



A Way Forward

by Brian Jones



Do we have to be just one thing?

It may be my opinion but the old school marketing approach of defining oneself as a single product and creating a brand around it may be a thing of the past. What is newly branded one day becomes the fad of yesterday. The key to success is to represent a diversity.

People's attention span is shorter than ever. The mind latches on to something in the moment and yet is always looking for the next thing of interest. This is true of the spirituality movement as well. How many people come to meditate that may be dabbling in five or more things? These days in order to keep people on your website you need to have a diversity of content. Think about how many sites we "bookmark". We still return to only a handful over and over again but those sites probably offer a variety of things.

In business, successful sites have a conglomeration of offerings - Ebay, Amazon, Wayfair. If your an online magazine you have many articles that represent a lifestyle such as Oprah's site. If you want to see a successful spiritual TV site check out - One-0-Eight.com or Gaiam TV. Even the art sites such as Satchi or Etsy are successful because of the diversity created by bringing thousands of individual artists together under one virtual roof.

One of the other big things happening online are groups and events that are “self-evolving” - powered by the people themselves. Crowd funding is a great example of business powered by the people (if you don't know what this is, please do a search).

Our group by nature is a self-evolving movement and we have an opportunity to be a leader in this area. The nature of transmission itself is one of *self-evolution*. It is natural for us to keep growing and adapting and *manifesting change* as a result. But to do this we must not constrain how we grow or what we think we're supposed to be, otherwise the world may zoom past us. Like Heartfulness, this will require continual adaptation.

If Heartfulness is a way of living then why not embrace all aspects of life?

While this may be more applicable to centers with a physical building there may be other ways we can embrace this idea, including what we offer online. Below is a mockup of a Schedule or Menu of offerings that may represent a usual week at a Heartfulness Center.

When we go to a University we choose from a wide variety of classes, when we go to a restaurant the menu is usually diversified. When we go to a local Recreation Center there are many different classes available.

Maybe we should embrace this approach as well - creating a platform that evolves with the needs of the seekers and many offerings that bring a diverse audience together.

Think of a Heartfulness Center as a place for mental, physical and spiritual rejuvenation and education.



So how do we keep everyone happy?

Heartfulness and Sahaj Marg each become a class. Heartfulness is kept simple and Sahaj Marg can cover deeper aspects of the journey, similar to how we have been doing things. Whispers are no longer limited to a reading after group meditation but become a class or discussion group. The relaxation technique can be incorporated at the beginning of any class or study group if the facilitator would like.

A natural approach...

I believe this forges a way that allows people to take spirituality at their own pace.

People may come for Yoga but they will ask, "What is this Sahaj Marg Meditation?" This leads to a natural conversation and explanation because the question comes from the enquirer instead of us trying to impart layers and layers of information.

If someone wants to just come for Sahaj Marg, that's okay. If someone wants to just come for Heartfulness, it's fine. If someone wants to just attend Yoga - also fine. People may just want to come for the movie and conversation - why not? There is no need for us to be pushy about what we do. Remember, we are having the thought that all those who are ready are coming - no need to sell someone on our method.

Here's how it works:

All programs fall under the umbrella of the Heartfulness Center...



Umbrella of Heartfulness



Below is an example of what a weekly schedule may look like:



Schedule of Events

Day	Time	Program
Tuesday	7 - 8:30PM	YOGA Tuesday followed by Heartfulness Meditation
Wednesday	11 - 12:30PM	Hatha YOGA followed by Heartfulness Meditation
	7 - 8PM	Heartfulness Group Meditation
Thursday	7 - 8PM	Gregg Braden Study Group "Resilience of the Heart"
Friday	11 - 12:30PM	Beginner YOGA followed by Heartfulness Meditation
	7 - 9:30PM	MOVIE NIGHT! Film is "Happy" followed by group discussion and Universal Prayer
Saturday	8 - 9:30AM	Hatha YOGA followed by Heartfulness Meditation
	10AM	Presentation: "Beyond Spirituality - the Science of Meditation"
	11AM	Speaking in Public - "Engage and Conquer"
	1PM	Mathematics ages 12 - 16
Sunday	7:30AM	Sahaj Marg Meditation followed by discussion "Beyond Self"
	9:00AM	Heartfulness Group Meditation - Guest Speaker followed by breakfast
	12 - 2PM	Introduction to Cranial Sacral Therapy (register online)
	6 - 7PM	Whispers Reading Group

So what does a Heartfulness Center look like?

Every center is different so it is best to just convey some broad ideas that may help set a tone. The idea is to have a neutral and flexible space that can accommodate many types of gatherings or classes. We have to be an inviting place.



Mockup ideas for Richmond Center reception area.



We have to keep in mind that the Yoga movement has already set a bar as to what people expect when entering a space that may offer Yoga, meditation or other classes. While some of the pictures are of Yoga studios - it is not to imply that we are a Yoga studio - it is just an idea of a neutral space!
This is right inside of a mall...



This is a Yoga studio in Malaysia. They offer many things including art classes and music.

This is their cafe called Vibe - not that different from one of our "cafes".



Here is an idea for a neutral space.
This room can accommodate any number of group activities.



It's not a church, its not a yoga studio, its not a corporate office - its the Heartfulness Center



Just to go a little bit further - this is not a Starbucks - its in a church...



The churches have realized the importance of the social area - this is where relationships are forged and comfortable conversations on all things spiritual happen...



What does a Heartfulness Bookstore look like?

What about a broad offering of current spiritual literature including ours.



So, what is next:

There are many other things to consider -

Do we really need a physical location?

How do we create an online community?

How can webinars and weekly online programs help support a physical center?

Should we have bi-yearly or quarterly Spirituality Conferences - where people come to hear diverse topics and speakers but also participate in three Heartfulness meditations.

add your own ideas...