



A Journey to Wellness

The DARE to Self-Care Challenge

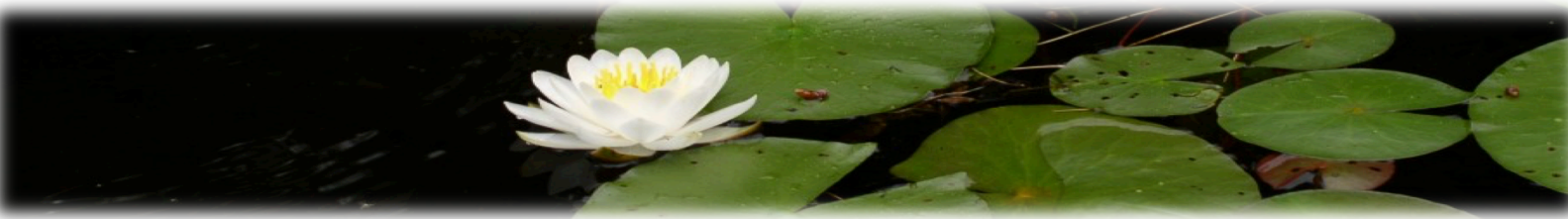
Wellness is a personal journey. It involves a change of perspective that supports healthy ways of living with diabetes. It's possible to dwell in a state of wellbeing at the same time as coping with the demands of a chronic illness. Many of us are so caught up in the day-to-day details of disease management; we are unable to consider the concept of wellness. In fact, we may be so focused on our illness, the idea of wellness is a contradiction at best, unattainable at worst. Wellness is a state of mind as well as a statement of physical health.

Wellness is often defined as an absence of sickness or a cessation of symptoms. It is actually much more than that. Wellness is a domain all its own. It is a felt sense of balance in one's life, an awareness of living in harmony. It is the ability to find stability within ever changing circumstances. It is a tempered strength within the different threads of body, mind, and spirit. It is there for the taking, if we could but recognize the pattern it is already weaving into our lives.

We believe this journey begins with a dare. A dare to manage your diabetes with a bigger set of tools and skills. It's a "self-dare" for each woman to examine her closely held beliefs about what is possible for her to attain. But there is one thing we know, diabetes itself is a challenge we have already met. The journey to wellness, in spite of our diabetes (maybe even because of it) is merely the next step.

A change of perspective is all that is needed along with a great pause. A series of moments in which a common place attitude of struggle and fatigue, disappointment and frustration is suspended. It can be found in the subtle sense of flow when one is practicing tai chi. Somewhere between "parting the wild horse's mane and white crane spreads its wings" the flow of harmony showed up. In spite of blood sugar fluctuations or numbness, regardless of what one ate or didn't eat, a sensation of wellbeing wove itself into the pattern of a moment. Those moments can be strung like pearls on a silken rope to create a perspective that becomes the strength of purpose and meaning.

This is no small thing. Like the tensile strength of silk, it does not break down under pressure. It is the very measure of resiliency. There are many things one can do that can create this form of wellness. It can be a sense of stillness that showed up in meditation. It can be felt in the flow of breath and movement of qi gong or expressive dance. It can permeate your muscles during a brisk or vigorous trail hike or the sensation of joy when tasting subtle new flavors in the foods you eat.



What if you were able to tap into a feeling of wellbeing that surpassed fear, distress and the sense of hopelessness that managing diabetes can induce? What if you no longer saw yourself as weak, sick, or struggling? What if what you are simply a wise woman with diabetes who knows she is far more than a diagnosis?

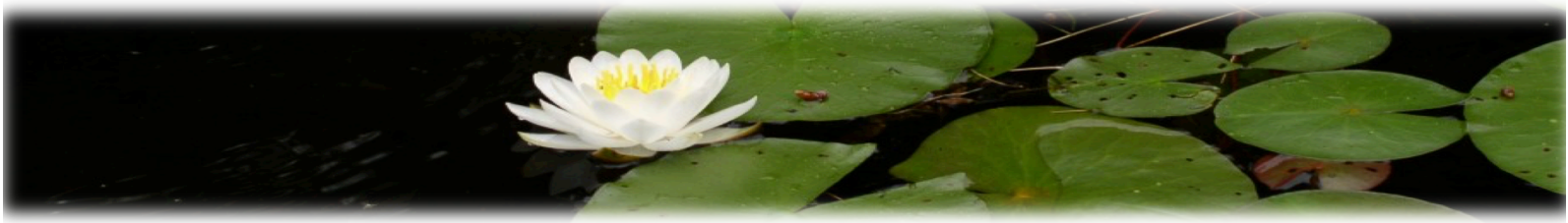
There is vibrancy in that kind of self-awareness. It's not a concept, this perspective of wellness, it's a felt reality. To find this perspective within the changing demands of living with a chronic condition, one needs to take "time out."

Our retreats offer time away from daily demands and create an atmosphere of introspection and discovery. We offer fertile ground to discover wellness of body, mind and spirit. We help women with diabetes explore and create sustainable, realistic blueprints for healthy self-care attitudes and actions. Our unique combination of sharing diabetes wisdom, knowledge, skills, humor and kindness helps women to become more confident they can respond to the changes diabetes brings to their lives.

So take the **DARE** and Discover, Awareness, Respect and Empowerment along the journey to wellness!

THE DARE TEAM

Janet, Connie, Judith, Gita, Ann Marie & Melanie



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