

Connect with Your Body

Article Rating: ★

Submitted by: articlediner on 2006-12-30 and viewed 42 times.

Total Word Count: 536

Author Rating:

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Content:

When we're in the creative flow, we can sometimes forget we even have a body, because our minds are exploding with color, sounds, words and images. But when unhealthy habits sap your body of its vitality and strength, your creativity and productivity will be sapped as well.

What could be more frustrating than the interruption of your creative flow by an uninvited headache, back spasm, dullness of mind or the "shakes"?

I once heard the expression that as a guitar player, I'm a "small muscle athlete" â€“ meaning I need to warm up those muscles and treat them well. Perhaps as artists we're ALL small muscle athletes. After all, we do need a good measure of physical endurance to get through our creative tasks.

Whether it's sitting hunched over an easel, the repetitive movements of playing a musical instrument, the stamina to stand and walk on stage throughout an entire show or sitting at a computer keyboard for most of the day, our creative tools all require the use of the body.

To keep that body strong and resilient takes daily attention.

Day-to-day self-care practices such as getting enough sleep, eating three healthy and balanced meals that are evenly timed throughout the day (plus healthy snacks if you need them), moving your body actively and drinking enough water are all essential for taking care of your body.

Taking care of the body also affects the mind. Fatigue, malnutrition, inactivity and dehydration will all have adverse effects on the mind and the ability to problem solve, concentrate and connect ideas.

The Creative Cycle and Self-Care

Touring with a band, rehearsing for a show or burning the midnight oil to finish a painting before a gallery opening, are all examples of extraordinary circumstances where we might relax our self-care discipline and adopt a whole new set of rules.

Then, when the show or tour is over or the piece is finished, we sometimes sink into an anti-climactic "low" or a period of transition before we get back into the creative flow again.

The daily practices you keep when things are "normal" will build resilience for the times when these extraordinary circumstances come up. They also build habits and healthy living skills that you can draw on when life gets more challenging.

Put it into play

One of the best practices for a healthy body, mind and spirit is to get enough sleep and rest. Tonight, end your evening activities a half hour early and spend that time winding down. Release the worries of the day by writing or speaking about them. Calm yourself with a bath, tea, massage, music or a good read that doesn't remind you of your work.

We can all come up with reasons why we can't exercise, we can't make different food choices and we can't focus more on our health.

You have a unique creative gift to share with the world, but your creativity relies on a sound mind and body.

So which of your reasons for not taking care of yourself are more important than that?

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Linda Dessau, the Self-Care Coach, helps artists enhance their creativity by addressing their unique self-care issues. Feel like your creativity is blocked? Sign-up for your complimentary copy of the popular e-course, "Roadblocks to Creativity" by visiting <http://www.genuinecoaching.com>

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