

Episode 9

Personal Growth and Your Health

Hello health enthusiasts. I am Rosie Bank and I will be your host on this episode of Health Matters Podcast. What a perfect time for us to connect. It's that time of year called the Holidays. I've seen it written as the Holi-Daze, spelled D A Z E at the end. If you ever find yourself challenged to stay on your health game between Thanksgiving into the New Year, then this episode is for you. But in truth, what we are going to discuss for the next twenty minutes or so goes way beyond the two months at the end of the year. Food and drink may seem more prevalent when there are more parties and celebrations. But you and your body need to set your sails straight through twelve months, not just two. The holidays may magnify your behavior toward eating. But I suspect that what you do with your co-workers, family, and friends to celebrate at the end of the year reflects your habits, values, and challenges during the rest of the year. I mean that positively as well as in areas where there is room for improvement.

I picked this topic, Personal Growth as it relates to Losing Weight and Becoming Healthy, because it keeps popping up with my clients. Let me elaborate so you and I can understand each other on this episode of Health Matters Podcast.

Also, I encourage you to download my free bonus section. I called it Your Roadmap to Personal Growth and Permanent Weight Loss. In it I have the resources I mention throughout this episode. Also, I created a template for you to map your journey of personal growth as it relates to your health and weight. I think this handy guide will enable you to be more deliberate and confident in taking these steps forward. You can get this at www.RosieBank.com/9download.

There will be five segments of this episode. After I explain each one, I will also describe a way to get relief and move to higher ground. The goal here is to enhance not only your health and to reduce your weight. It is also to provide you with greater value to you as a person.

The segments are:

1. Preoccupation with food
2. Identifying your Why (personal motivator) as being important enough
3. Self-regard, self-worth
4. Recovering from woundedness in order to honor your body
5. Living a bigger life, free from the undercurrent of addiction

Preoccupation with food is something with which I can relate from my past. And they are painful memories. I vividly recall attending a training at the Rolf Institute. This was the school where I did my advanced courses in order to pursue my career as a Rolfer. This is a form of body therapy and I practiced for two decades. It is a beautiful form of hands-on therapy that helps others to live in their bodies more successfully. People often experience transformation when they are Rolfed. And the work itself was often a peak experience for me as a practitioner.

And yet, here I was, in the early 1980's, immersed in some of the most sophisticated professional training of my life, and I can still remember the anguish of being so distracted by food. It was like a monkey on my back and it weighed me down heavily. Since that monkey is no longer on my back, I can look back and feel the same empathy toward myself that I feel toward my clients and students who are similarly preoccupied with thoughts of food.

Since these thoughts are often obsessive, what this represents is a compromised life. If part of our ability to live life fully is a function of being present and focused, then obsessing over food robs us of the richness of life. Whether it is studying in school, doing meaningful professional or voluntary work, or being with our families, to the degree that we are distracted by relentless desires and cravings for food, we settle for an inferior life.

It was not easy for me to pull myself away from that debilitating distraction. But when I did, everything about my life became easier. Ironically, by not resorting to obsessive thoughts around food even made other challenges in my life easier to solve. Obsessing over food is a heavy burden. It's hard to think clearly and it's hard to resolve issues against this backdrop of persistent thoughts. Everything was foggy for me. I sense that some of you are nodding and being able to relate to this.

How did I get to the point where food no longer wreaks havoc in my life? And if this is something with which you can identify, let's ask the question like this. How can *you* get to the point where your mind is clearer and you are freer in a similar way?

I believe that anything you do that teaches mindfulness will help you begin to break free. Learning to meditate is very powerful. I spoke at length about meditation on an earlier episode of Health Matters Podcast. My clients who get the most benefit from learning to meditate are the ones whose thoughts about food were the most relentless. Someone told me today that his mind is never quiet. Well, not so after he sat in my office listening to his breath, releasing tension, and hearing tiny slivers of silence between the thoughts.

In these newfound moments of peace you can make new choices. Learning how to focus on, say, studying in a classroom situation, takes practice and on-going effort. Becoming the person who is no longer assailed by obsessive and distracting thoughts will be nothing short of transformational. Imagine the peace this will bring to you. What creative things could you do with this newfound energy?

This is my first example of connecting personal growth with losing weight and getting healthier. Lead yourself with your own gentle hand to gradually bring more of your attention to whatever you are doing. Set your phone to play a tone after thirty minutes of uninterrupted focus. Use your phone to time a variety of activities during which you practice your ability to pay attention and gently – not forcibly – release distractions.

