



## Body Wisdom

Lately I have been aware of how often I push to get things done. The benefit of doing this is that I get a lot done – I keep things moving forward. So what's the problem?

There is a big shadow side to pushing. When I am pushing, I am not open to receive. The universe is full of gifts, but you can't pour more into a cup that is already full. When I am focused on getting somewhere, I am likely to miss the full impact of what you are telling me. It is hard to be present.

Physically push against something and feel the sensations of pushing. You have to tense your muscles to push. You might hold your breath. The act of pushing itself requires that you shift your balance – your energy is projecting outward. You can really get the idea when you try it on in your body.

I know I'm not alone. Many of us do this all the time! Only because most of our pushing is not a physical process, we are not aware of it. But the body sensation is very similar when we push to make something happen.

As an alternative, try on a receptive stance. How can you stand in a way that is open to the world (or others)? It's a centered stance. When you are receptive, there is room for listening, room for others, room for new ideas. It is relaxed but alert and inviting. Feel how much easier it is to breathe deeply from here.



Pay attention to when you are pushing and when you are open and receptive. I find that my body sensations are my first clue. When I feel muscular tension, it tells me I am pushing again (or holding on to something, which has similar sensations). Notice and experiment. What works for you?

## Creating Health

*This newsletter is a chance to share the learning that my clients grace me with. Here is something I've noticed:*

### Eating When Not Hungry

We eat for many reasons. Biologically, food fuels us. But we also eat when we are stressed, frustrated, bored, lonely, afraid, etc., etc., etc. The sad truth is that even though food is not very effective in helping these situations, it is often the main way we take care of ourselves. And at some level, it does work.

There is an interesting twist here. Most of us get exasperated with ourselves when we eat even though we are not hungry. We can see how we sabotage our desire to lose weight and be

healthy. The irony is that our body is communicating useful information. All we have to do is listen.

Become an objective observer and really pay attention to what triggers your snack attacks. Is there a predominant emotional field? Instead of being judgmental or critical, get curious. What is the true craving? What do you long for? Is it being held? Being seen? Or even just time to yourself? What do *you* long for?

The more you pay attention to what is being called for, the more choices you have. Most of us are not very good at taking care of ourselves. We are very good at taking care of others. Taking care of ourselves seems selfish, but using food to do so is socially acceptable. It is interesting that our bodies immediately recognize this as a way of being cared for!

Get skilled at truly taking care of yourself. Find the ways that have meaning to you and are deeply satisfying. It's not about will power or discipline. It's about feeding the deeper craving with nourishing practices.

### Low Fat Diets: behind the headlines

Remember the recent headlines: *'Low-fat Diets don't cut heart, cancer risks'*? A large study (The Women's Health Initiative) reported disappointing results. So does that really mean what we eat doesn't matter? Not at all.

The lower fat diet group was supposed to eat only 20 percent of their calories from fat. After one year they were getting 24% fat, but by the sixth year they were getting 29% of their calories from fat – not much different than the control group. The study did not control the type of fat because it was primarily designed to see if low fat diets would cut the risk of cancer. When all the results are included, the difference was not statistically significant. However, when the data is narrowed to include just the women who reduced their fat intake the most – these women had a 22% lower risk of breast cancer than similar women who ate their usual diets.

The bottom line: The type of fat is more important than the amount of fat to lower the risk of heart disease. Low fat could cut risk for cancer. The women who made the greatest reductions in saturated and trans fats and the greatest increases in fruits and vegetables did have a reduced risk of heart disease and cancer.

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