

In Service of Self

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A Look at Boundless Living

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This book is dedicated to the inner you, the outer you, and the new you.

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Introduction

SELFISH adj. devoted to or caring only for oneself; concerned primarily with one's own interests

Are you?

Acknowledgements

For me, expressing myself via the written word is such great F-U-N! It is then that I joyfully participate in the creative expression of Love and Light, experiencing the archetypes and personas of Faith, Hope and Sophia, Goddess of Wisdom, as my companions. I am truly blessed.

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Head to Toe

How many digits are there on your hand? Your feet? Your mother most likely counted each one soon after your birth, just like most mothers do. Doesn't matter if it's the first child or the ninth coming in to join the family, parts are parts, and moms sure can count!

After a baby's first cry, the mother asks, "Is he all right?" That's mom-speak for "are all the parts in place?" Moms are understandably concerned with the physical attributes of their newborns.

Somewhere along the line, however, the focus seems to move more to scraped knees, sore throats and runny noses, with mothers, or mother stand-ins (maybe daddies?), watching out for the physical well-being of their children.

From kindergarten to high school, most likely someone was there to make sure you had food to eat, help you find fun clothes to wear and take you to the doctor when you needed to go. But after you leave home, what then? Who's hovering about now, taking your temp, keeping track of your health, your wholeness? Guess that would be you, although some men have their wives to remind them to take their vitamins!

Do you pay much attention to your physical self? Of course, if you are a woman you look in the mirror to put on makeup, check out your panty line and stand in such a fashion as to hopefully airbrush ten pounds off your hips. If you are a man, you generally look into a mirror while brushing your teeth and shaving, and definitely while emulating your favorite ideal of masculinity. You "suck it in," attempting to be oh-so-lean looking.

But, how often do you visit a doctor or health care practitioner? How often do you go to the dentist? Eeesh, not fun. While this line of questioning might make you uncomfortable, it would be wise to pay attention. How watchful are you when it comes to the foods, liquids, and drugs being delivered to your system via your mouth? Guess we won't even talk about physical exercise here! We have definitely become experts at making excuses as to why we look and therefore feel the way we do.

Our lives are cyclical. They revolve right along with the earth's spinning from darkness into the light of the sun, allowing for periods of sleep and times of wakefulness. What we do during the moments of daylight and how we fill our evening hours is up to us. As adults we are either supported by someone else—possibly a mate or the family trust fund—or we support ourselves. Perhaps we share joint fiscal responsibility with another. But how can we be gainfully employed, enjoy our day-to-day lives, or rest peacefully at night if we are not in good health? How can we take care of others who are important parts of our lives, if we don't take good care of ourselves, *our* physical bodies, first?

We have all heard a story similar to the one that follows:



A married woman gave birth to the cutest little boy any nurse ever saw. He had large blue eyes and short blond ringlets that stuck to his head. He was beyond cute to his mother who enjoyed pushing him to the park every day in his buggy, waiting for people to peek in to see this little one and commenting on her good fortune for having such a beautiful, healthy baby.

Sadly, his daddy didn't share the enthusiasm, and he most definitely didn't like waking up at all hours of the night when this little one cried for his bottle. The father soon became very discontent with the idea of even being a

parent, and it didn't take long before he left this household and his relationships, never to be heard from again.

Now, the mother had to go to work, and that meant leaving her precious son at day care, which caused her to become very depressed just thinking of what else life had in store for her. She took comfort in a group of women she worked with, sharing lunch during the work days and Saturday afternoons in the park with their children. She also shared their cigarettes and soon was smoking almost a pack a day, sometimes even sneaking into the women's restroom at work to have a quick one.

She smoked as her son was growing up and continued to do so right through his college days. Because she never remarried and had no more children, when her boy left home for good, the mother became very lonely. And then, she became ill, with emphysema.

Time passed and the mother continued to smoke. Friends came and went in her life, but her cigarettes stayed. She always had her "friendly" pack close at hand to pass the time with. You know, you don't actually have to be doing anything as you sit and smoke.

Lying on her deathbed some years later, attempting to get the best breath she could from the oxygen tank by her bed, she was a sad sight indeed.

Her son visited her when he could and was with her before her very last breath. At that moment, in a weak whisper, she once more made him promise that he would never smoke.

He never did.



As observers of life, we see similar stories being played out. It can seem so tragic, the loss of life or early disability, especially when there seems such a direct cause.

Are we aware of the lesson that is offered by these dear souls? You might argue that people who have physical ailments didn't ask for them. And that may appear to be true. However, if you had taken a pictorial overview of one of these lives, it would be easy to see how daily choices led to a certain outcome.

Eating fast food day after day, consuming more food than we actually need, "stuffing" anger and frustration while stuffing our faces, then sitting in front of the television or computer week after week to escape. These behaviors, along with the seemingly unavoidable stress in our lives, can lead to physical disabilities, if not unwelcome and untimely death.

How are you responding to the idea that we each just may be responsible now for our future health? Not new news? Of course, we all have choice as to how we participate in the various scenes of our lives, and it really can be quite difficult to break our habits and change our patterns. It takes a real effort to make any change. You must admit, though, it *is* food for thought.

Is it selfish to take care of your physical self?