



# *Balancing the Heart*

What does it really mean to live with a balanced, peaceful heart? Is it the ability to forgive, or the integrity of keeping your agreements? Does this balance come from not taking things personally, or being able to trust the goodness in humanity? Yes, these are important signs of a person living in balance, yet there is a deeper place in all of us and between all of us where the balance of the heart really comes from. I want to illustrate that place of origin in this article, and to begin, tell a brief story.

**by geoff brandenburg**



**W**hile sitting at a beachside restaurant recently, I overheard a conversation between a father and his vivacious 10-year-old daughter. Talking in animated sentences about a movie screenplay she wanted to develop, his daughter was clearly stretching her vocabulary and her grasp of the entire process of how to produce this screenplay. All along, her father was supportive, treating her as an equal while giving her intelligent, thoughtful responses.

At no time did he talk down to her or make fun of her ambitious attempts to visualize and project her worldly intentions like a mature adult. At one point, he gave her the names of his friends she could call for support, just as he would a business ally. When she suddenly switched into a bubbly little kid who just wanted to jump up and down with excitement, he easily flowed into those emotions with her. Then when she became a serious young preteen stretching her mind to form a complex sentence of intention, he stayed right with her, enjoying every part of what she was feeling and saying. In his mind, he saw the pictures she was creating for him.

At the end, feeling complete and satisfied that she had given birth to all these feelings and ideas successfully, she wanted to go explore the beach. A new wave of life had taken hold of her, and her body wanted to explore what that felt like. Full of trust and confidence in her, her father asked her to come back in a certain time, and like a

strong young adult, she gladly gave her word, empowered by their talk and grateful for his trust.

Watching her walk away, a healthy, growing girl with real self-love, I realized how rarely I've heard a conversation between a parent and child that was so balanced heart to heart. Throughout their talk, the daughter journeyed through different emotional ages and modes of expression, and her father responded with love, respect and happiness for her self-discovery. He obviously loved those parts of himself, and knew how to love and honor them in her.

He was a man who possessed balance in his heart, and was passing that gift on to his daughter.

How did this man get there in himself? It is revealed in how he responded to her. He understood the innocence, beauty and vitality of the emotional ages in his daughter, and could allow her to journey spontaneously through them until she reached her own result.

The real experience of a balanced heart begins when we realize that

Child and Awakening Teenager, as they form the foundation of our identities. Learning to give unconditional love and acceptance to these ages inside of us sets free the love and wisdom of each age. In that healing process, they will come into a vibrant balance between them, much like the father and daughter above. They can unite in our hearts with a love for ourselves and others that celebrates all aspects of life, and can open the doorway for deep spiritual awakening.

What does this mean practically, day-to-day? It starts by recognizing that upset, pain, depression, anxiety and fear live in these different ages. They are real parts of our heart, which if neglected, will try to get our attention. It means learning to identify what these ages are holding that needs love, where they are incomplete, and to respond to them with commitment and compassion. Does your Inner Child need you to reassure them that they are safe? Does your Teenager need recognition for their dormant power, beauty or intelligence? Does your Young Adult need to realize greater autonomy in a relationship? Does your Mature Adult need to get completion in the younger Selves, to liberate their full Life Vision?

Balancing the heart means giving equal love and respect to these ages in us as living, real aspects of our sense of self. Embracing these four ages in ourselves

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within each of us there are four emotional ages: the Inner Child, the Awakening Teenager, the Young Adult and the Mature Adult. Each age carries a unique perspective and gift of love, and wants to be honored and respected. The goal of doing our inner work is to re-parent ourselves—to liberate all four Selves from any incompleteness, wounding and grief that they are trapped in, and set them free to express, explore and create new life.

Reparenting is the process of re-attaching ourselves to these emotional ages through the heart, especially the Inner

and in our relationships profoundly expands the love and healing that is possible. We can learn to create confidence, grounding, peace of mind and an open, balanced heart that can live and love to our fullest potential.

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