



Linda's Tai Chi Weekly Handout

A Poem by John Roedel

The name of the poem is "Breathe"

But, for us, it is a poem about Breath # 4: Harmonize Within

Once again, I thank one of our class members who brought this poem to my attention

Enjoy.....

my brain and  
heart divorced

a decade ago

over who was  
to blame about  
how big of a mess  
I have become

eventually,  
they couldn't be  
in the same room  
with each other

now my head and heart  
share custody of me

I stay with my brain  
during the week

and my heart  
gets me on weekends

they never speak to one another  
- instead, they give me  
the same note to pass  
to each other every week

and their notes they  
send to one another always  
says the same thing:

“This is all your fault”

on Sundays  
my heart complains  
about how my  
head has let me down  
in the past

and on Wednesday  
my head lists all  
of the times my  
heart has screwed  
things up for me  
in the future

they blame each  
other for the  
state of my life

there's been a lot  
of yelling - and crying

so,

lately, I've been  
spending a lot of  
time with my gut

who serves as my  
unofficial therapist

most nights, I sneak out of the  
window in my ribcage

and slide down my spine  
and collapse on my  
gut's plush leather chair  
that's always open for me

~ and I just sit sit sit sit  
until the sun comes up

last evening,  
my gut asked me  
if I was having a hard  
time being caught  
between my heart  
and my head

I nodded

I said I didn't know  
if I could live with  
either of them anymore

"my heart is always sad about  
something that happened yesterday  
while my head is always worried  
about something that may happen tomorrow,"

I lamented

my gut squeezed my hand

"I just can't live with  
my mistakes of the past  
or my anxiety about the future,"

I sighed

my gut smiled and said:

"in that case,  
you should  
go stay with your  
lungs for a while,"

I was confused

- the look on my face gave it away

"if you are exhausted about  
your heart's obsession with  
the fixed past and your mind's focus

on the uncertain future

your lungs are the perfect place for you

there is no yesterday in your lungs

there is no tomorrow there either

there is only now

there is only inhale

there is only exhale

there is only this moment

there is only breath

and in that breath

you can rest while your

heart and head work

their relationship out.”

this morning,

while my brain

was busy reading

tea leaves

and while my

heart was staring

at old photographs

I packed a little

bag and walked

to the door of

my lungs

before I could even knock  
she opened the door  
with a smile and as  
a gust of air embraced me  
she said

“what took you so long?”

*Peace,*

*Linda*

