

How is Health connected to Attitude?

Devorah Kur

When people think of wellness, they think of good health, physically or medically. Wellness encompasses many other aspects of our life as well such as emotional, spiritual, financial, family and workplace wellness. Wellness is actually an overall state of wellbeing where balance is achieved between body, mind and spirit.

Balance.... Isn't that what we all want? Sometimes people believe that there is nothing they can do to influence, change or affect their current circumstances in their lives. I am going to suggest that the first place we need to start to see changes is our attitudes.

In my reflexology practise I have had the privilege of working with people who are going through tremendous suffering on different levels. When working with patients it is necessary to bring all aspects of healing into the picture, not just a physical healing. I believe that Hashem speaks to us through our bodies, through the ailments, symptoms and diseases that we have. These difficulties are challenges for us to connect to a deeper meaning behind them. This way we can use our challenges as stepping stones to the greatness that we can become instead of seeing ourselves as victims in the situation.

It was Dr Bernie Siegel's books 'peace, love and healing', and 'love medicine and miracles' that first challenged me and got me interested in these ideas. Dr Siegel is a Neurosurgeon in America who over many years was dealing with thousands of cancer patients. He was puzzled by the amount of patients who lived despite a severe prognosis and those who died with a good prognosis. This began a huge in depth study into their attitudes where he discovered that some patients were told that there was no further hope or no cure for them and that they should go home and put their affairs in order. He found that these survivors, in their last moment of living made choices to live life to the fullest. They began to pay attention to their feelings. As they expressed their emotions, made wise choices, like leaving poisonous relationships, surrounding themselves with people they loved, taking that once-in-a-lifetime holiday, and doing that which they had always put off for another time, and became more spiritual, their bodies benefited. Most of all, these 'nothing more we can do for you' patients who recovered into what doctors call 'spontaneous recovery or remission' where there is no logical or medical explanation, realised that time was running out for them and they made peace in their lives, forgave those from their past for the hurts and pain or abuse that they had been carrying around and suffering silently from. These survivors found themselves back living, without regret and farribles, and most of all, living lives in the present filled with happiness, love fulfilment and optimum health. The physical changes were the side effects of an altered life. Once they had been through this process, their lives and personalities were altered and they no longer 'needed' the disease.

A few years ago I ran a health and healing workshop in Cape Town. My Workshops are about understanding 'The Body's Ability to Heal Itself'. Here I help empower people with tools to understand what their bodies are communicating to them through their illnesses, ailments or diseases, and the changes they can make in their lives to see changes in their bodies. After one session a woman came over to speak to me. She told me that many years ago her husband had been diagnosed with cancer



and was given 3 months to live. He was a workaholic, high-flying business man who was married to his job and not to her or their children. She describes the transition that came over him from the very next day. He quit his job, and felt that if he only had 3 months left it was time to look at his life. He couldn't just have his business associates at his funeral. He realised how much of his life he had wasted on the wrong priorities and felt that he could make the best of his last 3 months and was grateful for the opportunity to do this. The way he went about it all was to start creating relationships with his estranged children and spending time with his wife. He started to live a meaningful life. She continued to tell me that 11 years later he died, with all his children around his bed, a 'healed' man with a changed life. She also said that if he would have died after the 3 months that the doctors had predicted, then their children would have had to find time to attend his funeral. She blessed the cancer that came into his life which actually brought him life. He may not have been cured from his disease but he was healed in his life.

Your attitude determines whether tough times turn out to be beneficial or whether good times will make you miserable. We can learn this lesson from Victor Frankel a Jewish Austrian psychiatrist who suffered in the holocaust at Auschwitz concentration camp. He describes an event that took place in the first few days that he was there. He was waiting in line for his daily 'meal' and was given a plate of so called soup with a fish head floating in it. He initially viewed this as a disgusting insult and thought to himself that this was a disgrace, didn't they know who he was, a doctor, someone who was high up in Austrian medical society. Then he stopped himself and thought, he doesn't know how long he will be there, but he knew that if he continued with that negative outlook he wasn't going to make it very far. So, he decided to view this as a nutritional meal that would feed his soul and nourish his body. It was a total turnaround of attitude for him. His book, 'Man's search for meaning' is highly recommended read that chronicles his experiences as a concentration camp inmate and his conclusions to finding meaning in life. Not only did he find meaning in his day-to-day life, he also used the circumstances around him for the positive to set up a huge psychiatric case study. Everyone around him had the same circumstances – no family, no belongings, no clothes, no hair, no food, no freedom, yet some survived and others died. It's all starts with our attitudes to life, and he demonstrated that on his first day there with the 'fish head soup'.

Healing is the process of transforming inner grief which could be unfulfilled needs or ambitions, disappointments, broken promises, and unfinished business into lessons that empower rather than destroy the individual. In accepting the necessity of doing this quality of inner work, we are acknowledging the need to change or transform the areas of our lives that are not conducive to regaining our health. As we do this, we change the relationship we have with our disease. This way the disease changes from being a condition to being a messenger. The challenge is to understand the message in the illness and to act on them in ways that are productive to our health. This is an opportunity for you to lovingly challenge yourself and push yourself to receive those messages and to create the health that you want to see in your life. To be able to look back on the symptoms from our lives and say that they were the turning points for us and even although it was a painful process, the lessons we learned along the way were invaluable.

It all starts with our attitudes.

Devorah Kur is a Reflexologist practicing in Raanana Israel

www.dkreflexology.co.za

www.fertility101support.com

+972 54-3495545