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KEEP SANITY AT WORK

SOME DO'S

- + Develop a non-comparative awareness.
- + Define your personal success.
- + Cultivate deep social and personal relationships.
- + Try to be true to yourself— it might not be too beneficial in the short term gains but will stand you in good stead in the long run.
- + Align your current work goals with the future purpose.
- + Intuit Solutions.
- + Create a personal ritual to immunize against stress.
- + Form alliances, support and laughter circles.
- + Assert control on the situation.
- + Become emotionally aware and maintain emotional bank balance by closely monitoring it. See how much you invest or drain everyday. E.g. praying, meditating etc., will be investment and anger, jealousy etc., will be drainage.

SOME DON'TS

- + Limit the tendency to do multi-tasking. It does not work . Do one thing at a time.
- + Limit junk food, excessive sugar, salt and white flour. They mess up our digestive system thereby adding to emotional woes.
- + Do not feign sincerity, affections and work ethics.
- + Do not compare yourself with others, it is the biggest mistake you can commit. Remember, you are not them. Pay attention to your own uniqueness.

COMING IN APRIL

A monthly lunch-time public lecture series 'FOOD FOR THOUGHT' by The Health-Q Consulting & Hamilton Public Library. Watch for more details.

WHAT BODY SIZE ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

— Parmjit Singh, PhD

As Valentine's Day looms large, millions of greeting cards will be sent around the world by lovers to their beloveds. With so much love circulating around one would expect that we are becoming more lovable or loving. But if you feel the pulse of our society, you might end up feeling more desolate, deserted, depressed and despaired than the upbeat rush of love coursing through its veins. Perhaps we have rubbed love in the wrong way....

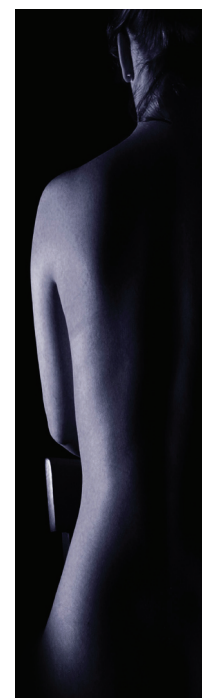
Valentine's Day has become a permanent fixture in our psyche and it inspires heroic and romantic ideas and ideals. Seeking love is a consuming passion for everybody: we hanker for it, pursue it, and obsess for it and sometimes when our intentions are subverted we do exactly the opposite of what love is all about. In a jiffy, our professed love turns into a paroxysm of hatred and violence.

In a society where love, despite being the number one obsession among the young and old alike, is not such a thing you can get in plenty, it is imperative to ask as to why love being so rudimentary and basic keeps on eluding us?. And when I say so, I do not mean the number of 'I love you's' you have been cooed in your lifetime. I am referring to the profundity of love which does not need any language—the one which quenches your existential thirst. It is the sort of love which infuses an extra gung-ho into life and makes you appreciate the sacredness of this existence. But given the increasing preponderance of violence, exploitative mentality, wars and lack of acceptance in our world, it seems that even though we are trying head over heels to be lovable or loving yet we are sinking into that bleak situation of lovelessness.

Are we doing something wrong? Surely I would like to think

that.

We live in a commercialized world where almost everything is for sale and love is no exception. When we come to think of love as 'something' which can be possessed just like cars or material richness, we commoditize it. We make it look like another object



on the market which can be possessed if we pursue it appropriately. Osho called this type of love as object-based or mind-based, where a boy falls in love with a girl because of her beautiful face and voluptuous body and a girl falls in love with the boy because of his handsomeness, hefty salary, a prestigious profession or a big house. Love, then, becomes nothing more than a thing or

an object.

But the problem with this kind of love is that you can always find better objects next time you look on a street: there are always more beautiful faces and bigger houses around the corner. We usually do not fall in love with the person but with a 'constructed idea' of love which our mind provides us. But mind is notorious and changes so readily with the influx of new information—it thrives in a comparative

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Mission Statement

'The Health Q' envisions to present factual information for the promotion of wholesome mental, physical and emotional/spiritual living. Synthesizing diverse sources spanning from scientifically valid physical/mental/emotional therapeutic techniques with latest research in mind-body medicine/sciences, cognitive & positive psychology, sport psychology, yoga, meditation, health sciences and other evidence-based integrative/alternative therapies, we intend to make 'The Health Q' an authentic vehicle for dissemination of reliable information for practical and healthy living.

