



# Hands of Health Newsletter

September-October 2013

Hello, again:

September, already? This year has flown by faster than a speeding bullet. Here in Arizona we won't be concerning ourselves with "cooler" temperatures for another two months or so. Last year it was in the 80's until the beginning of December if memory serves me. Still it's always great to get out of the house and participate in activities in the open air. Keeping active is crucial for your better health. I recently went to check out a gym to see what kind of exercise and health programs they have and before one can get started they take your measurements; height, waist, arms, legs and so forth. Then you get on a scale that not only measures your weight but what else is going on internally or metabolically such as body fat percentage and those kind of vitals. It also determines body age. I'm happy to say the results showed I have the body of a 30 year old. I'm hardly 30; "slightly" older. So my vegan diet and a healthy lifestyle has paid off exponentially. In this issue of my newsletter of course I present a food related article, cravings! And something else that may be cravings related, sweeteners. Also I included a couple of smoothies to try. Enjoy!

## DECONSTRUCTING CRAVINGS

The body is an amazing source of intelligence. It is always there for you, pumping blood, never skipping a heartbeat, digesting whatever food you put in it and maintaining homeostasis. Is this reliable, intelligent bio-computer making a mistake by craving ice cream or a hamburger or chocolate? Are cravings due to lack of will-power or discipline? I'd like to suggest that cravings are not a problem. They are critical pieces of information that tell you what your body needs.

The important thing is to understand why you crave what you crave. Perhaps your diet is too restrictive or devoid of essential nutrients. Perhaps you are living a lifestyle that is too boring or stressful. Your body tries to correct the imbalance by sending you a message: a craving. A craving for something sweet could mean you need more protein, more exercise, more water or more love in your life. The key to stopping the sugar craving is to understand and deliver what your body really needs.

No book or theory can tell you what to eat. Only awareness of your body and its needs can tell you. Of all the relationships in our lives, the one with our body is the most essential. It takes communication, love and time to cultivate a relationship with your body. As you learn to decipher and respond to your body's cravings, you will create a deep and lasting level of health and balance.

The next time you have a craving, treat it as a loving message from your body instead of a weakness. Try these tips to respond to your body:

- Have a glass of water and wait 10 minutes.
- Eat a healthier version of what you crave. For example, if you crave sweets, try eating more fruit and sweet or root vegetables.
- What is out of balance in your life? Is there something you need to express, or is something being repressed? What happened in your life just before you had this craving?
- When you eat the food you are craving, enjoy it, taste it, savor it; notice its effect. Then you will become more aware and free to decide if you really want it next time.

## FOOD FOCUS: Natural Sweeteners

Who among us doesn't love sweets? The sweet flavor releases serotonin in our brains, the chemical responsible for our sense of well-being and contentment. But when it comes to sweeteners, not all are created equal. There are side effects and health risks from refined sweeteners like white table sugar and high-fructose corn syrup, and from artificial sweeteners like NutraSweet, saccharin and Splenda. Since refined sweeteners have been stripped of vitamins, minerals and fiber, they can spike blood sugar, which can often lead to cravings and mood and energy fluctuations. Instead, using naturally and minimally processed sweeteners can reduce cravings for sugary things.

Here are a few natural sweeteners to substitute in drinks, food and baking. Since they are all approximately 1.5 times sweeter than refined sugar, you can use less. You can find them in most supermarkets or natural food stores. When replacing sugar with liquid sweeteners in a recipe, reduce the amounts of other liquids.

**Raw Honey** - Everyone seems to love honey, one of the oldest natural sweeteners on the market. Honey will have a different flavor depending on the plant source. Some are very dark and intensely flavored. Wherever possible, choose raw honey, as it is unrefined and contains small amounts of enzymes, minerals and vitamins.

**Agave Nectar** - Agave is made through the extraction and purification of the juice of the agave cactus. It does not stimulate insulin secretion as other sugars do, so it does not create a "sugar rush." It has a delightfully light and mild flavor.

**Maple Syrup** - Maple syrup is the concentrated extract of the sap of maple trees. It adds a rich, deep flavor to foods and drinks. Make sure to look for 100% pure maple syrup, not maple-flavored corn syrup. As with all sweeteners, organic varieties are best.

*Adapted from "The Cane Mutiny," New Age Magazine, March/April 1999.*

### Recipes of the Month: Inflammatory Smoothie

#### Ingredients:

1 pineapple  
3 ribs of kale  
1" slice of ginger  
1/4 tsp. Turmeric  
Sprinkle of cayenne

### Green Juice Smoothie

#### Ingredients:

1 edium zucchini  
2-3 large kale leaves  
1 green apple  
1 small handful cilantro  
1 lemon peeled  
1" slice of ginger

Give these a shot and see what you think. Of course add water accordingly as your base.

### Forward to a Friend

*It's such a pleasure to help those closest to us become happier and healthier. Please forward this newsletter to friends, family members or colleagues who might be interested and inspired by it.*

Hope you learned something from these articles. I ask this question over and over again for a reason because it's something we all need to be concerned about as demonstrated by the results of my experience at the gym: what are you doing for your better health? If you went through the "examination" I went through what would be the age of your body? Younger than your chronological age or older? Would it be a rude awakening or would you not be surprised? As a health and nutrition coach I work with you to help you make smarter dietary choices so you can live a healthier, happier more productive life and maybe slow down the aging process. What you eat IS a factor in your age; emotional, mental, and physical, external and internal. I don't have the sophisticated equipment the gym has to put you on the scale and see what the results are but I guess I can say the dietary choices I've made along the way is the reason why I had such good results so I guess I know what I'm doing and maybe I can do the same for you. But until you take the first step and make an appointment with me for a FREE health history consultation you'll never know. There's no obligation and we may not even be compatible to work together. I've turned away a number of people because we weren't a good fit and I didn't feel I was the right person for them to work with. I referred them to someone else. Oh, yeah; you can also schedule a therapeutic bodywork session! So call me: (480)423-0578! Happy Autumn!

Until next time,

Stay healthy, stay well,



*"Nobody can give you wiser advice than yourself." - Cicero*

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