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A Key to a Happier and Healthier You

by Debra Beck

When we are 20 years old, we think we are invincible. Our body looks good and strong. Even though our emotions are all over the place, we can stuff them so deep that we hardly even know that they are there. It's a pattern we have followed since childhood. This response may work for us until we are well into our 30s. And then things change. Around our late 30s, we start having a hard time keeping that stuff down. It affects us in our body, in our mind, but most of all, in our heart and soul.

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And then the quest to wholeness begins. This is a journey that is more adventurous than climbing Mount Everest, swimming the English Channel or surfing the pipeline in Hawaii. It is the topper of all toppers; it is life changing. It is a journey that takes us through our physical body and mind into the depths of our deeply deprived soul.

The journey to wholeness involves healing our wounded child to reconnect to our soul and source. This connection allows our physical healing to begin and brings us back to joy and openness so we can love and laugh as a child once again.

When we are children and have upsets, we store them in our body and carry them with us into adulthood until we start the healing process. Situations in our adult life will show up to give us the opportunity to heal what we could not cope with as a child. It's not a coincidence that we recreate situations that make us feel the same way we felt when we were young.

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All of our experiences in life are opportunities to learn and connect more deeply with ourselves. The more we connect to ourselves, the more healing we do. When a situation makes us feel angry, sad, sick to our stomach, fearful or off center in any way, our body expresses this discomfort by a physical contraction. This is a signal for us to reconnect with ourselves.

Check it out the next time something happens that makes you feel upset. Notice the discomfort in your body. Breathe into the discomfort and explore the feelings that come up. See if you can recognize the similarities between what is happening now and what you felt in your past. Also notice your behavior around the situation; often it will be that of a child.

So, what do we do with those painful situations? We can do many things. Some people react. They yell, pout and maybe even throw a fit. I'm sure you have seen adults behave in this way, and you probably thought, "That person is acting like a child." That is exactly what is happening. They have been thrown into their childhood wounds, and they are re-experiencing the chaos, confusion and upset they felt as a child.

Often, this is such an uncomfortable place to be, that some people stuff the emotion. They don't do or say anything; they just keep it in and let it sit in their bodies where the unexpressed feeling often causes dis-ease.

A healthier choice is to move through our upsets.

Have you ever seen a mother and child when the child is pulling on the mother for attention? First the child just tugs. When the mother ignores the child, the child gets more insistent and vocal. When the mother still does not respond, the child gets louder. Finally, after being ignored completely, the child throws herself on the floor and has a tantrum. This is exactly how the little girl inside of us feels when we don't address upsets or contractions in our life. At first they don't feel so bad, but after being ignored for a while, they start to feel huge. Imagine those upset feelings sitting in your body for an extended period of time. OUCH!

So how can we tend to our little girl by moving through our upsets?

1. First, we have to notice when we are upset and realize that it's okay to have those feelings. They are a normal part of life.

2. Next, we train ourselves to pay attention to any situation that makes us feel off center in any way. Then we acknowledge those feelings and reflect upon them. We might say, "Wow! That really made me mad when she did that to me."

3. Finally, we go on to ask, "Why did this interaction or situation bother me? How did it make me feel emotionally and physically?"

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Healing begins when we give ourselves the room to explore our feelings, to see where they came from. We might ask, "Did I feel this way as a child?" Chances are we did. By taking the time to pay attention, we are telling that little girl inside of us that we hear her and we are here for her. We acknowledge how hard it must have been for her and let her know that she is safe. (Sometimes journaling can help with this step or carrying on an imaginary conversation.)

Our journey through life is meant to be fun and exciting. Every time we connect with the child within us, our little girl dances and sings and unites with us. This allows our soul to remain joyful and open to all of the love that surrounds us.

When we heal our childhood wounds, we become happier and healthier. So let the healing begin!