



PURA VIDA HEALTHCARE
Your Mind-Body Connection

January 2022
On Being Right

“I’m no longer trying to be right. I choose to be happy, happy, happy.” (Mashti)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNOeHd7drdE>

This is one of my favorite quotes from a song. So simple, yet so true. Yet I have struggled for years with unlearning the sense of rightness that has been instilled in me over my lifetime. Now, I am more consciously aware of how much these judgments affect my life and the snowballing negative consequences that come from me assuming my way of approaching something is the best. With awareness comes the opportunity to shift, well, everything!

Most of us have grown up in a culture that values being “right”. We are taught to solve problems - and that there’s only one “good” solution. We are taught to categorize “same” from “different” – which often comes with a judgment of “different from me is bad/wrong”. We learn to take multiple choice tests where there is literally only one correct answer.



Part of this comes from our evolutionary roots – we were much more likely to survive if we were part of a tribe than on our own. Our survival instincts taught us to recognize others that were like us, and distinguish what was different as a possible threat.

As social and online media become more central in the world, we see our likes, attitudes and points of view reflected back to us. This deepens our sense of being right about our perspective. Unfortunately, this echo chamber does nothing to create healthy discourse between differing opinions and actually shuts down the bonds that create community over time.



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When we stop communicating with each other because we have already formed an opinion, the world becomes a more difficult place (for everyone).

When we stop being curious and willing to listen, our hearts close and our minds kick into overdrive.

I'm bringing this to you today after two years of sitting with hundreds of people, personally and professionally, as we move through another global pandemic. Fraught with fear and lots of unknowns, we humans tend to go to the mind to make sense of it all. We rely on our brain to help us figure out what to do, discern "safe" from "unsafe", and make a plan of action. This is all a huge gift and we'd be in trouble if we didn't have the mind and its skillset.

However, when we move into a sense of "this is the right way" (or the only way) our focus becomes very narrow. We no longer have a 360-degree view, and this limits us from seeing another approach, let alone valuing a different point of view. Throw a healthy dose of fear about mortality or getting sick, and that tunnel we're perceiving through gets narrower still.

And this is where feeling "right" can shift into "righteousness". When you determine the best course of action for you, especially with many unknown variables present, that should be celebrated! When someone else makes a different choice, it is not a threat – it's simply another human making the best possible choice for themselves.

No one can ever truly and completely understand someone else's perspective. We can try! We can even get very close if we want to. And, at the end of the day, there will always be missing pieces.

When public health makes policies, they are looking at a strategy that is good for the largest number of people. They simply cannot make individualized decisions to accommodate millions of people. So, blanket statements are made, and everyone is encouraged to comply. They are doing the best they can with the information they access.

As a healthcare provider, I have the privilege of getting to see many different, individual humans, each responding to the world in their own unique way. I have seen people be greatly relieved about getting vaccinated and others that are scared to death of that option. I have seen folks have no reaction and others who ended up with pericarditis, stroke or major immune/inflammatory reactions that they haven't recovered from.

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I have sat with people who believe it is a moral obligation to get vaccinated, and others that are facing a choice between their livelihood and providing for their family or getting an employer-mandated vaccine.

The thing that everyone I have the honor of talking to has in common is our humanity. We are all making the decision that is right for our families. We all have convictions that we take to heart. We all want what's best for the whole – even if we don't agree on what that is. We all want the chronic stress of COVID to be over and behind us.

I am asking you today, with a heart full of love, to consider how you have been showing up in the world. Have you been curious? Asking questions when you don't understand? Showing compassion for all beings? Have you been able to keep your heart open, even amidst the on-going strain and overwhelm? Where have your channels of focus narrowed, and what would it take to allow them to expand again?



If this calls to you and you're not sure where to start, I would offer Wonder and Lightness. When we move into our curiosity, we can often find that there is more than what we originally perceived. Try starting your sentences with "I wonder..." and see what happens. This brings us back to a more child-like nature of openness. And Lightness is a wonderful quality we can breathe in – what if this wasn't such a big deal? What if it didn't really matter after all? What if I could hold this problem more lightly?

As we approach the end of January 2022, I feel like we each have a choice to make. One that I believe could truly make a difference in the lives of so many. Are you going to choose to perpetuate separateness, judgment, and differences? Or are you willing to let go of the duality of right and wrong in favor of welcoming it all, in neutrality....

You have the power to change the world. Today.

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What we put our focus and attention on will only amplify in energy, intensity and frequency.

What if we got back to finding the good in the world? The amazing opportunities that are possible in each new day? The power and resiliency of humanity when we each of us feel seen, appreciated and honored?

I wonder what it would take to choose a new way of being...

I wonder what we could create...



Just playing with this idea creates little bubbles of electricity up my spine and literal goosebumps on my arms.

I wonder... I wonder....

Yours~
Dr. Nicola