

A vibrant watercolor illustration of various flowers and leaves in shades of purple, green, and yellow, serving as the background for the magazine cover.

The Funky Raw

Issue 31 - Spring 2014

£3.50

Healthy eating for everyone

magazine

- Emotional Eating
- Tonics and Elixirs
- Raw Food for Beginners

From the Editor

We've got a feature packed issue for you this month. Just to show that we are open-minded at Funky Raw, we have an article on raw food for beginners talking about a vegan diet right next to an article called "My Vegan Diet Caused Health Problems". I think you know my point of view: a balanced diet with lots of raw veggies, some fruit and a small amount of fish, meat and dairy, but hopefully you can read the articles and make your own mind up.



And for more controversy, in the 'beginners' article, Natalie Heath suggests that a food processor and juicer are both "essential" while a blender is not - personally I'd reverse that, I use my blender at least once a day, and the juicer and food processor probably only once or twice a month...

It's good to see lots of raw events and festivals coming up, see page 4 to plan which festivals you are going to.

If you want to write or do artwork for future magazines, please get in touch: magazine@funkyraw.com

love Rob

Cover Artwork

Claire is an illustrator and artist. She creates work in a variety of different styles and is heavily inspired by the natural world.

This piece was created using watercolour paints to create floral imagery. These were then layered together on the computer.

Contact Claire for commissions or collaborations.

She has Particular experience at designing textiles, wallpaper, wedding stationary and book covers and can offer Funky Raw readers good discounts!

Clairety.pattern@gmail.com / +44(0)7960325463



Raw Food: What? How? Why?

Raw food is about eating the way nature intended. It's about fresh ripe fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds. It's about delicious flavours and healthy living.

No other animal on this planet cooks its food, and in general they enjoy much better health than humans do! Many people find benefits to eating more raw food including increased energy, uplifted mood, weight control, less need for sleep, better skin, clearer thinking and intuition, increased effectiveness, calmer, more contented children. Many people notice that their connections to nature and to other people deepen.

Due to the current state of humans, the state of the soil (lacking minerals due to intensive farming) and the actual fruit (changed through many thousands of years of hybridisation by humans) this is the diet we currently recommend:

Fruit - High quality fruit, fully ripened and grown on rich soil.

Greens - high quality greens grown on rich soil, particularly wild greens, in the form of salads, juice and blends (which help digestion), are essential for minerals and rebuilding.

Nuts and seeds - these are important to get enough density and rebuilding fuel to compensate for our malfunctioning systems. Soak before use to aid assimilation and remove anti-nutrients.

Animal products - insects would have definitely been part of our archaic diet. Figs for instance are a primate's favourite food and wild figs are laden with insect matter. At the very least we need to substitute for this. We use unpasteurised milk and cheese and butter made with unpasteurised milk, goats or sheep's generally being better than cows milk. Raw egg yolks are nutrient dense, buy them direct from a local farmer.

Some people need more animal foods, organ meats such as liver are nutrient dense. All animal foods should be from animals eating their natural diet, eg grass for cows.

Supplements and Superfoods - these help to compensate for not only our malfunctioning system but also for the degeneration of the soil. It may be possible however to avoid supplements if one eats food that are grown on very rich soil.

High Quality cold pressed oils - Flax and hemp seed oils are excellent. Keep all oils in the fridge.

Find out more on our website:

www.funkyraw.com

The Funky Raw Magazine is open for your **writing, recipes, artwork, food preparation tips, poetry, cartoons, short stories**, etc. Contributors receive a discount from the Funky Raw online shop and a free copy of the magazine. Please send submissions to magazine@funkyraw.com

Submission deadline for next issue: **23 June 2014**.

Advertising deadline: 4 July 2014 funkyraw.com/ads/

The editor reserves the right to edit articles for the sake of space and / or clarity.

The content of this magazine does not necessarily represent or reflect the editor's complete opinions, beliefs, thoughts or own experience. Copyright of submissions remains with each individual author or artist.

Everyone who reads this magazine is 100% responsible for what they do with the information presented here!

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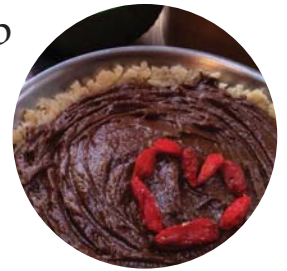
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www.ink.uk.com

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This magazine is printed on 100% post consumer waste recycled paper by an environmentally friendly printer using vegetable based inks.

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News

Got a story? Email news@funkyraw.com

Festivals

June 16-22 or 19-22: Blue Planets Festival, Sweden

Gourmet raw food workshops, wheatgrass, microgreens and sprouts, music, concerts, circle dancing, nature, amazing raw buffets and more.

Lots of ticket options. 6 days 7500 SEK (approx £680), 3 days 3500 SEK (approx £320).

Accommodation is extra, various options including camping for 150 SEK (approx £13.60) per night or in a double room for 1650 SEK (approx £150) for 6 nights or 825 SEK (approx £75) for 3 nights. tinyurl.com/blueplanetraw

June 25-29: UK Fruit Fest, Duvale Priory, Devon, UK

A residential raw food festival in the UK for those who wish to experience an 80/10/10 style fruit based raw vegan lifestyle. Talks and classes with Dr Doug Graham, Professor Rozalind Graham, Anne Osborne, Grant Campbell and Chris Kendall. £525 for the full event including all accommodation, classes (lectures, food demos, fitness) and food. www.fruitfest.co.uk

July 17-21: RawFest, Laughton, East Sussex, UK

Talks, demos, massage, yoga, sound healing, permaculture, ecstatic dance, live music and more.

Early Bird full tickets including camping: £90. Full details and more ticket options: www.rawfest.co

July 17-20: Fresh Food Festival, Denmark

Fruit based 80/10/10 style raw food festival featuring Dr. Doug Graham, Rozalind Graham and more. Talks, sports activities, fitness, yoga, etc.

Price 3939 DKK (approx £435) inclusive of meals and Accommodation. Full schedule and more ticket options: www.freshfoodfestival.com

Sept 13: Festival of Life, London, UK

Talks, demos and workshops and a wide variety of stalls inside covering: natural parenting, nature cures, permaculture, environmentalism, musical, poetic and artistic expression, simple and non-consumerist living, creating community and networks, celebration and connection. Conscious dance party in the evening.

Full event: 10.30am-11.30pm: £20 /£15 (concs)
Evening only (from 6pm): £10 /£5 (concs)
www.festivaloflife.net

The Raw Nature Community

If you live in London or Glastonbury, this group organises raw food pot lucks, parties and workshops. They are dedicated to providing events to help raise conscious awareness of natural health and wellbeing, with raw, vegan, plant based nutrition, bodywork, natural therapies, meditation, yoga, sound and of course nature!

www.meetup.com/Rawnature/

Sandor Katz in the UK

Author of two books on Fermentation, Sandor Katz will be in the UK in May, with a workshop and talk in London and a course in Devon

Thursday May 22, 10am to 4pm, Chesham, London: Fermented Foods Demonstration, Tasting & Workshop

Learn how to make kimchi, kefir, kombucha, and other fermented delicacies.

£110 inc lunch. www.meetup.com/westonaprice-london

Friday May 23, 6pm to 9pm, London: Talk and Tasting

Learn basic fermentation concepts, and about the healing qualities and nutritional importance of live-culture ferments.

£25. www.meetup.com/westonaprice-london

May 26 to 30: Exploring the Microcosmos – New Paradigms from Microbial Communities, Schumacher College, near Totnes, Devon

This course is a unique chance to work in a small-group setting looking at how we can work with microbial communities, from compost to kefir, to cultivate more tasty, vibrant, sustainable and collaborative communities.

www.tinyurl.com/katzcourse

Nama Foods: New Location

Nama Foods has moved to a new much larger location in Notting Hill. They now have a bigger menu including cold pressed juices.

They also offer delivery programs, juice cleanses, workshops, and venue rental for birthdays, etc.

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 7pm, Friday 8.30am to 10pm, Saturday 10am to 10pm, Sunday 10am to 6pm.

110 Talbot Road, London, W11 1JR. Closest tube Westbourne Park, approx 10 mins walk. (Or 15 mins from Notting Hill Gate tube.)

www.namafoods.com 0207 313 4638

Coastal Community

We are looking for people and families interested in forming a veggie/vegan eco community near the coast in Dorset/SW England.

Based on permaculture and cohousing principles, we'd like to forge a healthier way of life: grow most of our own food and fuel; generate our own energy; share skills; provide a place for courses, activities, holidays, retreats; and create an abundant biodiverse forest garden to share. We hope to find somewhere with a rural feeling, but with good transport links and wider communities nearby.

We are aiming to move quickly and so are looking to purchase somewhere either with permission to build or with existing dwellings; co-purchasing will be more affordable than doing it alone, but this will need financial and personal commitment.

For more info email info@coastalcommunity.org.uk

Workshops & Events

Kundalini Yoga and raw food retreat

Date: Friday 16 May to Sunday 18 May

Location: Paddington Farm, Glastonbury, Somerset

Description: A weekend of Kundalini Yoga with morning sadhana, meditations and kirtan supported by a delicious and nourishing raw food diet, relaxing time and walks at the foot of the Tor hill in Glastonbury.

Lovechef Mark will teach how to make incredible full filling raw meals whilst Karamroop will share her Yoga and raw life experience with you throughout the weekend.

Price: £225 all included

Website: karamroopkaur.wix.com/kundalinirawyoga

Rohvolution

Date: Saturday 17 May to Sunday 18 May, 10 am to 7 pm

Location: Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany

Description: Trade show, a raw food event in its 21th edition in Germany.

Share knowledge, spread the word of healthy eating, and show the diversity of raw food.

Website: www.rohvolution.de

Raw Detox Week

Date: Sunday 18 May to Sunday 25 May

Location: Sunny Italy

Description: Indulge in this holistic raw program to eliminate bodily toxins including the breakthrough 'The Quantum You' System by prof. Norbekov. Experience fantastic raw, vegan cuisine before transferring to daily detoxing juices designed to speed-up weight loss in a healthy and sustainable way.

Price: Sharing £1125, single room £1375

Website: www.walking-holidays-abruzzo.com

Permaculture Design Course (PDC)

Date: Monday 19 May to Saturday 31 May

Location: Cana Dulce, Malaga Province, Spain

Description: Permaculture design certificate course catering for all / mainly raw fooders led by Steve Charter and Lucho Iglesias, with optional daily yoga, many practicals and lots of inspiration. Held at an outstanding example of permaculture and forest gardening, with fruit fresh from the trees! A life changing experience. Course taught in english.

Price: 600€ (or 545€ camping) plus 25 to 50€ for food.

Email: steve@sc2.org.uk

Website: www.permaculturacanadulce.org

Fermentation Fetish

Date: Saturday 24 May, 10am

Location: Meare, Glastonbury

Description: Raw food nutrition principles and recipe creation for long term success. Plus comprehensive and fun education on making delicious fermented foods:

Why kefir is one of the most powerful superfoods available.

How to use exotic cruciferous veggie ferments to safeguard you and your family from xenoestrogens and chemicals in plastic.

How to easily and affordably create delicious fermented and living foods with no previous experience.

How to permanently eradicate Candida and other dysbiotic digestive disorders within months or even weeks!

Why the enzymes and probiotics in ferments are superior to any supplements you could buy in your local health food store.

Recipes: kefir, superkraut, cultured Mexican salsa, kefir cheese-cake, coconut kefir ginger beer, fermented pesto, etc

Price: £85

Website: www.foodforconsciousness.co.uk

Phone: 01458 860060

To get your event listed here, add it to our website at www.funkyraw.com/events/

Spring Cleanse Liver/gallbladder cleanse talk/demo

Date: Saturday 24 May, 2-5pm

Location: Heart Bennet Road, Headingley, Leeds LS6 3HN

Description: Spring has sprung and its the best time to clean out those inner pipes in our body! Have you ever wanted to feel better? Have you ever wanted to get rid of those addictions and cravings? Have you ever wanted more energy? Here is a method of cleansing that can offer you all these! This cleanse is based on the Jubbs liver/gallbladder cleanse based on and around Lifefood liquids and more.

Afterwards you can walk out the door with the knowledge and feeling that you will know how to practice this on a regular basis in your home.

Susan will also cover some important points on the liver/gallbladder cleanse that are often over looked to help it all run smoothly.

Price: £15 To confirm and secure your place by 26th of April, please go to my website and click on to make a payment. Click on the paypal button.

Website: www.iridologyforhealth.co.uk

Phone: 07980064092

Spring Cleanse Liver/gallbladder cleanse talk/demo

Date: Monday 26 May, 2-5pm

Details as above.

Introduction to Raw Food

Date: Saturday 31 May, 10am - 4pm

Location: Shaftesbury, Dorset

Description: This one day course by raw food chef, educator and health coach Gabriela Lerner is an introduction into the beautiful rich and varied way of eating raw. During the day, Gabriela will show you how to make some easy and delicious raw meals and how to balance different raw foods to create the highest benefits for your health and longevity. The day costs £75 including tasters throughout the day, lunch and a goodie bag. Bring a friend and save £10.

Website: www.radiantonraw.co.uk/products/raw-food-day-class-31-may/29716

Raw Yoga Detox Retreat

Date: Friday 6 June to Sunday 8 June, 6pm

Location: Little Barden, Country House, East Sussex

Description: This is an opportunity to detox on raw foods, smoothies and juice. This popular event is run by yoga teacher Daniela Broder with the nutrition and accommodation provided by Suz Evasdaughter. For further details contact daniela@animacreations.co.uk

Website: littlebarden.co.uk

Intro to Raw Foods Workshop

Date: Saturday 7 June, 2pm - 5pm

Location: London

Description: In this workshop you will learn all the basics of raw food and raw food recipe preparation – everything you need to know to get started with preparing deliciously simple and quick raw food.

If you're new to raw food or want to make sure you're doing the basics right, come and join me for this day of hands-on learning on the foundations of raw food.

Price: £80

Website: www.rawfreedom.co.uk **Phone:** 07733 107 811



Fermented Wild Longevity Food & Drink Workshop

Date: Saturday 07 June, 2-5pm

Location: Heart Bennet Road, Headingley, Leeds LS6 3HN

Description: Come along and be with nature and learn how to make the most delicious healthy fermented natural food and drinks. These jars are filled with living bacteria to help rebalance the gut flora within your gut.

Most diseases or imbalances are related to lack of the good bacteria in our gut - dysbiosis.

I will show you how to make :-

* Kombucha - made with raw honey creating a champagne like quality kombucha

* fruit based kefir

* fermented wild garlic -my own tantalising spring recipe

* Fermented hot chilli sauce -based on Dr David Jubb's very own delicious recipe!- not to be missed

Price: Early bird before 19th May - £20, full price £25

Please pay using "making payment" on my website:

Website: www.iridologyforhealth.co.uk

Phone: 07980064092.

Rainbow Raw Italy - Abruzzo

Date: Sunday 08 June to Sunday 15 June

Location: Abruzzo, Italy

Description: Reconnect with your inner paradise while journeying into the heart and spirit of Majella - The Mother Mountain. Join us on a transformational Farm Organic Raw Food Retreat through immersion into the ultimate natural lifestyle, awaken your love of self, shine light on your inner paradise, and renew inspiration for creating your dreams!

Price: £995 full board, inc airport transfers

Website: www.walking-holidays-abruzzo.com

Yoga & Raw Food Workshops

Date: Tue 10 June to Thur 12 June, 5pm Fri - 3pm Sun

Location: Thirsk, North Yorkshire

Description: A two night luxury retreat - relax and unwind with yoga and meditation, refresh and cleanse with delicious energising raw food and enjoy some kitchen workshops on how to make simple & healthy raw food meals. (Yoga suitable for all levels).

Also enjoy soaking in the hot tub and detoxing in the sauna during your stay

Price: £345 in shared room or £450 in single room.

Website: splitfarthinghall.co.uk/

retreats-workshops/yoga-healthy-eating/

Spring Detox Retreat

Date: Fri 13 June to Sun 15 June, 5 pm Fri till 3 pm Sun

Location: Holy Combe, Warwickshire, CV36 5PH

Description: We will prepare and eat together raw and cooked, delicious, nutrient rich living food. You will then be given the most contemporary information on all mineral supplements and superfoods available.

You will learn a powerful Breath Work technique which alkalizes the body and will help to shift emotional and mental baggage.

The transformational yoga package includes extended daily yoga sessions, guided meditations, treatments and a sauna. Set in idyllic english countryside our holistic retreat will leave you inspired and re energised for many months to come.

Price: £285 or £265 Early Bird discount, book before August 1st 2013, all meals accommodation and classes included. Treatments £55 Coaching £60 an hour

Website: www.rinagolan-rothwell.com

Phone: 07833432282, 01225 720160

Yoga & Raw Food Lifestyle

Date: Mon 16 June to Wed 25 June, starts at 17:00pm

Location: Orgiva, Alpujarras, South Spain

Description: Enjoy the healing powers of Yoga, Living Food, Chants, Meditation, Holistic Therapies, Dance and Walks; all ingredients we use to nourish, transform and rejuvenate your Body, Mind & Spirit.

