



April Newsletter Integrity: TSP Core Value #2



This is the core value that holds us all most accountable. The Still Place statement reads, "Integrity is embodied through honesty, reflection, and a humble spirit. We facilitate the integration of serious life-altering illness into the fabric of the lives of The Still Place community, including families, staff, volunteers, board members, and donors."

The first definition of integrity you might find is "the quality of being honest, having strong moral principles." The second definition is, "the state of being whole and undivided." Jigsaw puzzles come to mind.

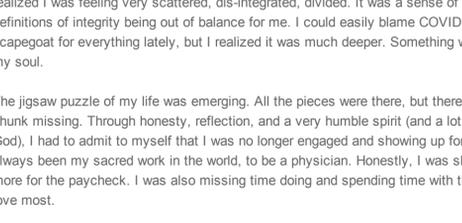
Last month, my mom and I started a challenging 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle. This particular puzzle had a letter code on the back of each piece to help guide you to the area in which it belonged. We had quite a discussion about whether we were going to "cheat." We decided together we were above that and we would try to do it without looking. With sore necks and backs a day later, we compromised and decided when we got to a really stuck place we could flip over a few pieces just to verify if we were anywhere near the right area of the puzzle. We relaxed a bit and enjoyed working it even more, always checking in with each other before we flipped a piece over. I think we went through the litmus test outlined above in The Still Place core value of honesty, reflection, and a humble spirit as we solved the puzzle together and found a way to have our little community of integrity.

It has become very tricky in our culture today to find integration amongst so many good-hearted people having such polar ideas of what constitutes strong moral values. How to humbly respect all and remain integrated has become a challenge for us all as we emerge from our COVID cocoons.



What if we break it down and ask ourselves to look at ourselves, our community, and our role in it with honesty, reflection, and a humble spirit?

What are our own strong moral values; are they still the most loving? Do they still fit in our life and make us whole or are they dividing us? Are we loving the best we can or are we limiting love?



I have always been a shape-shifter being able to dance between cowgirl, doctor, farmer, artist, warrior, and fairy. It takes a lot of energy to stay integrated sometimes. I don't see black and white. I tend to dwell in shades of grey. Recently in my quiet time with God, I realized I was feeling very scattered, dis-integrated, divided. It was a sense of both definitions of integrity being out of balance for me. I could easily blame COVID...the scapegoat for everything lately, but I realized it was much deeper. Something was awry in my soul.

The jigsaw puzzle of my life was emerging. All the pieces were there, but there was a chunk missing. Through honesty, reflection, and a very humble spirit (and a lot of time with God), I had to admit to myself that I was no longer engaged and showing up for what had always been my sacred work in the world, to be a physician. Honestly, I was showing up more for the paycheck. I was also missing time doing and spending time with the people I love most.

Being stuck, I flipped the piece over for a clue and realized I was trying to put the wrong puzzle piece in the entirely wrong part of my life's puzzle. So I pulled the trigger and decided to retire from clinical medicine in June. I am not sure what my sacred work will be for this time in my life, but I do have a sense of integrity again as I look forward to my retirement from medicine with great satisfaction of a job well done and happiness about what adventures the future might hold, especially at The Still Place. My affirmation came when I realized how perfect it is for me to have started my career during the unknown and fear of HIV and to end with the same of COVID. Tiny little viruses were the hints on the back of my puzzle piece after all!

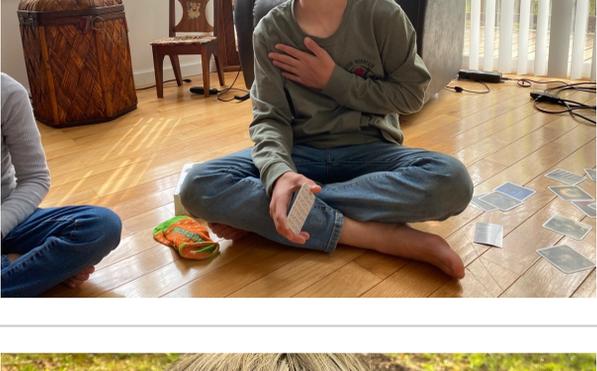


I challenge you to look at the jigsaw puzzle that is your life. Are you trying to fit the wrong piece in a tight spot? Are you feeling whole and undivided, experiencing integrity for your own life, your family, your community? Or do things feel a little dis-integrated in the fall out of the pandemic? Have your views and values changed a bit? Is there something brave you need to do?

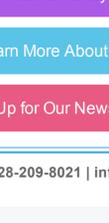
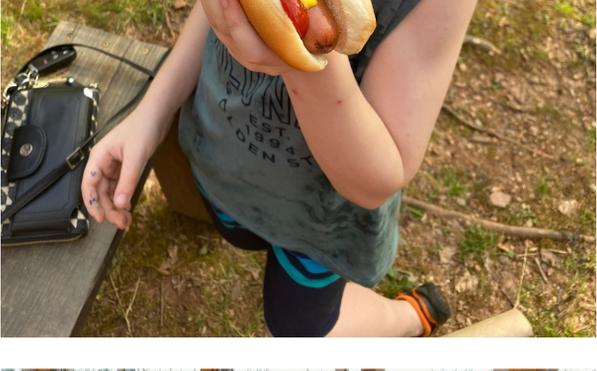
Dr. Craig can tell you there are plenty of pieces still missing (likely hiding under the couch) from my personal puzzle, but my life is feeling easier and more joy-filled not trying to jam the wrong piece into my puzzle.

Blessed to be on this journey with so many wonderful people like you!

-Dr. Dawn



Thanks from the bottom of our Hearts to our
Amazing Volunteers
for making so many S'mores, Cake Pops, Hot
Dogs, and Awesome Art!
We Love You BIG!
April is Volunteer Appreciation Month!



Donate

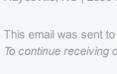
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