

flourish![®]

July/August 2010



NARROW THE GAPS in your health and in your life

By Dr. Michelle Robin

Most of us are not where we want to be in many aspects of our life, such as health or finances. When you think of these or other goals you have, two things are for sure: change is required and results are not instantaneous. You need a plan. A good plan asks three questions: Where am I now? Where do I want to be? How do I get there? While these questions are viable for any goal you want to achieve, I'm going to focus on health.

First—Where am I now? Take an inventory of all aspects of your health. Think of health being in four quadrants: mechanical, chemical, energetic and psychological/spiritual. Be objective when taking this inventory and write down where you are now on the left side of a piece of paper.

- Mechanical health —This is the structural support of your physical body.
- Chemical health —This is your body chemistry, metabolism, nutritional intake, lab results.
- Energetic health —This is your invisible life force, our vibration.
- Psychological/Emotional health

Second—Where do I want to be? Close your eyes and imagine your ideal state of health. Visualize each aspect of yourself using the four quadrants. Write this down on the right side of your paper.

Most of us have a gap between where we are and where we wish to be. Our wellness potential lies in the gap. This is your opportunity to narrow the gap by making positive changes for lifelong health!

Lastly—How do I get there? For me, assessing where I am and writing the goals are the easy parts. The hard part is putting a plan into action! The thing I hear most often from clients working on any significant improvement in their lives, be it health, finances or other goals, is “It is so overwhelming. There is so much to do.”

Combat the feeling of being overwhelmed by approaching your health plan the way you might your retirement plan. Similarly to planning for retirement, after visiting with a financial planner and realizing that you need to have in excess of two million dollars to live the way you want, for example, it can seem overwhelming. Four key elements of financial planning apply to your health plan as well:

- **It will take time.** Just as having all your retirement savings stockpiled is not immediate, neither is total health and wellness. You are not Wonder Woman. You can't just spin around and completely change clothes, persona and have super powers to do anything you want instantaneously. Accept this from the outset and approach your plan as a life-long journey and lifestyle change.

- **Break down your plan in reasonable and manageable chunks.** With your retirement plan, there is only so much you can contribute at any given point in time with consideration of all your other financial obligations. With your health plan, identify all the specific changes you'd like to make and incorporate them as they can be successfully implemented. Literally and figuratively, don't bite off more than you can chew. If you take on too much, you will continue to feel overwhelmed and likely quit. It is more important that you achieve slowly than fail quickly.
- **Make it automatic.** You likely have your 401(k) contribution or other savings taken out of your paycheck automatically every month. This rapidly builds your savings and eliminates some of the decision making. Do the same with your health decisions as much as possible. Set up a Health Savings Account (HSA) and automatically save so that you have funds available when you need them, i.e., seeing your chiropractor for regular adjustments. Make other things automatic such as a regular time every day that you take a walk, meditate, spend 15 minutes de-cluttering the house or set aside the same pitcher of water you need to drink each day. You will have a daily sense of accomplishment.
- **Compounding effects.** Time is important in finances and in health. You save money now for later because of the accumulation of wealth and the compounding interest over time. The same is true for your health choices. You may be able to only walk to the end of your street and back today. But if you did that every day by the end of the month you would likely be circling the block twice. When you break down the overall goals into manageable amounts, as mentioned above, you will feel the accumulation of health. As you begin to add more healthy habits while maintaining the habits you've already created, it is as if you are gaining the compounding interest of health.

Make a commitment to start closing your gap—decision by decision, day by day, and month by month. Feel your health wealth build! Get started today.

Wishing you a year filled with wellness!

Dr. Michelle Robin is the Founder and Chief Wellness Officer of Your Wellness Connection, P.A. Contact her at 913.962.7408.

If you liked this article, then consider subscribing to
flourish! magazine • www.flourishmagazine.com