

LIVING WELL

A special winter edition to warm your hearts

H Jackson Brown Jr.

"Sometimes the heart sees what is invisible to the eye"

Martin Luther King Jr.

"I have decided to stick to love, hate is too great a burden to bear"

Lao Tzu

*"Kindness in words creates confidence.
Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.
Kindness in giving creates love"*

Einstein *"Gravitation is not responsible for people falling in love"*

Thoreau *"There is no remedy for love but to love more"*

Cold hands warm hearts

As Canadians we feel a seasonal entitlement to complain, strain and feel drained by our winters and well, we are truly in the midst of winter. As I begrudgingly shovelled and ice picked during the midst of the last storm I felt my hands numb and my spirits low. I felt the strain in my neck and felt resentful as my mind constructed a list of all the things I'd rather be doing were it not for the task at hand. My hands shook as the rusty pick hit the cement one more time. I stopped for a moment to rub my hands. That pause was enough space to allow me to consider for that moment whether I truly believed myself, that it was as bad as I'd worked it out to be. In that moment my gaze shifted from my rusting ice pick to the soft white snow falling softly to the ground. I noticed the lifting of the strain in my shoulders and a sudden slowing down. My heart was opening to the beauty of the moment. I felt safe, protected somehow by the mounds of snow even though it was late at night. I suddenly felt grateful for my breath and my muscles. I took a deep breath and felt clear. In that moment I felt the resounding power that comes from being present with myself and nature. I marvelled at the gifts nature sends us unexpectedly making us drive slower, walk carefully, and to consider what we really need to run out to buy, to feed ourselves, to preoccupy ourselves with. This weather can be a pain, a strain, even draining but it also presents the perfect opportunity to slow down and notice what else is there. The most ordinary moments can be extraordinary if we so choose to open our hearts and behold all that is there. So our hands may be cold, but may our hearts remain open and warm to what is. **Love, Dr. Maria Patriquin Ivanov MD CCFP founder/editor**



Living Well Welcomes

Pamela Rubin



Canadian Certified Counsellor, providing counselling to individuals, and trauma-informed training to professionals. Pam specializes in recovery from sexual abuse, assault and intimate partner abuse. Pamela, formerly with Avalon Sexual Assault Center. “ I walk alongside clients as they tread the path to well-being and balance, providing guidance and options, respecting clients’ inherent sanity and power, and taking care to avoid intrusive or potentially re-traumatizing methods. I use evidence-based approaches including grounding and mindfulness, cognitive approaches, visualization, and relational therapy. These helpful techniques open the path for us to reclaiming our wellness, our goals, and our zest for living.”

“All of us have the inner resources we need for a meaningful, positive life. It’s just a matter of unlocking our strengths! Using proven techniques, I help you build on what’s natural: grounding ourselves in the present through mindfulness, encouraging self-care habits and balance, finding approaches together to life’s problems that make sense. Based on working with people for many years, I believe that our natural capacity to find healthy emotional balance is very great, even in difficult circumstances.

No matter what you have gone through in life, no matter what challenges you are facing now, you can work gently and intelligently with yourself to find success, happiness and peace. Counselling can help us chart a course toward strength and wellness. Knowledge is power, and counselling offers important information on the nature of our problems, and how healing happens.

With the right tools and support, big problems can shrink down to a manageable size. Often, we are stressed because we feel overwhelmed, out of control and isolated. Counselling can help gently ground us in habits and practices that will take us step by step towards well-being.

I welcome a broad range of clients, but specialize in recovery from trauma, including sexual assault/abuse. Experiences that overwhelm our ordinary ability to cope are called trauma. The negative results can include depression and anxiety, obstacles in our personal relationships or career, panic attacks, nightmares, persistent flashbacks, fatigue or chronic feelings of unwellness. I assure you that post-trauma issues are not a life sentence, and you can regain the quality of life you deserve.”



LOVE IS A PRACTICE, A WAY OF BEING...