This 10 days Yoga Retreat is an inspirational mix of a relaxing getaway, a tranquil refuge of simple living in tune with Mother Nature.

Website: www.sunfoodyoga.com

Eating for Energy: An Introduction to Raw Food

Date: Saturday 21 June, 10am - 4.30pm

Location: Falmouth, Cornwall

Description: Enjoy a day of learning all about raw food in a fun, relaxing and supportive environment in beautiful surroundings, with recipe demonstrations and plenty of tastings throughout!

- Discover the health benefits of raw food and simple ways to add more raw into your existing diet

- Learn how to make super tasty, quick and easy raw food dishes (without fancy equipment!)

Price: £60 includes tastings, a recipe pack, a delicious raw food lunch and a goodie bag.

Phone: 07928 113 616 / **Email:** rawfoodsarah@gmail.com

UK Fruitfest

Date: Wednesday 25 June to Sunday 29 June, 10am Wednesday to 6pm Sunday

Location: Duvale Priory, Devon

Description: A residential raw food festival in the UK for those who wish to experience an 801010rv style fruit based raw vegan lifestyle. Talks and classes with Dr Doug Graham, Professor Rozalind Graham, Anne Osborne, Grant Campbell and Chris Kendall. Early bird offer of £395 for the full event including all accommodation, classes (lectures, food demos, fitness) and food is open until the 31st of January 2014.

Website: Www.fruitfest.co.uk

Fun with food: explore your relationship with food

Date: Sunday 29 June to Saturday 5 July

Location: Hasparren, near Biarritz

Description: This will be an empowering week for you to discover what kind of relationship you have with food. We will explore different eating behaviours. Do you feel like you overeat, use food for comfort, use food to relax, out of boredom, loneliness, stress, habit, distraction or entertainment?

The objective is not to promote any particular diet or food, but instead leave your body to gravitate towards its optimal way of eating. No judgments, just exploration.

The food we serve is local and organic (because to us it just tastes so good...)

Starts with a two day juice fast and intro to Raw food.

Price: 950 € all inclusive, based on shared occupancy

Website: www.retreat-biarritz.com/16.html

Phone: +33 559 545635 **Mobile:** +33 67705220

Raw Food for Weight Loss

Date: Saturday 5 July, 10.30 - 5.00

Location: London

Description: Losing weight doesn't have to mean denying yourself delicious food, it's about eating the right food.

In this hands-on workshop I'll teach you how to prepare delicious and satisfying recipes to incorporate into your lifestyle that will help you lose weight with ease. Practical and tasty recipes for everyday weight loss and energy.

Price: £159 or early Bird £119

Website: www.rawfreedom.co.uk **Phone:** 07733 107 811

Raw Imagination - Raw Fast Food

Review by Amy Dagley-Asop

As soon as i saw chatter in my news feed about raw imagination's fresh sandwiches, burgers and puddings, excited baby butterflies instantly started fluttering in my tummy and I emailed them right then and there for samples to review. I mean I love the myriad of raw crackers, ice-cream, chocolate, dips and desserts, etc, etc, that we can buy on the hop these days from our health food shops and the like but I do hanker for a good old lunch break style sarnie, a raw one, including the 'bread'. Being in the presence of my cooked food eating friends I, among no doubt many others, have been asking the cosmos for this for a while now, and raw imagination have answered!

With three fresh moist sandwiches, a burger, and two puds. The BLT was my part raw, part cooked food eating hubby's favourite, it's a scrummie salt and sweet affair with the 'bacon' made from coconut! Their club sandwich is a robust, does exactly what it says on the tin number, and the raw falafel with brazil nut hummus is deeply satisfying. But if I *had* to choose only one for life, it's the burger that wins out for me, it's the coleslaw that comes with it, it's amazing! The 'mayo' that it's made with tastes exactly the same, down pat, as the mayo known as miracle whip from well known fast food chicken outlets, yet this is ethical and good for us! Woohoo! The puds are of course obviously utterly divine too, with a chocolate brownie and a lemon tart adding to the pleasingly ever growing plethora of raw treats and sweets which we're lucky enough to have out there these days. well done raw imagination, we wish you all the luck and love you need, so we can have all the raw fast food we need. Any new products, send them my way ;-) Come to think of it, a raw imagination delivery service would be right up my street...



Currently only available at Planet Organic, at other healthfood shops soon.

www.rawimagination.co.uk is the website, but there's not much on it yet.
facebook.com/officialrawimagination
www.planetorganic.com

Jun - Herbal Honey Kombucha

Review by Natalie Heath

Jun is a sparkling fermented probiotic drink originally used in the mountains of Tibet. It is rich in enzymes, B-vitamins and probiotics and has a detoxifying and energising effect on the body. Jun is brewed like kombucha from tea and probiotic cultures, but unlike kombucha Jun cultures eat raw honey instead of sugar so the resulting drink has all the benefits of the honey as well as the powerful results of the nutritious culture. Jun is also more potent than kombucha.

The health benefits of Jun are huge; it positively affects the body in a myriad of different ways. It:

- ▶ Feeds off honey (no disaccharide sugars)
- ▶ Has protective almost anti oxidant effects on the liver
- ▶ Relaxes the body and causes blood flow to the brain to increase.
- ▶ Is usually cultured with other surfactants that manipulate the blood brain barrier for protective nutrients to resurface the barrier.
- ▶ Improves lung function
- ▶ Removes poisons from the intestinal tract
- ▶ Has a probiotic effect on the intestinal tract
- ▶ Cultures omega 3,6,7 & 9 in the intestinal tract out of monounsaturated fats.
- ▶ Raises serotonin levels
- ▶ Increases glutathione peroxidase
- ▶ Reduces somatostatin
- ▶ Purifies the blood
- ▶ Removes mould from the tissue
- ▶ Removes sodium fluoride residue from the pineal gland

I was lucky enough to be sent five flavours of this wonderful health giving drink by Food For Consciousness, and had a lovely afternoon sampling them all. They are very fizzy and a good tip is to open them over a glass or jug so that you can catch everything that fizzes over and not waste anything. All the Jun's had a similar sour taste to kombucha, and each variety had it's own unique flavour. They varied in fizziness and colour.

Xocolatl Dream Jun

Contains: Spring water, raw honey, tulsi (holy basil), passion flower, rooibos chai, yerba matte, raw cacao powder and Jun cultures.

This Jun was very fizzy. The first taste was very fresh and then there was a creamy, chocolaty, warming after note. It had a lovely, sweet, well-balanced flavour. It reminded me a little of my favourite herbal tea, choco chai by Yogi Tea. This was my favourite, but I am a huge chocolate fan.

Jungle Jun

Contains: Spring water, raw honey, pau d'arco, cats claw, chanca piedra, chuchuhuasi, yerba matte, turmeric, ginger and Jun cultures.

Jungle Jun is filled with beneficial Amazonian herbs. It had a lovely refreshing taste, and was light and fizzy. It had a slight warming ginger note and was a beautiful sunny colour from the turmeric.

Yogini Jun

Contains: Spring water, raw honey, chaga, rhodiola rosea, rosehips, schizandra berry, goji berry, hibiscus, yerba matte, lapsang souchong and Jun cultures.

Yogini Jun is formulated with a specific set of herbs designed to assist with spiritual practice. It was softer tasting than the others and not as fizzy. It had a nice aromatic tea taste from the lapsang souchong. It was slightly fruity with a gorgeous orange colour from the goji berries.

Ginko Jun

Contains: Spring water, raw honey, ginko biloba, hemp leaf, gotu kola, yerba matte and Jun cultures.

Ginko Jun is formulated to be neurologically stimulating. It was slightly more sour than the other flavours and less fizzy. It had an aromatic herbal after note. It felt very uplifting.

Chaga Jun

Contains: Spring water, raw honey, chaga, yerba matte, green tea, Jun cultures.

Chaga Jun was slightly fizzy with a delightful sweet honey flavour.

I know that it is very difficult to get genuine Jun cultures, and so these drinks are rare and precious. Food For Consciousness produces them carefully by hand, using German crocks and glass (some probiotic beverages you can buy are brewed in plastic containers). They use high quality raw honey and the best quality herbs available. They also only use filtered spring water from Glastonbury. These really are the highest quality probiotic drinks available, and they all taste great and are very easy to drink.

£5.95 per 250ml bottle from
www.foodforconsciousness.co.uk



Edible Perennial Gardening

Review by Rob Hull

Is there an easier way to grow a garden? That's the question the author Anni Kelsey asked, and this book is the answer she found. It is an informal personal account of Anni's gardening experiences in Shropshire (UK).

The ideas in this book have a lot in common with forest gardening, but on a much smaller scale. Anni has a regular sized front and back garden in which she is growing her perennial polycultures. The first question is of course "Why" and the answer is that perennial vegetables "can provide reliable harvests throughout much of the year for little work, and when grown in polycultures according to natural principles they help build fertility and enrich local ecosystems."

The book starts with introductions to the general principles of growing food naturally, including the most important part, the soil and how to have healthy, alive soil. Design of gardens including how to use plants for mineral accumulation, nitrogen fixing and attracting beneficial insects.

Next the book goes into detail about the various plants Anni is growing. She divides this into plants she has had success with and plants that she didn't. How to use each plant is also discussed.

Then comes information on how to put your garden together: site preparation, growing plants from seed, and ongoing management of the plot.

The book is well organised, has good charts and tables summarising the important information, with a resources section at the end with seed suppliers, websites and books.

Maybe the title of this book should really be 'Edible Perennial Vegetable Gardening' as there are only very minor mentions of the perennial fruits which can be grown. Strict raw fooders should note that quite a few of the vegetables included in this book need to be cooked.

In general, this is a great little book, a complete guide suitable for beginners.



EDIBLE Perennial Gardening

Growing Successful Polycultures in Small Spaces



£14.95. Published by Permanent Publications, March 2014.

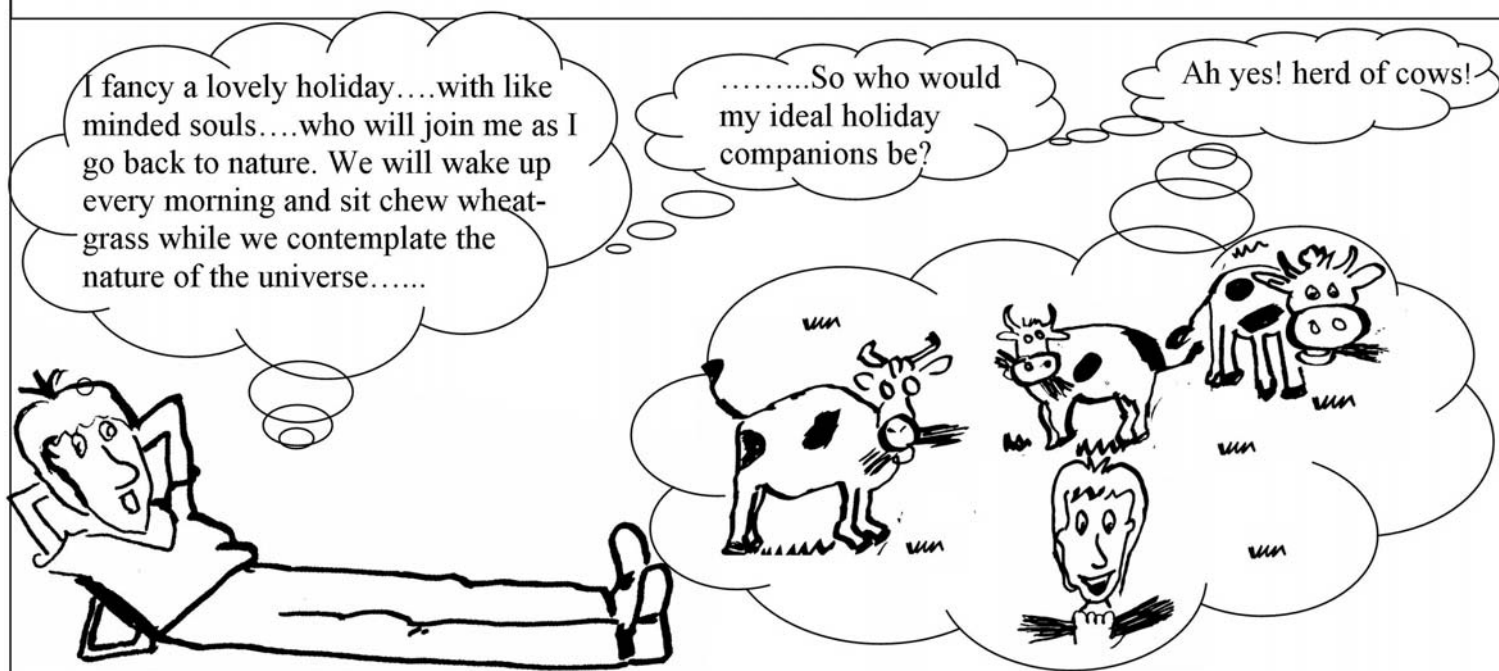
ISBN: 978-1-85623-149-7

Available from www.green-shopping.co.uk

Anni's website annisveggies.wordpress.com

RFD (Raw Food Dude)

Sally Holloway



Sally Holloway's 44 page book *Sprouting In The UK, How to grow, Greens, Beans and Superfoods* is available from sallyholloway.com for £2.99 or Amazon Kindle for £1.53.

Recipes

Want your recipe to appear here?
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No-Machine Chocolate Mousse Pie

Yep, you can just whip it up by hand and make no mess at all... fast track to chocolate heaven!

Avocados are one of the creamiest fruits and they:

- are a complete protein!
- are a great source of calories with healthy monounsaturated fats, which are easily burnt for energy
- have anti-inflammatory qualities
- are a rich source of B vitamins, including folate (B9), and vitamin C
- are an amazing source of pantothenic acid and minerals such as potassium, copper, magnesium, manganese, and phosphorus
- are a good source of fibre

...All of which translates into their being a wonderful food for your skin, bones, heart-health, and supporting a healthy pregnancy.

With cacao being the second main ingredient, giving you loads of antioxidants and minerals, you can't go wrong with something so delicious, so good-for-you, and so quick and easy to prep...

Ingredients (Makes 1 mini pie)

Crust

- 2 Tbsp coconut butter
- 2 Tbsp coconut flour*
- 2 Tbsp shredded coconut
- maple syrup (as needed)

Filling

- 1 avocado
- 3 Tbs + 2 tsp cacao powder
- 2 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1 Tbsp coconut oil
- vanilla
- tiny pinch of salt (optional)
- dash of cayenne pepper (optional)
- Optional garnish: sliced fruit, dried fruit, chopped nuts, coconut flakes

*Feel free to use almond flour

instead of coconut flour, if you'd like, or make a more common, nut & date (or any dried fruit) base, like the one here, for a cashew creme pie.

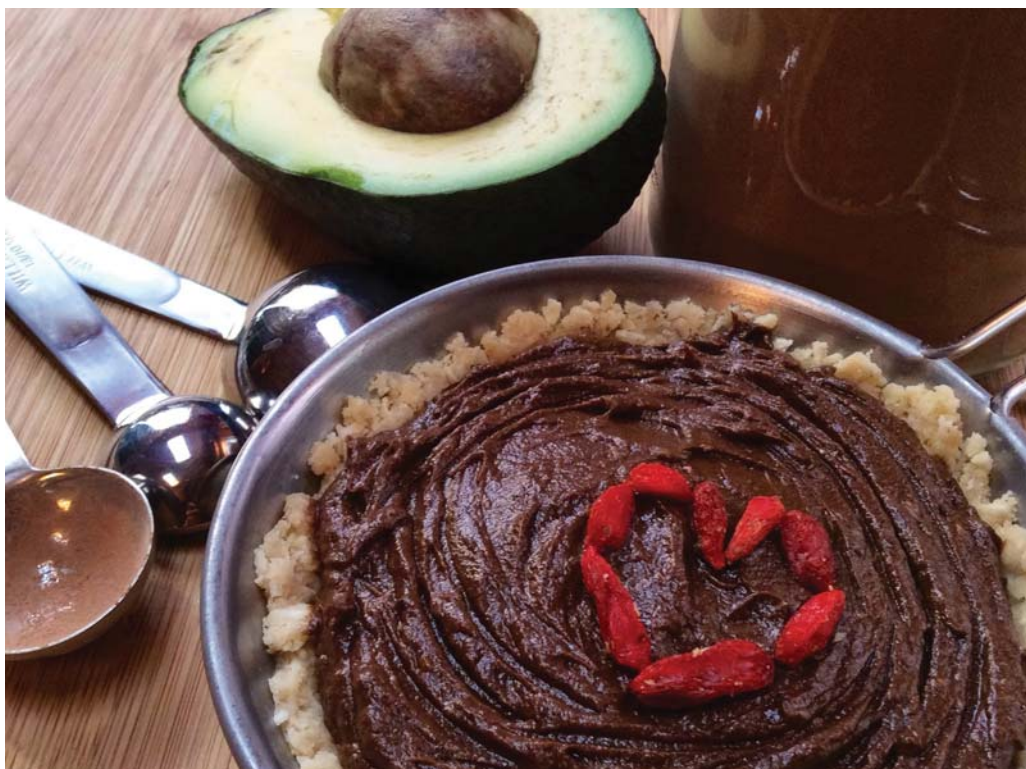
Method

1. Place the coconut oil in a dish that you can place in hot water and let it sit till it's melted (unless it's warm where you are and it is already in liquid form)
2. Mix the crust ingredients in a small bowl simply using a fork and press it into a tiny pie shell or a shallow bowl
3. Scoop out the avocado, mesh it with a fork and whip it into a smooth consistency as much as you can
4. Mix in the maple syrup and the coconut oil (make sure it's not hot) and little by little, add the rest of the ingredients while stirring it until you get a homogeneous filling.
5. Taste test and add more sweetener, etc. to your liking
6. Pour the filling into your crust, decorate if you like, and place the pie in the refrigerator for an hour or so before serving.