Consider this a new set of skills. And just like playing the violin, you will get better at this. To be clear, I submit this release of obsessive thoughts around food with personal growth and your health because I believe you will make smarter choices as you clear the space in your mind. I also believe that new doors will open for you, and that those doors connect you with greater possibilities in life.

The second category is Identifying your Why (personal motivator) as being important enough to forge ahead with smarter more life and health-enhancing choices. Let me give you a hint. Whatever you deem as a reason to make your health a priority is good enough. Last week one client said to me, “Well, I know I want to feel better. I know I want to look better. I know I want to steer clear of diabetes. But are those reasons really good enough?”

Do you hear the built-in problem as my client voiced this? Judging your reasons as not good enough is a straight up form of self-sabotage. I don't mean that you are doing something bad. I just mean that you are doing something that gets in your way. By perceiving your reasons as not good enough, then you have set yourself up not to honor them.

If you find yourself dismissing your own reasons for wanting to get on and stay on track regarding your health, simply ask what is often called “the why behind the why.” For example, so you want to feel better. **WHY?** So you can go to your son's birthday party and have plenty of energy? So you can enjoy a meal and avoid that awful stuffed feeling afterward. So you can go to bed without regurgitating your food?

What about wanting to look better. **WHY?** So you no longer suffer embarrassment when you stand in front of a group? So you will be more comfortable being intimate with your spouse? So you can wear clothes that don't hide your body?

How about avoiding disease, like diabetes? One of my professors at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition said that one of the best choices you can make regarding your health is to avoid diabetes. Oh let me count the ways why this is the mother of all reasons. How about the cost to you and your family? Here is a quote from the diabetes.org advocacy group.

People with diagnosed diabetes incur average medical expenditures of **about \$13,700 per year**, of which **about \$7,900** is attributed to diabetes. People with diagnosed diabetes, on average, have medical expenditures approximately 2.3 times higher than what expenditures would be in the absence of diabetes.

What about this potential loss to your family is not valid enough? What about the emotional wear and tear for your loved ones? I am asking you straight up to consider these things when you make choices around what you eat, whether or not you move and exercise, and how much volume of food you consume.

Your reasons for taking beautiful care of your body should be personal, compelling, unique to you, emotional, and urgent. Frankly, anything between wanting to look hot for your spouse to wanting to avoid what everyone in your family suffered from is valid. There are no inferior reasons.

Embracing your reasons, indeed fully accepting them, means that your health is worth it to you. That you are worth it to yourself.

Let's talk about your self-regard and your self-worth. This comes down to how much you value your body and your own self. Denis Waitley says, *"The winners in life treat their body as if it were a magnificent spacecraft that gives them the finest transportation and endurance for their lives."*

This quote illustrates for me why our health is a reflection of our personal development. If you think highly of yourself it makes sense that you will invest in you with good nutrition, adequate rest, regular exercise, a positive working environment, and loving relationships in your life.

The simplest way I know how to boost your self-regard and self-worth is to do things on a daily basis, on purpose, that demonstrate to you a high opinion of yourself. Here is an example. If you are in a relationship in which you feel degraded, learning to speak up for yourself is a good start. This may not always be easy, but you must start somewhere. If you habitually stop after work for a few drinks, by switching to going home and taking a walk with your dog or spouse is like pouring value into you. If you habitually stay up too

late and feel exhausted in the morning, try getting to bed every night at 10 for a week and see how you feel.

With these habits, it is most challenging in the beginning, but it does get easier. In fact, with each incremental bump up in your seeing value in you, you will be that much more inclined to reinvest in your self-worth. I think of this as your filling your own tank. It's like reaping a return on your investment, and it is measured by a shift in your perception of your energy, your choices, your health, and often your weight.

Another aspect of this is in letting others observe this shift in your attitude and behavior. Let those around you adjust their expectations of you as you improve your self-care. My family knows that I won't be joining them in their fried chicken dinner. They know I don't eat food like that. My mom knows when I come to visit her that I am going to take time out each day to get some exercise and do yoga. Teach the people around you to respect you for your choices. This reflects back to you as energy and encouragement.

This is connected to the next category which is your recovering from woundedness in order to honor your body. In [Health Matters](#), I refer to the work of Dr. Mario Martinez, who wrote [The MindBody Code](#). Essentially, if there were traumas and insults to your psyche in the past, they might manifest in a tendency to do damaging things to your body. Carrying an extra fifty pounds, for example, might be your body's way of holding on to unresolved hurts or abuse. I don't know anyone who did not experience some kind of woundedness in their past. I grew up in a household in which there was an unimaginable amount of control and judgement around food and my sister's and my body shape. I had to swim upstream to get past that negativity, shame, and blame. But it was worth it. I learned from my own experience that taking care of ourselves as a way to heal from the past represents transformational personal work. I see this in my clients all the time.

