

How Healthy is Your Spirit?

By Barbara Ashcroft B.A.M.ED.

In western culture when we refer to health issues, we frequently think only of our physical symptoms and body ailments. We seek out measurement tests that give us evidence of the status of our body functions. We look for a variety of quick treatments to fix us up so that we can get back to the daily business at hand. The WHO (World Health Organization), on the other hand, defines health as a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

How often do we take the time required to examine the state of our mental and social well being? What scale do we use to give us this data? I can check my blood pressure at the pharmacy, but so far I haven't found a tool to give me a reading on my zest for daily life. We must become monitors of our own personal moods and emotions. We need to start paying attention to how our inner spirit is feeling. We must learn to recognize when we are becoming emotionally drained and depleted, when we are experiencing a lack of interest in the day and a sense of emptiness in our purpose. These prolonged negative states of mind and spirit can creep up on us slowly and may eventually contribute to the development of physical disease. We need to better understand the mind-body connection. We must learn how to listen to our bodies. Stress, physical ailments and depression often set in when our authentic selves are buried and sacrificed for who we think we "should" be.

We were all born into this world with our own unique gifts and into a natural state of joy. True joy comes from using these gifts for ourselves and then for the greater good of humanity. Somehow along the way, however, life happens, and we may lose touch with those gifts and our inner feelings of self worth and our spirit of hope. We need to reconnect with our original state of giftedness and contentment. The only way we can begin to do this is to become aware of our daily feelings and begin to gather some reflective data. We need to ask ourselves: How content and satisfied am I with my life? How peaceful and joyful do I feel today? When is it that I feel most confident and fulfilled? What am I doing? When does time fly? Why am I excited to greet this particular day looking forward to all its events? When do I least want to get out of bed in the morning? What's going on that day? Pay attention to your responses. The answers lie within. It may take you a

while to notice these indicators, but they are clear signs of what you need more of (or less of) in your life in order to feel complete, peaceful and valued.

Where are you on the enthusiasm scale? Are you passionate about what you do? We all start out in life with longings and interests that often get pushed aside. What was it that stirred your heart at 6, 10, and 15? Do you even remember? What were your childhood aspirations? Have they been buried so long that you can't even recall them? Are you in touch with what really makes your heart sing? What dream do you want to start creating today? When you follow your passions, you will love your life. Your dreams already exist. They are just waiting for you to find them...to bring them into the world. This is what will keep your spirit alive and keep you mentally healthy. Your intuition knows what you really need to feel fulfilled. Your life may need some long overdue adjustments.

Sometimes we get so caught up in our same old, same old, that we lose sight of what really matters to us, what motivates us and touches our soul. Busyness and daily routine take over and then we die. Life has a way of happening with or without your consent. There are no reruns. Most people, on their death beds, do not regret their mistakes, but their lost opportunities. The good news is that it doesn't matter what age you are. There is always time to get in touch with your passions...better late than never. If you ask yourself how many good years you think you might have to live on this planet, you get a sense of how important it is to make these years purposeful. Why would you waste one day spending your valuable time doing what is not feeding your soul? What truly gives you meaning? When you begin to align your daily life with your passions, your whole life becomes renewed and energized. Think about this: if today were your last day to live, what would not be fulfilled in you?

Even if you aren't able to spend your whole day in your bliss, you must find some time to nourish yourself with those things about which you are passionate. Your body cries out for it. In fact, your body will rebel if you do not use your natural talents and gifts.

*Your mind might be able to pretend you're someone you're not, but you're
body can't. Sarah Ban Breathnach*

When we really begin to seek the answers to these larger life questions, we start to live a life on fire with inner joy and passion. Our spirits get uplifted, we feel light as a feather, and our whole mental outlook improves. When we are living our passions, our physical and mental health flourish, our families benefit, and our lives become productive and rewarding.

It's never too late to become what you might have been. George Elliot

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Barb Ashcroft offers Journey to Seminars and private consultation for those who want to think more positively, discover their true passions, and feel fully alive. She may also be booked for professional speaking engagements. Barb is a certified Passion Test™ facilitator. Contact Barb 905 814-6434 barb@barbashcroft.com

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