Note: this also goes for a chocolate pudding recipe so if you have extra filling you're in luck. Gobble it up right away or chill it for a treat later

by Dita -

www.rawfoodfortruth.blogspot.com



Raw Chocolate Brownies with Choc Fudge Icing

Ingredients (Serves eight)

½ cup walnuts
½ cup pecans
1 cup medjool dates (6-8 dates)
2 tbsp. raw honey
½ cup cacao powder
1 tsp. vanilla extract
¼ tsp. sea salt

Icing

¼ cup coconut butter, melted
¼ cup cacao butter, melted
½ cup cacao powder, sieved
3 tbsp. raw honey (more if you like it sweeter, or add some stevia)
3 tbsp. raw almond butter
1 tsp. vanilla extract
Pinch sea salt

Method

Put nuts in the food processor and blitz to a crumb consistency. Add other brownie ingredients and pulse to combine. Press into small baking tray or brownie tin lined with cling film. Refrigerate.

Whisk icing ingredients together and pour onto brownie. Refrigerate to set.

Take out of fridge an hour or two before eating to soften icing.

by Natalie Heath -
rawlifestylecoach.co.uk



Carrot cake shake

Ingredients

2 large carrots, juiced
2 large apples, juiced
2 ripe bananas, peeled and roughly chopped
2 tbsp. shelled hemp seeds
1 tsp. vanilla extract
½ tsp. ground ginger
½ tsp. ground cinnamon

Method

Place juice and all other ingredients in blender and blend until smooth. One large or two small servings.

by Natalie Heath -
rawlifestylecoach.co.uk



Moroccan Cous Cous

Ingredients

1 cauliflower
4 tbsp. raisins
4 tbsp. pine nuts
6 sun-dried tomatoes, diced
2 shallots, finely chopped
½ tsp. ground cumin
2 tsp. ras el hanout spice blend
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. turmeric
4 tbsp. olive/flax oil
½ tsp. salt
2 tsp. apple cider vinegar

To serve:

2 spring onions, finely sliced
½ green chili, finely sliced

Method

Chop the cauliflower and blitz in the food processor until it resembles cous cous grains. Don't over process. Tip

into a bowl and add everything else except serving ingredients. Mix well. Spoon into a bowl and garnish with spring onions, chili and a drizzle of oil.



by Natalie Heath - rawlifestylecoach.co.uk

Raw Food for Beginners

If you are new to raw food Natalie Heath goes back to basics. Why eating raw is a good idea and what to eat.

Why raw?

Humans are the only species that cooks its food. Is it merely a coincidence that we are also the sickest species? When food is heated above 40 to 47°C (104 to 118°F) vitamins are dramatically reduced, protein is diminished, once healthy oils such as olive oil turn toxic, and enzymes which nature has put in the food to help your body to digest it are obliterated. So not only does your body have to use up its precious enzyme stores to process the food, but it also has to waste energy trying to extract what little nutrition is left in the food, which also drains energy. You will recognise this as feeling tired and bloated after you eat. In reality this is not normal – we should have more energy after we eat, not less! Is it any wonder we are in a state of exhaustion all the time? When you cook your food in effect you are killing it. You are removing the energy, the life force, the vitality. We can't nourish and heal with dead food. It's not possible. You are a living being. You need living food.

The benefits of increasing the amount of raw plant food in your diet are vast and amazing, and they include detoxification, releasing excess weight and water retention, stabilising moods and balancing emotions, creating a sharp and focused mind, giving more energy and a positive outlook, allowing a deeper spiritual connection to the universe, creating kindness and compassion, improving the condition of your skin, nails and hair, healing ailments, allergies, skin conditions and illnesses, and improving general wellbeing, health and happiness. You will find that eating raw protein allows you to build strong, lean muscle if you work out or play sports, and increase flexibility and strength if you practice yoga or dance.

What can I eat?

People often ask me “so what do you actually eat?” I get this all the time. You will be surprised to learn that there is an abundance of different foods you can and should eat. It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that there are more cooked foods than raw foods, but think about it for a minute, didn't everything that's cooked start off raw? It is just a sad fact that in modern day society there are more commercially available cooked and processed foods than natural, healthy raw foods.

It is common to think that there are only 4 food groups you can eat raw – fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds but in actual fact there are many different food groups available:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Sprouted grains
- Sprouted beans and pulses
- Edible flowers
- Mushrooms
- Algae

Sea vegetables

Oils and butters

Herbs

Spices

Superfoods (aloe vera, maca, lucuma, cacao etc)

Sweeteners (coconut sugar, lucuma, raw honey, etc)

Pre packaged raw foods (flax crackers, raw chocolate bars etc)

Some people also choose to eat raw dairy, raw eggs, raw meat and/or raw fish.

Of course this does not mean that moving forward you shouldn't ever eat cooked food. For most people this is very impractical and unsustainable. The main rule to follow is to have more raw than cooked food on your plate. This ensures you are getting the enzymes needed for digestion plus a healthy dose of nutrition, and you don't have to give up your favourite foods, stop going to your favourite restaurant or be difficult at someone's house! So for example if you are going out for a meal, order a cooked starter or side dish and a big main meal sized raw salad. Or at home, Have a raw sauce, some cooked rice or quinoa and a big salad. Or make a raw pate and have it on top



of a baked sweet potato (cooled sufficiently so as not to cook the pate) and a side of crudités for dipping. And a salad. It's the easiest way to include raw food in your meal. Have a huge side salad. Have fruit and smoothies for breakfast. Snack on fruit, dried fruit, soaked nuts etc. All it takes is a little forward thinking and to make conscious decisions. We should never eat unconsciously anyway.

Useful kitchen equipment

Below is a list of all the things I use day to day. You will probably find that you have a lot of this stuff in your kitchen already. The bigger more expensive items are nice to have but don't think you have to go out and buy it all at once! Just start with one thing at a time and build it up gradually. The most basic pieces of equipment you need are a juicer and a food processor. I recommend the Philips whole fruit juicer for ease of use and cleaning, and any food processor that

comes with a blender attachment, that way you are getting two gadgets for the price of one! Kenwood do a good range and are affordable. As you go deeper into raw food you may feel you'd like to upgrade some of your equipment. You can upgrade your juicer to a masticating one if you wish, they are definitely better than centrifugal ones as they are gentler on the juice and keep more nutrients intact, plus they usually get more juice out too and can handle wheatgrass, greens and leaves. They're much more expensive though. Most raw fooders love their Vitamix blender, as it is one of the most powerful one on the market with a 2 horsepower engine. It makes raw ice cream from frozen bananas and gets sauces and soups etc perfectly smooth. It can warm food with friction heat so you can have warming soups in the winter and raw hot chocolate. But it is quite expensive and not essential in the beginning. Obviously you need a dehydrator if

you wish to make dehydrated dishes such as crackers and granolas etc but again in the beginning it's much better to start simple with your equipment and with your food.

Raw Food Preparation Techniques

Soaking

In most raw food recipes that use nuts and seeds you will see that they require soaking first. This is for a couple of reasons. Firstly, it makes it easier on your food processor or blender as the nuts will be softer and easier to process. Secondly and more importantly, nuts and seeds contain enzyme inhibitors (anti-nutrients), which can be removed by soaking. Nuts should be soaked for minimum 3 hours, (except cashews), seeds minimum 1 hour (except shelled hemp). Soak in filtered water, never use tap water. There are some recipes that require dry nuts and seeds to be used, and some raw fooders will choose to soak the nuts then dehydrate them so they are dry again before use. Personally I just don't have time for this, so I choose to use the nuts straight out of the pack. If you are grinding/processing them, this greatly improves their digestibility anyway. It is a good idea to soak whole nuts for snacking on, but again this is totally up to you. If you are making nut milk, you should definitely soak them for a few hours to make sure you get the most out of the nuts.

Sprouting

You can sprout most seeds, beans, lentils, grains etc, except for red lentils as they have been split. Nice ones to try are sunflower seeds, mung beans, chickpeas, brown lentils, alfalfa, buckwheat, broccoli and radish seeds, mustard cress etc. You can buy these already sprouted or you can sprout at home using sprouting equipment, or you can just use a large 1 litre jar, or a nut milk bag. You must soak the seed/lentil/grain first, ideally overnight, but there is a minimum soak time for each type: alfalfa - soak minimum 8 hours, lentils - soak min 10 hours, chickpeas - soak min 10 hours, mung beans - soak min 10 hours, sunflower or pumpkin seeds - soak min 8 hours, buckwheat - soak min 10 hours. Then you should rinse and leave to sprout for a few days out of direct sunlight, rinsing twice a day

Essential	Good to have but can come later
Juicer – for juicing fruit and vegetables	Blender – for making nut & seed milks, shakes, smoothies, sauces, soups & dips
Food processor – for making pates, cauliflower rice, desserts, pesto, raw dough	Dehydrator – for making crackers, cookies, pie crusts, granola, pizza, bread and more
Decent sharp knife – for ease of veg prep, ceramic ones are good	Ice cream maker – for making raw ice creams from nut milks and other ingredients
Filter jug – for pure drinking water	Nut mill/coffee grinder – for grinding nuts and seeds to a fine flour
Nut milk bag – for straining nut milks and juices made in the blender	Wheatgrass juicer – for juicing all sorts of greens effectively
Silicone chocolate moulds or ice cube trays – for raw chocolate	Spiral slicer – to make spaghetti & noodles from courgettes, carrots and other veg
Tupperware and screw top jars – for food storage	Mandoline – to julienne & finely slice vegetables
Vegetable peeler – peel fruit & veg, and make paper thin ribbons for salads and pasta	Sprouting equipment – for sprouting seeds, grains, lentils, chickpeas etc
Cheese grater – for grating vegetables	Silicone cake moulds of different sizes or loose bottom cake tins
Colander or sieve – for rinsing vegetables in	Citrus press – for easily juicing lemons and limes
Glass jug – for making raw chocolate in so it's easy to pour into moulds	Small Parmesan grater – for zesting citrus fruits and finely grating garlic and ginger
Mixing bowls, measuring spoons and cups	



to prevent them going mouldy. You will know when they are ready, as you will see little tails appearing. Once this happens, keep in the fridge and eat within a couple of days. Add to salads, pates, dips or anything you fancy! Sprouts are one of the most nutritious foods we can consume, a true living food and full of protein, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, life force and vitality. I recommend you include them in your diet everyday.

Fermenting

Fermented foods make a really great addition to your diet because they contain lots of beneficial bacteria, which is helpful for digestion and immunity. It's a bit like eating live yoghurt or yoghurt based probiotic drinks. You can ferment vegetables; an example of this you will have probably heard of is sauerkraut, which is fermented cabbage, but you can also ferment any type of vegetable. Miso is a fermented food, and makes a great savoury addition to raw dips, pates and sauces. You can also make fermented nut cheese. This may sound a bit dodgy but I promise you it is delicious! It is very easy to make and a great thing to have in the fridge for easy lunches and snacks, it makes a great dip for crudites and is nice spread on crackers, topped with sliced cucumber and tomato.

Dehydrating

Pick up any raw food recipe book and you will be sure to see that some of the recipes require a dehydrator. This can be frustrating for the raw food beginner but investing in a dehydrator does open up huge possibilities in the world of raw food cuisine. The dehydrator basically acts like a raw oven. It gently dries the food at low temperatures, which gives the appearance and texture of cooked food, whilst preserving those vital enzymes and nutrients. With a dehydrator it is possible to make foods such as: crackers, breads, cookies, pastries, pizza, quiches, burgers, nut balls, granola, kale chips (delicious crispy flavoured kale pieces, like raw crisps), fruit leathers, your own dried fruit, and lots more.

Food Shopping and Sourcing

People sometimes think that going raw means you will be spending a lot of extra money. While it is true that

organic food is generally a bit more expensive, and nuts can be pricey too, you will be surprised at how much you save from ditching convenience packet foods and buying lunch out rather than making it yourself and taking it with you. Obviously organic is best if you can afford it, but even if you can't, you will still be getting a healthy dose of nutrition and enzymes from eating raw living plant food. According to the Environmental Working Group (EWG) there are some foods that store pesticides more than others, and should be bought organic wherever possible. So if you can only afford to buy a few organic items, go for the ones on the left.

The fruits and veggies on the right are on their clean fifteen list of lowest pesticide residues so you can go for non-organic here if you really can't afford organic.

Buy organic only	Conventional if you must
Apples	Onions
Celery	Sweetcorn
Peppers	Pineapple
Peaches	Avocado
Strawberries	Cabbage
Nectarines	Peas
Grapes	Asparagus
Spinach	Mangoes
Lettuce	Aubergine
Cucumber	Kiwi fruit
Blueberries	Cantaloupe
Potatoes	melon
Green beans	Sweet potatoes
Kale	Grapefruit
	Watermelon
	Mushrooms

You can check out their site here:
www.ewg.org/foodnews

It's best to try and source local seasonal produce when you can. Supermarkets tend to source their stock from all corners of the globe, so try and find other suppliers in your area. You may find there are some local farmers markets you can shop at, which are not only great because the food is local and seasonal, but also because you are supporting local businesses. Pick your own farms are a good option as you can get the freshest produce because you know exactly when it was picked! They also offer a fun morning or afternoon out with the kids as a bonus! Other possibilities

include local box schemes such as Abel and Cole www.abelandcole.co.uk or Riverford www.riverford.co.uk. These companies offer local seasonal produce delivered to your door, but can be a bit pricey sometimes.

It's up to you to investigate what your local area has to offer. Useful websites to help you: www.localfoods.org.uk. This site lets you enter your postcode and shows you all the farmers markets, pick your own farms and farm shops within whatever radius you choose. Also check out Stall Finder www.stallfinder.com. You can search for events and scroll down to farmers markets and put in your postcode and search radius again. Another good resource is your local councils website, they often have information and listings of local business. Also just do a Google search for farmers markets or pick your own farms in your local area.

The best way to start with raw food is to add in one thing at a time. For example, add in a smoothie or juice for breakfast, and once you get used to this you can move on to something else. Remember that every extra mouthful of raw fruit and vegetables you consume makes a difference to your health. Take it at your own pace and most of all, enjoy the journey!

Natalie Heath is the Raw Lifestyle Coach. She has been on the raw path for over 6 years and now uses her experience, knowledge and training to teach and coach others how to eat more raw plant food, lose weight, detox, live naturally, and create the body and life of their dreams.



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My Vegan Diet Caused Health Problems

Kristen Suzanne followed a vegan diet for 10 years, but ended up asking if primal or paleo would be better?

Things have changed in my life recently, and I want to share what's going on.

But first, it is important that I say I'm reporting this based on my own experiences. What follows is not a prescription for you. You're on your own journey and I respect that. Please, do what you want for yourself. I'm sharing this because I feel it's important.

The big news: My family is no longer eating a vegan diet.

As many of my readers know from my blog and books, I've been a hardcore, ethical vegan (some might even say militant) for almost a decade. To sum it up... well, there's really no summing it up. The transformation has been too consuming and complex. But I'll try...

My head has gone through so much thinking, researching, meditating, analyzing, soul searching, and emotion over the past four months that I can't cover everything here in one article. I'm still in the "researching" and "experimental" phases, and I hadn't actually planned on attempting to tell this story until I was farther along. But I began to realize that A) people might want or need to know, and B), if I had waited too long, I would have forgotten some of the details. Perhaps by jumping into the story mid-stream and sharing now, it will help me share more of it in better detail.

For starters, we still eat some vegan meals, but we don't eat vegan at every meal.

So, why the change? It all started with our toddler, Kamea. I began having doubts about our vegan diet when she became strangely sick in the early fall. Wait. Back up... actually, when I think about it, I'd been dreaming of eggs for about three years. I ignored them though. Then Kamea had a strange illness of sporadic vomiting, having trouble walking for a couple of days, and overall I was feeling instinctively like

perhaps being vegan was not right for her. She consumed plenty of breastmilk over the years, thankfully, but her solids were nothing that made me feel like she was getting all she needed. Too often I was stressed about her diet. (I later became convinced that my maternal instincts had been correct.) That began the research. That, and I kept hearing and thinking about the word "balance." That word kept popping up in my mind and what always followed it was the thought that my vegan diet was anything but balanced, because simply... a vegan diet is not balanced. It's on the far end of the dietary spectrum.

