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Healing Love: An Underrated Component of Health



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Today I feel compelled to touch upon the healing power that can take place through acts of kindness and giving back to the local and global community. From 2001 to 2006,

I lived in Fort Lauderdale. That move was part of my healing platform in that it provided me a kind of anonymity that equaled less stress—along with beautiful sunshine, ocean water for swimming, parks to gaze at the sky and roller blading without the danger of traffic.

While there, I became involved with organizations that ministered to orphans and widows.

It was amazing to learn that both of these groups shared some of the same immediate needs: love, safety and encouragement. Through a friend, I became involved with 4KIDS South Florida, an organization

geared toward providing immediate and long-term fostering and adoption of kids from newborn to age 18, and Help Hands, a ministry that offered support to the elderly, who were often scared and alone.

I also began teaching exercise to the 80-plus crowd of mostly widows, with the occasional widower in the mix.

Holding babies, reading to toddlers, babysitting and engaging with the teens, were simple joys that enabled me to find my balance again.

These kids faced the world alone and this program helped them find foster parents in a unique environment of caring. This giving and sharing healed my heart and helped me heal my body. My heart began to take on so much joy that my soul was refreshed.

I began to take classes to become a foster parent, and there was a plan to take in a 16-year-old girl from New Orleans who had no one. It was evident to me that the antidote for the pain and suffering for all of these kids was pure and gentle love.

You might ask what this has to do with health and wellness, as it is not about changing your diet or implementing new supplements or foods.

But this is about a heart change. This is about going to a higher zone of giving and sharing that allows the heart to be open to all the possibilities to share and give back that will center you and make you feel whole again.

Healing takes many forms and shapes, but once the heart is open, healing and joy can penetrate.

I often speak of a “circle of balance” that I implemented when I first began my journey to heal from cancer; it included diet, nutrition, fitness, lifestyle, education, giving back and prayer. You see, I had lost sight of who I really was due to the pressures of daily life and my attempts to succeed in business, which I believe were risk factors for me.

I lost sight of the Julia who would pack her knapsack with a blanket and some food, trek to the woods with her guitar to sit for hours in the stillness of nature to write poetry and play music.

I began to try to find my way back to that Julia, and in doing so I realized that God wanted me to care for those least able to care for themselves... And so: my cancer was the gift that led me on the path to reopen myself to the woman that God intended for me to be from the beginning.

Giving back and taking on the care of another person, especially a child for me was and is the most rewarding of life’s choices and brought me back to life before disappointments, deadlines and disease.

I continue to support foster kids and those scattered around the world living without much food, clothing or hope.

All we need is love, mixed with courage to venture out of our comfort zone to find the unmatched joy that can be found when we lose ourselves to the mission of helping others and sharing our true-life stories, experiences and gifts. Once we surrender to that, God will do the rest.

So I encourage you to let your healing begin with a willingness to take on one task of giving back and to considering being used in a meaningful way in a world that needs love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. All of these are the fruits of a spirit that is alive with hope.

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