

Health is Wealth

Health is something we often take for granted. Many individuals wait until they get diagnosed with a disease to recognize what they have lost. Health is a relationship with you and just like all other relationships it needs nurturing and awareness in order to flourish.

If you want to be a great parent or a successful business person you generally continue to put time, energy, finances, education, and creativity into being your best. Why do we not do the same for our health? Would you feed your thriving business junk food to keep it going?

How do we nurture our health? Understanding that health is interconnected is a first step. Our physical, mental and emotional states all affect our overall health. If we are a bit depressed or unhappy we may find it harder to exercise and may find ourselves eating foods that are comforting on some level but in reality are damaging both our physical bodies and our spirits. Health is balancing; fun/adventure/creativity, relationships, work, contributing to others, spiritual well being, and self-care (physical and emotional health).

As I've worked with clients over the last couple of years what I have come to understand most is lasting change is in the journey not the destination. Change is a given you can consciously change or let it happen without your guidance and awareness. Learning to appreciate the journey is a big part of being a happy, well-balanced individual. If you have spent a great deal of your life focusing on work and family and have let your physical health go by the wayside it will take creativity, time management, and commitment to support your shift to health.

Health is a process. Greater knowledge of the details and the pros and cons of changing, versus staying the same, supports you to

develop inner strength to move forward. It takes time and internal shifts (changes in beliefs, attitudes, perspective...) in order to fully embrace balancing external priorities. To enhance your success at making change support yourself by looking inward first. Not by beating yourself up or going by past history but by being present to what is happening now. Take time to become more aware of your choices and what your commitments are.

When you increase your self-awareness you gain more information about your behaviors. Simply start to notice what you spend your time doing, how you feel when you are doing it, and what needs are being met. You may find you have needs that look conflicting. For example: watching TV and getting some exercise.

Acknowledging that watching the TV does meet a need whether it's for relaxation, connecting with your partner, or laughing with your kids. On the other hand exercise meets your need for increased stamina in your daily life, being in nature and weight management. Recognizing that both those activities meet a need allows you a greater perspective on your choices and perhaps more compassion with yourself. When we identify what our needs are we can more easily connect them with action. For example: If the need is to take time to connect with your partner or family and get exercise could you meet both those needs by going for a family walk? What other options can you think of?

Commitment is a touchstone you can use to question where you are now and where you are headed. Commitment is big; marriage, career, family and it's also all of the little moments. Whatever you are doing right now is what you are committed to. I often hear people say they are committed to their families or committed to health and yet when they recap what they did the last week, family time and doing something healthy for themselves didn't show up. You are committed to what you are doing now. If **now** is never about taking time for self-care you may have an intention to be healthy but most likely aren't **committed** to your health.

If you say you are committed to health and are eating five donuts a day, what are you committed to? If your commitment is to play three hours of computer games every evening is your commitment to self-care, fun, stress-relief, avoiding relationships or.... Asking yourself what you are committed to supports you to gain more clarity about your choices. Is this commitment of value to me? There is no right or wrong answer. This isn't about judging yourself. It's learning more about what you commit your time to. What needs are being met and how that relates to you living a healthy, balanced life. You can focus your commitments in new directions but first need to acknowledge what direction they are currently going.

Being healthy is being aware and committed to health. It takes looking at life from a broader perspective, balancing all of the important priorities of your life. Health encompasses self-care, and when you do great self-care work, relationships, and finances have new potential to improve. When you are your best it's contagious. Commit to yourself, get support, and align with the health you deserve.

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