So, it started with dreams of eggs, then raising Kamea during these critical developmental periods (particularly neurological development), that got me thinking about things. And then there's the fact that I wasn't without my own health issues. Me? Health issues? Now that I look back at it with the clarity of hindsight, yes. The problem was that I wasn't making the diet connection. I figured it was "something else." I had thought I was eating and living the ideal lifestyle so, despite making constant tweaks and adjustments (superfoods, fancy juicers, superherbs, tonic herbs, prepping foods various ways to optimize nutrients, following rules for combining or not combining certain foods like having vitamin C with iron rich plants – just to name a few), never in a million years would I have entertained the idea of making such a radical change. But, that's exactly what happened.

As this journey started, I found myself asking questions like...

Are there cultures around the world who eat exclusively vegan and, if so, have they done so for multiple generations?

What nutrients are omnivores easily getting that vegans are trying, with

much effort, to get with supplements?

Are there nutrients where supplements aren't enough?

If we get enough of certain nutrients from supplements, are they still inadequate for some reason or less than ideal?

Does supplementing overlook essential co-factors that are known to science? What about the ones that aren't yet known? (Seems like, every week, they discover more complex linkages between nutrients that are consumed together.)

Under what dietary circumstances did humans evolve and what does that say about my vegan diet?

How have things changed since I went vegan almost a decade ago with respect to plant based foods?

What vegan-promoting studies and experts was I relying on for information? Are they unbiased? Are they cherry-picking studies that support their philosophy while ignoring those that don't?

What is the current state of animal agriculture? Has it changed since my first days of eating a vegan diet?

These are just a handful of the hundreds of questions that would run through my head almost every day. I couldn't help but ponder such issues, and time and again, I was moved by many of the answers I was opening my eyes to see. Truthfully, my world was about to get seriously rocked. Turned upside down. What started as a troubling little nag in my mind started peeling layers back until I was in nothing short of a full-scale identity crisis... what if I've been wrong... *all these years?* Even worse, what if I've harmed my child? I can assure you, these are issues that nobody wants to face, but I owed it to myself and to my family to seek out the best available information

— regardless of the source — that was available anywhere to be found.

“Meat-curious vegan” seeks answers

The first thing I discovered was, wow, there are a lot of us. Since switching back to an omnivore diet, I’ve learned there are legions of people with nearly identical stories to tell, including more than a few esteemed nutrition and health experts. The common thread: We were vegan, some quite smugly, thinking it was the human ideal of a smart-n-healthy diet, but then, only after several years, started to experience health problems, and then switched back to omnivore, and the health problems disappeared. That is a pattern that I heard over and over. But there was an interesting second pattern...

What we also have in common — made somewhat easy no doubt due to having adapted to a strict (vegan) diet for many years — are the strict kinds of omnivore foods we eat now vs what we were eating pre-vegan. I’m speaking about high quality. Even more so for former raw fooders, whose restrictions (such as avoiding grains) make some vegans’ diets look like junk food. So the strange irony is that hard-core vegans and raw fooders actually have more in common with, say, a hard-core paleo diet than the population at large. In short, we’re all accustomed to reading labels, grilling restaurant staff, ordering hard-to-find ingredients online, preparing food ourselves to ensure its purity, and eating plenty of vegetables.

For those of you who don’t know, I originally went vegan for ethical reasons. With health benefits an added big bonus for this nutrient-minded gal, the vegan diet seemed like a no-brainer. I remember over the years when people would go vegan and then stop because they didn’t feel well on it, I used to think to myself, “Well, they’re simply not doing it right.” Some people complained of lack of libido, lack of iron, lack of energy, etc. I now realize, quite humbled, that many of those problems may have been valid, even if they were doing a vegan diet “right.” Perhaps it took longer for the vegan diet to take a toll on my health than others. More likely I just couldn’t admit it to myself because my beliefs were so strong, constantly reaffirmed by my full-time immersion in the understandably self-reinforcing vegan culture (minorities

do need to stick together and support each other, so this culture is understandable).

But after taking a careful look at Kamea’s vegan diet and what a growing child needs, and starting to recognize some cracks in our own adult vegan diet, I started to feel differently about it all. I’m now confident that these cracks started some years ago, but I wasn’t seeing a possible dietary connection. But then added on top of these deficiencies came pregnancy and breastfeeding — which is depleting on any mom — and the cracks became gorges that were impossible to ignore. But I tried to, or I tried to explain them away. I rationalized that maybe I was sleep deprived and messed up hormonally from breastfeeding. But, seeing Kamea on a vegan diet pointed out things I hadn’t previously thought about (and I’m convinced MommaBear instinct is quite a bit more powerful than cognitive dissonance and confirmation bias). I started looking to the future when Kamea would wean and I wondered if her vegan diet would be nutritionally adequate. My mind started to spin and I was questioning all of my previous assumptions, and at the same time I was getting more and more frustrated (and quite distraught) from having been vegan so long and wondering what implications that had for my family. I personally concluded that I was not willing to experiment with my child’s or family’s health.

What were my specific health issues from being a vegan so long?

Fertility. It’s still a big “what if,” but I feel in my core that we were not nourished enough to conceive on our own. I now know that, despite superfoods and supplements up the wazoo, we lacked some essential fertility-supporting nutrients, stuff you just can’t get in a pill or any bizarre exotic mix of daily goji berries and maca. I could go on at length about just this one issue, but it deserves an entire article which perhaps I’ll write at some point, with all the gory technical details.

Skin issues. Over the years, sometimes I had an amazing glow, especially in the beginning of being vegan and raw. But as the years passed, time and pregnancy took their toll, and with extended breastfeeding... well, my skin started to suffer. I had some horrible breakouts that lasted long and didn’t heal quickly. I started to notice that I had

pale, grayish looking skin, and dark circles under my eyes. Of course, I’m a mama to a toddler and constantly sleep deprived so I thought this must all be par for the motherhood course. But then there was the rash I had on my finger since before I was pregnant with Kamea. It would get irritated (and frighteningly worse) with water and too much dish washing, and it would itch, get red, etc. It would come and go, but mostly come for over three years. I kept hearing in my mind what my mom always said, “Your skin manifests problems happening within.” So, I wondered. My diet is awesome, right? Why do I have this rash? Surely my insides are glowing and beautiful. This rash couldn’t mean anything about my food choices. Well, I now have some ideas as to why my vegan diet resulted in skin problems.

My teeth. Since pregnancy and through breastfeeding I’ve had two teeth break plus some other issues. Again, I didn’t think anything of it because I thought my diet was pretty perfect; in hindsight, I was missing important nutrients.

My butt was sagging. I’m 36 years old and, despite regular exercise, my butt was starting to sag. I was embarrassed. I started looking at pictures of when I was younger, maybe 8 years ago and I had a full face, olive skin, and although I was younger back then, I certainly didn’t anticipate a freakin’ saggy soft ass at the tender age of only 36! Oh, and the skin on my knees was sagging. I was like, “Seriously? My knees? Am I suddenly 80?” Overall, I was looking way too old for my age. I kept wondering how that was possible when my family history didn’t support that (both sides aged with good skin), plus I was eating such an antioxidant-rich vegan diet... so what was wrong with me?

Nausea. And, the bloating. I can’t tell you how many times I complained to my husband Greg about feeling nauseous after eating or saying “I feel so fat” from the bloat I had even though I was only weighing 117. Again, I never dreamed it was my diet. In hindsight, I wonder if being a long term vegan contributed to low stomach acid which could explain these things. Or, perhaps it was the vegan food such as grains and legumes, which can be hard to digest.

Lastly, my cupboard was becoming a pharmacy of supplements as I tried to

keep my family's intake of nutrients balanced, but which probably was even more unbalanced as I took many supplements in isolation. I became increasingly leery of this because I knew intuitively that the best nutrients are found in real whole foods... not isolated in supplements. Not to mention, it had become a monthly line item on the household budget comparable to a car payment.

Clearly, something wasn't right.

There was a lot going on that I didn't realize until I opened my mind to the possibility that something was not right in my diet. Humbled, but nevertheless intrigued, I pushed on. (At least as a non-vegan, I can now eat crow! Ar ar ar.)

At first, it seemed more than just a little weird to end the vegan chapter of my life, as I said, it was more like an identity crisis. These labels carry so much meaning and weight with them. Fortunately, now just a few months later, it actually doesn't seem like a big deal. At some point, a switch in my brain just flipped, and that was that. It was about my family's health, not a philosophical crusade. It boils down to the fact that my family was missing nutrients, and now we're not.

Some Specifics

Here are a few things that concerned me about our vegan diet, but I didn't realize it until a few months ago:

Nuts and seed oils (as well as grains) can be high sources of omega six fatty acids, which can be a problem especially when my diet wasn't a strong source of omega three fatty acids in spite of my consumption of hemp, chia, and supplements. For example, eating a vegan burrito (or even a sans-tortilla "bowl") at Chipotle was not a great choice like I had thought it was. There is refined soybean oil in about everything Chipotle makes. And, don't get me started on the tortilla (see number 3 below). Another example: Eating loads of nut-filled raw brownies was not great either. I'm not saying raw chocolate brownies are completely bad, but in hindsight, it's not as innocent as I once believed, especially when scarfing down several at a time or if I was eating all raw all the time. I realize that a lot of people eating "exclusively raw" might not have the issue of inflammatory omega six refined oils, but most people aren't exclusively raw. And,

even if you are raw, there's a lot of omega six fatty acids in a raw diet while lacking quality omega three fatty acids to balance it out. As I was not usually all raw, once I started looking closer at the vegan foods I was eating, I was pretty shocked at what I found.

Drinking all of those protein shakes because I craved protein. I became curious as to why I was even craving protein, not to mention the possible consequences of consuming a powdered and concentrated food like that with warnings of metal contaminants, etc. A protein shake here and there, no biggie, but to have it much more often than that because we were trying to add protein to our diet is another deal altogether. (Why did it take me so long to realize this?)

Um, gluten is the devil. 'Nuff said.

Retinol is important for so much including pregnancy, fertility, breastfeeding. And beta-carotene will not cut it – at least not for my family. (This one alone probably pisses me off the most because retinol is only in animal foods. You never hear vegans warn about it like they do B12, and who knows the problems I caused my family by avoiding it.)

Iodine and my lack of it from not eating fish (and mostly gagging at sea veggies) was not good. And on top of that... consuming massive quantities of crucifers (daily juicing, anyone?) might have negatively affected my thyroid, which could alter many things including fertility. Honestly, I knew crucifers could be problems for people with thyroid issues but I presumed my thyroid was in top shape. Who knows what potential damage I was doing to my thyroid gorging on so many green juices, green smoothies, green powders, and kale salads, and not balancing it with enough iodine-rich foods.

Important nutrients were missing (fat soluble nutrients, choline, etc), and supplements weren't cutting it. I sure tried though. I've learned a lot over the months regarding the importance of fat soluble vitamins, the source of them, the absurdly complex ways that they interplay with each other for optimal health, how they are important for other nutrients that aren't fat soluble, and – bottom line – how much easier and better it is to get them from foods instead of trying to add them through isolation in my diet. At the risk of flogging myself too much for one article, I

just can't believe I didn't consider this stuff before.

Cholesterol is not the devil. This alone flipped my worldview upside down when we learned more about cholesterol. Do you know I had a cholesterol reading once a few years ago that was 95?! And, to think I bragged about that. I'm ashamed of that now.

Soy, always a bit iffy, now seriously scares me, no matter what form.

I questioned the amount of grains and legumes we had in our diet and how it contributed to our problems. Not only are they an inferior source of nutrients (especially for a growing child like Kamea), but they increase the overall sugar load in the body and I was eating a lot as a result of increased hunger due to pregnancy, breastfeeding, being active, and basically not being nourished. (The degree to which legumes are problematic for human digestion continues to be hotly debated and researched as you read this.)

How did I make the transition?

At first I was learning about vegan foods that might not be that great for you, such as wheat and gluten. Then I learned how grains and legumes in general are just not so good. Now, as a raw fooder, I was already aware of many of grains' problems. But the problem is that if I'm not eating anything from animals, and then I decide to cut back on nuts due to their poor fatty acid profile, and fruit has too much sugar to be a large part of my diet ... pretty soon I start running out of things to eat. Then, add breastfeeding to the daily caloric requirements, and my weight started to drop precipitously. I had to get more calories, so I had started consuming more grains and legumes despite their disadvantages. But once I learned more about why they're bad and started revisiting my options, the whole equation changed, because it became much easier to get high quality calories from animal products.

So I began by eliminating grains and legumes from our diet. It's been 4 months since I've had either and I don't miss them a bit. I am committed to a 85/15 flexibility rule where I don't freak about a meal here and there that might have grains or legumes (hold the gluten though), but I've not felt the need to implement that much "cheating" yet.

We eliminated all soy. We reduced carbs overall (including cutting down on fruit) because I think we were eating too many. When you take out all of those aforementioned foods, that takes out a lot of food. Then, as I learned more and more the importance of nutrients we were missing or not getting enough of, or not getting them in an easily assimilable form, I was drawn to foods for those missing key players. Enter: high quality animal foods. So, it was a process of cutting out certain low-quality vegan foods and then adding in certain high-quality animal foods. It was a process and it didn't all happen overnight.

What about my hardcore ethics? Once I had committed to making a change for my family's health, I was afraid I'd enter omnivore-land begrudgingly, crestfallen, and with a heavy heart. And at times it felt completely foreign. Yet my old distant memories made the idea of eating certain foods familiar at the same time; after all, I was an omnivore for decades before going vegan. Additionally, I actually, naturally, started seeing my food differently. I consid-

ered evolution, my ancestry, biochemistry, health, how animals are raised and processed, and the ecological web of life on earth.

Above, I listed a lot of health challenges I experienced while being vegan for so long. So, what happened when we introduced animal products?

Night and day is what happened.

My skin, almost literally, changed overnight. I haven't broken out in four months. My face filled out. My skin tone changed and I have more of my natural olive tone color to it. I look in the mirror and I see my former self. Oh, and the pesky rash I had on my finger? Gone. As if I never had it, not matter how often it gets wet from doing dishes.

My digestion changed practically overnight as well. I no longer get bloated or nauseous after eating. And, I never feel fat (and you should see all the fat I eat now – whoa).

My body composition is changing and it looks so much better. My ass isn't sagging anymore, thank god!

I feel more nourished now but I'm still healing from being depleted for so long. Hopefully we'll conceive naturally this time around. That'd be awesome. Speaking of that, my monthly cycle changed instantly! If that's not proof that something is going on with one's endocrine system, then I don't know what is.

Kamea has done super terrific, too. Whew, this mama is finally at ease. When eating an all vegan diet (aside from breastfeeding), keep in mind that there is little margin for error, not just with nutrients, but plain old calories. If her appetite wasn't strong, she wasn't getting enough calories. If she was finicky, she wasn't eating enough, or it would pressure me to feed her lower quality foods I knew she'd eat, like the tortilla on my Chipotle burrito or extra nuts, just to make sure she got enough calories. Or there was the issue that many vegan foods are high in fiber so her belly filled up before she could get adequate calories. Or the fact that I had so many rules to follow regarding where to get certain nutrients in the plant world, like pumpkin seeds for

Beetroot, Chili & Lime Pesto

- 1 cup diced beetroot (raw or roasted)
- 1 cup fresh herbs & leafy greens
- 1 cup walnuts
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1/2 a lime, juiced
- Fresh red chili to taste
- 1 teaspoon herbs de Provence
- a pinch of salt

Tip:
For longer storage, freeze in ice-cube trays. When frozen, pop them out and store in a Glad zipper bag. Add frozen to hot recipes, or defrost for cold recipes.

Directions:
Prepare all the ingredients and put in a food processor or blender. Blend until smooth with some texture, and add more oil if needed. Put into a glass jar and store in the fridge for 5-7 days.

Fight Food Waste
Freeze excess,
Compost the rest!

3 Ways TO EAT BEETS

Art: Holly Gardner. Recipes: Heather Gardner @TheRawTeacher

zinc, and so she filled up on those and there wasn't much appetite for other important foods. I faced constant hand-wringing daily dilemmas... all gone now. Her appetite went up, her caloric intake went up, her nutrients went up, and she started gaining weight at a healthier rate. I went from being a constant ball of stress about her eating enough to feeling totally relaxed and relieved knowing she was getting everything she needs, especially as she started to wean. This stress was taking its toll on me, emotionally, and affecting my sleep... all things that are terrible for health. All of these are much better now, secondary effects of the dietary change. It's like I'm living a new life relatively void of anxiety compared to how things were before. I only wish I had done it sooner.

All of these changes happened immediately and it was proof for me that we were going in the right direction.

It's true that there were many times I felt great as a vegan, especially in the beginning years. Perhaps there was a cleansing element to it; or perhaps it was mind-over-matter, a placebo,

because I was on a serious animal ethics mission so I didn't think my issues were food related. I am only now recognizing this for what it was. I now suspect I was in a constant state of denial because I thought I was doing the best one could do. There were periods when I went all raw and it was heavenly. But, I never stayed all raw because it felt too unbalanced. Add to that a pregnancy and extended breastfeeding. I simply became depleted and my body showed the signs, and it's during the past year or so that it hit me the hardest. I was forced to open my mind and consider that my diet had shortcomings. I'm so glad I did. "When I knew better I did better."

