

be similar to the pain of childbirth), while I coached her breathing. If Sumi was unable to bear the pain of this experience, we figured, she'd probably want painkillers when she was going through the actual birth. After two minutes of holding her hands in the ice bucket, Sumi clearly understood the appeal of an epidural. During the birth itself, any ounce of love Sumi ever had for her husband was completely transferred to the anesthesiologist, who produced the epidural at the critical point. (With our second child, we made it to the hospital about two minutes before Neta was born, so Sumi did end up experiencing an analgesic-free birth after all.)

LOOKING FROM ONE emotional state to another is difficult. It's not always possible; and as Sumi learned it can be painful. But to make informed decisions we need to somehow experience and understand the emotional state we will be in at the other side of the experience. Learning how to bridge this gap is essential to making some of the important decisions of our lives.

It is unlikely that we would move to a different city without asking friends who live there how they like it, or even choose to see a film without reading some reviews. Isn't it strange that we invest so little in learning about both sides of ourselves? Why should we reserve this subject for psychology classes when failure to understand it can bring about repeated failures in so many aspects of our lives? We need to explore the two sides of ourselves; we need to understand the cold state and the hot state; we need to see how the gap between the hot and cold states benefits our lives, and where it leads us astray.