

Heart centered Integration and learning. Teaching with intention

A question I've often asked myself as both a student and teacher is: How do we continue to cultivate self-awareness and start to move our lives from unfocused and meaningless or so called "mindless learning" and instead move to focused, purpose-filled and intentional learning?

The term "mindless" is certainly at the beginning of the problem...

What we consider to be unfocused – thoughtless learning is often the product of too much thought and not enough feeling – not enough attention to an effective learning process and too much attention on learning for learning's sake. I'm reminded of sitting in my middle school classroom, in discussion over some prescribed literature and being keenly aware (and uncomfortable) that I was unable to understand how or why this material served us – and also keenly aware that the teacher presenting the material had no real feeling and real grasp of the purpose of the material themselves. I certainly thought often to myself – but to what end must we learn this?

When we teach children from a young age, they often are not in their own choosing – in my Experience as a teacher of 15 + years, a parent will come into my studio and says, "Oh, I would love (so and so) to learn the cello" – and it's then your job to teach your new charge the instrument – whether or not the child is "ready" or truly willing.

However, if you are to be truly effective – you must teach them not only the art of the instrument But to feel and access *how* they learn – through careful observation of how you learned. You must go through your own process of personally evaluating the importance of a topic (in your own life) and should be able to impart the joy of learning that comes when you intimately understand the inner workings – challenges and joys of your craft. In addition, be able to tie the teaching in to a more universal experience that helps the student learn

fundamental truths that will help her orient herself to her world regardless of what is being taught. The key of using universal themes and methods play to a child's innate intelligence and these principles do not make the arrogant assumption that the one discipline you are teaching will be or should be your students only interest. Though all students and learning styles vary – I use some universal methods and ideas that can apply to all students of all things. These methods are an amalgamation of wisdoms learned through spiritual texts – and found in rare teachers who taught, possessed with the knowledge that – it is not for school but for life that we learn.

Often, I observe cello students - hard at work, minds on full-blast - so much so that they easily and quickly forget themselves, their bodies and more often than not, their objective. When learning this way, joy quickly turns to frustration – and a “system overload” sort of feeling short circuits the brain. The learning process is stunted and is stuck. It's no wonder this occurs – our systems are designed to learn through an integration of more than one input. We learn through integration of mind – body – breath – and emotions. First – and importantly – it's wise to take a step back and relax the mind, to bring the student to a state of relaxation, calm and reassurance.

I remind the cello students to throw their ears out to the corner of the room so that they might hear themselves while they play – especially while they are learning a difficult passage or new technique. It's another way of asking them to be both the doer and the observer. I find that someone who is able to both observe and “do” gives them power to adjust – their awareness – their movement – their energy level.

When the student is given the time and space to digest the information, and they become aware of the degree and type of energy used in crafting the pitch, sound, physical posture as well as the energy involved in all the “fancy footwork” – something magic happens: it's called integration

and entrainment into a new field of potential.

The novice (and we are all novices) must work carefully but with ease – integrating instruction – using their body in a new and sometimes uncomfortable way. I prefer to let my students know that being unsure and uncomfortable is not – incorrect and certainly not a feeling to run from but a state from which to go a step further in discernment. They now must now of how far to push themselves so they won't sustain too much emotional stress or injury – I remind them of self-regulation the rivers flow and to stay with themselves. That instruction is key – but they are the ones who must begin to regulate how the information is incorporated.

When you begin instilling a sense of self-awareness into a learner's purview – from this angle – they are far more able and willing to learn – since what's being nurtured is their own intuition and self-confidence, not just the abstract assimilation of information and skill. This method helps a child to not only learn – but more importantly tune into their own guidance system and choose for themselves what they are interested in learning. This in turn creates adults who are assured of their purpose (whatever it may be) and who have the confidence and vantage point to help others reach their goals and dreams.

Congruent with healing in the sense that as a healer you must also widen your sense of perception. As a healer, your sense of perception is however not – outward – but inward. And the “room” that you must now resonate to is your own heart.

This essay focuses on teaching with intention and LOVE: I think it's wise to ask ourselves as we're teaching – what is our goal? It's never for school – but for life which we learn and in the same vein – it is never as important to learn the “thing” or reach the goal – but the way in which we learn to integrate our goal for both current and for future endeavors. If the purpose of the so-called “future endeavors” has anything to do with the betterment of the heart and soul of the learner – then – lasting and meaningful learning and exchange takes place.

Do we teach in a way that gives our students a way to find a new solution on their own regardless of the subject? Do we teach in a way that integrates multiple aspects of self for a more whole learning environment?

In the same way that learning is often catalyzed by a teacher's ability to sense a deficiency in the student – so too is healing catalyzed by the healer's ability to feel and harmonize the client's wounds.

The key words are: Authentic Connection.

Also, similar – as all teacher and students enjoy a symbiotic relationship – healers too benefit through facilitating healing within another person. How is teaching part of the healing process?

Presentation:

Toning and listening

Listening to yourself from outside - the universe is your resonance chamber and your voice is the “stroke” of the mallet.

Your belief is the bowl you are playing – the tone you are resonating with - does it feel right?

Does it feel authentic? Have you prepared your voice and your mind for the arrival and expansion of the note or Melody?

When it feels good and natural - you know you're onto something true...

The greatest conduit of learning is Joy:

Joy holds the greatest impact potential <3meditation on accessing joy!

“As we expand our consciousness, our belief systems grow and expand. The greatest enemy to that expansion is the limiting beliefs we carry, such as “I can't do it. It'll never happen... It is impossible, illogical, I don't deserve it. You can't. I never, etc., etc., etc.”. In fact, we discover that anything is possible. Impossibility negates the infinite potential of spirit.