I have to admit that looking back, I have deep regrets. I was vegan for too long, and it was not in my best interest during my pregnancy and especially having Kamea being vegan as a growing child.

So what do we eat? - This is an update written 1 year after the above.

I frequently get asked about my life these days. How is my family faring on

our omnivore diet since ending a decade of being vegan? What are we eating?

Our diet is higher in fat, moderate for carbs (with some days being lower in carbs), and comprises a ton of high-quality animal products, including:

Wild caught fish, usually salmon (including wild caught salmon roe)

Grass-fed and pasture-raised meats (including massively nutrient dense organ meats and bone broths) How can I eat organ meats? Well, it's been a process to find the best way I like them but finally that's happened. I hide liver in butter-and-brandy-rich pate as well as in cheeseburgers smothered in home made BBQ sauce. I hide beef heart in stew and enjoy some weird beef tongue. I am determined to keep my family eating grass fed offal (organ meats), and so far they're totally loving them, thankfully, because the nutrition is stellar and unbelievable. These organ meats are the true super foods of the world.

Sardines, Oysters (and other shell fish)

Ruby Red Juice

- 1 medium beetroot
- 1 pink grapefruit
- 2 apples
- 2 blood oranges
- 1 pomegranate
- small piece of ginger

Tip: Freeze juice in ice-cube trays. Pop into smoothies and drinks for added zing!

Raw Beet Borscht

- 1 cup raw diced beetroot
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1/2-1 stick of celery
- 1 avocado
- 1/4-1/2 small red onion
- 1 clove garlic
- 1/2 a lemon, juiced
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried dill
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- Fresh red chili to taste
- a pinch of salt
- 2 cups of warm water
- Sauerkraut to serve

Tip: Can be stored for 2 days in the fridge. Freeze in a Glad zipper bag for later. Serve chilled in the summer, warm in the winter, or bring to work in a thermos for a healthy lunch.

Pasture-raised organic eggs

Organic vegetables

A little fruit (usually in the form of berries)

Grass-fed butter

High-quality oils (grass-fed ghee, high vitamin butter oil, coconut oil, MCT oil)

Coffee shakes (yum!) see www.tinyurl.com/krcoffee for recipes and info

Organic Norwalk cold pressed fresh green juice but the recipe is different from what I used to in the past (no heavy greens like kale, collards, or spinach because when we consume those now they're cooked). The recipe is usually celery, cucumbers, romaine, cilantro, occasionally parsley and other herbs, and we might have a pint or two every week or so.

Supplements These change based on our diet for the week as well as new things I learn every day.

White rice (occasionally)

Dark organic fair trade chocolate

Raw organic sauerkraut

Nuts and seeds

Dairy products like raw grass-fed organic cheese, grass-fed organic ice cream (not raw, usually Straus brand), and grass-fed organic yogurt (not raw). After some experimentation it seems we tolerate them very well. The ice cream and yogurt make up a very small percentage of our diet and it doesn't make a regular appearance, but we do have it sometimes. It must be from free range grass fed cows and organic. I go back and forth on dairy... some say it creates inflammation but others say if it's high quality and tolerated then it can be very nutrient dense. Therefore, we enjoy it at times and other times we abstain for awhile.

As you can imagine, we don't eat out very much. As much as I love cooking, I do need a break from the kitchen. I make almost everything from scratch, and that's a lot of time in the kitchen for three meals a day. So on occasion we go out to eat for gluten-free pizza (maybe once every 10 to 14 days) and we also go to Chipotle every couple of weeks. I really don't care for Chipotle's crap oils they use on their rice and for cooking, but a girl needs a break from meal prep, ya know? I sure wish there

were some options with truly high quality everything. I can find a grass fed burger here in Scottsdale, but the salad it's served with has junk canola oil on it as an example. Sigh.

In my effort to keep my food prep simple as a busy mom, I rely heavily on my many slow cookers (mini, 6 quarts, 7 quarts, and 8 quarts) and my Kitchen BFF, the great sous vide. My goodness these are game changing tools in the kitchen for not only making the easiest meals ever, but also the most delicious and healthy. I also try to cook pretty big batches of recipes so that we can eat leftovers for the following day's lunch (or breakfast). For example, when I make the Liver n Beef Bun-less Cheeseburgers, I cut Kamea's patty in half so she can have half for dinner and half for breakfast the next day. Here are some more details to give a better picture...

How are we feeling?

It's been over a year now so I thought I'd reassess and let everyone know. Reassessing is always important no matter what you're doing whether it's exercise, diet, supplements, a job, school, anything. Being open-minded and asking questions helps to reassess and decide if things are working as well as they should be. Things change, right? I mean, I was vegan for so long — too long — because I didn't reassess. What I didn't realize was that it's possible to feel well being vegan for a while, depending on where you're coming from in your diet. But, things can change over time and gradual depletions can occur. It happened to us. Or people age and hormones change. Or people become pregnant, have babies, lactate, and things change. My point is that it's important to reassess as you live, because what works at one time in your life might not be the same later. Or heck, the world changes. When I went vegan a decade ago, the world was very different regarding animal food options in the quality available and the animal welfare. Now we can buy high quality grass-fed foods online with the click of a button, and we're seeing gluten-free options in more restaurants every day.

Overall Health and Wellbeing

Over a year since going omnivore, we still feel great. During our time as vegans, especially near the end, Greg was frequently injuring joints when exercising, or heck, he could sneeze and

tweak his neck or back. It was getting to be a real nuisance, not only painful, but it kept him out of the gym and he loves to work out. At the time though, I had no idea that our vegan diet could've been causing inflammation and that we weren't getting proper nutrients to build strong bodies. During this past 1+ year as omnivores... no injuries and his strength has increased. Interestingly, that's with him not even consuming tons of protein like he did as a vegan. There was a long period, while vegan, where he would drink 3 to 4 double (or triple) scoop protein shakes with vegan protein powders. He was able to experience some strength, but it was so much more work than it is now (and that's with him being older now). With our diet now, he consumes less protein, way fewer shakes which are with grass-fed whey, and he's feeling strong in the gym. But now it's not as much work. The absence of injuries has also allowed him to be much more consistent (months without missing a workout) and work out harder, pushing more weight and not feeling that he needs to baby his joints. He says it's like the kinks that he used to attribute to getting older are just not there anymore.

Fertility

Our fertility has improved by way of my hormones and cycle being damn near flawless. My cycle now regularly comes but it sneaks up on me because I rarely experience any PMS. No cramps, no headaches, no zits. I sometimes get a day of being a bit tired before my cycle, but it's so much easier on me now than it was before when I was vegan. I'll say that way back years ago, pre-vegan, when I was on a normal diet of wheat, hormone filled meats, veggies, oatmeals, cereals, milk, etc, my cycles were horrible. So much pain. Then, I went vegan and raw, cleaned up my diet and I experienced improvement. But, then I stayed vegan so long, missed out on important nutrients (and became depleted over time) that my periods started getting ridiculous again and painful... tired... pimples. It sucked. Then, I went omnivore in November 2012, by simply adding pasture-raised eggs to my diet and cod liver oil. Holy moly, my cycle changed virtually overnight. Since then, as you know we've gone full-on omni and my cycle has been great. I'm still amazed it's such a breeze.

Greg's fertility has improved as well, which we quantify based on our DIY semen analysis using a microscope. The analyses are not quite lab quality (they use imaging software to get more accurate numbers), but we have a baseline and can see trends and there's improvement. I'm not pregnant yet, but we have a solid chance of making it happen naturally. Trouble with that is we're not getting any younger. I'm turning 38 this year and Greg is in his 40s. We welcome another baby, and Kamea very much wants a sibling, so we're feeling a bit of pressure to make it happen sooner rather than later.

Teeth

I had some terrible experiences with my teeth when I was vegan in spite of eating a diet full of supplements and without junk food. Now I know I was missing important nutrients. This whole year my teeth have been great with the exception of a problem that has reared its head as a result of the root canal I had to have while vegan! However, so far it's under control with diet and the oral care I use. I have high hopes that I can continue to stay out of the dentist's chair if I keep my diet in check, which of course I will.

When I look at Kamea's teeth now versus when she was vegan, it's a difference, too. We healed what we think was a cavity with nutrition. Her one dental visit we took her to for a check-up after she turned three was that her teeth were in great shape. I'm scared to think of how her teeth could've fared had we stayed vegan. And, I'll say this... people who eat omni can still have teeth problems. It's the difference of eating super high quality nutrient rich omni foods while cutting grains and junk, too. Teeth need specific nutrients for a healthy mouth.

Skin

My skin has stayed wonderful this whole year as well as my body composition. Goodness what a relief. My beauty routine is ridiculously simple (read here: tinyurl.com/krclean) yet my skin looks great, though I'm still fighting the aging that my vegan (and high carb) diet caused. I'm seeing improvements though. Yippee.

The good news is that my skin has its natural healthy tone and is no longer ashy / pale colored. I rarely get a pimple, and if I do, it heals with lightning speed which was something I didn't do

well as a vegan. No wonder since I wasn't getting zinc that assimilates properly, skin building nutrients like retinol (only available from animal products I learned) and quality omegas and fats, plus more.

Digestion

My digestion continues to feel good. Oh man, the times I was bloated while vegan. Ugh. Now that I've cut grains, soy, and wheat out of our diet (except for some white rice as noted above) I don't get bloated. It really is that simple for me. And, I don't get gas. I can't help but laugh at how bad my gas was for the decade I was vegan.

Kamea's Overall Health and Development

Kamea, our 3.5 year old daughter, is thriving. Her body filled out after introducing the foods mentioned above, her color is gorgeous, and her development is great. She looks much healthier than when she was vegan. Oh the relief I feel knowing what I know now, and ever grateful for the changes I made once I opened up my eyes to the life we were living and the vegan "research" I was parroting. The nutrients she was missing – not cool. I thought she was getting enough (of certain nutrients) with nuts, seeds, grains, lentils, beans, etc, but it seems that many of the nutrients in those foods aren't very bioavailable so she likely was not getting them. I thought if she ate enough beta-carotene from carrots and greens that she'd get enough vitamin A but that's not true. It converts very little to vitamin A, and in some people not at all, and in children it's particularly poor. I thought she (and we) could get proper iron, protein, omegas, and zinc from plants, but it doesn't look like it based on the research I've done this year, not to mention the way we felt toward the end of our vegan chapter.

Damn if I don't feel frustration and regret, even today, when I look back to pregnancy, nursing, and raising my baby as a vegan. Turns out it wasn't a good solution for us. I remember back during our time as vegans I posted a picture of Kamea on my blog. Someone wrote in saying how she thought Kamea looked weak and sickly. I was blind to it and offended. I thought I was doing everything ideal for my child. Her comment about Kamea really bothered me but I blew it off as saying it was poor lighting in the picture. I

think back upon that now and I want to cry. I recently looked at videos and pictures of Kamea in her diaper when she was 2. F#*k, she was ... err... lean. I chalked it off that our family has lean kids since there were professional sources saying it's totally safe and healthy raising a vegan child, and anyway, I wasn't feeding her any junk foods. I was wrong. Now I'm different though. I pay attention better, remain humble, and consistently reassess. I'm willing to make whatever changes are necessary for us to have optimal health.

I'll be honest though, I feel burned after wearing my rose-tinted vegan glasses for so long that I can't help but be skeptical of everything I read these days. I suppose that's a good thing though. Constantly question everything. That being said, if I look at history, biology, genetics, and most importantly the changes in my family's bodies, then I'm a believer that we're on the right path.

So there you have it. It's been over a year since we ended our decade of veganism. We reassess our choices frequently, read as much as we can, experiment and pay attention to our bodies, and we're doing great. I'll continue to update on our lives more often.

In 2005, Kristen walked away from her corporate career in executive level operations to focus on her true passion: healthy food. Already a vegan for 2 years, she turned her attention to the raw vegan cuisine and lifestyle, initially teaching classes and providing personal chef services, but as her online audience grew, she ultimately shifted to full-time blogging, recipe development, and publishing recipe books. By 2012, she had authored twelve books on the raw vegan diet, when problems in her health and child's health forced her to reevaluate the nutritional claims made by advocates of the raw and vegan diets. In November of 2012, she began introducing high quality animal products into her family's diet, and saw dramatic improvements almost immediately.

This article was originally published on Kristen's blog in two parts. You can read more from Kristen on her blog and website www.KristenSuzanne.com and Twitter: @KristensRaw ☘



The Art of Crafting Tonics, Brews and Elixirs

Learn how to make your own herbal brews with Yarrow Willard.

Crafting elixirs is a fun and inspiring process. The basic formula for crafting is simple... and it is a wonderful art that can evolve over time, as you learn the way different herbs and ingredients work together.

First, you simply begin with setting the intention of the desired effect of the brew. For example, this could be specified health benefits (like support the liver or kidneys), or energising-effects, or an emotional lift. Then, craft the tonic with herbs and substances that support that intention. In time- you begin to see the magical and synergistic way herbs and superfoods work together to support and boost your overall health.

The basis of crafting a good herbal tonic elixir drink is creating complimentary relationships between the herbs in your tea base, and all the ingredients that you add in afterward. Begin with establishing the desired effect you want your drink to have- and then craft it with ingredients that support this purpose. When formulating, I like to treat the herbs like personalities and create tribes or communities with them. A well-balanced community has a diversity of skills, and purpose that accent and inspire each other- they may all act in differ-

ent ways, but they also balance each other and fill out the spectrum of vantage points. Each ingredient you choose should be placed with intention and a purpose to support the desired outcome.

When all the fundamental aspect are tended to in creating the elixir or tonic- we can then choose to add some complementary ingredients, enhancing different skills, functions, and complexities to the community we have created. This could include herbs that help stimulate, relax, soothe, increase circulation or protect the liver. Pick those ingredients with actions that are in line with the direction of intended effects you are looking to create.

For example, say we want to create a blend to replace a coffee habit and improve or repair some of the damage that coffee can contribute to in the body. So, we start by adding herbs like burdock and dandelion root that work on restoring the liver and kidney function, as well as help pull out toxic load from the blood. We may also want to help stabilise blood sugar, so we add in Devil's Club. To aid digestion and destroy gut pathogens we can choose Oregon Grape. To reduce inflammation and

ease elimination of toxins, we can add in Marshmallow Root, though the dandelion and burdock are also contributing in this area. Lastly, and by no means least importantly, we want it to taste good and have a coffee-like feel, so we add in some roasted chicory root, that also supports the whole health effect with its high inulin and anti-oxidant content. This example I have described is the Harmonic Arts "Coastal Roots formula." It is designed with intention to help aid the body and work like a team, compounding the beneficial effects of each individual ingredient in it. All of the Harmonic Arts formulas are crafted in this way, and many of them lend well to being the herbal base for a tonic elixir drink.

As Coffee has some zip and zing, we can add herbs to the tea or powder blend that create this effect if desired. Good choices are Yerba Mate or Guayusa in the tea or Chocolate, Maca, or Gaurana in the powder mix. This will give you the potent earthy taste and tone of coffee that is so well-loved (especially in the mornings!) - while at the same time, supporting and enhancing our internal processes. Boosting our health, while providing an enjoyable and nourishing sipping experience- perfect combination!

Another aspect to look at in creating your perfect tonic drink is how the different levels of the flavour spectrum are filled out. An easy way to do this is by creating three layers: a Base, a Middle, and a Top Note. A Base Note is usually an earthy or deeper flavour, balancing and nourishing the blend. The Base creates and holds space for the rest of the formula. It is like the ground or foundation of the brew. Many Roots and Mushrooms possess this type of grounding energy, as well as Saturated Fats, Minerals and Clays. They are ideal substances to include as your Base.

The Middle Note holds the balance and equilibrium, bridging the two ends of the spectrum. Also known as the heart note. Members in this group are harmonising to the blend and help round out the flavour. Barks, sweet plants, many fruits, sweeteners and some nut mylks populate this area.

It is equally important to create a good Finish or Top Note. The ideal is to use ingredients that can lighten the body, uplift the spirit, and balance the mind and emotions. Many of the lush aromatic leaves, flowering parts and seeds and berries of the plants can do this. These potent substances often have a strong influence on our digestive, nervous and endocrine systems.

Once the Base note, Top note and middle note are in place, we can then diversify the spectrum, incorporating the "add-in theory." This is when elixir-making really gets fun! When we get to add those special super-ingredients, that give it the extra boost, and finish it up with a tasty zing to our palettes.

So the next question is – What kinds of complimentary ingredients can we add? How can we fortify this elixir in a way that enhances our health and well-being? Now it's time to play! Start with focusing on good fats, Nut Mylks, super foods, Wild seasonals, tinctures, essences, mineral salts and more...

Here is a brief description of these components:

Good Fats are like the matrix. They lock in the nutrients and strengthen the cells. They actually slow down the absorption of our elixir and fortify our core nourishment. Although 'fats' get a bad rap in the health world - 'good

fats' are a MUST in a long term health strategy.

