

SMILE TO YOUR HEART MEDITATIONS

Simple Practices for
Peace, Health and
Spiritual Growth

IRMANSYAH EFFENDI M.SC.

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Spiritual Growth

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*May all beings open their hearts more to the Creator,
True Source*

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INTRODUCTION

We are meant to be happy.

If you look at the motivations behind our thoughts and actions—conscious and unconscious—they’re all to get us closer to the feeling, or at least the idea, of happiness.

Yet in spite of our worldly successes and social relationships, we sometimes feel lonely, empty, as if something is missing. Even when we experience happiness, it tends to be more of a brief touch than a lasting embrace. We seem to slip back to a lower plane, a place of wanting, again and again.

Psychologists, economists, poets—and, most importantly, you—have long asked why. But, for all of the scholarship and human insight across the centuries, nobody has found a complete and enduring answer. Perhaps because it’s been too close to see...

The answer, the truth, is our heart. Not the physical heart that beats in our chest, but our spiritual heart: the key connection to True Source, the Source of peace, calmness, and joy. In

opening and using our heart, we're blessed with a lasting peace and happiness that we can feel—actually and really feel—as we go about our daily lives. (Because opening our heart is universal and applies to all religions and faiths, please feel free to replace the term “True Source” with whatever name you use to refer to the Source of Light and Love). It is my joy to share with you in this book not only information about the heart but also simple and effective exercises to help open and strengthen your heart even more.

As you read through the exercises, you will notice that the steps are actually quite simple and natural. Being guided by your feeling as you begin to practice, you will experience the beautiful ease of allowing your heart to lead you.

I began presenting Open Heart and Inner Heart workshops years ago, and have been asked why I am writing this book about the heart for the public now. It's because everything is happening at such a fast rate during this spiritual awakening age. In fact, it was not until just several months ago that without any preparation (i.e., Heart workshops), people were able to open and strengthen their hearts easily. Given this great shift and Blessing, this book will be valuable for everyone—including those who have no background whatsoever in heart training or meditation.

May you find everything I share in this book useful. By opening and using your heart more, you will become happier, more peaceful, and healthier. May you also enjoy praying more, be more grateful, and become closer to True Source.

Irmansyah Effendi
Perth, Australia, May 2010

1

OUR HEART

There are countless sayings recognizing the importance of our heart:

"Your vision will become clear only when you look into your heart. Who looks outside, dreams. Who looks inside, awakens."

~ CARL JUNG

"Few are those who see with their own eyes and feel with their own hearts."

~ ALBERT EINSTEIN

"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."

~ ARISTOTLE

"The only lasting beauty is the beauty of the heart."

~ RUMI

"The worst prison would be a closed heart."

~ POPE JOHN PAUL II

"Wherever you go, go with all your heart."

~ CONFUCIUS

"One learns through the heart, not the eyes or the intellect."

~ MARK TWAIN

"Without a rich heart, wealth is an ugly beggar."

~ RALPH WALDO EMERSON

"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."

~ ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY

"The way is not in the sky. The way is in the heart."

~ BUDDHA

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart."

~ HELEN KELLER

"In prayer, it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart."

~ MAHATMA GANDHI

"There is a light that shines beyond all things on Earth, beyond us all, beyond the very highest heavens. This is the light that shines in our heart."

~ CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD 3.13.7

In reading these quotes, we recognize a core essence of truth. There's a knowing and familiarity, despite perhaps never having studied or followed these figures or their stories. That's your heart speaking.

The heart, in its depth, is the center of peace and calmness. When we open and use our heart, we experience genuine lightness and tranquility throughout our whole self.

Sakyamuni Buddha taught: "Calmness is within you; do not look for it outside of you." Yet you don't have to be a Buddha to see how those who chase down worldly success in an effort to be happy and peaceful many times end up anything but. A number of wealthy people find it difficult, often impossible, to smile freely or feel any real calmness or peace in their daily life. If we neglect our heart, we may attain success and material goods, but serenity and happiness will always still be in front of us, just out of reach.

