

I have been totally fascinated with computers beginning when I was 11 years old (1963) and taught myself to program using punched cards. By the time I was a teenager, I was designing and building my own personal computers using intuition – there were very few design rules about what did and didn't work and they were easy to learn.

In college they taught us more and more rules but none of the reasons behind the rules, why the rules worked (don't ask questions, just apply the rules). I was fortunate to have been one of the original Atari game programmers in the days of Pong, Breakout and Pacman. In the beginning there were no rules and we were allowed to be totally creative. Sometimes the games were successful and sometimes they were not, but we had a great deal of fun learning what worked.

After Atari, corporations were not interested in technical creativity. Only marketing was allowed to be creative and Engineers were expected to apply the rules and implement marketing's grand vision. If this grand vision violated the laws of physics then that was engineering's problem. In order to survive in this environment, I lived totally in the head which eliminates intuition.

Eleven years ago, I had reached the breaking point and completely changed my life by silencing my mind and moving back into my heart. This has been a long, difficult and often painful process but the results are worth the effort. Slowly, my intuition has returned. I thought that my ability to do a complex computer design using intuition had been lost forever. Fortunately, two weeks ago the image of a totally new home automation and security device popped into my head, fully formed and I was able to write it all down (and layout the printed circuit board) in nine days. This was a huge relief for me. Doing a design using intuition is so much easier and fun than the standard method of trial and error, making sure that you don't miss any of the rules.

The teachings of the great spiritual mystics were key to my recovery. The Buddha taught us that suffering is in the mind because the mind is always occupied with remorse over the past or fears about the future. The mind cannot live in the present moment. Only the heart lives in the here and now. Unfortunately, Western society has trained generations to live totally in the head: the humanities are unimportant, only the skills that are important to corporations are meaningful and get rewarded. The mind does not have a social conscience which fits in with the current corporate environment (people dying because of corporate actions are immaterial as long as the corporation makes a profit). The mind requires an over-active ego in order to protect itself, always trying to impress others with material possessions, etc.

The one, sure sign that a person is living in their head is the constant "monkey chatter". When a person truly lives in the heart then the mind is completely silent, which is a wonderful experience. The mind makes an excellent servant and a terrible master. When a person lives in the heart, the mind is still there to balance the checkbook and remembers to buy milk. Plus a lifetime of emotional baggage disappears because the mind is incapable of handling emotions and suppresses them in the sub-conscious. Creativity and intuition live in the heart and are suppressed by the mind.

Unfortunately, the Western mind and over-active ego have taken control of many people. This mindset denies the existence let alone the usefulness of the heart. Once this happens, it is nearly impossible to return to a balance between the mind and the heart. The mind, once in control wants to remain in control. It took me three years of solitude and meditation before I saw results. Every time that I had an egocentric thought, I would note it and release it. Typically, doing a technical design strengthens the ego and reinforces the mind which did not happen this time further heightening my relief with the design I just did.