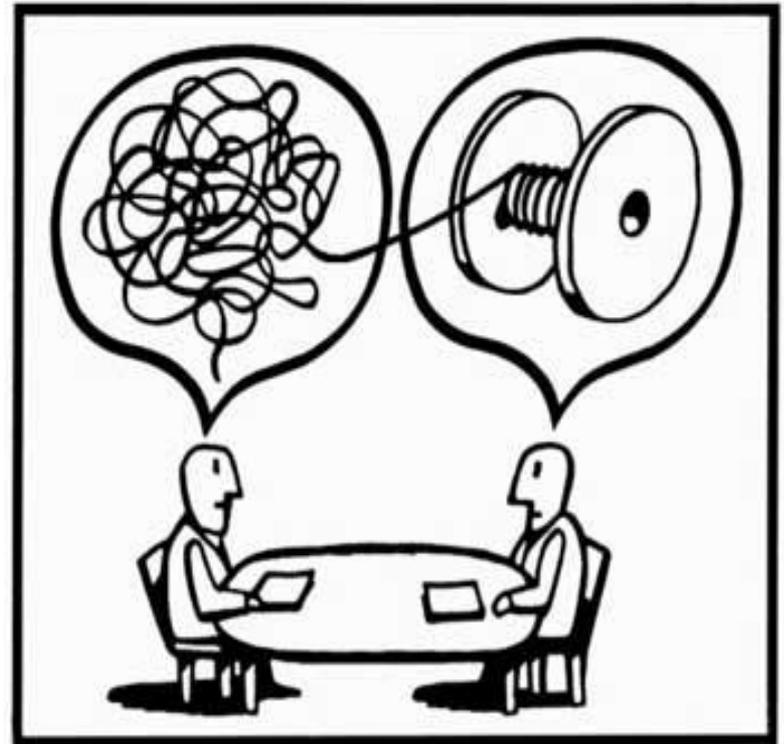
This Invisible Life that lives in me can be experienced, felt, accessed. It is accessed through paying attention to my longings in the moment. And we all share the same human longings. It might be said that it is One Heart living in all of us. Through this One Heart we are united in sharing in Its common longing.

Connecting to The Heart

- We connect to the Heart when we listen to our own inner life, sensing into the feelings and needs, or heart's desires, that are alive in the moment.
- We connect to the Heart, also, when we listen to another human and touch into what feelings and longings are vital to them in the moment.

Translating

- To hear the heart of another, or to hear our own heart - we may need to do some translating.
- Many of us have been taught the language of the head – of thoughts, opinions, judgments, criticisms, evaluations.



Translating

- “Translating” involving listening through thoughts and judgments, emotions, and “stories” that may be painful to hear.
- Underneath it all is a beautiful need.
- Underneath it all is a heart longing for something essential.

An Example of Translating

- For example, a teenage daughter hears her mom say, “You can’t go to the party.”
- The daughter responds at a very loud volume, “I hate you. You’re cruel.”



An Example of Translating

- Underneath those words may feelings of anger or rage. Underneath that may be feelings of frustration or powerlessness.
- And these feelings may point to the longing for freedom, or fun, or friendship, or trust.

Translating is Seeing with the Heart

“It is only with the heart that one can see rightly.

What is essential is invisible to the eye.”



- The Little Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupery

For more information contact



Heart-to-Heart: Comienzos East, Inc.

P. O. Box 1441, Merchantville, NJ 08109

(609)707-5900

h2hincinfo@gmail.com

www.heart2heartinc.org

With gratitude Dr. Marshall Rosenberg, Dr. Robert Gonzales, and the Center for Nonviolent Communication. Your teaching and living informs this presentation.