

## **Your best life coach may be your body**

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**Joan Dickinson, ED.D., Life Coach**

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Do you believe our bodies actually think and talk to us? I do. I'm not just talking about our brain; I'm talking about the wisdom in all our organs right down to our cells. Usually we discount the wisdom of the body and only listen to our higher functioning cerebral cortex.

In my college anatomy course long, long ago, I learned our brains are the thinking center, not our organs. Our heart is a muscle that pumps blood, not the target for cupid. Our stomach's purpose is to digest food, not to tell us our stresses or even whom we might love.

Then in graduate school, I was even told to discount the brain, look only at behaviors. I was taught, "If you can't see it, it doesn't exist." I remember being chastised when I dared to ask about intuition.

Well, I left behavioralism posthaste, and went on to more holistic approaches to psychological treatment. When I was introduced to the notion of psychosomatics, how we can create our illnesses and how this is reflected by our word choices, a light bulb went on in my head.

This is the age of medical specialization. We carve up the body to better treat it . But why? Our total self walks into a doctor's office, our mind, body and spirit. Medical doctors don't treat mental health issues, much less spirit issues. And the insurance companies sometimes call behavioral health a "carve-out", not a part of medical care.

The expression, "We can't see the forest for the trees," seems to fit with our worst decision-making. At these times, have we discounted the wisdom of our spirit that can be found in our bodies?

Listen to some of our body wisdom from our language.

- I can't stomach that.
- My heart aches.
- I feel it in my gut/ heart/bones.
- The little voice in my head tells me this is/is not right for me.
- You make me sick to my stomach.
- I can't swallow that.
- I can really get my teeth into that.
- I can see the love in his/her eyes.
- My heart is full.
- I know it in my heart.
- I sense it is a great/bad idea.

- This is bone-deep truth.

Think about situations where your body has talked to you.

- Did you listen to your body?
- In retrospect, would you have been better off listening?
- Did your mind's "I should do this" win instead?

I just heard a story this morning at the Chopra Center for Well-Being conference I'm attending on this very subject, body wisdom. It's about a fox, whale and eagle who had a secret of life they wanted to hide from humans. The whale said, "I'll hide it deep in the sea." "No, no, they will find it there," said the other two. The eagle offered, "I'll fly the secret of life to the moon; they'll never find it." "No, no, somehow man will get there," chimed the others. Then the clever fox laughed, "I know, let's hide the secret of life inside them, where they'll never look."

The next time you make a decision, turn your awareness to your body as the Chopra Center advocates. Sit quietly and scan your body for slight sensations that indicate comfort or discomfort. An organic wisdom will surface. Now include that secret wisdom in your decision-making.