



Words and Their Stories: Heart to Heart

Now, the VOA Special English program WORDS AND THEIR STORIES.

Each week, this program explains the many meanings of English expressions. Today's expressions include a very important word – **heart**.

We will try to **get to the heart of the matter** to better understand the most important things about words and their stories. So **take heart**. Have no fear about learning new expressions. Besides, popular English words can be fun. There is no need for **a heavy heart**. Such feelings of sadness would only **break my heart**, or make me feel unhappy and hopeless.

Now, let us suppose you and I were speaking freely about something private. We would be having **a heart to heart discussion**. I might speak from **the bottom of my heart**, or say things honestly and truthfully. I might even **open up my heart** to you and tell you a secret. I would speak **with all my heart**, or with great feeling.

When a person shares her feelings freely and openly like this, you might say she **wears her heart on her sleeve**, or on her clothing. Her emotions are not protected.

If we had an honest discussion, both of us would know that the other person's **heart is in the right place**. For example, I would know that you are a **kind-hearted** and well-meaning person. And, if you are a very good person, I would even say that you have **a heart of gold**. However, you might have **a change of heart** based on what I tell you. Our discussion might cause you to change the way you feel about something.

But, let us suppose you get angry over what I tell you. Or worse, you feel no sympathy or understanding for me or my situation. If this happens, I might think that you have **a heart of stone**. And, if you say something to make me frightened or worried, my heart might **stand still** or **skip a beat**.

Yet, even though you may be angry, I would know that **at heart**, you are a kind person. In reality, you do care. And any argument between us would not cause me to **lose heart** or feel a sense of loss.

My **heart goes out** to anyone who loses a friend over an argument. It really is a sad situation, and I feel sympathy for the people involved.

I promise that what I have told you today is true – **cross my heart**.

I really wanted to play some music at the end of this feature. In fact, I **had my heart set on it**. So here it is, “Don’t Go Breaking my Heart” by Elton John.

(MUSIC)

This VOA Special English program, WORDS AND THEIR STORIES, was written by Jill Moss. I’m Faith Lapidus.