

Caring for others

Are you a caregiver? Caring for children or elderly parents are obvious examples of being a caregiver, but there are other areas in which you take care of others. Do you have a partner or spouse, siblings, neighbors, co-workers that need your attention? Sometimes we overlook just where our energy really goes. If you have to help tend to someone, your energy reserves can be depleted rather quickly – especially if the needy one is highly demanding, in a state of depression, angry or negative. Giving to another can also be extremely fulfilling.

The more that you show love to others and wish for their health and happiness the more you will receive those things. It may not come from the one you are caring for, but if you are aware, you will see that health and happiness is readily available to you as well. You must be open to such positive energy though. If you feel worn-out and drained by the giving and giving, take a good look at your diet, your “you time”, and your exercise. I, also, strongly believe you should look at your spirituality – your connection to God, the Divine, the Universe, your Energy source or whatever you call it.

Eating junky, unhealthy food can leave your body begging for certain chemicals and hormones. Cut out as many refined sugars as you can. Refined sugar is in cookies, sodas, doughnuts, canned foods, white bread, white pasta, condiments, etc. Refined sugars can increase the risk of depression, obesity, headaches and more. It can also reduce one’s immune system. Try to eat more whole foods (whole grain, natural, fresh,

organic, and unprocessed i.e.). Look for local farmers' markets as locally raised foods are usually better for you.

Maintain hydration! In other words, drink enough water. How much water do you need every day? It is suggested now that we drink about half of our weight in ounces. This means if you weigh 130 lbs., you should drink around 65 oz. each day. If you are highly physically active, you should consider adding another 8-16 oz. Our bodies are 60-70% water. Without replenishing our bodies numerous symptoms are likely to arise from headaches to backache to constipation. This also puts us at risk for depression and/or a lack in our mental clarity. If you are steaming vegetables in a pan and the water runs out, they will burn unless you add more water. If your car runs out of oil, you need to add more or you will blow the engine. What do you normally do? Do you burn the vegetables and blow up the engine or do you tend to the vegetables and your car? Why ignore your body? Why burn it up or cause it to breakdown?

Do you take time for yourself? Spending even as little as five-ten minutes every day just for yourself can make a huge difference in your life. Take five minutes to just close your eyes and focus on your breathing. Find ten minutes to just sit and read a few pages of a good book. Lay on your back with your legs flat on the floor and your arms (palms up) out to your sides like a "T". Close your eyes in this position. Focus on your breathing and allow yourself to melt into the floor. You need time to rejuvenate yourself if you are going to be of any value to others.

Do you get any exercise? Maybe you go bicycling, do aerobics, or go swimming regularly. Or maybe you don't do any exercise. Your body needs exercise. It needs the opportunity to burn off stress. Exercise is an opportunity for your body to detox itself. Your muscles need to maintain flexibility and strength. This is vitally important when it comes to maintaining your health.

Take a look at your spirituality. You do not need to go to church to have a connection with the Highest Power. Taking that five or ten minutes a day for you can help you find that connection. There are as many paths to that energy and love as there are people. Caring for those people in your life is actually one link to your spirituality, but you may not realize that. Try to be more mindful whether it is doing the dishes or listening to the birds as you walk through the park. Be thankful that you have soap to wash your dishes or even that you have dishes to eat on. Be thankful you can hear the birds singing.

Caring for yourself is extremely important. Take care of you and you will have more strength, stamina and love to care for others.

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