

HEALTHY CONNECTIONS

November 2011 * Permission to copy granted

5th of a 5-Part Series on Balance...

Balance is about discipline, forgiveness, and creativity. It's about knowing who you are - what do you like? What don't you like? Do you set limits with yourself? With others? With your children? Do you know what you're good at....and do you do it?

Last month we looked at the BALANCE OF spiritual beliefs and practices. **This month we will be taking a look at the BALANCE OF SELF.**

Remember, the key to understanding balance is admitting to yourself that something is off-balance; something needs tweaked.

In this 5-part series, we are learning to achieve balance so we can experience the long-lasting effects of balance throughout our lifetime. With this, we can also pass this practice of balance to our children, our friends, family, co-workers, and anyone we interact with.

When looking at the "whole self", remember

the five areas of balance: friends & community, family, work, self, and spiritual beliefs & practices.

Also remember the order or importance is up to you; it's according to your beliefs and your worldviews. Oftentimes, these areas overlap, which is expected – there's no right or wrong way to look at this.

I want to keep putting in front of you the physical part of balance as a reminder of the importance of the mind-body-spirit connection and how it plays a vital role in our lives: **As humans at a very basic level, we come alive when our bodies and brain are in a state of pleasure. Physiologically, the part of the brain that operates this drive in us is the Limbic System.**

This is a primitive, vital Limbic system in our bodies. It helps control Emotions, Hormonal Secretions, Moods, Motivation, Pain and Pleasure Sensations. This state of pleasure could be anything from laughter to anger; having sex to eating some really good

chocolate; cuddling with our kids to exercise.

When we submit to this basic need or this basic drive that is stored deep within us, we can then learn to unfold our tighten muscles, overworked cells, and our tired bodies...all in the name of balance. This is a very healthy habit to develop! This is important physically because of the above reasons. It is also so important because it taps into the emotions in us, thus affecting our relationship with self and others.

“And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.”

-Anais Nin

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*Let's begin looking at
SELF:*

An elder Cherokee was teaching his grandchildren about life.

He said to them, "A battle is raging inside me ... it is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One wolf represents fear, anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego."

"The other stands for joy, peace, love, hope, sharing, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, friendship, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.

The same fight is going on inside you – and inside every other person, too."

The grandchildren thought about it and after a minute one of them asked, "Which wolf will win?"

The elder simply replied, "The one you feed."

If we live in a constant world of worry and fear and negative stress, then we become anxious and fearful and full of negativity.

Now certainly there are times to feel these emotions. Then, there are times to put them in their place. Times to balance it out. Sometimes we need help with this and we talk with a friend, a family member, or realize a professional may be able to help, so we see a counselor or doctor.

Eventually we see that not only is balance important, but we are important...we have something to share; to give. We begin to understand that working through stress and finding balance is a necessity and so we begin to practice balance in our lives.

If you recall from some of this year's earlier newsletters, we learned important ways to breathe, relax and meditate. If you need a refresher, go back through the newsletters and practice them again. Then, make it a part of your morning and evening

routine. But, begin slowly, for maybe you make it part of your morning routine first for a month then add the evening time.

Even 5 minutes of lying in bed when you first wake up, doing a few stretches, deep breaths, and words of prayer or practicing positive thoughts have an impact on you and how your day will go. It will help you balance your mind, body and soul, thus helping old destruction habits such as procrastination, gossip or negative thinking.

Balance... you're doing it for your physical, mental, emotional and sexual health. You're doing it so your children can model after you. You're doing it so family, friends and strangers can model after you. You're doing it to help break the cycle of chaos.

**ADMIT SOMETHING
IS OUT OF BALANCE,
SET BOUNDARIES,
AND BE CREATIVE...
THIS IS THE
BALANCE OF SELF.**

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