
Health and Wholeness in the New Year

Julie Tara

Often we think that taking care of our health is a relatively simple issue. Given our own unique bias, we will naturally focus on one or two primary areas of our life, which we think if we just "do it right" will lead us to some promised state of health. My sense is that it's a lot more complex than that, first of all because health is not a static state, but rather a dynamic process of change. Also, just as we are a part of the universal web of life in the macrocosmic view, so we are the web itself in the microcosmic view – therefore, if we are looking for true health we must look to all the various strands of the web, ensuring that they are all working together in a harmonious and integrative way.

We Need to Love

To seek out that universal harmony and witness it fully reflected in our personal lives means we need to love, stimulate and nourish our minds, bodies, hearts and souls, so that Spirit can flow through us unimpeded, bringing us to a naturally vibrant state of health on all levels. The beauty of a fully awakened consciousness that can blossom out of this state is truly powerful enough to transform ourselves, our families, our societies and the World.

As we come into the New Year with all our good intentions for growth and transformation, let's take a moment to scan the fabric of our lives, checking to



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see that the colors and strands are each being noticed and nourished, in order to create a rich tapestry of health and harmony within the Self. Creating this is an ongoing weaving process; most of all it takes loving ourselves enough to care, to allow ourselves to unfold in a wholesome way, and to be willing to change old, outmoded habits, constantly calling ourselves into new birth, again and again. The courage, determination and

will power to transform our lives all stem from that deeply activated core of love.

Our environment is central to our well-being, both externally and internally. Let's begin here in our quest for true health:

External Environment

Since we, as *homo sapiens*, are part of the animal kingdom on Earth, we need to make sure we are feeling a true sense of connection here, and being nourished in our home. Immersing ourselves in Nature whenever we can is paramount to health. Her rhythms, smells, sounds, and colors all remind us that we do indeed belong here.

Absorbing each of the elements is vital to our well-being – breathing fresh air deeply into our lungs, truly being inspired by the eternal breath of Spirit; softening, opening and blossoming in the loving warmth of the sun's rays, yet respecting the power of fire and not abusing it by burning ourselves; drinking in the sounds and movement of water, allowing it to cleanse us; and of course allowing ourselves to connect to, and be fully supported by, our Mother Earth. For here we can deeply rest and rejuvenate, knowing we are indeed Her children and greatly loved by Her.

Internal environment: We take the external environment within us and transform it into blood, bones, tissue etc.

via the food and drink we ingest. In truth we internalize our deep connection to our Earth Mother. The closer these foods resemble the natural gifts of the Earth the better, for they will then be easily recognizable by the body and utilized effectively in a healthy way.

The most natural and therefore most appropriate diet is comprised primarily of whole grains, beans, fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds and small amounts of animal foods (fish, poultry, etc.). Not only do our bodies thank us wholeheartedly for these nourishing foods, but our minds and emotions do too, since the brain is highly susceptible to healthy (or not so healthy) blood. Remember, thinking uses up an extraordinary amount of nutrients from the blood! Clear thinking leads to clearer emotions. It's all part of the web.

Exercise Environment

We all know we need to exercise our bodies, the question though is what kind of exercise is appropriate for whom? And in what context? What quality of environment is to be the most nourishing? Trial and error is one way to find out. Deeply connecting with our body and its unique needs is perhaps more expedient! Do we wish to exercise inside our homes privately, or inside a club or studio with others? Or do we need to exercise outside, running on the sidewalks, hiking or climbing mountains, or playing tennis with friends? What about quality of movement? There's dance, sports, T'ai chi, swimming, nautilus, yoga etc. What suits your body, your temperament, your health needs?

Loving your body and listening to it will lead you naturally to the most appropriate forms of exercise. And remember, all things change, so what may have been right for you last year may not be the same this year! Nurturing your body also includes giving it massages, saunas or steambaths, soft natural fabric clothing and lots of loving touch. Connecting with and validating the natural beauty of your body can make a world of difference in your self-esteem and overall health and well-being.

Home and Work Environments

Since we spend most of our days in one or other of these places (or perhaps

they're one and the same) it is really important that we create surroundings that nourish our bodymind, emotions and soul on a deep level. Natural, nontoxic paint, carpeting and fabric, plus natural or full spectrum light sources make a big difference over a period of time. Obviously it's harder to change around our work place, but even on a small scale bringing in beauty and harmony through natural sources (such as plants, shells, rocks, colorful flowers, etc.) is wonderfully uplifting and nurturing to us.

Lovely music, aromatic oils or incense, warm candlelight, and vibrant healing colors – all these seemingly little things caress the senses in ways that help restore harmony. Also, make sure there's always a special place (a sanctuary if you will), even if it's just a corner,

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where you can retreat to simply relax, read, meditate, make things, write in your journal or whatever. A place where your heart is open and your soul can sing.

The Inner and Outer Worlds

We all need the immense nourishment and challenges of relating to others in our outer world. The ebb and flow of communication between the self and family, friends, co-workers and others is essential to help us define ourselves and the world we live in. It's also one of the deepest ways in which our hearts open to experience the beautiful and wondrous powers of love.

But no less important or vital is learning how to relate on the inner planes, moving into the unseen world of Self to become equally familiar with this incredible and limitless landscape. This

domain of dreams, meditation, visions and Spirit guidance is so available to us, if we only take the time to quiet the chattering monkey mind, and sink softly into the mysteries of the inner realms.

The trust and willingness to explore is all we need to begin this magical journey. It is here that much profound healing of the soul can take place. Listen to the call of Spirit, it will not fail you in your search for inspiration and restoration. Always strive to balance your focus in the outer world with focus in the inner world of dreamtime.

Creativity and Play

Last, but by no means least, in order to create our health in an ongoing way, we need to laugh, play and be creative. This is easiest in an environment of unconditional love, for it is in recapturing our innocence, our childlike self, and suspending all weighty expectations, that we can be liberated to rediscover our spontaneous creative nature.

As adults, this can be a scary proposition, but freedom of Self does require the courage to trust the unknown! To let go and let the creative urge bear fruit is to trust that we can indeed create something out of nothing – and that if nothing comes at first, so what! The more we play, the more easily we can move into that place of surrender.

Look to children, the elderly, nature and the Arts to help awaken the innocent Self. Creativity and the soul are intertwined in eternal embrace. Birthing one births the other, and in this lie the golden threads which lead to vibrant health and profound joy.

May you create a unique and wonderful tapestry in your quest for health and wholeness in the New Year!

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