Do a body check and ask yourself if you might be acting out something along these lines with your habits. Food and nutrition represent your chance to honor your body, or to abuse it. It's the same thing with alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sugar, and exercise. Are you nurturing yourself? Or are you poisoning yourself?

Here is the simplest way to blend personal development with your ability to help your body heal. Take massively good care of your body in present time. I ask my clients to do something every day on purpose that supports them to be healthy. Even if you are still at risk to do other things against your own good judgement, still... you can add something positive to begin to shift the balance.

Some examples are to add more veggies to your diet, or to switch from diet soda to pure water. I mentioned taking a walk instead of having a few drinks after work.

This is similar to what I told you earlier in this episode. Instead of discounting the simple things, celebrate them. It's like your goal to be more comfortable in your clothing. You

have heard me talk about baby steps over and over on this Health Matters Podcast series. Whatever little loving, nurturing, honoring thing you do daily, on purpose, will add up and inspire you to heal from the past and become more complete in the present. This is like reverse engineering any traumas from the past by taking care of yourself today and all of the todays in your future.

This leads me to the last category that connects your personal growth with your health and optimal weight. I called this living a bigger life, free from the undercurrent of addiction.

I am obsessed with not being obsessed. What I mean by this is my relentless pursuit to be free and unencumbered by distracting health challenges. I embrace and love how I take such good care of my body that my body works beautifully for me in sports, yoga, work, and every day activities. Not only do I not take my body for granted. I invest in my wellness every day. What can you do starting today to invest in your own wellness?

I am recommending to you to move in the direction of being so aligned with your body that new doors of opportunities open for you.

I've been thinking a lot about this lately, which is what prompted this episode of Health Matters Podcast. To make your life about living instead of succumbing to the distraction of poor habits will be among the greatest transformations you can experience. My mind is being flooded right now with all of the rewards to you for gradually untangling yourself from self-destructive habits. Choosing to move towards being happier and freer is nothing short of life-changing. Decide on a daily basis that your value is high and the people whom you want to serve in your life are important.

Find causes that are only possible to achieve when your size, your shape, and your energy level are consistent and favorable. This is among my most compelling messages to you. I am encouraging you to become all that you can be, which invariably includes pro-health, pro-body choices.

You don't have to be an Olympic athlete to get the benefits of regular exercise. You don't have to be a full-fledged health nut to experience the rewards of more green leafy veggies in your diet. And you certainly don't have to be rail-thin to have a beautiful body.

But you do have to figure out what your best is. And you do have to figure out in what ways might your body serve you to achieve your dreams instead of inhibit you. This is the ultimate theme in your personal development, finding out what you are made for and what your purpose is. Recently I heard someone say that the two best days of his life were when he was born and when he discovered his purpose.

Let me remind you to go fetch your roadmap to personal growth as it relates to optimal health at www.RosieBank.com/9download. Let me know what you discover. Join us at www.Facebook.com/GetYourBodyToLoveYouBack where you can share your wins.

I am promising you from the bottom of my healthy heart that by inviting your body to support you on this journey called life, every single thing about that will bless you and reward you. There is no down side to making healthy choices. Doing so eliminates risk instead of increasing it. Becoming more energetic and shedding extra pounds opens doors for you. Your figuring out what those doors are is an essential part of this journey.

Currently it is December 2016. It is almost the New Year. One of my clients told me yesterday is that she can now say with confidence Happy New Me, and I can say to her, what I want to say to you now: Happy New You.

Remember, health matters. And so do you.

Additional Resources

Here are some resources to get you acquainted to the Health Matters approach to lasting health and vitality.

[Health Matters Podcast](#) – free and downloadable

[Health Matters newsletter](#) – healthy news you can use on a weekly basis. Free Ebook, *It Pays to Be Healthy*

[Health Matters—52 Ways To Get Your Body To Love You Back](#). Available in traditional and eBook format.

If you believe that this is your time to get your body to love you back by making changes to your approach to food, nutrition, eating, and other lifestyle habits, consider [Health Coaching](#).

[Click here](#) for an immediate reply from me if you have questions or wish to get started.

Through health coaching and using these principles, imagine in less than one year hardly being able to recognize yourself for your energy level, your freedom around food, your new size and shape, and your enjoyment of massively reduced stress plus increased peace and harmony.

Wishing you peace, joy, and an abundance of great health,

Rosie Bank

