



Linda's T'ai Chi Weekly Handout February 19, 2023



### Matters of the Heart

Who we are as a person, our thoughts, emotions, feelings, our personality are centered in the brain. But, since the mind and heart are intimately connected, a strong rush of emotions such as fear, anger or love can pump adrenalin to the heart. This rush of adrenalin accelerates the heartbeat. Negative states of mind, including depression, anxiety, loneliness, anger and chronic stress, may increase the risk for heart disease over time or worsen heart issues that already exist. By the same token emotional vitality—a sense of enthusiasm, of hopefulness, of engagement in life, and the ability to face life's stresses with emotional balance—appears to reduce the risk of coronary heart disease.

The Heart of the Matter in this case is the brain or mission control central in our body. It is the brain that holds our cognition, perceptions, thoughts, wisdom and character- who we are.

But the belief that the brain is the core of our being was not always the case. Ancient Egyptians believed that the heart recorded all of the good and bad deeds of a person's life, and was needed for judgment in the afterlife. The brain was discarded in the

mummification process while the heart was preserved, (sucked out through the nose actually).

Probably the most interesting aspect of the ancient Egyptian's concept of the heart is that their ancient beliefs remain with us today, not as science, but within the very tapestry of our culture, our poetry and our song lyrics. When we refer to our hearts in regard to love, or any other emotion, we are invoking a living memory of the ancient Egyptian belief system.

Since the Egyptians believed that the heart was the source of human wisdom, as well as emotions, memory, the soul and the personality itself, notions of physiology and disease were all connected in concept to the heart, and it was through the heart that God spoke, giving ancient Egyptians knowledge of God and God's will. For this reason, it was considered the most important of the body's organs despite the ancient Egyptian's seemingly advanced medical and surgical knowledge. In fact, the only real function of the brain was thought to pass mucus to the nose, so it was one of the organs that were discarded during mummification.



Heart amulet

The heart amulet was a personal adornment for magical purposes that was sewn on mummy linen to assure the deceased his or her heart in the afterlife.



Heart Amulets

So today, when we speak with love to our family or friends, we speak from the heart, and when we experience loss, it is our heart that is broken, in only another of many memories of our ancient Egyptian roots.

When we perform T'ai Chi, we coordinate our mind, body and spirit which we know are intrinsically linked. One informs and affects the other. When our body feels good, we feel good mentally. When our emotions and feelings are disrupted, we often feel unwell physically.

May you find connections in your heart, mind and soul,

Linda