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The Importance of Keeping a Healthy Balancing Act

Learning to speak out and deal with life's irritations will help you create a better mind and body balancing act.

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November 2013



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You are not a moaner or a groaner, no way, not you.

You pride yourself on being compassionate, understanding of other people's difficulties, and tolerate life's various frustrations well. So it's totally in character for you to pretty much ignore your spouse's annoying behaviors, occasional pettiness and habitual criticalness.

So when you get that sinus infection that just won't go away, or that painful ulcer, the doctor

asks you, "Any unusual stressful situations in your life?"

You automatically say "No."

After all, you've not been fired, you're not in the midst of a marital crisis, and your car is actually running. It never occurs to you that the way you handle your spouse's annoying behaviors, pettiness and criticalness has anything to do with the state of your health.

Instead, you wonder, "What's wrong with me? Why can't I get over this darned sinus infection?" or "An ulcer? Me? You're joking!"

Unfortunately it's no joke, and there is nothing wrong with you—other than your head in the sand approach to your spouse's unpleasant behaviors. Your body is reacting to what you think of as minor annoyances by getting sick, not to punish you, but to warn you that such an approach is self-destructive. Your body is trying to be nice to you! And if you insist on ignoring its message, eventually your body will generate something more incapacitating—severe bronchitis, for example, or a bleeding ulcer.

Achieving Balance

Sophisticated as we are, linked, connected and wired to virtually everyone and everything, we tend to forget that our bodies, those marvelously non-technological, touchy-feely fleshy vehicles we use and abuse, are what is most closely linked and connected to us.

Body and Mind is a holistic system. One invariably impacts and responds to the other. And mind isn't just your brains. Mind is your brains, your heart (emotions) and your soul. Brains, heart, soul and body all work together to help you survive and thrive. There is a wonderful balance between all the parts of your being, which when respected, provides you with the energy, strength and mental/emotional/spiritual well-being to rise to the challenges of living. When you get out of balance, a part of you will try to get through to you with a warning: "Hey, pay attention here! You're in trouble."

It's great to be tolerant and let a lot of life's minor irritations roll off you without paying them much heed, but it's also important to let people know how you feel about such irritations. Let your spouse know it's uncomfortable for you when he or she is always late, or leaves their clothes lying about. Talk calmly and considerately about such matters and try to resolve them. It may not seem like much, but the accumulation of little annoyances, unexpressed, do throw your body/mind system off balance, and can lead to physical ailments.

Your body isn't trying to hurt you, it's trying to get you to deal with those annoyances so you don't have to continue to more dire physical consequences. Failure to deal with painful or uncomfortable emotions can frequently lead the body to respond in a way that will get your attention. Scientists are fully aware, for example, of the connection between repressed anger and cancer.

Rather than wait until your body has to speak up on your behalf, act now! Become more aware of when you are out of balance, denying your emotional reality in the name of "peace" in your marriage. Peace bought at such a price isn't real peace! The accumulation of small grievances can fester to where you either explode with anger or implode with illness, and now you really do have a problem.

Pay attention to how you feel and ask yourself periodically, "Am I in balance? Am I expressing my emotional truth to my beloved?" A little emotional awareness, expressed with compassion and grace, will go a long way toward helping you live the full, healthy life you deserve.

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