Harvard University recently concluded the Grant Study, one of the longest investigations ever of the factors contributing to human flourishing. George Vaillant, the study's director for three decades, summed up its conclusions: "The seventy-five years and twenty million dollars expended on the Grant Study points to a straightforward five-word conclusion: Happiness is love. Full stop."

One man went into the Grant study with fairly bleak prospects for life satisfaction: he had the lowest ratings predicting conventional success and stability. But at the end of his life, he was one of the happiest. Why? As Vaillant explains, "He spent his life searching for love."

What kind of love is meant here? Joyful social connection. Despite Valentine's Day hype, the kind of love that contributes to well being is not necessarily romantic attachment. The love referred to in the Harvard research included all kinds of strong, caring, positive connections. How can we have more of this love in our lives, with or without a romantic partner?

Ironically, research tells us to focus both more and less on ourselves. What does this mean? To begin with, we can immediately increase our caring and love towards the person closest to us, ourselves! We can practice looking with the eyes of love: instead of being hard on ourselves when we suffer or make mistakes, we can generate a kindly attitude, much as we would for a friend. Instead of rushing through self-care tasks, we can slow down and appreciate taking good care of ourselves. We can enjoy the fresh water in the shower, putting on clean clothes, eating a good breakfast. We can look around and let ourselves see and feel the love coming towards us from others, also.

When it's suggested we focus less on ourselves to increase love in our lives, we're not talking about self-denial or martyrdom. Just a little shift in focus. We can use mindfulness meditation to peek out from behind the waterfall of constant thoughts. Being more settled, we can afford to look around at what others are feeling. When we have opened up that mental space, it's easy to connect with and support others.

Love is a practice, a way of being, not just an "affair." By noticing and caring about how we are, and how others are around us, love shines and grows. And as the Harvard study says, that's happiness, full stop. *Have a gentle Valentine's Day!*
- *Pamela Rubin*

Here are 8 steps towards a heart healthy diet:

1. *limit portions*
2. *eat more fruits and vegetables*
3. *choose whole grains*
4. *limit unhealthy fats and cholesterol*
5. *choose low fat proteins*
6. *decrease your salt intake*
7. *plan ahead*
8. *treat yourself occasionally*



Start the day right with Yia yia's heart healthy breakfast:

-Soak 1 cup of large flake or steel cut oatmeal in milk (soya, rice or 1% dairy) overnight. The milk should cover the oatmeal otherwise it doesn't moisten.

-In the morning add a half cup of your choice of berries or grapes and some walnuts or pecan pieces. Frozen berries work well and are reasonably priced.

-Add 1/3 cup of plain greek yogurt or naturally sweetened strawberry greek yogurt to taste and heat up on the stovetop or microwave .

-For those with a sweet tooth drizzle a tablespoon of maple syrup or honey on top. Stevia powder works well too. Sprinkle ground flax seeds on top.

Some heart smart food facts:

Plants like **flax seeds** contain Phytoestrogens are substances that have a mild estrogen-like action in the body. Studies suggest that flaxseed lowers the risk of blood clots, stroke, and cardiac arrhythmias. They may also help lower total and LDL "bad" cholesterol and triglycerides, and even blood pressure.

Nuts, seeds and wheatgerm contain phytosterols which are plant sterols that resemble cholesterol and seem to lower it too!

Carotenoids antioxidants that help protect the heart. They are in many **colourful fruits and veggies**. Alpha-carotene, beta-carotene, lutein, and lycopene are carotenoids.

Polyphenols are another set of antioxidants that protect blood vessels, lower blood pressure, reduce LDL "bad" cholesterol. Flavonoid polyphenols include catechins, flavonones, flavonols, isoflavones, resveratrol, and anthocyanins. Non-flavonoid polyphenols include ellagic acid (think **berries**).

Omega-3 fatty acids (found in fatty fish like **salmon**) and alpha-linolenic fatty acids (like **walnuts**) help boost the immune system, reduce blood clots, and protect against heart attacks. They increase good HDL levels, lower triglyceride levels, protect arteries from plaque building up, are anti-inflammatories, and lower blood pressure.

