

RISE March 2026 Meeting
“Inner Game” Notes:

Habits of Heart

The human heart is the first home of democracy. It is where we embrace our questions. Can we be equitable? Can we be generous? Can we listen with our whole beings, not just our minds, and offer our attention rather than our opinions? And do we have enough resolve in our hearts to act courageously, relentlessly, without giving up—ever—trusting our fellow citizens to join with us in our determined pursuit of a living democracy?
— Terry Tempest Williams¹

Paraphrasing Jack Kornfeld...

The world will always show us reasons not to love,
and news headlines, reasons for us to fear.
We could easily decide to shut down,
but that’s not freedom; that’s armor.

The work is to become gentler and more
compassionate
despite the troubles plaguing the planet.

That is true strength,
and that is what begins to turn the tides to love.

Margaret Wheatley:

So many of us choose names that are too small for a whole life.
So, we call ourselves, 'cancer survivors,' or 'widows,' or 'martyrs';
that seems to be a very bold name, but is it big enough to hold a life?
Are these names big enough to hold your life?

And the second question is,
Are we choosing names that demand fearlessness?
You're a coach or consultant. You're a teacher, minister, administrator.
Are those names demanding fearlessness of us?

I don't know what the names are that would create fearlessness,
but I think this is a very important question.

Invitations for Reflection and Sharing

How do I call myself? Have I chosen a name for myself that is big enough
to hold my life's work?

Do these names express the ways I am/aspire to be a conduit for
(Habits of Heart): fostering belonging and connection; encouraging
others' voice and agency; building beloved community?

“Outer Game” Notes

Annie Paraison offered a brief presentation bridging Habits of Heart (encouraging personal voice/agency, holding tension creatively and creating community) with tending to our nervous systems to “Grow the Me, We and Collective”—springboarding to lively conversation about ways to adapt her conceptual framework to our own setting and work as leaders. (Thank you, Annie!)