

Personal Wellness, Mind, Body, Spirit

PART III - by Pamela Aloia and Michael Aloia



In the past two installments of the three-part Mind, Body, Spirit article series, we have touched upon the necessity to nurture and challenge the mind, through awareness and positive thinking, as well as the obligation to discipline and nourish our bodies with proper food intake, exercise and rest.

Attention given to each of the distinct parts of the mind-body-spirit connection results in a well-balanced and successful individual – both personally and professionally. With this third

installment on our Personal Wellness series, we will discuss the powerful and often overlooked realm of the spirit.

Initially, the term “spirit” may invoke notions of the supernatural or thoughts of other worldly beings. While the term “spirit” can be interpreted as something external to our own selves, “spirit” can also refer to the essence of our very existence – a self-contained, self-relating sense of being, originating from within. Spirit can have many names: soul, heart, inner

fortitude and drive to name a few. Regardless of what we choose to call that essence of our individual selves, our spirit is an integral part of who we are and how we live in the world.

Internally, each of us possesses an unlimited source of knowledge, strength, courage and character. For some, this source may be virtually untapped and relatively unexplored. A sense of unfamiliarity to one’s own spirit is quite common. In a society where we fill our schedules with family obligations,

work meetings, tasks, sports, music, television and other time-involved activities, it is difficult to take a moment to nurture our spirits.

We all know what it feels like when our spirit is high or low – it goes beyond an emotional feeling and encompasses a whole “being-ness” – whether it be joy for no particular reason at all, an inner calm we feel or a sensation that something is “off.” Being aware and acknowledging these states helps us determine our own level of interaction and

involvement in our daily routine or particular situation. Knowing where our spirits are helps us extend and challenge ourselves or helps us realize our own limitations in the moment. Knowing this creates an inner road map that distinguishes us as a race and as an individual.

Without this inner knowledge of ourselves, if the time of need arises to call upon our spiritual fortitude, we may not have direct access to it if we are not personally familiar with it. Ensuring we're in touch with our inner selves requires time to explore and cultivate our spirits. On the

flip side, there are those who have been able to draw upon the power and purpose of the internal spirit – digging deep in times of need. These individuals know firsthand the inner strength that can surface from awareness of the spirit.

Consequently, there are also those who are regularly exposed to the tragedies of life and often question the existence of something far greater than himself or herself or the existence of any form of spirit. The need to have some form of explanation or relevance to why things happen needs to be present to make sense of the seem-

ing madness. These individuals tend to look outward for answers when internally the answers exist. It is when you cannot see the spirit from within that you will not see the spirit from without.

Our spirit is what guides each of us to do what we do and excel at it. If we allow it to, our spirit is that which helps us answer or find our life calling – whether it changes over the course of time or remains the same – our spirit is guiding us down our path. Some have described it as the “angel on my shoulder,” or that “little voice inside my head,” or that

“fire burning deep inside” – our intuition, our inner knowing. Some have wrestled with it for a lifetime while others embrace its presence and find comfort and security in its existence and companionship. There is an independence knowing we can rely on ourselves – great confidence and great freedom is realized.

Our awareness to the inner spirit relates directly to faith. In this reference, faith refers to our personal power of belief rather than that of a religious nature – it is a deep trust in one's own self or lack thereof. The spirit is always being



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stretched or challenged, thus, our personal faith, our personal beliefs of ourselves, is also being developed. The stronger the faith, the more our spirit can brave the daily confrontations of outer worldly events and circumstances.

That inner strength can be derived from a number of sources, singly or collectively – such as love, hope, religion of choice, culture, family, friends or profession. Some find that as a Rescuer/Responder, the means to make a difference, to save a life, is the basis of their internal drive. The ability to bring that inner power of

the spirit to the surface is often the dividing line between those who truly live and those who allow life to have its way with them. Spirit also relates to one's own will or desire – that innate drive that keeps us getting up no matter how many times we have fallen down.

We all possess the means. It is often said that there are those who are “just born with it.” The truth is, we are all born with it – we all possess the power. The difference lies in those who have acknowledged, embraced and utilized it. But it is there for each of us. EMS personnel are consis-

tently confronted with the challenge of pressing on, sometimes in the face of overwhelming physical fatigue and mental depletion. A numerous string of calls, one right after another, can quickly wear down reserves, leaving little room to come up for air and just breathe. Yet, the drive to make a difference shines through, and the Rescuer/Responder presses on.

People can be taught to find their spirit and maximize its potential. Since the spirit is something we have with us always, it's a matter of learning new and potent ways to harness that

spirit. In doing so, we can launch our lives ever forward in a positive way. Many methods of inner self-awareness are available and can be used to unlock the hidden energies nestled in each of us.

Meditation and yoga provide an intra-scope of observation and reflection. Both methods can use physical aspects, such as breathing, stretching, poses, chants, walking and visual references to gain a deeper awareness and understanding of the individual spirit. Martial Arts training provides an array of philosophies and ideologies geared towards cultivating the

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spirit that encompasses mental, physical and spiritual exercises to achieve that inner connection and development. General exercise and fitness programs can also build awareness to the inner spirit through means of physical stimuli and body education.



and the means to do so will differ for everyone. Consider exploring the possibilities. The experience in the discovery itself can be enlightening and enriching with its own rewards.

When we are open to the experience, partaking in any of the above-mentioned activities automatically connects the mind, body and spirit. For some people, other activities or non-activities may have the same effect. Methods of acknowledging and expanding upon that inner connection to our spirit

The journey on the path to personal wellness, mind-body-spirit balance, raises many questions and presents many answers along the way. The oneness we seek is the connection of the three – mind, body and spirit. It is a journey

of self-exploration and discovery. The result can be noticeably subtle or perhaps drastic life changes – not only to you directly but to those around you – a chain reaction is started.

The quest for mind-body-spirit connection brings us a bird's eye view of ourselves, the world in which we live, the way we live, and the ways we can live better. In time, and with this balance, our experiences and lives flow with ease and harmony simply because we have taken the steps to be the very best we can be, inside, and out, at this very given moment. ♦

Authors

Pamela Aloia is an instructor and practitioner of alternate methods of self-healing, including meditation and Reiki. She conducts regular workshops to assist in changing individual lives through topics such as leadership and energy awareness. Pamela currently works in the hospice and bereavement fields, and has authored the book, 52 Pick Me Up and has co-authored Rescuer Mindset. For more information visit www.solangel.com.

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