Nut Mylks enrich our blend. Nut mylks are as they sound– a method of soaking and grinding nuts using a permeable bag to extract the rich nutrient-filled 'milk' from the nuts. Nut mylks bring fullness, body, and completeness to our drink. They are best freshly made and are easily created in 1-4 hours. As we are using a nut mylk bag to strain out the fibre portions, we can also add other ingredients to them that have portions that should be filtered out.

Superfoods fall into an advanced nutrition category. They are vitality-rich, packed with nutrients and mostly toxin free. Many are abundant with flavour and nutrition-enhancers, and yet not all are suited for consumption on their own. Many are from the most bio-diverse regions of our planet and contain potent and nutrient dense chemistry. The fertility and competition of the eco-system they grow in generates their unique characteristics, which we can use as accents to our blend. Many superfoods are best added as a powder, but some that dissolve well can be added whole.

Wild Seasonals, when fresh, help us touch our here and now seasonal reality. They tell our bodies what is current with our environment, imparting valuable information to body system harmony. Wild seasonals can make the back bone of a formula or be an add in to amplify our connecting to the natural world around us.

Tinctures contain concentrated plant spirits. They allow us to access the complex chemistry of a plant without the need for digestion. Powerful in small doses, they are easily absorbed and well preserved for many years. Making them a convenient way to administer specific action.

Essences broaden the spectrum further. There are many types, mostly affecting the subtler aspects of our perception. Essences are based on a more unseen or energetic resonance– yet equally as potent and impactful. Essence include homeopathics, tissue salts, flower essences, gem essence, animal essences, and even prayer/intention.

Mineral Salts are the perfect finish to the whole spectrum we have created.

They add up to 84 trace minerals and have a very important harmonising effect. They should always be added in small amounts.

More... What else are we able to incorporate? Again, the add-in theory stands. As we are crafting a road to health, we can add time, energy, and a way of life as part of the value in our blends... Through the practice of creating these healing tonics we are ultimately carving out our own "health sovereignty." Nourishing ourselves pro-actively from the inside out.

Once you have brewed your tea blend, it should be filtered and 1 litre added to ½ cup of nuts of your choice. This is then blended in a blender for 30 seconds and filtered through a cheesecloth or nut mylk bag. The liquid is placed back in the blender and any additional ingredients and sweetener are added, re-blended and served either hot or cold. Typically it will be good for upto 24 hours but is best enjoyed right away. If you would like to keep for a longer time, you can store the tea in the fridge for upto 4 days, and blend in nut mylk and add-in ingredients when ready.

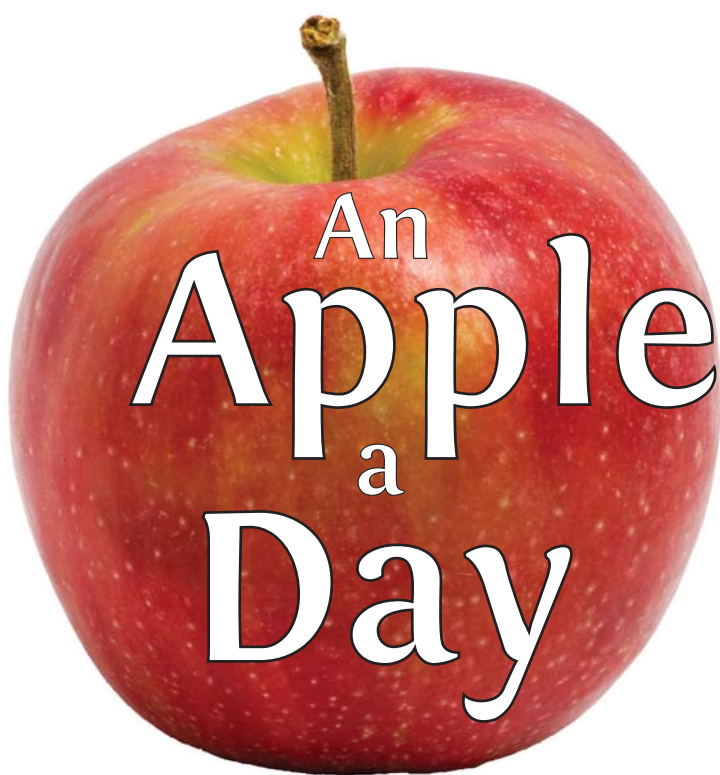
Now, sip, enjoy, and feel the nourishing vibrations!

P.S. If you are not completely satisfied with the blend afterwards, remember that there are no mistakes! There are only ways we can learn, and choices we can improve upon. Elixir and tonic crafting is a subtle art that improves and develops with time. The journey of experimentation can be just as enjoyable as the end results. With this in mind, start with small batches and be relaxed about changing your formulation or adding extra ingredients to improve the overall effect.

Yarrow is the founder of Harmonic Arts Botanical Dispensary, a small company of Herbalists based in the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island, Canada. Their mission is to share the healing powers of plant medicine with the community, both near and far. They try to provide the finest high quality herbs, and herbal products. They search out the best possible sustainable organic and wild-harvested herbs in their local farm community, wild lands, and on the world market. They also run workshops where you can learn to make elixirs.

www.harmonicarts.ca ❁





Learn more about apples than you ever thought possible with Dawn Waterhouse

Many of us are familiar with Malas Domestica – the modern apple; they are available all year round in an array of fancy names from Jazz to Pink Lady, from Fuji to Jonogold; to the more traditional varieties such as Cox's orange pippin and James Grieve.

Belonging to the rose family, our domestic apple is believed to have been cultivated over many centuries from Malas Sieversii – the wild apple of Central Asia, which is now sadly vulnerable to extinction. Unlike our domestic variety, the wild apple is quite resistant to weather extremes and disease – something centuries of selective breeding has lost.

The apple has been in Europe for many thousands of years – but was only taken to Northern America by European colonists in the 17th Century – so is a relatively modern fruit for them. Apple trees are said to have lined the North American trade routes, handy for a travellers snack.

Apple wood was once used to build coffins, and as such boat builders were not keen to use the apple tree for boat building. There is also superstition about the apple itself. In Ireland they believe that the apple peel, if peeled in one continuous ribbon, thrown over a woman's shoulder will form the initial of her future husband, whilst Danish folklore holds that apples wither around adulterers!

Apples appear in our customs too.... Apple bobbing at Halloween is a game that many of us are familiar with – and is a great way to encourage children to enjoy eating apples when they are most abundant. In Cornwall, there is Allantide – also celebrated on 31st October as the beginning of Winter. At this time Allantide Apples are given to family and friends as tokens of good luck. Another custom is the Wassail. I loved the episode of river cottage where Hugh Fernley Whittingstall participated in the 12th night Wassail to bring good harvest to the cider orchards. This is a custom that dates back before Anglo Saxon times, and varies from region to region.

A lovely tradition is the winter solstice spiral, if you fancy doing this with a group at the end of the year, make a note in your diary now to remind you to organise an event. A spiral of winter greenery with a path in and a path out is created in the garden (or indoor space if the weather is inappropriate). Candles set into apples with a blessing can be made by each individual and placed along the spiral to light the path. Before lighting the candles and walking the spiral, stories, songs, puppet shows and food can be shared, when it is time to close the merriment, everyone gathers in silence to walk the spiral before leaving. If so arranged, individuals can wait to collect their apple candle and

blessing before going home. Of course if the spiral is outside, the apple candles may need to be set in kilner jars to prevent them being blown out. If you would like inspiration for your winter spiral, I would suggest reading Jean Millers little guide on the winter spiral. It has songs for little ones too.

There is much mythology about the apple – In the Bible it is claimed that it was the forbidden fruit that led to Adam and Eve's down fall. It is also the reason men have an Adams Apple – it is where the apple lodged in Adams throat! The Celts are said to use Apple wood as one of the woods of choice for magic wands and in Greek mythology Hercules had to collect the golden apples from the tree of life as one of his twelve labours. There are many, many more apples in mythology – if you have children it is a fun exercise to see how many stories you can find with apples in. Snow white is the first children's story that comes to mind.

When my children were little we visited a puppet show. The story was called apple pip – and it was amazing. I know the children loved it – but so did I. The simple story line of an old lady wanting to cut down her orchard because the trees no longer gave enough apples was full of twists and turns – and the puppeteer was inspirational too. The Nutmeg puppet company had copies of their story in the form of a picture book. It was a great investment as it has been a favourite for the girls (and me) for many years. What I love most about that story is there is a reflection of apples helping our health and also the magic of loving our trees. If you get chance to see this act or read the book – I suggest you do – whatever your age!

As I mentioned, in Apple Pip, part of the story explores how an apple restored someone's health. The old adage of an apple a day keeps the doctor away is well founded. I would recommend eating organic or naturally grown apples when possible, as the apple is one of the "dirty dozen" foods that test for having a minimum of 47 different chemical residues when grown conventionally. Apples can be used to treat a wide array of conditions:

- ❖ Grated raw apples help to heal diarrhoea, a great one to remember with little ones
- ❖ Juiced apples help ease constipation great to know for all ages, especially little ones
- ❖ Apple Juice also helps break down

calcium deposits and so is used as part of the gall bladder flush and also is useful for arthritis when there are excess calcium deposits.

- ❖ Apples help to regulate blood sugars, so if a good snack to have between meals, and also before a meal as it may help curb your appetite.
- ❖ The apple is rich in vitamin C, beta carotene, quercetin and B complex vitamins, as well as small amounts of potassium, calcium and phosphorus. It is a great nutrient dense portable food that helps boost immunity, and lifts potassium levels (so helping the heart rate and blood pressure).
- ❖ Apple cider vinegar is a wonder food and there are too many benefits for me to mention here – in fact, there are quite a few books are written on the health benefits of cider vinegar. To name a few simple home uses:
 - ♦ Cider vinegar can be used to bathe in to help with dry skin, and also chicken pox. The potassium rich liquid softens the skin and brings relief to itching. Add about 10ml (or a small jug) to the bath. Do not worry – you will not smell like a chip shop, but a few drops of lavender or your favourite essential oil can make you feel happier about the aroma.
 - ♦ Cider vinegar can also help with arthritis – drinking a little in warm water before a meal can raise your stomach acidity and help you better digest your food, whilst also helping reduce the excess calcium deposits.
 - ♦ Cider vinegar, being potassium rich, can help you lose weight if your problem is from a sodium excess. Again, drinking a little in water before meals helps you better digest your food and also help your sodium/potassium balance. Your body will be better able to release excess fluids.
 - ♦ Cider vinegar is a great cleaning agent. Use a little to soak and then scour the toilet, to clean taps and also clear lime scale from baths and sinks etc. So much cheaper than the average cleaner – and more eco-friendly too.
- ❖ As a flower essence, the Bach remedy crab apple is used to help cleanse the body of obsessive thoughts or behaviours that we over focus on, for example, hand wash-

ing, or checking that doors are locked. One way to remember the healing properties of the crab apple flower remedy is to remember snow white – she cleaned the 7 dwarf's cottage and was disliked by the wicked queen!!!

The Crab apple is another relative of our apple. The crab apple is a good pollinator so is a good addition to an apple orchard, and the root stock of the crab apple is often used to graft the modern apple to. It is also good to use as a bonsai. The crab apple is somewhat lost as a food in our modern culture, but once upon a time it was prized for crab apple Jelly. Being rich in pectin it is also traditionally a good fruit to blend with soft fruit for jam making. Most Crab apple varieties are quite sour raw, but if you want to have a go at adding a few to a juice or to sharpen up a savoury sauce, it would be fun to try.

There are over 700 varieties of crab apples and some are sweeter than others. When the fruit grows pointing upwards, the fruit is said to be sweeter than when the fruit grows pointing downwards. This helps guide you with the amount of sweetness you will need to add.

The wood of the apple tree is slow growing and fragrant and is great to use if you are a fan of smoking your food. It also burns long and slow, so is a great wood for a fire to enjoy with family and friends. If you want to carve apple wood – it is somewhat different to many other types of wood. It is best carved green as it is difficult to work with when seasoned.

We have used pruning's from our apple tree for many purposes. The gerbils enjoy chewing this safe non-toxic wood (much better than their cage!!) and my girls have enjoyed making fairy play grounds too. You just need imagination, a little string, some soft ground to push the sticks into and you are off.... A cheap afternoon entertainment whilst enjoying the garden. Other fun crafts include making dolls house furniture (imagine rustic tables, chairs and beds), vase decorations (just tie sticks around the outside of a large jam jar with pretty ribbon) and most importantly of them all – magic wands! my list could go on and on just add an open mind and you have a years' worth of toys in your garden.

So how do we enjoy eating these wonderful fruits? My favourite way has to be picking it and eating it. It is portable

and travels well.... No fuss. When I worked in an office, invariably, my lunch bag had three apples, one for mid-morning, one for lunch and one for afternoon snack. When I was little, my mum would often chop apple into slices and add it to our plate with slices of other foods – a great way for a child to be introduced to variety without overwhelming them.

You can also use apples in crumbles (either alone or with other fruit) a touch of cinnamon is a great spice to add with it. For a raw version, blend some fresh raw apples to a puree with a little cinnamon if liked. Put in the bottom of a dish. On the top cover with a crumble mixture made with a mixture of sweet nuts of your choice (such as pecans, cashews, walnuts and almonds) ground with some fresh pitted dates. This is a quick and yummy raw twist on the winter crumble staple.

Apples are also great with nuts (such as walnuts) in salads, coleslaws, and even as a sweetener in soups. (Have you tried adding a couple of apples to butternut squash, some onion and a little ginger and seasoning with water – it is a great quick and easy meal!)

There is just so much to write about apples – I am sure you will think of something I have not mentioned here. But my favourite fact of all that I found (or perhaps I should say the most magical fact of them all) is that unicorns live underneath apple trees Surely that is a good enough reason for anyone to have an apple tree in their garden.

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nutmegpuppet.co.uk/current.html
- Apple pip puppet show
www.rivercottage.net
tinyurl.com/wspiral - an example of how to do a winter spiral
tinyurl.com/wspiral2 - Great little book by Jean Miller about the winter spiral along with suggested songs etc.
tinyurl.com/15clean
tinyurl.com/applecrab
tinyurl.com/crabapplej - recipe for crab apple jelly
Dawn is a raw foodist, homeopath and shares her non-judgemental experience in her workshops. The sessions are aimed to help you feel more confident about using alternatives for you and your family's health. Find Dawn on her website
www.dawnwaterhouse.co.uk or FB
tinyurl.com/dwnaturalhealth ❁

Understanding Emotional Eating on a Raw Food Diet

Do you suffer from cravings and binge eating? Fiona Robertson looks at how our emotions are involved.

The days come and go and so do my moods, emotional needs and my external pressures, and even the strongest most religious eater would buckle under certain strains. Giving in to the quick fix and old habitual style of eating that has become a trusted friend to relax and momentarily make you feel happily fulfilled. Then like a burning match it's gone, transformed into nothing that has any satisfaction at all. So it has led me to discover for myself what it is that my body really needs and wants rather than strictly trying to stick to my internal list of what I can or can't eat or enjoy. No guru can tell me what suits me, only I know that in every moment surely?

I know for myself when I am deeply involved in a project that time flies and it is a long time before I even consider what to eat or that I may or may not even be hungry. Yet all too often I find I have my head in the fridge (even mentally) searching for something to comfort and fulfil me, but if I'm enjoying my creative project I'm thoroughly happy gardening, sewing or painting furniture and no food is a necessity.

The hardest time for most people I've surveyed is the night-time mindless binge eating, this is certainly one of the craziest, entrenched and most difficult habits to break. However in many ways this habit can be trying to tell you something, if only we could step aside and just hear what. And that it has usually nothing to do with hunger for food, but a lack or "missing nutrient" throughout the day.

One recent client began to really transform after she discovered that all day long she was giving herself away, long hours, no lunch break, ungrateful bosses, you know the story and she was feeling totally depleted when she got home, filling herself up as soon as she got through the front door was her reward. Does this sound familiar to

you? With some work on her self esteem and helping her to create stronger boundaries in her relationships, as well as in other areas where she previously held no boundaries, brought her to some profound clarity, one happy outcome being that she no longer looks to fill herself up with edible treats as her reward.

Another client recognised that having her fridge and stock cupboards full to overflowing was a sign of her having abundance, which she craved and having easy access to food made her feel wealthy, supported and well provided for. However uncovering the belief that she also hated to waste any food meant she over ate. Although she ran a very successful business of her own, I often heard her remark about not having this or that, or not enough and she soon realised she was coming from a feeling of lack. Once she turned around her awareness and was grateful for her own achievements, she allowed herself to reward herself fully with no guilt attached, and in much more fulfilling and pleasurable ways than food. Now she has little necessity to fill the fridge, continually buy food and pressurise herself to eat it all. Which in turn resulted in many benefits from her pocket to her waist line.

I know from running my detox retreats and coaching with hundreds of people that there are times when we just have to listen to what our body wants and needs. It is a known fact that when we eat mostly raw food and especially do any type of fasting juicing or otherwise, regular colon cleansing and detoxes that we are inviting these feelings and experiences to rise up and be felt. We have nothing for a certain period of time to dampen down our enthusiasm for life and if we are in a safe place and encouraged to listen at these particular times, then we can resolve a lot of our hidden repetitive patterns and hurts once and for all.

