**The Heart of the Matter: Knowing Your Body’s Love Language**

Relationships, romantic or otherwise, evolve and strengthen through consistent effort. The same is true of your relationship with your body. When you consistently pay attention to its subtle language, it thrives. Hearing the term “love language” brings about thoughts of how love is expressed and received in relationships with others. Similarly, the body uses language to communicate requirements for nourishment, care, and attention. The question is, are you listening? Unlocking the secrets of the body’s love language is not just a one-time revelation; it’s an ongoing journey of understanding and adapting to the nuanced cues and signals it sends.

Since February is the month associated with love in all its many forms and is also the month where we are reminded to pay attention to heart health⸺it’s the perfect time to pay closer attention to what your body is telling you. One fundamental aspect of the body’s love language is nutrition. It’s an area where small changes can make a big impact. Instead of drastic diets, focus on gradually incorporating healthier food choices into your daily routine. Over time, these incremental adjustments can lead to improved energy levels, better digestion, and overall enhanced vitality. It’s about the cumulative effect of consistently making choices that nourish your body while remembering that it’s also necessary to nourish the soul. However, nourishing the soul more often than the body, can lead to health issues. Making daily micro changes will eventually tip the scales in the opposite direction where those soul nourishing meals will be less frequent *and enjoyed even more*.

Be mindful of how your body feels after eating certain foods, or quantities of food. If you notice discomfort, decide if it’s really worth feeling that way. For example: If your favorite pizza has you in the bathroom for the rest of the night and the following day, your body is talking to you, loud and clear. You may want to limit both portion size and frequency. If your comfort food choice is of the highly processed variety, it has likely been formulated to keep you coming back for more. Try making a homemade version of your favorite dish so you are aware of every ingredient. Likewise, it’s vitally important to pay attention to what foods and habits make you feel your best. If you notice a pattern of more energy, better sleep, less stress after eating certain foods, slowly make those a more permanent part of the menu rotation. Just as you probably don’t enjoy being ignored in personal relationships, your body doesn’t like it either. The body, in its innate wisdom, is talking to us all the time. Noticing subtle signals can keep it from turning up the volume and prevent things from getting out of control.

Understanding the body’s love language extends beyond the physical and also involves recognizing emotional and mental cues. They are intertwined. Stress, anxiety, and other emotions are signals that your body sends to convey its state of well-being. Practicing mindfulness, meditation, intentional breathing, or seeking support when needed is a way of responding favorably to these signals and can have a profound impact on your mental clarity and emotional resilience over time. Positive emotions are associated with the release of endorphins and other feel-good chemicals in the brain, which can positively influence the cardiovascular system. Studies suggest that individuals who experience more positive emotions tend to have better heart health.

Learning and honoring every part of your body’s love language involves tuning into signals such as hunger, fatigue, stress and emotional well-being. It promotes self-love and self-care, ultimately contributing to a healthier, happier, you. It is an investment your future self will thank you for!

**Easy Love Language Valentine’s Day Recipe**

A special Valentine dinner doesn’t have to be fancy. Some strawberries dipped in chocolate, a heart shaped cookie cutter, and a little imagination are sure to turn an entree or side dish into a love language meal. Pictured below are a couple that have warmed my heart.

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