'The Health Q' is not a replacement of a
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Printed at MSU Design & Copy Center,
McMaster University. Thank you for their help.

LEARNING FROM THE HEART

—By Byron Selorme

Have you had the experience of feeling overwhelmed, lost, scattered lately or disillusioned by what you are currently doing? We can all say yes to this at some time or another. Here are few suggestions that can help you refocus your energy once again.

When we become jittery about certain life situations, we infect our mind with scattered energy and corrupt our surroundings with negative force. Reorganizing this energy and focusing it back on our heart centre (Anahata Chakra) can help us process and direct it in positive manner.

Take some time to actually feel the pain, anxiety, powerlessness and other feelings that you may be experiencing. Notice that you may believe that these feelings are wrong or are not supposed to be present. Failing to acknowledge what is present and to accept the fact that it is necessary for that moment, is the source of more suffering than any actual circumstance we can envision.

Take for example a heavy debt from the shopping season. We may get into panic mode wondering how we will pay for our indulgences. We may even take it as unfair, especially if the gifts were for others. After all, we were being generous and should be rewarded not billed. At this moment, rather than going on an automatic roll, focus your awareness.

Ask "Why am I really feeling this?" Beseech your heart for guidance about your feelings. Don't try to understand, judge, or classify them. Just feel them and hold them in steady focus. We are often too analytical, trying to make meaning of everything. The heart is a feeling entity full of intuition and sensitivity that the mind is oblivious too. We must be patient and open if we want to hear what the heart has to say. It will speak

only when we have learnt to trust its voice.

The second step is to feel your current feelings in their entirety. Don't run from those like the prey from the predator, one of our inherited tendencies. The heart scares you sometimes; we don't need to escape but to embrace this fear, for growth. Remind yourself that I have created this situation and I can make it through this. Others have been here and they have survived, some have even thrived. So I can grow from this too!

The third step is to stop what you are doing and take four long and deep, cleansing breaths. Focus each breath on building the strength of the heart. Our minds are easily distracted by frivolous and fancy things, but the heart can't be fooled; it has a wisdom that is not fathomed by our mind. Let go of your attempts to understand the heart's intuitive intelligence, just open it up to receive the guidance. Cultivate gratitude for all that you have. If you always feel wanting and poor, think of all those who do not even have what you have.

Remember that all things go through cycles, it is inescapable. Learn to make the difficult or challenging times an opportunity to go deeper into your heart for strength to persevere. Compassion is born out of understanding collective human anguish.

Learning to listen to your heart has some great benefits. As a result, we become more sensitive, accepting and understanding. Sensitivity allows us to see others in positive light and imparts us an intuitive wisdom which no other mean can afford us.

Make this year the one, where you take the bull of life by its horns.

KICK START YOUR MORNING

—By Somphorn Thammassouk, Naturopathic Doctor

Need something refreshing and nourishing to start you in the morning? A breakfast protein shake provides a good source of protein to help stabilize your blood sugar levels throughout the day.

Try the following recipe:

Protein powder – 1-2 scoops per serving

If you have sensitivity to soy, then try a whey protein isolate source as they contain less fat and lactose than whey protein concentrate). It contains essential (body does not manufacture naturally) and non-essential (body does manufacture naturally) protein required for the building blocks of your body. It is a good source of energy and is needed to drive liver functions to aid in detoxification of toxins in the body as well as heal the bowel lining.

and referential environment. This mental-flux keeps us on tenterhooks. That is why mind begins to wander the moment you look at a more beautiful face or a more successful person. Over and again, we fall for our 'concept of love' rather than 'love' per se—and that is what is wrong with the whole idea of love.

Roses and greeting cards do not create love; they are just carriers or messengers. Without the soulfulness of love, they are just objects—nothing more than bricks. Regardless of what the commercial world says, love cannot be bought or pursued; it is something that 'happens' when you open your heart and make 'yourself worthy of it'.

