

Weekly Meditation November 3, 2010

By Rev. Teri Lubbers

An Open Heart

The hardest thing about staying open, for me, is getting back into my heart after I've shut down to survive. Feeling whatever made me want to shut down is a challenge too. Taking care of myself while I'm open is tough. I either get so soft and mushy that I'm an easy target, or I turn into a pit bull. Or sometimes I just get scared of being that vulnerable. I wear myself out, running back and forth between my head and my heart. ~ Melody Beattie, 52 Weeks of Conscious Contact

When I interviewed for CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) as a hospital chaplain they asked why I wanted to do it. I told them that I needed help making the journey from my head to my heart. Logic and all things rational feel so much safer. Risky, vulnerable, scary is how it feels to have an open heart. Who knew it could be such a long journey!

I know how to do the analytical stuff...I am a master in fact. I know how to bracket and compartmentalize (just noticed that word has "mentalize" in it!) in order to function at really high levels. But sometimes those self-made walls start dissolving - without my permission mind you - and my heart insists on having its way. Sometimes the heart says: honey, we can't live in survival mode forever, let's try a new path. Because sometimes the old paths just don't know the way home.

My mom died a couple of weeks ago. It has been a really hard year for my heart. Lots of losses, big and small. Some good advice came in a condolence card I received (and how fitting that the words should come from my teacher, Rumi): Dance when you're broken open. I can't dance yet but, with the love of many, I am standing.

Prayer: God, you draw near with tenderness to all who cry in pain. You do not shy away from my brokenness. Heal my shattered heart and teach me to dance. Amen.