When we open and use our heart properly, by contrast, we find that contentment and pleasure come hand-in-hand with the wealth: helping us to enjoy everything better, and with real perspective. We also share our happiness with those around us more freely, and create an environment that encourages and supports this peace and calmness.

By opening and using our heart in our daily lives, moreover, we can feel and enjoy this peace and calmness—*so clearly*—that our whole heart and our whole self are happy each moment. Your heart, in fact, already knows how. It's only a matter of opening it up and using it.

WHY OUR HEART?

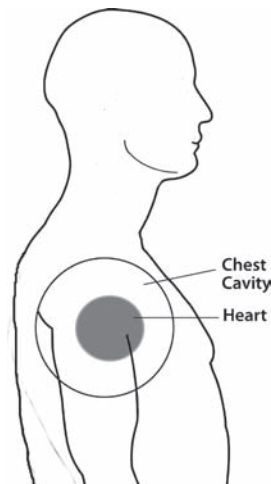


Figure 1. Our heart within the chest cavity

Why is our heart the center of happy and beautiful feelings?
Why is our heart, not our brain or other parts of us, the key?

Our heart is the key because our spirit, or our *true self*, is within our heart. The Creator, True Source, is a Spirit, and therefore our true self is also a spirit—a spark of True Source. Our heart is the special facility provided so that there is always a beautiful connection between True Source and the beloved children of True Source.

Our brain is also a wonderful facility given by True Source so that we can learn through experience, as our lessons here on Earth to help us to remember about and choose True Source. But of course it is the special tool, the heart, which has been provided for us to truly improve our connection.

In the same way we must use our eyes to see and our hands to touch—not just intending to or thinking about seeing or touching—our heart must actually be used to strengthen

our connection to True Source. Yet because our relationship is obviously not a physical matter but a spiritual one, it's clear that we wouldn't use a physical organ to grow closer to True Source. Again, this is what the heart, the key to our connection, is for. And while the spiritual heart is non-physical, it isn't difficult at all to use; you will see this after opening your heart for some time.

In fact, when our brain chooses True Source, but we also properly use the special facility that has been given to us—our heart—to connect to True Source, True Source's Love can help our spirit directly with everything that is needed. This is part of the beautiful gift of the human body.

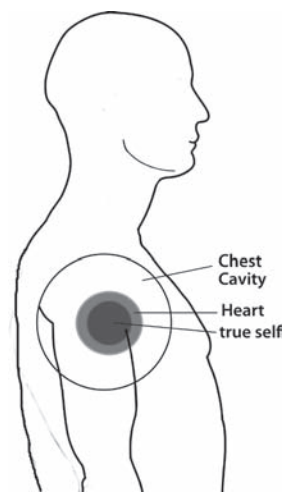


Figure 2. Our true self within our heart

OUR HEART IS THE CENTER OF PEACE, CALMNESS, AND TRUE LOVE

When we open our heart, we recognize and realize the presence of True Source's Blessings. We can feel—really and actu-

ally *feel*—so many beautiful things within our heart, including lightness, calmness, peace, happiness, and joy beyond all things we have ever felt from our worldly experiences.

Moments when we are enjoying the feeling from our heart are moments we are actually *using* our heart, letting True Source's Blessing work better on our whole heart and our whole self. Every moment we spend within the Blessing within our heart brings us closer to True Source—to the eternal beauty and joy that our heart already knows, and that our brain has been seeking.

OUR HEART KNOWS THE TRUTH

For ages it has been said we should follow our heart, that our heart knows the truth. Why? This is because our true self, the spark of True Source, within our heart has its own consciousness. This consciousness is much higher than our brain consciousness, and it knows the real truth—what is best for us and for others.

