

## **If the Spirit Grooves You, Let it Move You...**

*By Dave Markowitz*

I am often asked how to maintain a spiritual, healthy lifestyle in this oft-unhealthy physical world. And while the answer may seem logical, it's often difficult to follow--especially in the face of adversity. This is both the challenge and the opportunity.

The game is clear; we create an ego self to keep us safe. And yet that same ego is the very opponent that keeps us from truly experiencing happiness. It convinces us to close our hearts from feeling pain and closes our minds from learning and overcoming obstacles.

How can we maintain an open heart in a society that pretty much forces us to keep it closed? While every attempt is made to appeal to our ego selves to "buy, consume, repeat" by corporations and to "fight amongst yourselves" by media (good guy vs. bad guy), religion ("mine is the only correct one") and even medicine (disagreements between alternative and traditional) etc., we can overcome the ego with deductive reasoning. You don't need to meditate with the yogis in Tibet to know we've been heading down a self-inflicted, dangerous path. Determine not what is right or wrong, but rather ask if what you've been doing is working given what you're looking to accomplish; it will be clear that a change is needed. Not just by you, but by everyone. But you can only start with you.

That same ego self likes to blame and control others; it will let us give advice or even state demands when neither are needed or even welcomed. And the recipient's reaction will often be from ego as well-- choosing resentment rather than gratitude, arrogance rather than openness, and fear rather than love. You can't fight fire with fire without both people getting burned. You can however, choose a spiritual, healthy approach.

When someone challenges you, take a moment to breathe, and notice that what he is saying isn't all he is trying to convey. Feel his heart in addition to hearing his words. In fact, I've been able to feel gratitude toward others whose advice may seem an antithesis of effectiveness to me because I choose to feel their hearts in those moments, even if they can't or don't. And their hearts are always saying that they love me.

This same mindset works in the other direction as well. While I'm well aware of--and make a healthy living sharing the underlying causes of pain and illness and how to overcome them--I don't go around blurting it out to everyone within earshot. Not everyone wants to hear it. And even though I know I can be of assistance on their path, if someone, for whatever reason isn't willing to hear it, it will fall on deaf ears anyway.

For many, advice on how to live a spiritual, healthy life is so contrary from what we've been taught that egos quickly engage and shut down the conscious mind from taking on any new information. Why is it that I can guide my clients in overcoming just about any pain and illness in dramatically less time than traditional modalities, yet my services and those of others like me are still not sought by everyone seeking healing? Ego. It does an

amazing job of not only convincing an individual that hers is the only reality. Ego also convinces the individual that her version is the best. It is the ultimate opponent--knowing all facets of your individual self lets it seep deeply into the nooks and crannies of your brain. And even though it's said to be the size of a peanut, the ego often runs, if not ruins, your life. But it doesn't have to.

Though some swear meditation is the only path to truth--it certainly is helpful and probably is the most efficient--deductive reasoning will also do so. Ask yourself daily if what you're doing is conducive to what you're looking to accomplish. I used to spend lots of money on gadgets to make a day-job commute more manageable until I was able to see that by getting a job closer to home, I'd not only save money, I'd save the only true irreplaceable asset, time. Likewise, if you're overweight and not losing pounds, dealing with pain and illness daily, or just plain feeling sad or unfulfilled, maybe there's something else you could be doing. Open up the heart and work on quieting the ego to have your answer given to you by grace. It will come--it always does--if you can drop the ego that will have you attached to how it comes.

For many, answers come by random accident in a neighbor's conversation, or in a lecture you're somehow feeling inspired to attend. There are always others with more--or maybe a better word would be "different"--knowledge than you that you could learn from. Open the mind and heart and listen well so that no words may fall to the ground before you hear them. For in the most random conversation, or even one that is consciously sought, what you need is always given.

The opportunities for spiritual, healthy living are plentiful, you just need to open up to not knowing something and then inquire-tirelessly if need be--to finding the answers. Nature abhors a vacuum; in surrender, joy and fulfillment are always found.

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Dave Markowitz is an Intuitive Health Consultant and Spiritual Healer who works by phone and in person in selected cities. He's been on the lecture circuit with Deepak Chopra, Gary Null, and more, and is a co-author of a best-selling book. His highly anticipated book, *Perspectives: A Radical Approach to Healing*, will be out in 2009.

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