

# The Forgotten Body

## How to use this card:

*Pass this card around. Each person please state your name and read a small section of the content on *The Forgotten Body*:*

## Concept 2: The Forgotten Body

*Poor health and addiction are the logical conclusion of leaving the body out of the body, mind, and spirit equation.*

The Suppers Programs seek no more but no less than to restore care of the physical body to its natural place in this equation. The body's nonnegotiable needs are simple, if not easy, to fulfill. We require a diet of whole foods as they exist in nature, meaningful physical activity, and ways to manage stress, including satisfying human connections. The profit motive for orienting care of the body toward treatment and pharmaceuticals is intense. At Suppers, we remember the body and focus on prevention and repair through diet and lifestyle.

## [Gail's Story: You Are Not What You Eat](#)

In my many years of searching for answers to my depression, panic attacks, and abdominal pain, no one ever suggested that my mood problems and bellyaches were all the same problem. And nobody told me that what was going on in my head was "downstream" from my gut, which is just a fancy way of saying one caused the other.

I went to lots of conferences, seminars, programs, and support groups in addition to doctors and therapists. Some of them were holistic, and that's where I started to realize that nutrition is not generally examined when you present with panic attacks. Just as Suppers says, they forgot my body. They were perfectly willing to give me pills to fix my moods and abdominal pain, but they didn't pay attention to where my mental health issues came from to begin with. Years of eating sweets and treating infections with antibiotics had ruined my digestion.

One day at a seminar, a doctor said, "You are not what you eat." Ears perked up. "You are only what you absorb of what you eat." And he went on to talk about all the things in our environment that destroy our digestion, including sugar, processed foods, stress, heavy metal pollutants, antibiotics, not having breast fed, lack of exercise, and too much alcohol.

This made sense to me because although I ate pretty well, I was stressed, had taken lots of antibiotics, and self-medicated my anxiety with alcohol. Ultimately, good food was not enough. I had to get professional help from a doctor and nutritionist who gave me probiotics, capsules of herbs to clean out my liver, and supplements to heal my gut. Eventually the bloating decreased. I put on a few pounds, which I needed to do. I took some anti-fungal medication recommended by my doctor and worked on the stress part by swimming and learning to breathe better. It took a long time, but as the abdominal pain and pressure subsided my mood got better.

What I would like to contribute to Suppers is this: "Don't ever leave your body out of the equation." Even some very bad mental health challenges can start with a bellyache, because the brain is downstream from the gut.

**Continue around the table by briefly sharing how you relate to the Suppers concept of The Forgotten Body.**

**In what ways has your body failed to have its needs met, and how would you like to change that?**

**Discussion Prompts (Each person select a prompt that works for you.)**

- What are you noticing about your relationship with food and how it affects how you feel throughout the day?
- How would you characterize your digestion and bowel function? See the [Bristol stool chart](#), page 85 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Logical Miracles* or on the Suppers website.
- Describe how your relationships support or weaken your well being.
- Describe a situation in which you left care of your physical body out of the equation.
- What change would you make to better include care of your physical body in your daily life?
- Describe what you do for physical activity, whether it's "exercise" or something else.
- Using "I statements", share on the theme of "profit motive" and how it has influenced your well being.

**Ideas for Next Steps:**

***Experiments and Observations:***

- Do an observation with your group. Go once around the table, each person commenting on their digestion and their mood. Does any pattern emerge?
- Do a thought experiment: Imagine you have already made a change to better include the needs of your physical body in your daily life, how would that change how you feel?
- Do a thought experiment: Locate a place of tightness, pain, or stress within your body and imagine the change (not limited to food) that might help release it.

***Between Meetings:***

- Read how other Suppers members related to this concept.
  - For people in recovery from alcoholism, read [Tina's Story](#), page 81 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Logical Miracles* or on the Suppers website.
  - For people who do not experience easy, healthy bowel movements every date, read [Grett's Story](#) page 83 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Logical Miracles* or on the Suppers website.
  - For people with autoimmune diseases, read [Maggie's Story](#), page 86 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Logical Miracles* or on the Suppers website.
- Arrange a walk or some physically active social time that keeps you moving.