B-complex vitamins like Vitamin B-12 (**seafood, meat, eggs, dairy, yeast**) and vitamin B-6 (**nuts, seeds, fish, poultry, avocado, spinach, bananas**) protect against blood clots and atherosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries.

Niacin (vitamin B-3) helps increase HDL "good" cholesterol. Foods like **fish, poultry, peanuts, mushrooms, avocado, sunflower seeds** are rich sources of niacin.

Vitamins C (**bell peppers, dark leafy greens, broccoli, beans, citrus, peas**) and E are antioxidants that protect cells from free radical damage. Foods rich in Vitamin E include **dark leafy greens, leafy greens, olive oil, wheat, broccoli, nuts and tropical fruits**.

Magnesium (**lentils, leafy greens, avocado, dark chocolate, nuts and seeds**), potassium (**dark leafy greens, potatoes, avocado, bananas, fish, yogurt, dried apricots**) and calcium (**dairy, sardines, dark leafy greens, soy beans, fortified foods**) help lower blood pressure.

Fiber-rich foods help lower cholesterol levels. Think **bran, broccoli and cauliflower, berries, leafy greens, celery and beans**.

Favourite Love Resources:

Romantic love:

Ted playlist (7 talks) Talks that just might save your relationship. www.ted.com

ACT with love by Russ Harris

The 5 Love Languages, Gary Chapman

Self love and compassion:

www.self-compassion.org

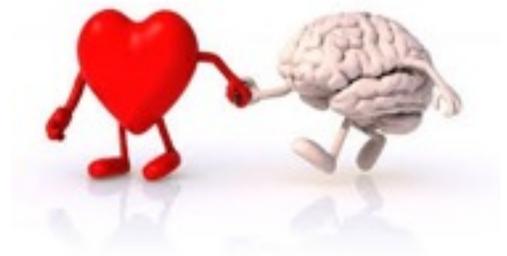
Radical Acceptance, Tara Brach

www.mindful.org

Daring to Trust, David Richo

Forgiveness, A bold Choice for a Peaceful Heart, Robin Casarjian

Andrea Dorfman Youtube video "How to be alone"



Parental love:

The Mindful Child, Susan Kaiser Greenland

123 magic, Thomas Phalanx

How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen So kids Will talk, Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish

Sibling Rivalry, Jan Cortex

Siblings Without Rivalry, Adele Faber & Elaine Mazlish

Breaking the Good Mom Myth, Alyson Schaffer <http://www.alyson.ca>

Honey I Wrecked the Kids, Alyson Schaffer

Everyday Blessings: The Inner Work of Mindful Parenting, Jon & Myla Kabat-Zinn

Mindful Movements, Wietske Vriezen & Thich Nhat Hanh

How to love Work:

Ted talks: Nigel Marsh (2010): "How to make work life balance work"

Ted talk: Shawn Achor: "The happy secret to better work" 2011

Diet and Lifestyle:

Mindful Eating, Jan Chozen Bays

Savor: Mindful Eating Mindful Life, Thich Na Hanh 2011

Eat, Thich Nhat Hanh

Ted Talk: Dean Ornish: "Healing through diet" 2004

Ted talk: A.J. Jacobs (2011): "How healthy living nearly killed me"

Ted talk: Matt Cutts (2011): "Try something new for 30 days"

Nature:

open your door, walk out and breathe



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"Together is better"

Mission Statement: To support individuals and their families in their efforts to live well by providing diversified co-ordinated care, guidance and education that encompasses body, mind and spirit.

*Offering Medicine, Mindfulness, Naturopathic Medicine, Osteopathic
Massage, Physiotherapy, Psychotherapy and Counselling*

*May everything you do be some sort of expression of your love. May you live, laugh,
cry, joy, hope, grieve, work, eat, walk, wash, teach, learn, give and receive with love.
Love makes everything gentler. It is our greatest legacy. Happy Valentines Day, love
Maria*