Interaction Overload

Interaction overload isn't discussed much. Take a second to picture what that means to you in your life.   What drains you the most in terms of your ability to communicate? Common examples are shopping malls, grocery stores, and other crowded places. Then again, it could be all the talking and listening you're doing. Coaching, babysitting, socializing, workplace parties, family functions (even when you actually like all your family members), and tournament weekends.

Everyone has a different tolerance to interacting. Some of us can chatter all day and night. Others need a break after an hour. Some of us are totally immune to other people's vibes, while others experience everyone else's stress as if it's their own. Meanwhile, some of us are dealing with big stress or grief, and are out at events just to honour their responsibilities. Some will communicate that and some will keep it secret.

All these dynamics make for complicated situations, especially when we're wondering if that person's vibes are because they're unhappy with us for some reason. This worry will drain interaction-energy quickly. We'll find ourselves second-guessing every word, tone, and facial expression. We'll be subtly trying to get information about that person. Suddenly, now, we're acting differently and putting off our own set of vibes.

It's exhausting, isn't it? Don't you wish you could be one of those people who doesn't seem to notice/care about the nuances going on around them?

After a long day of interacting, we get home and collapse into our device, and with anger or guilt we ignore our pet, child, and partner's attempts to get our attention.
        Who, or what, took too much interaction-energy from you? Was it the obnoxious person you stood beside? Was it the person who seems to always need something from you? Was it the person who's going through a tough time and you feel really bad for them? Or was it the sheer volume of people you were around?

We don't always have the energy to honour the needs of everyone we try to satisfy. But, we get so caught up in it all, we can lose the ability to see who's suffering from our attempts to satisfy everyone. So, my question is,

are you spending your interaction-energy on the right people and tasks? Have you budgeted your energy?

Budgeting is a great tool. It's a little uncomfortable to actually develop it, but it's just as useful as a financial budget.

<u>The Body and Mind Will Do Its Best For You</u>
Have you ever noticed that your body will let you push through a task list until it's completed, then crash on you? Headaches, appetite changes, mood changes, body temperature fluctuations, no ambition, and big fatigue?   The body's good like that. It will do its best to keep you functional until the important stuff is done, but then it will make you stop. It will exhibit whatever symptoms you pay the most attention to.

      If it has to, the body will scare you into giving it the rest it needs. Rightly so.   By getting you through important stuff, it's using energy it would normally use in the future for other important stuff. If we don't give the body the opportunity to recuperate, it may eventually get sick....and not just the flu. Many serious diseases are correlated with having pushed one's Self too far for years.

Energy budgeting protects our future health. It also protects the relationships that we care the most about. Societal norms demand that we not be selfish. But, honouring our own needs on a week-to-week basis helps keep us able to provide awesome care to our loved ones for as long as they need us to.

-Dr. Angela Hanlon, ND