



Making Good Choices about Your Healthcare

By Renée Siegel

There are over 78 million baby boomers in the United States. This article is for those of us boomers who want a fulfilling and vital lifestyle. Those of us committed to recovery want a quality recovery, one filled with a healthy productive life, lots of vitality and energy to embrace and enjoy ourselves. In order to achieve this goal one day at a time, it is imperative that we move past the victim stance we held onto so dearly during our active addictions. We must see ourselves as empowered. After all, the powerlessness we embrace is about the addiction or self-destructive behaviors we were engaging in.

What does it mean to be empowered when making choices about your healthcare? Here are some suggestions to guide you in making good choices . This applies to your medical and counseling professionals. Remember these persons are not your Higher Power. This is not a place where you turn it over. You may want to follow the advice given to you and to establish a partnership with these caregivers, but it is YOU that is taking the action once you leave the office.

1. Choose a provider that can offer you the type of care you want. Be clear about your expectations.
2. Do you want someone that you are comfortable talking with? How important is bedside manner to you?
3. Do you need a specialist? A psychiatrist or psychiatric nurse practitioner is more likely to give you an antidepressant that is effective than a general internist.
4. Make a list of questions that you would like answered. If you need help with formulating questions, ask a friend or sponsor to assist you.
5. Get a second opinion if necessary. Remember this is your health and you deserve to get another opinion if you are unsure of the advice of your doctor.
6. In counseling, are you able to be rigorously honest with your therapist? If not, why waste your time?
7. Do you feel safe and is your confidence regarded in the sessions?
8. Are you being held accountable in therapy or are you looking for someone to just take your side? If so, you will not grow!



9. Is it important to be able to use the insurance you have? If so, and you are not familiar with the list of practitioners, ask someone whose opinion you value to assist you in this process.
10. Examine the importance of informing your healthcare providers that you are in a recovery program especially if I do not want to be prescribed medications that will interrupt or disrupt your recovery!

I believe that in order to have faith in my healthcare providers, I want to see them as on the same team as me!

In addition to these guidelines, there are a few issues that you may be overlooking on your journey to wellness. What is the fuel you are delivering to your body - in other words, what are you eating? Sound nutrition will enhance any healthcare program you choose! Are you getting exercise and effective exercise for you? How do you relax and what is your sleep like? Do you manage stress well? Do you even recognize when you are stressed out?

Addressing all of these wellness concerns will help you to anchor the lifestyle changes you are seeking!