And when you become worthy of it, love will find you! Just as Sufi poet Hafiz says:

Even after all this time
The sun never says to the earth,
"You owe Me."

Look what happens with
A love like that,
It lights the Whole Sky.

Despite its transcendental meaning, Hafiz's love does not touch many mortals in our modern world. We still remain transfixed on sexiness, handsomeness or some other external assets when it comes to choosing mates for short-term or long term hauls. Living in a materialistic society adds even more to this confusion. We are driven to find suitable mates on the basis of some social norms and street wisdom. But as we see in the social trends of broken relationships, this is not helping much and the emotional woes of broken marriages and their toll is heavy, both for the partners and children.

A recent scientific study published in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* suggests that bad marriage can essentially kill you, both proverbially and literally. And perhaps all the broken marriages are having these cumulative effects on the declining collective mental health of our society.

When it comes to human relationships, there is no single solution but we can safely say that relationships based on mental compatibility, sexiness or handsomeness alone do not last long if other factors are missing. Though all these qualities seem attractive yet they come with their inherent flaws.

Relationships based on slippery values such as sexiness, beauty, handsomeness, salary or

other material values lose their appeal the moment we possess them. Once the cat is out of the bag, the mystery no longer remains as appealing as it would have been while fantasizing about them. They become victims of 'escalating expectations'. Most of the things sound good only when we are thinking or dreaming about them. Our mind, through a rich tapestry of vivid imagination, provides a tantalizing background to our wishes and we fall for this 'mental image' of the relationship rather than the person per se. This is where we make the mistake, a sort of honest mistake because most people do not know how to think beyond mind—they are stuck into the rut of calculating logic and are convinced by its powers.

But how can we escape this? I think the best recipe is to generate an extra awareness and not respond to conditioned thinking automatically. Therefore, next time when you feel tempted to fall for somebody's beauty or handsomeness or material richness, pause for a second and think about the 'person' who lies behind those assets; do you know something about him or her? Eventually, you are not going to live with one thing you like but with the whole package.

Additionally, we are sometimes looking for somebody to complete us. This is a foolish idea; how can somebody complete you? It sounds as if you are incomplete to begin with. This is very romantic but flawed. We have forgotten our own completeness or wholeness due to over-thinking and all you have to do to reclaim it is by remembering yourself. Nobody else can do it for you. Can somebody die your death?

Another thing that happens is that when you are looking for somebody to complete you, the other one is also looking for the same. Two incomplete beings looking for completeness!!! How can two incomplete beings create a complete relationship? It might be possible mathematically, yet life is not all mathematics. An empty person brings emptiness into relationship and two empty people can not make completeness.

In order to have a good relationship, you have to cultivate yourself. You have to tend your garden of love, kindness and humanity and be willing to accept and tolerate. When two people meet with that attitude there is a possibility of Hafiz's love to take home and a consequent relationship blossoming into newer heights.

FIVE STEPS TO STAY ON SCHEDULE

—By Nicole Jean

Five simple Steps to help you stick to your exercises routine:

1. Set smaller goals. Setting small goals such as running for an extra minute or going to the gym for an extra day will add up by the end of the week.
2. Write down your daily exercise. Writing down your exercise efforts will help to give you a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment.
3. Get a buddy. Working out with a friend will help to keep you on track.
4. Don't look for overnight results. It takes six weeks for your body to adapt to a routine. Give yourself time and the results will come.
5. Remember the good feeling you have after exercise—It will help to keep you consistent in your efforts.

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MINDFULNESS-BASED THERAPY HELPS IN SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suicide prevention is tricky and there are not many fool-proof methods which can help a person on the edge. However, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is showing some promise in this area. Mindfulness is a powerful method to understand the reality of mental activity and helps us winnow out events from facts. We get in trouble when we start taking mental events or thoughts as something concrete happening in our head. Mindfulness helps us understand that thoughts are just thoughts, like passing clouds, unless we start identifying with them. If you maintain a witnessing attitude, they come and go without leaving any imprints just like a wave washes the shore and returns to the ocean.

FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF

Feb. 25, 2006 Saturday, 9am-1pm
@ YWCA Downtown Hamilton

10 WEEK 'THE HEALING VOYAGE'

March 7, 2006 @ YWCA, Downtown Hamilton
Free Info session: Feb 28, 7 PM

What you get:

Take control of your personal health/wellness and life balance by learning the role of mind, body, and spirit. Learn advanced techniques of psychology, mind-body medicine/science, yoga, meditation, visualization, awareness training, creative art therapy and self-auditing.

Learn to beat stress, feeling of depression, chronic pain/health problems or to speed up recovery from an illness. Transform your negative thinking, improve relationships, enhance health & well-being and learn to create balance, manage stress/work-related health problems, anxiety, low self-esteem, body image problems, chronic pain and enhance your general well-being.

From an extensive tool-kit, chart your personalized journey of discovery, healing and transformation.

YWCA Membership not required for our programs. Open for both men and women.

Call 905.524.3463 to get more information about these and other programs

LAUGHING IS A SERIOUS BUSINESS

—By Parmjit Singh

Have you ever noticed why a full belly laugh leaves us refreshed and stress-free?

It jogs our internal system and mobilizes physiological resources to counter the stress response. In Zen, it is believed that one full belly laugh in the morning is better than few hours of meditation. Now do not get carried away by this promise. It is a metaphorical way of putting the things in a fresh perspective. One does not become a Buddha simply by laughing, though it makes things easier for the mind to become deeply meditative.

It also provides ample cues on how not to take life seriously by changing the perspective of difficult situations. Too much seriousness can rob us of the pleasure of being alive. Laughter reinstates our ability to be spontaneous and human.

Once Mulla Nasrudin, a Sufi folklore hero, was boasting how he made a blood thirsty tribe in a forest to run.

"How", his friend asked?

Very simple, I ran for my life and they ran after me.

The above example shows how by changing the perspective and putting things in a lighter mould, we can take the sting out of life's bad experiences or situations. Not only does it help us alter the perspective of situations we face in everyday life, but also triggers a healing physiology in our body. Laughing away problems can simply be a life-saver as it enhances the immune system, thereby fortifying our ability to fight infections. Research has proved that being in a lighter mood during sickness can help us recover faster and even help us keep our heart healthy by increasing the blood flow to the heart as reported in the current issue of *Heart*. This is especially good for people who are at risk for cardio-vascular problems.

So, loosen up and spare some stress to your heart.

KICK START YOUR MORNING, from page 2

Flax seeds (ground) – 1-2 heaping tablespoons

Flax is a source of water-soluble fibers which help normalize your bowel movements

Flavoured Fish oil – 1 teaspoon

An excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, DHA & EPA, fish oil is generally much better tolerated than flax oil. However, use 1-2 tablespoons of flax oil if you are a vegetarian.

Add the following to the mix:

Rice milk or pineapple or mango juice (150ml)

The following ingredients are optional:

¼ - ½ frozen banana

1 tablespoon frozen fruits (raspberries, blueberries)

Water – add enough to adjust the texture of the shake

½ cup of crushed ice

Blend all the ingredients in a blender until desired consistency is reached. Enjoy!

GET FIRED UP

—By Gurdarshan Jyot, PhD

Walter Chrysler, the founder of Chrysler Motors, has said, "The real secret of success is enthusiasm. Enthusiasts are fighters. They have fortitude. They have staying qualities. Enthusiasm is the bottom of all progress. With it, there is accomplishment. Without it, there are only alibis."

Enthusiasm is a sense of inspiration. The word comes from the ancient Greek,

meaning "the god within." It is a connection between your inner power and adding energy and excitement to whatever you do. Even if you may not feel naturally enthusiastic, anytime you act "as if" you are, you start to take on that quality.

◆ When you are feeling low check your posture, if you are slumped take deep breath draw your shoulders back and pull upward.

- ◆ Bring change in your boring routine. Do something which really fires you up.
- ◆ Surround yourself with positive, enthusiastic people. Enthusiasm is contagious—It will catch you.

Live your life to the fullest with enthusiasm, as French writer Emile Zola wrote: "If you ask me what I came to do in this world... I will answer you: 'I am here to live out loud.'"