



Healthy Relationship = Healthy Body

"Everyone has suffering. Pain is optional."
DALAI LAMA

Recent brain imaging research has shown that getting your feelings hurt affects the brain in much the same way that physical pain does. Emotional pain stimulates the same area of the brain that physical pain does. So, when you get your feelings hurt, it really hurts you. In other words, physical pain and social pain are one and the same. When someone "breaks your heart" it's not too far from the truth.

Another study discovered couples in relationships full of unresolved conflict take longer to heal than couples that resolve their conflicts. On average it took the unhappy, conflicted couples 40% longer to heal from something as minor as a scrape or bruise to something as major as surgery. Hostile, conflicted couples also have poorer immune function and develop more respiratory infections than cooperative and supportive couples.

So, our body treats an emotional injury like it's a physical injury and that injury, whether it's physical or emotional, takes longer to heal if we're in a conflicted or hostile relationship.

It's true, then, that our relationships have a direct impact on our health. Hostile couples that constantly argue and bicker or use criticism, sarcasm, and put-downs when addressing each other healed the slowest. Even a

simple disagreement slowed healing. This goes for recovering from the cold or flu, as well. Why? Because instead of being focused on resolving their differences, they were focused on winning the fight. Winning became more important than their relationship. Harmonious relationships, then, speed up the healing process. Even if you have frequent disagreements, so long as you work to resolve them, you will be healthier in the long run.

Working cooperatively towards something is more enjoyable and healthier than working against or in spite of each other. When we don't resolve our issues we harbor resentment. This resentment causes a chemical chain reaction inside your body that, if prolonged, could eventually lead to heart disease, cancer, and premature death. I'm pretty sure there isn't a person on the planet I would choose to shorten my life for simply because I resent them so much.

Yet that's what some people do, consciously or unconsciously. Often times one or both partners refuse to resolve their differences as a show of defiance. They think by standing firm they're punishing or hurting their partner. The reality is they are only hurting themselves. They unwittingly end up trying to hurt their partner by hurting themselves.

MIND-BODY MORSELS

When Dr. Bernie Siegel was diagnosed with cancer, rather than undergoing the typical treatments, Siegel took his recovery into his own hands. For 8 hours a day he would watch movies that made him laugh. Whatever it was, if it made him laugh he'd watch it. By laughing everyday for at least 8 hours he ended up ridding his body of the cancer. Laughter may indeed be the best medicine.

Children laugh, giggle, or smile on average 600 times a day. Take a guess how many times an adult laughs, giggles, or smiles each day. Give up? The answer is a pitiful 25. Twenty-five!! We are taking ourselves way too seriously.

Dr. Deepak Chopra, in his landmark book "Quantum Healing," revealed the connection between mind and body. That connection is thought. Every thought you have gets directly communicated to every cell in your body. When you're happy your cells are happy. When you're sad your cells are sad. That means when I say something it's not just the person sitting opposite me who's listening. Every cell in my body is also listening.

What does this have to do with relationships, you ask?

When you get angry with your partner your cells are angry, too. When your cells are angry it creates a chemical imbalance in your body. If prolonged this chemical imbalance suppresses the immune system. When the immune system is suppressed you are vulnerable to illness, disease, and even cancer. This is why you want to resolve any resentment, frustration, anger, jealousy, and so on. Holding onto these unpleasant emotions could cause serious problems for you.

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE...

Japanese researcher Dr. Masaru Emoto further proved the mind-body connection when he conducted a study using water. Essentially, Dr. Emoto captured water's "expressions." He developed a technique using a very powerful microscope in a very cold room along with high-speed photography to photograph newly formed crystals just as water began to freeze.

Dr. Emoto discovered that crystals formed in frozen water form different patterns when specific, concentrated thoughts are directed toward them. He found water molecules that have been exposed to loving words like "I love you" or "You're beautiful" show brilliant, complex, and colorful snowflake patterns. In contrast, water molecules exposed to negative thoughts like "I hate you" or "You're ugly" form incomplete, asymmetrical patterns with dull colors.

By thinking or writing thoughts out on labels and literally applying it to the same water samples the water appears to "change its expression." Water that was once dull and asymmetrical was now brilliantly colorful and symmetrical. Thought clearly affects water.

Since our bodies are 80% water, the implications of this research create a new awareness of how we can positively impact our relationships and our personal health. The results show how deeply our thoughts, attitudes, and emotions impact our health and our relationships. Each thought you have gets communicated to every cell as well as every water molecule in your body. The cells and water molecules respond to your thoughts and help to produce the results you are getting in your relationships.

When you feel bad you don't give 100% to your relationship. If you're not giving 100% to the success of your relationship you're going to get less than 100% in return. If your intention is to win the argument at any cost,

then your body and the 80% water that constitutes it is going to be under duress and highly vulnerable. On the other hand, if your intention is to resolve the conflict by cooperating, respecting, and negotiating, then your body is going to stay healthier and be stronger.

If you ever needed a reason to resolve your differences with your partner, this is it! Most people think they have to be “right” all the time. But let me ask you a question: Is it more important to be right or is it more important to have a healthy relationship and a healthy body? Sometimes you have to let it be okay to not be right. By resolving problems rather than fighting to be right you allow your body to heal 40% faster than if you don’t resolve your issues or grudges.

I’m not saying you should never argue. On the contrary, arguing and hammering out conflicts is how the relationship evolves. But if you’re arguing and not resolving your differences, you’re in for some big trouble. The relationship cannot evolve if issues go unresolved.

Furthermore, if you don’t resolve the conflict you will both harbor resentment toward each other. Resenting your partner is like taking poison and waiting for your partner to die. How much sense does that make? By harboring unpleasant, unresolved emotions you’re literally stewing in your own juices and those juices could eventually shorten your life.

Let it go. It’s not worth it. Your health and the health of your relationship is far more important than getting him to load the dishwasher the “right” way.

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