As soon as we use our heart properly, we can realize truths from our own heart, which are better than “truths” from our limited brain. Oftentimes, these aren't truths at all, but what we later find are mistakes based on limited or false information, misjudgments, or poor reasoning.

OTHER SPECIAL THINGS ABOUT OUR HEART

While the brain is easily influenced by its surroundings, our heart cannot be manipulated by anyone else. The truths from our heart are just that: truths untouched and untouchable by circumstance, persuasion, ego, or any other outside force.

Rather, we and True Source are the only ones who can affect our heart; no other being has the power to make our heart dirty except ourselves. Thus, when we feel hurt, angry, sad, or experience any other negative emotion, we must remind ourselves that it isn't really our colleagues, friends, family, or adverse life events causing these emotions within us. It's actually *us* following the negativity, allowing it to make our heart dirty.

In cleansing and opening our heart, however, it's not enough to rely on our own effort. Just as we're vulnerable to outside forces, we also lack the internal strength to rid ourselves completely of this negative energy. The best way—the most beautiful and joyful way—to cleanse and open our heart, instead, is to ask True Source for blessings. We will practice this later in the book.

2

OPENING & USING OUR HEART

OPENING AND USING OUR HEART WELL IN REALITY

There is a difference between thinking that we have used our heart well, and *actually* using our heart well in practice.

When we are using our heart well in reality, everything becomes more wonderful:

- We can really feel the difference between an ordinary smile and a smile from our heart. When we smile from our heart, we can feel how True Source's Blessing radiates from our heart toward all directions, filling us with a light, calm, peaceful, and beautiful feeling.
- When we smile to our own heart, True Source's Blessing within our heart also radiates so

wonderfully, uplifting our whole heart and feeling to become lighter and more beautiful.

- When we call out to True Source from our heart, we can feel our heart expand, pulling upward. This is our heart praying to True Source.

THE BENEFITS OF OPENING OUR HEART TO TRUE SOURCE

In opening our heart to True Source, we receive so many wonderful benefits. Not only does it make our lives more joyful and fulfilling, but it also improves our spiritual growth. With an open heart:

- Our connection to True Source becomes more beautiful.
- We are able to pray from within our heart.
- We are able to do good deeds with love.
- We are more grateful for everything.
- We surrender more.
- We feel light, calm, and joyful.
- We are far from stress.
- We find it easy to smile from our heart.
- We are mentally, physically, and emotionally healthy.
- We recognize the real truth (True Source's Will).

By opening our heart to True Source, all important matters related to our connection to True Source—which, of course, affects our entire life—will change for the better.

First, our connection will improve. The beauty of praying from the heart will be realized and experienced so clearly, filling our whole heart, our whole self, and our whole feeling.

Our gratitude will also grow and flourish with an open heart. Not only will we become more thankful for True Source's Love and Blessings, but we'll come to enjoy and be more grateful for everything in our lives: from our relationships to our health to our work.

And with an open heart, we are able to smile more easily and more often from our heart. Science, of course, has long shown that a regular smile (not even a smile from our heart) is already good in reducing stress. When we smile from our heart, though, we actually become mentally, physically, and emotionally healthier.

Indeed, recognizing that True Source has blessed us with exactly what will help us grow and learn the most, we are able to open our hearts easily.

3

OUR BRAIN & OUR HEART

How wonderful and exciting it is to know that peace, calmness, happiness and other beautiful feelings are within us at this very moment. To be able to feel and enjoy these blessings, all we need to do is open and begin strengthening our heart.

Toward helping us understand our heart better, there are two important initial steps: First, we need to know the differences between our brain and our heart. Then, we need to recognize the real feeling from our heart.

After learning more about the relationship between the heart and the brain, as well as recognizing how beautiful it feels to be within our heart, we will be able to do many wonderful things for our heart, including:

- Strengthening our heart.
- Lessening our brain's domination.
- Opening our heart through the Open Heart Meditation.

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