

# Finding Alignment

*Dear Angela: With everything that's been happening in the news, I've been feeling disconnected—from myself and from the world around me. Any advice on how to move forward?*

BY Angela Myles Beeching

What these times call for is a letting go of our old habits and assumptions so that we can discover a new way to be in the world. I like to think of it as finding a new way to be in *alignment*.

Yo-Yo Ma characterizes alignment as having “head, heart, and hands”—the intellect, our emotions, and our actions—all working together to effect change.

What I love about his definition is that alignment isn't an abstract concept—it's embodied. The fact that our hands are included means it's about taking action in the world.

Think of the times when you've felt most alive and most connected though bringing your gifts to others, whether through performance, teaching, curating, composing, or some other generous act.

The challenge now for all of us is to create more of these moments of alignment.

## Finding a New Alignment in a Time of Massive Upheaval

It all starts with self-care. Many musicians have pushed forward with projects during Covid, trying to make the best out of these tough times. That's fine, except when they've done this at the expense of their emotional and physical wellbeing. This has left countless musicians out of alignment and too exhausted to find new ways of connecting with audiences and bringing relevance and value to them.

Being aligned means being able to balance the moving parts of your life. Self-care isn't just eating healthy, getting more sleep, and staying active. It's also about connecting with loved ones and colleagues and finding regular doses of new inspiration.

## Healing the World Starts with You

The old-school strategies that served us well pre-pandemic aren't working well now. Discovering how you can best bring your gifts to others demands that you let go of the old ways. The problem is that most of us short-circuit our own creativity by yearning for certainty in an uncertain world.

Of course, we'd all like to have our “normal” back. Even though we know it's gone for good, it's easy to get caught in the trap of resentment and fear of change.

But you get to choose:

### Focus on What's Not Working

Scarcity  
Fear  
Uncertainty  
Loss  
Shutting down  
Isolation  
Discouragement



### Focus on What You Can Create

Abundance  
Curiosity  
Courage  
Possibility  
Letting go  
Community  
Hope

There's no going back. Give yourself permission to see the potential and build your future. Dare to be vulnerable, open, and curious—to move forward with a beginner's mind.

## The Reset Button of Now

“We can always begin again,” Yo-Yo Ma says in *Beginner's Mind*, his new audiobook. “Every chapter in life, every generation, every season, gives us an opportunity to do better.”

The gift of this time lies in this opportunity: to return home to our bodies, our values, our music. And to align head, heart, and hands.

Welcome to the next chapter of your life: you are our hero.

Angela Myles Beeching is a career consultant and the author of *Beyond Talent: Creating a Successful Career in Music*. Angela works with individuals, ensembles, and organizations to facilitate positive change.

