

Scott: Whole Health for Individuals and Couples. This is Stay Happily Married Episode Number 298.

Female Announcer: Welcome to Stay Happily Married, your source for weekly updates on the latest tips and advice to build a healthy and happy marriage.

Scott: I'm Scott Blair, and I'm your host today, welcome to the show. Do you and your spouse have whole health? Health seems to be a hot topic in the world today, whether it is mental health, or physical health, there are always articles in numerous magazines, and websites promoting ways to get in shape mentally, and physically.

We have articles on work out regiments, dietary plans, combinations of both. We also have articles on how to distress and relax. A combination of both of these topics can also be found in various articles and magazines and on the internet that promote physical health and mental health together. When you are in a relationship do you think it is important for you and your loved one to have superb physical and mental health to improve your relationship? If so what can you do individually and as a couple to achieve this?

Earning her doctorate's degree in Counseling and Psychology from Indiana State University Dr. Katherine Kelly is a licensed psychologist in her own psycho-therapy and counseling practice in Winston Salem, North Carolina. Dr. Kelly has been named the pioneer of soul health through the development of her trademark model the "Soul Health Model." She is a clinical holistic health psychologist. Dr. Kelly is a contributor to Health and Wellness magazines and speaks at local, regional, and national educational and corporate health organizations. With over 20 years of clinical experience Dr. Kelly has had extensive experience helping others to heal and evolve.

Welcome to the show Katherine, I am so glad you could join us today.

Dr. Kelly: Thank you, I'm so glad to be here today.

Scott: I'm not sure if the topic of let alone the term whole health are very well known. Can you elaborate a little bit on what whole health is exactly?

Dr. Kelly: Yes absolutely. To me whole health is a lot more than just the physical aspect. Most people think of health as being just the physical component, and I have a model that I created that really

has ten components of health that I think, and anybody would agree that if we weren't balanced within each one of those we would not experience that full groundedness or balance, or sense of wholeness, and so for me it's physical, psychological, social, interpersonal, spiritual, financial, recreational, sexual, environmental, and intellectual, occupational. So there's a lot more to it than just physical health.

Scott: Well what problems do you see that couples are experiencing in their relationships that could benefit by obtaining this whole health?

Dr. Kelly: You know, the first and foremost piece of this I think is awareness. When one part of our life is unbalanced, or for lack of a clinical term out of whack which I think a lot of people can relate to that term you know, we just don't feel well individually which means it starts to affect the couple, which means sometimes we have a hard time balancing our time, balancing basically our understanding of what we need to do to really enhance relationships, and marriages. And so you know, some of it really has to do with that whole awareness piece, I think the vast majority of it.

And because life can be so busy, and we have you know, a big challenge just trying to keep our balance within our individual lives they do start to affect the lives of those we love and care about as well. And so when we forget the whole picture, that whole idea of how my world affects someone else's and vice versa our relationship issues do tend to come to the surface, and also we start to ignore again not only our own needs, but our partners needs.

Scott: Well what are some of the short and long term negative effects that this behavior can have on the relationship?

Dr. Kelly: Well again, going back to time, I think when we don't take time to be whole we much more lose, easily lose ourselves, and it is so easy to lose yourself within a relationship when we're focusing on everybody else's needs or the busyness of life in general, and we tend to start treating others poorly, we become disconnected with ourselves, and others.

And for me the number reason why couples split is because they have grown apart, they have created a distance between each other that really sometimes is irreparable. Also this is why we have affairs, we have unhealthy behaviors, we start to distance in ways that basically hurt the relationship in general.

Scott: So as a therapist you're sitting down and speaking with couples that have come to you to explore perhaps even resolve issues in the relationship, and what point in time do you see that couples are actually becoming aware that not having whole health is hurting the relationship?

Dr. Kelly: You know, that's a tough one actually Scott, because I think part of this has to do with again are they aware enough to know that it's their lack of feeling whole that's creating it? Which to me which is why sometimes it's important to go to someone who is objective to start pointing those things out, because a lot of times when we're in emotional pain, or we're in the chaos of life we forget that really part of that is because we aren't feeling grounded and whole.

Scott: About ourselves.

Dr. Kelly: Yes, absolutely.

Scott: It reminds me of the old saying I heard I think on one of the interviews here that the advice was "I'll take care of me for you, and you take care of you for me." So we have to be whole ourselves first.

Dr. Kelly: Precisely, and people really have a hard time understanding that, because we're taught otherwise, we're taught to take care of everybody else first, but just like when you get on a plane one of the first things that we're told is put your own oxygen mask on before you help your neighbor, because otherwise you're not going to survive the situation. And so it is a dual purpose for us to take care of ourselves.

Scott: Yeah, because if you think of taking care of yourself first at times feel selfish, or narcissistic.

Dr. Kelly: Right, right, and yet that's where we best take care of you know everybody else is if we have a very firm grounding and sense of balance.

Scott: Absolutely makes sense. Have you observed trends among couples having issues that could be resolved by having whole health?

