

**“The measurable is what we know,
and the immeasurable is what the heart searches for.”**

Billie Tsien

John Lithgow once likened a flower to the controversy between STEM education and the humanities. He described the stem of the flower as just that: science, technology, math, and engineering. And the blossom, as the humanities. He said, “Without the blossom, the stem is completely useless. How essential it is that these two areas work in coordination with each other.”

A flower cannot exist without all of its parts. The stem feeds the blossom the nutrients it needs to bloom. The pollination of the blossom leads to creation of new seeds that grow into new plants. The stem and the blossom don’t compete with each other, but compliment and depend on each other to create the whole being.

As I watch John Lithgow on my iPad, I marvel at the beauty of its own technology. A magnificent blend of science and magnetism. It lives and breathes because of precise measurements of silicon, complex equations, and electricity. Physical substances it could not exist without. Yet it produces insight, culture, and ideas within my mind. Imperceptible matter that makes it appealing, and without which, I would have little use for it. There is a peace between my possession and the inspiration it produces within me, one no more important than the other.

I am no different. My fast-paced world requires me to have a deep well of knowledge and skill to function. But it must be weighed with the ability to think freely and be flexible to

my ever-changing environment. My capacity to adapt is set of a physical and emotional tools needed to evolve and survive. I have more than 600 muscles, 206 bones, and hundreds of nerves in my body, but they play no greater role in my existence than the countless thoughts, emotions, and behaviors occupying my brain.

Likewise, my education is the sum of all of its parts. I clearly articulate my thoughts, making it possible to share skills with others. I pass on the ability to accomplish and build. My observations and reflections lead to improvements in future experiences, and it's my perspectives that make my contributions valuable.

It is the sciences and humanities, together, that will propel us forward into our futures. If we deem one more valuable than the other, we will lose our ability to grow . . . like the stem without a blossom.