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## The most important heart of Valentine's Day

By Kay Wagner LMP  
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How is your heart this valentine's day? To each of us that brings a different image. For some it means 'Is your blood pressure OK?' or 'Do you have any blockages?' For many it means 'Are you loved and happy?' Science is now finding that your emotional state of feeling loved and connected will nourish the health of your heart.

In the next minute, while you read this your heart will pump four or five gallons of blood. That's all the blood you have in your body. Your heart will pull used blood in, pump it into the lungs where it picks up fresh supplies of oxygen and *then* pump it straight back into your heart. Now your trusty pump sends this blood to your brain, toes, finger tips, and every cell in between.

Recently I saw Dr. Mehmet Oz, a leading heart surgeon, on Oprah. Oprah's heart was shown on the big screen, in 3-D. Dr. Oz explained the healthy veins, arteries, muscle tone, and what this means. It means that Oprah has the heart of a nineteen year-old. A "very sexy" young heart, he and Oprah joked. They can see all this with a 64 CT scan, a new heart scanner which produces a three dimensional photo of your heart. This scan is available for around \$400.

Seeing Dr. Oz and learning that heart related disease will kill one out of two American women got my attention. Way beyond breast cancer. And knowing I have shortness of breath and often a high stress level and couldn't kick the winter flu made his message hit home.

Dr. Oz's book, *Healing from the Heart* chronicles his pioneering research in combining western medical treatment with 'complimentary' medicine like prayer, massage, yoga, relaxation tapes, acupuncture and diet.

Patient after patient that had love and encouragement healed faster and with less medication than those lacking these nourishing connections. Those who felt very angry, lonely, stressed, or anxious had more complications.

Heart patients with companionship, laughter, pep talks, prayer and someone to hold their hand were far more likely to survive.

Diet and life style greatly affect your heart. If they put in a stent to open and support a blocked heart vessel, they are mechanically opening the way for blood flow. But if the blood moving through is full of garbage like fats, salt, nicotine, and toxins your heart has to work twice as hard.

For a healthy heart, make it a habit to express your love to those you care deeply for. Focus on the love you feel for them and feel it expand in your heart.

If stress comes in, stand taller to give your heart extra oxygen and room to move.

Bring more joy into your day. Enjoy more music, nature, loved ones, funny movies, prayer, family photos, laughter with friends.

Stop rushing. Breathe more deeply.

Increase the physical activities that are most pleasurable for you. Dr. Oz suggests we break a sweat at least 60 minutes a week, to rev the engine of your heart.

Eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water.

Let the love you feel circulate freely in your veins. Stressed? Ask your heart for answers and listen quietly. You will know your heart is speaking when you feel at peace with the answers.

This Valentine's Day your heart will beat 150,000 times and pump more than 4,000 *gallons* of blood. Acknowledge your heart for all it does for you. Infuse your heart with love and let the chocolate and valentine's flow.

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### **Stressed? Headaches? Insomnia?**

**Kay Wagner LMP has a special talent for helping people relax and improve their health. Kay offers "R &R" private sessions, coaching breathing, stretching and relaxation. She is a Licensed Massage Therapist and Certified Yoga and Pilates instructor. Learn to relax and rejuvenate in Kay's studio overlooking the mountains and water at 828 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Mukilteo WA 98275.**

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