



By Silver Rose

## ***Dancing with Passionate Self-Care***

This month begins a series of blogs focused on Passionate Self-Care. This phrase often brings a smile of embarrassment to faces because most of us consider ourselves failures in this arena.

Sure, we devote time to self-care but it is generally based on negative rewards instead of the positive actions that make up *passionate* self-care. In other words, instead of taking an exhilarating walk after dinner, we settle down to watch *Wheel of Fortune*, usually with some sort of high calorie drink or snack in hand.



What brings this to mind are the myriad news reports on the high cost of health care and the ensuing crisis for aging Baby Boomers. As I listen to this conversation with interest, I've realized that what I haven't been hearing is much of anything about patient responsibility. Where does self-care fit into all this?

If you bought a house and did nothing to keep it up over a 5-year period, would you expect your insurance company to pay for repairs? They would deny such a claim saying it was neglect, not damage from an outside force such as fire or wind. Yet, we bring our sad, neglected bodies to our doctors or our sad, neglected psyches to psychologists and psychiatrists and expect them to give us a magic pill.

We want pills or surgery to fix what we systematically destroy through complacency.

**Passionate self-care starts with the premise that you are at least as worthy of daily care as your house, your car, your children, your boss, or your clients.**

Just as you would look at a messy house and say, "It's time to clean this up," it's equally important to pay attention to an ache in your body and say, "It's time to start taking care of this." This requires a change in behavior and change requires conscious effort.

I've earned the right to talk about this because I spent the first part of my life going to doctors and therapists trying to get them to "fix" me. They helped, that is a fact, but I took no responsibility for having gotten that way in the first place. I sat in the dentist's chair for example acting bewildered when told I had a cavity. The fact that I only brushed my teeth once a day and poorly at that seemed beside the point. Isn't fluoride in the water supposed to prevent cavities? I chose to be a victim.

One of the more important things I've learned in my conscious effort to move from victim to victor is that, no matter what happens to me, I had a part in it and it's important to take responsibility for whatever it was. Now, if I were in an earthquake, do I have a part in that? The surprising answer is "Yes" – I'm responsible for how I *respond*. I can be a victim or a victor and that's the choice we each have in every situation.

Where are you currently behaving as a victim and how can you transform into a victor? Taking ownership for your life is very freeing and it's an important component of self-care.

I don't know about you but I'd really rather NOT be one of those old folks who goes to the doctor with muscles atrophied from lack of use saying, "I can't understand why I'm so TIRED all the time. Can you give me something?"

We all have a small, active child inside of us who JUST WANTS US TO MOVE!!!! As you get more physically active, you will almost hear the child inside of you yelling, "Whoopee! We're finally moving!!!" I've come to realize that most of my aches and pains, physical and mental, were sent by that impatient child, trying to get my attention!



Take five minutes, right now, and make a list of all the "upkeep" sorts of things you've done over the past month for: your car, your home, your clothing, your pets, your children, or other people. Now think what life would be like if you put yourself at the top of the list.

"That's so selfish!" you might cry. And I say, "Yes, it is, and that is a good thing." I don't know when the concept of putting ourselves first got to be so negative. I suspect it was from people who wanted us to put them first so they taught us that self-care is bad.

When we practice passionate self-care, we accomplish several things:

1. We take back control of our own well-being
2. We set an example for others
3. We begin to enjoy our own lives instead of living vicariously through TV or other entertainment

The most important thing that happens when we practice passionate self-care is that we are happier and proud of ourselves. And the Law of Attraction says, "You attract what you are." The happier you are and the more empowered you feel, the more situations that match those feelings come to you. And that is the ultimate in Passionate Self-Care.