It is a wonderful gift to see and become aware of our habits and I really admire people who are willing to open up, be uncomfortable for a while and see why they are using food as a substitute for feelings of emotional turmoil, lack of intimacy or feelings of I deserve more, and all of these and many more are all bundled today and called "comfort eating".

If you are willing to do the exploration work and feel the experience that is being presented to you, are you willing to take food as a theme and see how it is a way to understand how we relate to everything.

What if we could suspend all our beliefs around food for a time? To really explore what makes us tick rather than what some book or guru you are following said. So that we can begin to feel and notice what suits our unique needs. All too often I have noticed that how we relate to the food we eat, so we are with the rest of our relationships. If we are scattered, confused, ridged, open, experimenting, flamboyant, depressed, restrictive, practical, efficient, unconscious and unaware, then this is then the correlation to how we are with everything in every aspect of our life. And if that is the case how is that effecting your health and eating patterns?

Consider now how you would be described and see if that fits with your way of eating style?

Are there any aspects that are causing you discomfort that you would like to change?

Fiona is an author, coach for How to live with Emotional Eating, Creator of the Home Detox Box a 7 day DIY detox and colon cleanse you can do at home, and runs regular detox and cleanse retreats at Retreat Biarritz in France. Find out more at www.retreatbiarritz.com ❁

Healing from Adrenal Fatigue

Jackie Balderstone tells her story: *If you crave to be free of your ills, free of your ailments, your disease, your niggling or even the 'stops you in your tracks' health issues then perhaps like me you remain disappointed and frustrated that health doesn't come your way no matter what you seem to do.*

Following my diagnosis by a Nutritional Therapist back in 2008 of 'adrenal fatigue' (chronic exhaustion – adrenalfatigue.org) I set upon a journey of regaining my health and what a journey it's been. Adrenal fatigue I had understood was completely recoverable from but it needed lots of change on my part. I threw myself into those changes immediately. However, not in my wildest dreams did I think that years on I would not have fully recovered. So what happened, what went wrong, what did it all mean, what hadn't I addressed? Was the recipe back to health beyond my grasp?

Coming off 'autopilot'

You know the story! Like me you have probably tried everything from diet to acupuncture. My journey included leaving work altogether and leaving the course I was studying, learning to say 'no', coming off 'autopilot', ie learning to ask myself how I felt before I started the day's activities/chores, allowing copious amounts of time for rest and sleep (although I had no choice for a good year as I was largely bed bound), dietary changes, learning to meditate and the discipline of doing it most days, stress & anxiety counselling, hypnotherapy, spending time in nature, learning how to breathe properly, attending classes on mindfulness, etc. My whole mind-set about how I lived my life, how I thought it should be lived had to change and it did... but it wasn't enough for a full recovery. I had to dig deeper. Although I was recovering, progress was painfully and frustratingly slow. My energy levels remained very fragile and the other adrenal fatigue symptoms also remained (albeit reducing in severity). I kept thinking "I've missed something".

Pet therapy

In 2011 I got a puppy. One of the best things I ever did. It was a massive leg up on the recovery programme. She distracted me, got me out in the countryside and fresh air every day, life took on a different feel. Most importantly I started to take my cues from her. The way she rested, so peacefully, so heavily, so fully and allowed it to happen. It is just an essential and automatic part of her day. She never has to give herself permission; it is just an accepted way of being. I learnt and continue to learn a lot from her. Her life is about food, walks, cuddles and play. Play never used to seem important to me, it was for children not adults but now I allow it into my life on a daily basis. Another tick in the box as far as recovery is concerned.

Finding Spirituality

Then at the end of 2011 I became aware of Spirituality. This has also moved my health

on leaps and bounds. In particular, a deeper level of meditation, learning how to be a human 'being' instead of a human 'doing', learning that it's ok not to feel guilty about resting – ah, that was a tough one for me. There's always so much to do isn't there whether you are ill or not but as I learnt 'most things can wait!' Learning about 'conscious' living instead of I suppose living 'unconsciously'. Learning that we are all connected and not separate, learning about compassion.

Going Raw Vegan

If the changes in my life hadn't been big enough I discovered raw food in early 2012 at which point I moved to a high raw vegan diet which felt so right for me – a pivotal point on the journey so far. The raw food and the raw food lifestyle have had a huge positive impact on my life & health continuing to shift me in the right direction.

But where's my energy?

Despite all these positive changes and additions to my life I still hadn't gained complete recovery from the fatigue. Although most of the symptoms had all but disappeared, one remained and that was how quickly I ran out of energy. A whole day's work was still out of my grasp, indeed a whole day of anything unless it was rest was still a dream to me. Nevertheless, I still had this belief that the key to recovery just hadn't been found yet.

Epiphany!

Then during one of my low energy days on the back of a rough few months which included completing some large renovation works at home and moving my mum-in-law into residential care I had an epiphany. I realised that every time I had energy, I would use it! I would use it all up. I would suck the life out of myself like a sort of self-sabotage. In fact, I'd been doing this for years. I would start to feel a bit better and then just 'run' with it. I'd finish up exhausted and horizontal every single time sometimes for days or weeks at a time. This was a lesson on 'how not to do it' that I'd learnt early on but still clearly wasn't fully practicing. The important thing here is that for me the amount of energy I had across time had been growing continually which had meant that the benchmark of what I could do had been moving allowing me to do more and more which had been fantastic. But I would always 'push it'. I would always push these limits, these boundaries. The thing is that I've struggled to learn to stay within my healthy limits no matter what stage of recovery I've been at. There's different reasons for this whether it's felt pressure from others or society, believing that the heavier energy demands needed at any one time would sub-

side eventually (they never do!) or just not hearing the signal to 'stop'. I would just keep going - beyond my healthy limit. Clearly, to stay healthy I needed to stay within it. It's as simple as that. Until I did I couldn't be trusted with wellness. My body, my health didn't trust me with it and it was right! What a wake up call. It was as if my body was protecting me from me.

Ready for wellness

I felt I'd done everything I could to get my health back. I saw no reason why my full health wasn't returning. The way I had started to think and live were and remain unrecognisable but still full health had eluded me. Why? Perhaps I couldn't be trusted with it. Until I fully and completely lived within my healthy limits most if not all the time, then why should my energy come back? In any case, I'm just going to, well, let's just say I haven't always nurtured the energy that came my way. The fact is that in my case I'd reached the point where wellness was already there for the taking. Maybe all I had to do was stay within my healthy limit. I needed to make the decisions about how my energy was used and only me and not be influenced by things or other people. After all, if I was sick what use was I to others anyway?

Changing the beat

Not pushing continually through 'energy' limits is of course likely to be only part of the journey back to health but it's been a critical part for me. I always feel so much better in every way when I don't push them. Perhaps this all resonates with you a little. A full recovery for me has had to include acknowledging, respecting and adhering to those limits – limits I know are there because I can feel them. It doesn't include bashing my determined way through them, returning to old habits, beliefs and ways of doing things that made me sick in the first place.

Finding my pace

Although my healing is ongoing, these days I've found a pace that I honour most of the time that keeps me inside my healthy limit which means I can reach that allusive wellness I've been craving. Of course there are some peaks of activity and troughs of energy because life isn't perfect and neither am I but largely I follow my own signals, do what's right for me, listen only to me and stay within the healthy limit my body has currently set for me. This pace may not fit in with everyone around me but it fits me and keeps me right.

Jackie's website:

www.rawelevations.co.uk ☘



Beat Cellulite & Tone your Skin with a Hot & Cold Shower

Heather Gardner takes a look at Hydrotherapy, the use of water for healing and detoxing.

After a long winter of woolly wearing, carb crunching hibernation, our minds start to ponder how best to scrub up for the summer, detox, and ditch that pesky cellulite or extra pounds. Do you leap out of bed in the morning with a spring in your step or do you slither like a slug, reluctantly emerging from your cozy cocoon? If you have been making less than perfect dietary choices and skimping on exercise, then it may be that you are in need of something to get your blood and body moving. Instead of forking out for the latest designer detox product we can look to Mother Nature and ancient knowledge to show us how to ditch the dither and slither for 'get up and go', sparkle and glow. Most of us are savvy enough to know that adding some lemon to our water, some greens to our smoothies and more exercise in our day will make all the difference...but what if we need an extra little nudge in the pudge, to move those toxins that refuse to budge?

Introducing some time tested, naturopathic techniques into our healthy 'toolkit', is a fantastic way to love our

bodies back to loveliness, and what better way to start out than using plain old water!

The Science and Art of Hydrotherapy

One of the most ancient forms of self rejuvenation used by man is the science and art of hydrotherapy, it was used in Ayurvedic medicine, by the ancient Greeks and Romans as well as the Turks and Japanese. It became popular in 19th century Europe for those in search of a 'nature cure'. People would flock to numerous spas and mineral baths to walk barefoot in nature and be cured of their ills.

Nowadays we can create a nature spa in our own home using the shower or bath. A simple way to do this is to start by finishing off your shower with a cold-water hose down. When you get used to this, gradually start ending your showers with alternating hot and cold water.

When the body is subjected to heat, the blood and lymph moves to the surface of the skin in order to keep the inner organs cool, alternatively when

the body is subjected to cold the blood and lymph moves in greater volume to keep the inner organs warm. So by heating then cooling the body several times in succession we create movement and a pumping effect within the body. As well as the detoxifying effects, it also contracts the skin pores and increases the tone and elasticity over time. If you have cellulite then it's great to practice skin brushing, as well as hot and cold showering, on the effected areas.

How To Take A Hot & Cold Shower

After you have taken your normal shower, change the setting to cool, then starting at your feet let the cool water flow all over moving from the feet upwards to the torso. You can move the water in a circular motion to give the skin a little massage. When you get to the torso then run the water up and down both arms around the neck and briefly to your face. Change the water temperature back to warm and repeat the process. Do a minimum of 3 times with hot water, 3 times with cold and always finish with cold water.

If you don't have a shower, you can keep a jug of water by the bath, then simply fill it with alternating hot and cold water, splashing your body with it.

The best way to get the benefits of hot and cold showering is to do it in the morning. First do some skin brushing with a natural bristle brush. Moving the dry brush in circular movements from the feet and hands towards the heart. This will magnify the benefits and increase the natural healing effects. The body can be more sluggish and stagnant in the morning after lying in bed overnight trying to process what we may have eaten and drunk the day before. These two techniques can help to get you feeling alert and ready for action.

Detox With an Epsom Salt Bath.

Epsom salt (magnesium sulphate) baths focus on using the largest organ of detoxification, the skin, as a route to release toxins stored in our bodies. It has the effect of drawing toxicity and acidity towards it. This combined with a hot bath will thin the lymph; encourage blood to the surface of the skin, and the release of toxic wastes into the water will create more movement in a sluggish body. Magnesium is involved in over 300 essential processes in the body and most of us are deficient in it. Sulfates are also essential for many of the body's activities as well as flushing out toxins.

The effect of the magnesium is very soothing and relaxing to body and mind, it's a perfect thing to do before bedtime for a good night's sleep, if you're feeling stressed or have sore tense muscles.

Precautions: Do not take Epsom salt bath when pregnant, menstruating or if you have high blood pressure

Directions

- ▷ Pour 1 kilo/2pounds of Epsom salts into an empty bath and run the hot water.
- ▷ Lie in the bath for up to 20 mins.
- ▷ Don't use any soap or other substance in the bath as it can diminish the effect.
- ▷ When finished you can take a cold shower to further effect the lymph drainage.
- ▷ Or quickly dry yourself and get

into bed to stay warm and sweat out more toxins.

You may feel weak & tired after the bath, but after a night's rest you should feel clear and refreshed.

A great way to use these baths as a detox is to take 1 a week for 3 weeks, take a week off then repeat. The perfect time for a bath is on the new moon which is well known to be a potent time for detox also equinox and solstice time.

If you want a less detoxing bath then use 2 cups of Epsom salts.

Other benefits of Epsom salt baths are

- ▷ Helps to ease headaches
- ▷ Ease stress, improve sleep & concentration
- ▷ Soothes respiratory conditions
- ▷ Regulates your calcium levels
- ▷ Balances insulin & makes it more effective
- ▷ Relieves athlete's foot & fungal conditions
- ▷ Soothes sprains & bruises
- ▷ Reduces any inflammation
- ▷ Helps to reduce spots
- ▷ Helps to create volume in your hair if you let your hair soak as well, rinse afterwards.
- ▷ Sprinkle in your garden to nourish

plants, deter pests and keep slugs at bay.

Adding these hydrotherapy techniques into your routine will give you a health boost with minimum effort or equipment. If your water is from the mains you may want to invest in a bath and shower filter.

Remember it is important to drink water too! Taking hot showers and baths can be dehydrating, so have an extra glass of water before and after.

Heather is the Wild Edibles and Herbal Medicine director at Tera Warner's Body Enlightenment University, a raw chef and teacher, yoga teacher, naturopathic nutritionist, hedgerow herbalist and health & beauty educator. A lifelong 3rd generation vegetarian, Heather began learning about herbs and wild foods at a young age from her herbalist mother while growing up homesteading on an Irish mountainside. She has over 10 years experience as a Natural Remedies, Health & Beauty manager. She has learned extensively from some of the world's leading health pioneers and has several decades working in plant food kitchens under her organic apron!

www.consciousearthcompany.com
www.facebook.com/therawteacher
Twitter: @TheRawTeacher

You can check out her courses here:
tinyurl.com/Womens-Herbal-Health
tinyurl.com/wild-edible-course 🌸

FERMENTATION FETISH

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS SO
HERE IS A PICTURE AS WELL AS SOME WORDS.



FEEDS OFF OF HONEY INSTEAD OF DANGEROUS SUGARS, IMPROVES LIVER FUNCTION, CONTAINS ENZYMES, PROBIOTICS AND B VITAMINS, REMOVES TOXICITY FROM INTESTINAL TRACT, CULTURES OMEGA 3, 6, 7 AND 9 INTERNALLY OUT OF MONOUNSATURATED FATS, PURIFIES THE BLOOD, REMOVES MOLD FROM BODY TISSUE, REMOVES FLUORIDE RESIDUE FROM THE PINEAL GLAND..... WE COULD GO ON BUT WE THINK THIS PAINTS THE PICTURE ADEQUATELY

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Paradise Lost, Paradise Found

Do you want to live in paradise? Adam of Eden looks at the benefits of living in nature, and how it is possible.

For a number of years now, I have been totally intrigued and inspired by the idea of paradise. Was the concept of paradise anything more than just a biblical metaphor to illustrate how far humankind has fallen from a long-forgotten golden age? Could it really be a reality that our ancestors actually experienced in relatively recent times? No doubt some of our distant ancestors experienced a virtual paradise – probably many hundred of thousands of years ago now – one which supported our evolution and that of our relatively large brains. Yet can we, who have lived for countless generations without ever having known that paradise, ever hope to return?

If you believe, as I do, that the healthiest environments create the healthiest bodies, which, in turn, allow for the highest expressions of human consciousness, then it makes sense to examine the components of the healthiest environments.

In what is surely a natural extension of [Louis Pasteur adversary] Antoine Béchamp's theory of the importance

of biological terrain, I believe we must try to find the ideal biological terrain for the human organism. Surely, it was something that was close to our primary evolutionary environment – the tropical fruit forest. The prerequisites, for anyone interested in a healthy lifestyle, are an abundance of delicious fruits, lots of fresh greens and quite a bit of veg.

Our ideal biological terrain should also include a pristine natural environment, plenty of the purest water, clean air, fertile soils and verdant nature - probably a mature, intact, forest environment.

In a related refinement of Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs', I puzzled over the finer details of what the precise conditions that facilitated the fullest flowering of human consciousness actually were. Maslow proposed that higher functioning of the human organism was dependent on sufficient air, food, water and shelter. However, I believe this is only half the story. It seems self-evident now that polluted air, contaminated water, unclean food, and toxic shel-

ter actually interfere with our organism's ability to express higher states of consciousness.

The truth is the modern world has introduced so many sources of toxicity into our lives that it is impossible to avoid exposure to all of them whilst living a normal life. Nowadays, we are not only seeking to escape the pernicious toxicity of the modern world, we are also seeking refuge from overly intrusive governments and corporations that are increasingly interested in the minutiae of our lives. Yet, alarmingly, the overwhelming majority are still dependent on a sick and dysfunctional system with which many of us have major issues.

Most people in alternative circles today accept the need to be living sustainably, but many choose for the most part to make a few sustainable choices whilst remaining inherently dependent on an unsustainable system. True sustainability demands that we are self-sufficient, especially in our most basic needs such as food, air, water and shelter.

Furthermore, the future is likely to herald further deterioration in our environment without drastic reversals in current trends, so it seems obvious that the sooner we can extract ourselves from the madness of the modern world and start living truly sustainably, the better our long-term future is likely to be.

Nevertheless, having moved so far away from our ideal evolutionary environment, the journey back is likely to be challenging – not least in how easy it is to decouple ourselves from the system on which we have come to depend. Ultimately, however, the case for doing so is massively compelling, and the rewards, I believe, are equally spectacular.