Dr. Kelly: Gosh the trends you know, I'm not sure I would call it a trend, but I do think there's many, many there are many, many patterns related to age, length of marriage, family structure et cetera. You know, the trend itself is that life is busy, and I think we lose that sense of focus, and we lose that self so much that I think that's the trend.

We've forgotten to ground ourselves so that we can stay very present in the moment, so that we can attend to ourselves, and to our partner, or family in general.

Scott: Well I know from my personal experience that if I let one area get out of balance it affects all the other areas. So if I lose my discipline in eating, I notice it in my spending, I notice it in my spiritual disciplines, in my gym life, it affects everything.

Dr. Kelly: And that is absolutely true, it is so interrelated that, that's why I said a lot of people aren't even aware of the whole area of whole health, but they're also not aware of just like you said that domino effect that one, I call them branches that when one branch is I call it dis-eased or wilty then it is going to have sometimes a tragic affect on the rest of those branches of health.

Scott: Well then what do you suggest that both couples and individuals do to start obtaining this whole health?

Dr. Kelly: Well it goes back to that old cliché of finding balance, but it's not so much cliché when your life is feeling unhealthy. So it's that whole idea of understanding whole or I call it full health, because it really goes down to that gut level of knowing that something is out of whack, and knowing how to fix it. But then we have to be intentional and actively work toward maintaining that connection with yourself, and others in order for it to come full circle, and you know create a much more viable foundation for that relationship.

Scott: Well could we drill down on that just a little bit?

Dr. Kelly: Sure.

Scott: And maybe list some specific items that you have couples working on that might help them resolve some of those negative issues we've been talking about.

Dr. Kelly: Absolutely. Some of it is just that plain old slowing down and checking in with yourself. One of my favorite ways to encourage individuals to do this is that taking the time that it takes to brush your teeth, morning, noon, night whenever you brush your teeth which is usually a minute, two minutes, to check in with yourself, and sometimes also with the ones you love that are nearby to just see where you are with that sense of groundedness, and balance.

Also I encourage a weekly time to set almost as a date or an appointment to just check in with each other to say "Okay where

am I with feeling grounded, and whole, and balanced, and where are you in feeling grounded and whole, and balanced?"

Another thing that I you know, especially in therapy I use this a lot, but I try to encourage people to use as much humor and lightheartedness as possible, because this life thing can be pretty difficult, and challenging. If we can be lighthearted toward maintaining our health, I think that goes a long way in actually being successful. And those you know, those check-ins it does not take very long for us to check-in with ourselves, we just neglect to do it.

Scott: Well when you have couples approaching the relationship in this way, and they're scheduling their check-ins, what are some of the changes that you're seeing in the quality and interaction of their relationship?

Dr. Kelly: Well the first and foremost thing is connectedness, because I think what happens is that once couples start to understand what they need, and start to express it to the other person, and then their partner starts to understand what they individually need, and they express it to their partner, not only are you educating, I call it giving them the instruction manual, but not only are you educating them, but you're also deepening your own bond with that person, because then you know what to give or receive in order to create that healthier relationship.

So that is I think the first and foremost is that connectivity piece, and then the other part of it is just that creating that intentional whole health mindset from that point forward is going to help you through any of the storms of life, because you know, we have deaths, we have births, we have marriages, we have divorces, we have you know, job losses, we have any of those I call them storms of life. And the more grounded you are within yourself and your couple the better you're going to get through any of those situations.

Scott: Well this is a pretty broad topic, and we have limited time here. But a kind of way of closing do you think there is anything of great importance that you can share with our listeners who might be feeling that they don't have whole health and that domino effect has just taken over their life?

Dr. Kelly: Absolutely. You know, I think the first and foremost thing again is that idea that we have to adopt a mindset of wanting whole health, and wanting to be balanced, and then educating ourself to figure

out what is your best blueprint in order to get there. The model that I created I think is pretty user friendly, and most people, I've got a couple of people that you know, actually literally put it up in their laundry room just so they could look at it once in awhile as they're through their day, but it's that intentionality, and mindfulness that take you where you need to go in order to not only create whole health, but to create that very close bond in that viable relationship.

Scott: Well Katherine this has been very helpful, really appreciate you taking the time being with us on the show today.

Dr. Kelly: Fantastic, I'm so glad I could be here.

Scott: To find out more about Dr. Katherine Kelly, and her practice you could visit her website at www.DrKatherineTKelly.com or call 336-723-1011 for an appointment. Thank you so much for joining us today and I hope you'll join us again next week.

For more information about this show and previous episodes visit us at StayHappilyMarried.com. I'm Scott Blair, until next time, stay happily married.

Female Announcer: Thank you for joining us today on Stay Happily Married. If you'd like more information, please visit us on the web at StayHappilyMarried.com, we would love to hear your feedback or comments. Please email us at comments@stayhappilymarried.com, or call us at 919-256-3083. Until next time, best wishes.