Published on *Happily Whole* (https://www.livinghappilywhole.com)

Setbacks & Soul Care

November 30, 2014, written by katie



What if you started thinking about self-care as soul-care first?

What if you decided that leaning into God's help and healing gives you better support than the Band-Aid solutions given by a world or your own resolve?

It's the perfect time of year to really think about your self-care a little differently. During the holiday season life feels overwhelming, doesn't it? The days are busy with bustling about and another week ends without warning. So, personal wellness often moves to the backburner while shopping, prepping, wrapping and parties take precedence. In fact, I can't tell you how many times I've been asked, "Can we put our wellness coaching on hold until after the holidays?"

We always want to put ourselves last.

But, let me reframe that for you: We often want to put cultural requirements first. We listen to the expectations as the trends of the season soak up our time and energy. We put our own care, our soul-

care, into a discrete little corner until we're once again ready to address it.

We send self…and soul…care to the corner because stress, anxieties, overscheduling and seasonal business take over our lives and consume our calendars. You see, the most common reason for failure to follow through on personal wellness goals is because *when the road gets a little rough, we return to the well-trodden path.* In other words, we return to old, more natural tendencies when we come up alongside issues or schedules that challenge us.

So, now during the busy holiday season, so many of us want to toss in towel and retrieve it from that dusty corner once it fits neatly into our lives. The problem with that is this: life is never neat and tidy for long. Whether it's the holidays, relationship tensions, financial strains, job stress or just physical exhaustion, **living well doesn't feel 'normal' until you make it your norm!**

That means you must push through the tough times, the packed schedule, the barriers you face and continue practicing the behaviors you'd like to adopt.

Now, how does this whole concept of 'soul-care' play into facing barriers and challenges as you attempt change during a difficult time?

Easy. You cannot do it on your own. Too often, we experience exhaustion and seek the pantry instead of inner peace. We look for comfort in cultural resolutions rather than reaching for Christ's example. We walk weary and avoid doing what we know we should instead of laying our concerns in the Lord's lap.

That's right. I'm telling you to surrender when you face failure. I'm telling you to stop beating your head against the wall and give your wellness to Him. Just like every other part of your life that benefits from His wisdom and direction, your wellness will too.

If you don't believe me, think about past times you have faced barriers (likely the same barriers that keep cropping up). Have you overcome those barriers once and for all with any worldly resolution? If you have, you're part of the minority! Most people butt up against the same personal barriers time after time, Band Aid them temporarily and when stressful situations arise, they fall into the same old habits.

And so the cycle continues.

To achieve different results, you have to DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY. Make this holiday season your shining example of when you released your wellness, weight, health, worries to Him. Start by answering these questions:

1. What's the wellness goal you've been working on? List them and describe what you want to achieve. (stress, getting proper sleep, setting time aside for devotion, weight loss, exercise, clean eating habits, etc.)
2. What is your typical barrier/challenge that rears its ugly head as soon as you think you're doing well? These can be dubbed as excuses, reasons you quit a healthy habit, a tendency often leading to your return to old behaviors, a reason you sabotage yourself.
3. What if you took your answers to Question 2 and prayed about them each time you face them? What if you committed to giving them over to God because you simply cannot solve it yourself? Go ahead…give that a try.

That, Sisters, is how self-care turns into soul-care…and it's how our deepest personal wellness walls are torn down.

So, yeah, in the midst of a holiday season, I'm asking you to do things a little differently. I'm encouraging you NOT to give up and give in to old tendencies. I'm asking you to make a choice to feel the miracle of the season without sacrificing yourself.

Because, you know what?

When you sacrifice yourself….or your soul….you're making the commodities of the culture or the ways of the world bigger than the God who made you.

ACTION STEPS:

Journaling activity: Write your answers to the 3 questions above in your journal. Explore the concept of 'soul care' as a form of self-care so that you can begin to define living well differently.

Fitness: Schedule yourself in and choose 2 Happily Whole Workouts to try in the next two weeks.

Nutrition: Drink more water. Let's get you hydrated because dehydration is a major hindrance to energy, focus, gut health and overall wellness. So, especially now during a very busy, indulgent season, let's fix that by drinking at least half your weight in ounces each day.

Additionally, each time you eat, focus on making a choice. CHOOSE the foods from the snack tables and parties. CHOOSE what you will eat instead of mindlessly lifting food to your lips. CHOOSE before you head back for seconds. Enjoy the foods and even indulge a little. But, before you do, give yourself the gift of choice. Because in choosing, you'll avoid the guilt so often leading to a spiral of continued poor choices.

Source URL: https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/articles/live-well-inside-out/setbacks-soul-care