Time For a Tune-up

August 17, 2011 By Aundaray Guess

If you own a car you're familiar with a tune-up. Each season or if your car hits a certain mileage point, you bring your car in to change the oil, have the tires checked and get new plugs. The interesting thing is that we do this for a car, a material object, yet many of us don't get a mental health tune-up for ourselves.

Speaking from my own experience, I recently had this cloud over me. It seemed to follow me everywhere, maybe dispersing for a day or two but then re-emerging. I just knew I was not my usual self. I was moody. Sometimes I would cry for no reason and overall just feeling like I was on auto-pilot. And it didn't match what was happening for me personally as I was finding success with my school of which I'm seeking an advance degree, and as an actor I was working on TV/movie sets and even played a principle part in a show that aired nationally. So what reason did I have for feeling blue?

In the back of my head I knew I needed someone to talk to as I recognized the symptoms of depression from having it before. I knew it meant seeing a therapist as throughout my years, I've seen several for various length of time. But this time I figured i would self-care by reading inspirational books or writing my feelings down or waiting until it went away. I was going to do whatever I had to do to not see a professional.

Maybe it was the stigma? Maybe it was pride? Maybe I just didn't want to admit I needed help? Maybe I thought they would give me pills, something I didn't need as I was already taking HIV meds. Did I want more? Yet when really looking at my situation, although I've seen professionals before, I had to ask myself, "What's wrong with getting a tune-up" What's wrong in talking out whatever is holding you back?

We manage our health with our meds and other forms of stress relievers but when it comes to our mental health we don't want to walk through that door. We want to bury our heads and pretend it's not there. For myself I wanted to get my car back into the fast lane. I wanted to get my oil checked and new spark plugs and my tires kicked.

To do that I had to ignore any shame and remind myself that it takes a strong person to look at their demons and confront them and not run away from them. I also had to remind myself that getting a tune-up doesn't mean I'll be seeing someone for years. For me it feels like it'll just be a few months. But its knowing that after those few months I'll be back on the road in a healthy state of mind.

Maybe that's why we don't seek a tune-up. We know that we're taking out old parts (the past) and replacing it with the new (the future) And for many we don't like change. But just imagine where your life will take you if you shift that car into drive instead of spinning your wheels and never moving, stuck in a rut?

So yes I am seeing a therapist once again, even with all my successes and I have no shame. And even five or ten years down the road I may need another tune-up. But if my car can get a tune-up, then why can’t I? The investment will pay off and I’ll be in a better place knowing I’m in motion and I’m driving myself to wellness!

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/time-for-a-tune-up