



WHEN A CITY GIRL *goes country*

By Annette Bridges

Has anyone come to the realization their well-being, health and body is their job? This thought hit me during my walk around our ranch driveway this morning.

As I am walking, I start to think of all the other things I could be doing and tell myself perhaps I should be doing them instead of doing some much needed cardio exercise. That is when the idea entered my conflicted brain. Your first job is to take good care of yourself so you will be able to do everything else.

You know, stuff like cleaning the house, doing ranch chores, going for dreams and aspirations, or being around to take care of any humans, dogs, cats, or cows who need you. This is a brand new concept for me to chew on.

I have never thought of taking care of my body as my job, much less my primary job. In fact, taking care of myself has always come up last on my to-do list and other priorities.

My jobs have been numerous during my 60-plus years in this life. My teenage jobs included being a cashier at a dime store and grocery store and working in a movie theater concession.

I afforded college with a tuition reduction work plan that included jobs like being a cashier in the campus bookstore and a mail clerk distributing mail in student mailboxes. I was also super fast at typing and made money during my college breaks at a variety of temporary office jobs.

After marriage, my jobs were primarily teaching in public schools until becoming a homeschool teacher for our daughter. Of course, I have always helped my hubby around the ranch in whatever way he needed me, too.

Apparently, being the only girl and youngest of my mamma's children made me the primary caregiver for aging and ailing family members. This job became my primary one for many of my recent years until my dear loved ones passed away.

These days when I tell my husband I am not sure what to do with myself when I am not helping him with some ranch chore, he tells me that my job is to take care of myself



Do not forget to take care of your number one priority, yourself. (Photo courtesy Annette Bridges)

and stay healthy.

I must admit he is quite correct. My body does seem to be suffering from neglect, and it is high time for me to do something about that.

At least, I need to do whatever I can do to stay healthy for my family as well as for our beautiful bovines. Heck, I need to stay healthy for myself, as well, which brings me back to my morning epiphany.

We have been gifted with one body as our vehicle to move through our life. When our bodies were young, the possibilities of where it would take us felt endless, and we may not have given our bodies a second thought about whether or not it could get us there.

These days the phrase, "If you don't use it, you'll lose it," comes to my mind when I feel too lazy and tired to take that much needed walk. Sometimes, I simply tell myself I must move my body any way I can whether it is taking that walk, riding my bike or dancing to my favorite songs. All of which are perfectly good options. I simply need to do them.

So my friends, whatever else your calling and responsibilities are, do not forget to take care of your number one priority, yourself, because you need you.

Remember, it really is true. You will not be able to take good care of others unless you take good care of yourself. 🌻