We need to ask ourselves not what sacrifices are we making to live such a dream, but what compromises are we making, and what risks are we taking, by not living our lives closer to the eternal truth of our need to live in harmony with nature? Our children grow up surrounded by graphic violence, unnecessary suffering, and sickening greed. Toxicity and pollution are everywhere, and attempts to live truly healthy lifestyles are frequently compromised.

We need an appropriately clean environment for our ongoing evolution, but environmental pollution

means the modern world falls well short of what we and our children require.

After a lot of searching, I believe that, here in the lush tropical forests of central Ecuador, there is a solution to the problems of modern life. We have found an incredible piece of land that is perfect for the creation of a tropical fruit paradise, and we intend to create a true paradise on earth.

Humankind has separated itself from the nature that nurtured its evolution for far too long. It is time to return to our evolutionary environment and recreate the conditions that served us so well. Only this time we return with the regained knowledge of superior diet, unparalleled access to a huge variety of seeds of edible plants, and a clear sense of the harmony and co-evolution we are trying to achieve.

The opportunity to create a fully functional community based on a truly healthy, plant-based lifestyle, to integrate the best ideas of modern society with the wisdom of ancient tribes, is too exciting to pass up, and the need to return to a truly sustainable existence is now too important to ignore.

If you imagine, as I have, what it would be like to raise children

immersed in an incredible natural environment, then maybe you would appreciate the opportunity to live communally in a pristine rainforest environment which has been selected for its beauty, its suitability for a tropical permaculture project, and its potential for long-term sustainability, independence and personal freedom.

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Gateway drug, to what?

Are we like rats in cages? Charles Eisenstein discusses drug laws, control and society.

Substance abuse has less to do with the substance than it has to do with the lives we live. But what has the War on Drugs done to us, and what will follow it?

You've probably heard about those addiction studies with caged lab rats, in which the rats compulsively press the heroin dispensing lever again and again, even to the point of choosing it over food and starving themselves to death. These studies seemed to imply some pretty disheartening things about human nature. Our basic biology is not to be trusted; the seeking of pleasure leads to disaster; one must therefore overcome biological desires through reason, education, and the inculcation of morals; those whose willpower or morals are weak must be controlled and corrected.

The rat addiction studies also seem to validate the main features of the War on Drugs. First is interdiction: prevent the rats from getting a taste of drugs to begin with. Second is "education" – conditioning the rats into not pressing the lever in the first place. Third is punishment: make the consequences of taking drugs so scary and unpleasant that the rats will overcome their desire to press the lever. You see, some rats just have a stronger moral fiber than others. For those with a strong moral fiber, education suffices. The weak ones need to be deterred with punishments.

All of these features of the drug war are forms of control, and therefore sit comfortably within the broader narrative of technological civilization: the domination of nature, the rising above the primitive state, conquering animal desire with the mind and the base impulses with morality, and so forth. That is, perhaps, why Bruce Alexander's devastating challenge to the caged rat experiments was ignored and suppressed for so many years. It wasn't only the drug war that his studies called into question, but also deeper paradigms about human nature and our relationship to the world.

Alexander found that when you take rats out of tiny separate cages and put them in a spacious "rat park" with

ample exercise, food, and social interaction, they no longer choose drugs; indeed, already-addicted rats will wean themselves off drugs after they are transferred from cages to the rat park.

The implication is that drug addiction is not a moral failing or physiological malfunction, but an adaptive response to circumstances. It would be the height of cruelty to put rats in cages and then, when they start using drugs, to punish them for it. That would be like suppressing the symptoms of a disease while maintaining the necessary conditions for the disease itself. Alexander's studies, if not a contributing factor in the drug war's slow unraveling, are certainly aligned with it in metaphor.

Are we like rats in cages? Are we putting human beings into intolerable conditions and then punishing them for their efforts to alleviate the anguish? If so, then the War on Drugs is based on false premises and can never succeed. And if we are like caged rats, then what is the nature of these cages, and what would a society look like that were a "rat park" for human beings?

Here are some ways to put a human being in a cage:

Remove as far as possible all opportunities for meaningful self-expression and service. Instead, coerce people into dead-end labor just to pay the bills and service the debts. Seduce others into living off such labor of others.

Cut people off from nature and from place. At most let nature be a spectacle or venue for recreation, but remove any real intimacy with the land. Source food and medicine from thousands of miles away.

Move life – especially children's lives – indoors. Let as many sounds as possible be manufactured sounds, and as many sights be virtual sights.

Destroy community bonds by casting people into a society of strangers, in which you don't rely on and needn't even know by name the people living around you.

Create constant survival anxiety by making survival depend on money, and then making money artificially scarce.

Administer a money system in which there is always more debt than there is money.

Divide the world up into property, and confine people to spaces that they own or pay to occupy.

Replace the infinite variety of the natural and artisanal world, where every object is unique, with the sameness of commodity goods.

Reduce the intimate realm of social interaction to the nuclear family and put that family in a box. Destroy the tribe, the village, the clan, and the extended family as a functioning social unit.

Make children stay indoors in age-segregated classrooms in a competitive environment where they are conditioned to perform tasks that they don't really care about or want to do, for the sake of external rewards.

Destroy the local stories and relationships that build identity, and replace them with celebrity news, sports team identification, brand identification, and world views imposed by authority.

Delegitimize or illegalize folk knowledge of how to heal and care for one another, and replace it with the paradigm of the "patient" dependent on medical authorities for health.

It is no wonder that people in our society compulsively press the lever, be it the drug lever or the consumerism lever or the pornography lever or the gambling lever or the overeating lever. We respond with a million palliatives to circumstances in which real human needs for intimacy, connection, community, beauty, fulfillment, and meaning go mostly unmet. Granted, these cages depend in large part on our own individual acquiescence, but this doesn't mean that a single moment of illumination or a lifetime of effort can liberate us fully. The habits of confinement are deeply programmed. Nor can we escape by destroying our jailers: unlike in the rat experiments, and contrary to conspiracy theories, our elites are just as much prisoner as the rest of us. Empty and addictive compensations for their unmet needs seduce them into doing their part to maintain the status quo.

The cages suffer no easy escape. Confinement is not incidental to modern society, but woven deeply into its systems, its ideologies, and our own selves. At bottom are the deep narratives of separation, domination, and control. And now, as we approach a great turning, a shift in consciousness, we sense that these narratives are unraveling, even as their outward expressions – the surveillance state, the walls and the fences, the ecological devastation – reach unprecedented extremes. Yet their ideological core is beginning to hollow out; their foundation is cracking. I think that the lifting (still by no means assured) of the War on Drugs is an early signal that these superstructures are beginning to crack too.

A cynic might say that the end of the drug war would signal no such thing: that drugs make life in a cage more tolerable and absorb energy that might otherwise go toward social change. The opiate of the masses, in other words, is opiates! The cynic dismisses cannabis legalization in particular as a small, barely significant counterweight in an onrushing tide of imperialism and ecocide, an innocuous victory that does nothing to slow the onward march of capitalism.

This view is mistaken. Generally speaking, drugs do not make us into more effective cage-dwellers: better workers and consumers. The most notable exception is caffeine – significantly, virtually unregulated – which helps people wake up to a schedule they don't want to live and focus on tasks they don't care about. (I'm not saying that's all caffeine does, and in no way do I want to demean sacred plants like tea and coffee, which are among the only herbal infusions or decoctions still taken in modern society.) Another partial exception is alcohol, which as a stress reliever indeed makes life in our society more bearable. Certain other drugs – stimulants and opiates – also may serve these functions, but are ultimately so debilitating that the guardians of capitalism recognize them as a threat.

Yet other drugs, such as cannabis and the psychedelics, can directly induce nonconformity, weaken consumer values, and make the prescribed normal life seem less tolerable, not more. Consider for example the kind of behavior associated with marijuana smoking. The stoner is not on time for work. He sits around in the grass playing his guitar. He is not competitive. This is not to say that pot smokers don't contribute to

society; some of the wealthiest Information Age entrepreneurs are reputedly smokers. In general though, the reputation of cannabis and the psychedelics to be disruptive of the established order is not without foundation.

The halting but substantial steps in several states and countries toward cannabis legalization is significant for several reasons beyond the well-known benefits regarding crime, imprisonment, medicine, and industrial hemp. First, it implies a release of the mentality of control: interdiction, punishment, and psychological conditioning. Second, as I just discussed, the object of control – cannabis – is corrosive to the cages we have lived in. Third, it is part of a deep shift in consciousness away from separation and toward compassion.

The mentality of control is predicated on the question of whom or what is to be controlled. Drug War thinking blamed the individual drug user for making poor moral choices, a view grounded in the theory that social psychologists call dispositionism – that human beings make free-willed choices based on a stable character and preferences. While dispositionism acknowledges the influence of environment, it says essentially that people make good choices because they are good people, bad choices because they are bad people. Deterrence, education, and interdiction spring naturally from that philosophy, as does our criminal justice system at large. Judgment and paternalism, inherent in the whole concept of “corrections,” are built into it, because it says, “If I were in your situation, I would have done differently than you.” In other words, it is an assertion of separation: I am different from (and if you are a drug addict, better than) you.

Note as well that the same belief motivates the War on Terror and, well, the war on pretty much anything. But there is a competing philosophy called situationism that says that people make choices from the totality of their situation, internal and external. In other words, if I were in your situation, including your entire life history, I would do as you do. It is a statement of nonseparation, of compassion. It understands, as Bruce Alexander shows us, that self-destructive or antisocial behavior is a response to circumstances and not a dispositional weakness or moral failing. Situationism motivates healing rather than war, because it seeks to understand and redress the circumstances that give rise to terrorism, drug addiction, germs, weeds, greed, evil, or

any other symptom we go to war against. Instead of punishing drug use, it asks, From what circumstances does it spring? Instead of eradicating weeds with pesticides, it asks, What conditions of soil or agronomy are causing them to grow? Instead of applying extreme antiseptic hygiene and broad-spectrum antibiotics, it asks, What “climate of the body” has made it a salubrious environment for germs? That is not to say we never should use antibiotics or lock up a violent criminal who is harming others. But we cannot then say, “Problem solved! Evil has been conquered.”

Here we see how drug legalization is consistent with the reversal of a millennia-long paradigm I call the War on Evil. As old as civilization itself, it was originally associated with the conquest of chaos and the taming of the wild. Through history, it came to incinerate whole populations and nearly the planet itself. Now, perhaps, we are entering a gentler era. It is fitting that something from nature, a plant, should be a hinge for such a turning.

The growing movement to end the drug war might reflect a paradigm shift away from judgment, blame, war, and control towards compassion and healing. Cannabis is a natural starting point, because its widespread use makes the caricature of the morally weak abuser insupportable. “If I were in the totality of your circumstances, I would smoke too – in fact I have!”

Marijuana has long been vilified as a “gateway drug,” the argument being that even if it isn't so dangerous itself, it ushers a person into the culture and habits of drug use. That canard is easily debunked, but perhaps marijuana is a gateway of another sort – a gateway to broader drug decriminalization, and beyond that, toward a compassionate and humble justice system not based on punishment. More broadly still, it may offer us a gateway away from machine values toward organic values, a symbiotic world, an ecological world, and not an arena of separate and competing others against whom one must protect oneself, conquer, and control. Perhaps the conservatives were right. Perhaps drug legalization would mean the end of society as we have known it.

This article was first published at www.opendemocracy.net

Charles is an author and speaker. His books include Sacred Economics and his most recent The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know Is Possible. Find out more at www.charleseisenstein.net ☼



You don't have to be Chewish

- but it helps...

How many times do you chew your food? Robin Littman takes a humorous look at conscious eating.

As my grandmother used to say 'Please God it should happen to you!' And so it came to pass.

On the day of the Sabbath, I discovered the outrageous benefits of eating a high-raw diet and my life has not been the same ever since.

Not only was I blessed with that discovery, but a whole new paradigm of health lessons came at me one after the other. I knelt at the altar of Rabbis Gabriel Cousens, David Wolfe and many more as I soaked up these new teachings handed down from one mount after another....

And this is one that I first picked up when reading Cousens' *Conscious Eating* and annoyingly, keeps on banging me on the skull cap - as do the teachings of others - whether it's Dr Mercola or other horribly helpful internet gospels.

Let me explain, I'm a fast mover. Ask my wife already. I'm well organised and efficient and get through various household jobs - even meals - at great speed so I can get back to what I was doing before.

And that's the trouble, not only do I do everything at great speed, I also eat fast - too fast, or I did until.....

And the Lord spake unto me and said 'chew thy food very slowly and thou wilt be sanctified'

How could I refuse? Back to read the Book of Cousens:

The secret of digestion is to transform each element into a more subtle form. The idea is to chew the food so that it begins to store the subtle energy locked inside. Then subtle receptor centres in our palate and throughout the length of our digestive

tract receive the essence of the food'

He continues, quoting Dr Fletcher who recommended thorough chewing (later called 'Fletcherising') which involves chewing each mouthful 40-100 times. Even Archangel Gabriel found that too much.

But then he began to realise that eating is more than just putting fuel into the body.

We have got into the habit of eating whilst we do other things - reading, watching TV or chatting away with others. But digestion starts in the mouth and furthermore, he suggests there are many benefits from being *conscious* while we eat. In that way, we can taste the delights of our raw food and express gratitude that we are able to have this opportunity to enjoy such a feast. Many others are not able to.

It may also be an opportunity to be still. Swapping religions for a minute, eating may be a form of meditation. The idea of 'Mindful eating' is becoming more and more widely practiced - something akin to a religious experience. Indeed this whole concept comes from Buddhism. Here, mindfulness is not just when we eat but also in the preparation of our food, the placing of it on the plate and the washing up afterwards. To continue in that theme, followers of Dr Masaru Emoto following his experiments of

offering different emotions to different bowls of water, will want to offer love to the food as it is being prepared so that they ingest it as they eat....

But I hear you say, is there any science behind this idea or is it just



whacky spiritual stuff? Yes, plenty.

In the 2014 issue of the US Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics, researchers found that when you eat more slowly, you consume fewer calories. The US Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism found in their research that 'eating more slowly leads to improved satiety' so that you feel full up earlier. In contrast the British Medical Journal reported that 'eating until full and eating quickly

triples your risk of becoming overweight'

So, how many times are you meant to chew your food? The key seems to be to chew until the food becomes liquid, using the saliva in the mouth. Then it is ready to pass into the digestive system.

Whereas Fletcher was talking about up to 100 times, others eg AJ Jacobs,

an author on food subjects found that the most he could achieve was 50 times.

I believe this is a very personal experience. I have found I can do up to 30 or 40 times and by that time my food is liquid. It also helps if I do not talk to my Beloved but give attention to the taste of the food. I have to admit that if I do that, it's quite a different experience compared with the old habitual and rather unconscious way of 'eating'.

The secret for me that helps me combat that old habit of using the knife and fork to prepare the next mouthful whilst I am eating the first one. This is something I seem to have been doing all my life. So try this: when you have put a good forkful of food into your mouth, *put the fork back down on the plate whilst you chew what you've just taken in.* Then it works. Then some sort of peace comes over one and it is a real joy to eat in this way.

It's about slowing down - our own version of the Slow Food Movement if you like - to enable us to feed not just

our body, but also the mind and the spirit.

Back to Rabbi Cousens, who quotes from the Gospel of Peace as translated by Edmond Szekely from the original Aramaic and first published in 1937. It is said to be the lost gospel of St John writing from the time he was with Jesus in the period when he lived with the Essenes - the Jewish sect whose members are said to be the authors of the Dead Sea Scrolls and to have taught St Ann, Joseph and Mary, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist and others - in fact the founders of Christianity.

Here is what he wrote down from Jesus' teachings:

And when you eat, have above you the angel of air and below you the angel of water. Breathe long and deeply at all your meals, that

the angel of air might bless your repasts. And chew well your food with your teeth, that it become water, and that the angel of water turns it into the blood of your body. And eat slowly, as if it were a prayer to the Lord. For I tell you truly, the Power of God enters into you after this manner at his table.

Robin and Jenny Littman run raw food workshops, detox retreats and raw food B&B weekends. For more information, visit www.reSource-me.com

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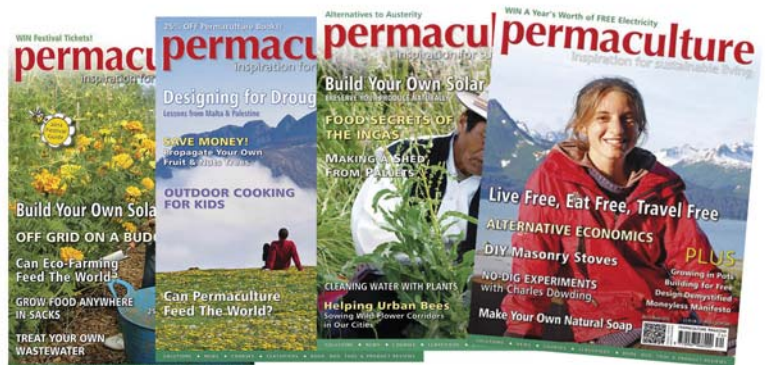
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