



Are You Shoulding On Yourself?

September 3rd is here and our 3-month family membership at the Community Center expired today. Danielle and I joined and worked out a total of 6 times all summer, which prompted Gary to calculate our cost per workout at \$15.00. Kinda expensive! We did have a plan — a plan to work out after Danielle got home from work at 5:00 pm. We were challenged by the weather being too hot, Danielle being too tired, or simply being too busy. The equipment was old and in need of repair. The workout room felt depressing, not energizing. The summer flew by and after our July family vacation we quit “shoulding” ourselves about going to the Community Center.

I went alone to work out a few times. But, after I worked out with Danielle it was totally no fun, boring and a total “should” to exercise all alone. I wanted to be with Danielle every minute she would “spare” for the three months she was home this summer. “I should exercise” versus “I want to be with Danielle and burn some cals on the treadmill at the same time.” Can you feel the difference?

Wants are joy, and happiness from the inside out. Exercising without Danielle was a “should” totally guilt based. Wants empower. Shoulds dis-empower. Wants bring joy. Shoulds bring guilt and self blame. Wants satisfy inner happiness — YOUR happiness. Shoulds satisfy external happiness — someone else’s happiness.

When we tell ourselves we “should” do something it sets us up for disappointment and dissatisfaction. When we don’t live up to our shoulds, we judge ourselves as bad or not good enough. Listen to your inner voice this week. Ask yourself as you go about your day, “Is this a should?” or “Is this a want?” What should you do about your long list of shoulds? You don’t have to do anything — only if you WANT to!