

Greetings from Cynthia Hutchison
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This month's issue of *Energy Magazine*™ is focused on Self-Care.

When Janet Mentgen was developing the Healing Touch Program, she incorporated this concept because she believed it was integral for the development of the HT Practitioner. We all know that in order to be of service to others we must also value and love ourselves enough to take care of our own body, mind and spirit. If we keep giving to others without rejuvenating and refilling ourselves, we “burn out” or similarly, “the well will run dry”, rendering us useless or less effective in helping others.

I hope you will take this opportunity to reflect upon your own beliefs about self-care and re-examine what it is you do to nourish yourself and bring yourself joy, peace and health. I encourage you to do a self-care assessment, asking yourself “How do I support my health in these four areas: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual?” Here are a few questions to contemplate ...

PHYSICAL: Do I exercise regularly? (daily, several times a week) Do I include aerobics, stretching and strengthening exercises? Do I give my body nourishing food (organic, natural, plenty of vegetables and fruit) remembering that food is medicine and junk food is toxic? Do I drink sufficient amounts of water and health-supporting beverages? How do I take care of my body when it becomes toxic?

Do I give myself enough sleep and rest? Do I take in daily fresh air and sunshine? Does my home environment support rest, display objects that are beautiful or inspiring and provide my basic needs to feel comfortable, safe and nurtured? Do I prioritize time in my schedule for self-care?

EMOTIONAL: Am I in touch with my feelings? Do I have safe and comfortable outlets for expressing feelings (friends, therapist, journaling, prayer, singing)? Do I strive to be in touch with my emotional reactions and responses and how I feel these in my body? Do I pursue release of emotional/mental stress through exercise, meditation or spiritual practice? Do I have enough fun in my life? Do I laugh enough? Do I regularly engage in fulfilling social activities and time with friends?

MENTAL: Am I aware of how much I worry about things and how it affects my overall health? Am I aware of my patterns of thinking and how they affect my life? (For example: Am I generally an optimist or pessimist? Do I feel a need to control things and people in my life or do I trust in the flow of events and my rightful place in participating in them? Do I pressure myself unnecessarily or overly concern myself with the opinions of others?) Do I stimulate positive thinking and feeling with what I read, conversations I have and the people with whom I spend time? Do I enjoy learning and do I actively pursuing learning more about the things in which I am interested?

SPIRITUAL: Our spiritual well-being relates to all of the above in that our belief about who we are as a spiritual being influences how we experience our physical, emotional and mental states. What do I believe about life, love, learning, people, my life and the existence of a Higher Power? What is my relationship to Higher Power? Do I meditate, pray, or maintain a spiritual practice of some sort? How often? What are my life values and how do I live them? What do I believe my life's purpose is?

Because our body, mind and spirit are intricately connected, any way we nurture one aspect will influence our overall health. For instance, when I began running (outside in nature versus on a treadmill) about five years ago, I didn't realize how much it would impact my spiritual life. Interestingly, running became one of my favorite modes of prayer because I usually experience the unity of my body, mind and spirit more so through running than in most other activities. In fact, running became a major method for deepening my spiritual life.

Teachers of self-care remind us that all four areas are important and that we should not neglect any one of them if we want to be balanced and healthy. I find that to be true. The better we take care of our physical health usually correlates with clearer thinking, more balanced emotions and a deepened sense of our spiritual self and our connection to Source. Likewise, as we tend to the garden of our soul, we usually find ourselves being kinder and more nurturing to our physical bodies.

Maybe it's time to send yourself some flowers and take yourself on a date to that place you've been meaning to go to that inspires you and makes you happy. Look in the mirror at the face of that person who has been waiting longingly to be noticed and attended to....Sincerely say "I love you....I respect you....I forgive you....I cherish you".

I hope this issue of *Energy Magazine*™ will inspire you to love, nurture and nourish yourself.

Blessings for a healthy and self-nurturing July,

Cynthia