

Accept the Responsibility  
By Jeanne Loehnis

Are you one of the many who say things like:

“My clothes are tight and I feel awful.”

“I need to lose weight.”

“I should exercise.”

Maybe you again made those New Year’s resolutions which have already been set aside as old behaviors crept in. Why is it that despite so many reasons why we \*should\* change our ways:

- Physical:
  - our cholesterol level is dangerously high
  - clothing never looks good on us
  - our energy level is low and the only activity that sounds good is a nap
  - we cannot join our kids on the sledding hill because we’d never make the climb back up
  
- Economic:
  - we desperately need clothes that fit properly but cannot afford them
  - that bag of chips or candy is outrageously priced
  - prescription drugs for lowering cholesterol are not in the budget

and so many avenues for support in making necessary changes:

- 12-step groups
- friends who care and those who are willing to make changes along with us
- programs for healthy eating and exercise regimens
- self-help books and exercise videos

we continue to be so self-destructive? It isn’t because we don’t know any better nor is it because we cannot afford much of the help that is available. As parents, it is likely that we encourage our children to eat well and get plenty of exercise so we know “what” to do. And the local library has plenty of books and videos which offer guidance for exercise and healthy living so help is readily available.

Yet, we continue to repeat the unhealthy behaviors. Why? Is it our unwillingness to take the necessary steps? Is it a lack of hope and a belief that there is nothing we can do that will help? Is it a lack of love for ourselves that keeps us in the personal abuse cycle? “Yes” is likely our answer to all of these questions to some degree as each holds an element of truth for many of us.

Maybe you act unconsciously around your physical self-care, often “doing the next thing” without any consideration for whether or not you want to do it or how you will feel once you have. Consider these situations. If you stopped to think how you would feel “later”, what would you choose when...

- the buffet is filled with your favorite desserts and you paid \$15 for this meal. “I want your money’s worth.”
- there is a box of candy by the office coffee pot. “One more piece of chocolate won’t make a difference anyway.”
- you are watching late night television and you are tired. “Too early for bed. A snack sounds good. What do I want? I’m not really hungry...”
- the sun is shining, it is warm outside. “I could go for a walk...”

It is a *personal responsibility* to care for our physical body. No one can make choices for us which impact how we nurture, nourish and tend our body. No one! *Do you accept that?* Stated slightly differently:

***I have choice and I am responsible for my choices around food, exercise, and sleep, and today’s choices do impact the life I experience tomorrow.***

What I eat, whether or not I exercise, how I think and feel about my body in **this** moment is always reflected in the **next** moment. If my moments are filled with hopeless thinking, disgust, “What’s the use?” or berating myself for yesterday’s choices, I am setting the stage for the next negative choice. If instead, my moments are filled with healthy choices and realizing that I made healthy choices yesterday and feel physically good today, I have set the stage for the next healthy choice.

Conscious choice is an option. *Personal responsibility around choice is reality.* Are you ready to accept the fact that only you can make the choice to nurture your body? Are you ready to gift yourself with “one choice at a time” that you will feel good about “later”? If your answer is “Yes!” then begin now! Choose consciously.

**Accept responsibility for your personal wellbeing now!**