**Controlling the “icky” in your life!**

Have you ever thought about the word “addiction” and how it affects your life? Unfortunately, the holidays can often bring out the worst of addictions, personal loneliness and problems. It’s a tough time of year for many people.

A question that I often struggle with is what causes us to become addicted?  Is it the addiction that sets our personalities or is it the personality we are born with or have been raised with that lead us into a life of an unhealthy behavior?

    Here’s what I’m thinking, if you take the alcohol away from the alcoholic you still have the “ic.”  If you take the work out of workaholic, you still have the “ic.”  When you take any of the behaviors or substances away, you still have the “ic.” The drug addict, exercise addict, T.V. addict, food addict, cleaning addict, cell phone addict, gaming addict; it doesn’t matter what it is. It’s the “ic” in all of us that is the hardest part to change when suffering from dependence from an outside source.

I believe it’s the “ic” in us that we need to address. We are always left with the “ic” after you take away the problem, it makes you feel “icky.” When it was the substance or the obsessive behavior that was the icky part of our health. We are the “ic”.

I’m a believer that deep down inside we, as humans are not icky. We do icky things to ourselves and we practice icky behaviors and we allow ourselves to make icky choices.

I want to change the “ic” that’s been attached to our lives and change it to represent “In Control.” As a health educator, I know that the ultimate challenge for every one of us is to stay in control of our behaviors. We struggle with it in everything we do and it’s the ‘lack of’ and/or ‘too much control of’ that often begins that cycle of addiction and destructive behaviors.

In our circle of health and the wellness wheel that I often speak about, it’s important to know and understand what is holding us down from reaching the goals we want to reach. So many “icky” behaviors drive our health right into the ground and cause our wellness wheel to gimp along and not roll productively through life.

Weight loss continues to be one of the biggest issue with health, so what part of you has lost control with regards to your diet and exercise? What behaviors will it take for you to get the icky behaviors out of your life and become in control of your weight again?

People often ask me how I manage to write this article every week. I must admit I often sit down with ‘ic’ in my brain, kicking myself for waiting until the last minute to get it done. I break it down into small steps, gain my confidence and momentum and wash that ‘ic’ right out of my thoughts and get her done. It’s the same thing that needs to be done with everything in our lives; and, yes, the same with our health.

So, begin gaining control of ‘ic’ with simple measures. Scheduling your exercise time on your personal, family and work calendars is a great way to make it happen. Also, it’s a great way to encourage others, by setting a healthy example for your family and co-workers. Be prepared and realistic with your exercise. You might suddenly find 30 minutes while you are waiting for your child, can you take a quick walk around the school while you wait? Don’t pressure yourself with unnecessary worries. If you don’t have an hour to hit the gym, then take those 15 minutes now and look for 15 more later in your day.

Pre-plan your meals and snacks. Figure out what meals and snacks you enjoy the most and how you can make them healthier, even if it’s simply eating less of it. Plan your eating strategy. Always have healthy choices available and prepare your day so that you don’t fall into the slump of “icky” eating.

Remember that you always have choices, no matter how terrible your ‘ic’ is in your life. There’s help and there’s a way!