

A new year is here! New Year's are wonderful in the sense they provide a starting point for new, and or, **revived resolutions** for improvement. My time still seems to be very full of caring for my family. I choose to place a high value on those responsibilities. In striving to find balance, I am hoping to more fully utilize my internet site as a means to share information for the present time.

I have made a New Year's resolution to write a few thoughts on an issue related to health and VITALITY each month. Reporting this intent to you is taking somewhat of a risk, since each of you now reading this **resolution** will be able to see if I actually follow through. Reporting this goal to you could also strengthen me because I have others to observe and encourage my diligence in this intent.

I was able to increase my understanding of the science of nutrition as well as read and study many of the scientific studies related to health over the last couple of years. I had the opportunity to travel to Fort Bragg, California last year where I spent about a total of three weeks learning at quite an intense rate...almost 12 hours a day of instruction! Fort Bragg is the location for LLCAI (Living Light Culinary Art Institute - [www.rawfoodchef.com](http://www.rawfoodchef.com)) In August, I attended the Living Light food expo, along with taking two educational certification courses. The first one was taught by Dr. Doug Graham on Nutrition and Physical Performance. Dr. Graham is a lecturer and author of many books, a lifetime athlete and an advisor to world-class athletes and trainers from around the globe. The second class was by Dr. Rick and Karin Dina, an introduction course to the Science of Raw Food Nutrition. Dr Rick is a chiropractor. He has been a staff member for Hippocrates Institute, a teacher at Bastyr University and the founder of Vitality Health Center. Karin is a Magna Cum Laude graduate. She graduated in Naturopathic medicine from Bastyr University. She has studied advanced nutrition and nutritional biochemistry. I returned to California right after Thanksgiving for another 10 day interval of learning from Drs. Rick and Karin...this was the level one and level two certification courses of the science of nutrition, as well as an educator certification course. It will take me awhile to process all that I heard and studied during that time, but I feel it was worth the time and effort (even to be away from my family who supported me), as well as the resources needed(I have to thank my husband for that) to be in attendance there.

I traveled to the LLCAI one other time during the previous summer, along with my daughter Kelsi. We attended the week long Recipe Development and Ethnic Food section of the culinary instruction that is taught by LLCAI. I have been blessed enough to have attended all the culinary instruction there, except for one catering class.

My mind is swimming with information and a desire to pass on to you, some of the learning I have been blessed to receive. Over the coming year, I hope to use this website to share twelve different sections of information. This January bulletin turned out to be a little longer article than I hoped it would be. The other months should be shorter.

## JANUARY

I will begin the month of January by sharing a little information presented to us in California by a guest speaker, Dr. Douglas J. Lisle, author of *The Pleasure Trap*. The subtitle to his book is 'Mastering the Hidden Force that Undermines Health and Happiness.'

I highly suggest the reading of this book. It gives a lot of added insight why it seemingly takes such an intense effort to overcome various temptations that seem to have such a hidden force in this modern life. The title describes the reason well...THE PLEASURE TRAP. This book gives an in depth view of our internal instincts and how we can make necessary 'lifestyle' changes in health that will support these internal built in instincts...instincts that we've been blessed with to insure our very survival.

The beginning of January seems to be a time when many people set new goals to regain, attain, or maintain health through losing weight after yet another round of the 'holiday celebration with food'. I would like to section this month's thoughts into ....REFLECTION, RECOGNITION, RESOLUTIONS, REALIZATIONS and RESULTS

REFLECTION and RECOGNITION...Awareness that a person's challenge may be part of a **Pleasure Trap**

Many people will say they have "bad eating habits". Dr. Lisle states, "We RECOGNIZE our 'simple little habits' could be more like 'life destroying addictions.' Eating the wrong kinds of food is scientifically proven to be the leading cause of death and disability in the Western world, resulting in obesity, heart attacks, strokes, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, stomach pains, headaches, and constipation. Part of the seriousness of this 'habit' is, after all, 'everyone eats it' (the standard American diet, SAD), even chefs, doctors, and dietitians. This way of eating is so widely accepted and so easily available! Thin, apparently even healthy looking people do too. It is served in hospitals, schools, restaurants, and the nicest homes, worldwide. How could something so widely accepted be a problem of such magnitude? Many of our calorically dense modern foods are actually addictive in the fact that they hijack the brain's **pleasure** pathways in a similar manner as do addictive drugs."

The fact that we have been created with such a strong and powerful instinct to *eat*, and the fact that the 'SAD' (standard American diet) is so widely accepted, makes any alterations to our "habits" of *eating* take a conscious and diligent effort. As a person changes their habits they may feel like a salmon swimming upstream. However, if a person does not make this effort, the path of least resistance just leads a person floating downstream. Lifestyle changes in our health habits WILL take some serious thought, effort and RESOLUTIONS to improve. *Eating* has the option to become a source for VITALITY or a 'devastating trap.'

An example given in Dr. Lisle's book, *The Pleasure Trap*, can help us understand just how strong our basic human drives can be. It is told of a shark. Why does a shark have teeth? To *eat*! Why does a shark *eat*? A shark *eats* to survive. This shark (a Great White) *eats* to survive so it can *reproduce* and its offspring can start the same cycle all over again. This has been going on for a LONG, LONG, time. *Eat, survive, reproduce, repeat, etc.*

In order for survival, a person must be very effective at these behaviors. Think of it....*eating* is something that we all do every day. We HAVE to *eat* to survive. Food is our fuel. It is not like we have an option as to whether we choose to *eat* or not. However, we do have a choice as to WHAT to *eat*.

Where is hunger? Hunger is in the brain. Hunger is an instinct, a STRONG biological drive. Instincts are neural circuits. Nuerons are put together to create particular types of feelings that will produce

behaviors that favor survival and reproduction for the organism. Think of a newborn baby. What do they want to do most of the time? *Eat*. Under normal circumstances, each baby is born with a natural ability to *eat*.

There seems to be an architecture, or a set of principles that underlies each person's motivation or instinct. It is called the....

### **Motivational triad**

- 1. Pleasure seeking**
- 2. Pain avoidance**
- 3. Energy conservation**

**Pleasure seeking** There are pleasure centers in the brain. **Dopamine** is a classic neurotransmitter associated with activation of **pleasure** centers. So are **endorphins**. The two activities that cause the greatest stimulation of the pleasure centers of the brain of organisms are *eating* (survival) and *reproduction*. We *eat* because it creates pleasure. We desire pleasure.

**Pain avoidance** Nature has programmed these instincts into all animal life as incentive for the organism to seek out activities that favor survival and reproduction. We don't like to be hungry. Hunger causes pain.

A person can actually learn to lose weight without losing their mind. Eating should be a natural and enjoyable part of our life. In a natural setting of caloric abundance, animals will consume the correct amount of food needed for optimal weight and function.

Overeating and undereating, in nature, is regulated by what is termed the "Law of Satiation."

We are actually no more exempt from the "Law of Satiation" than we are exempt from the "Law of Gravity."

In a person's frustration, many people desiring to regain their normal healthy weight come to believe that they must consciously override their hunger drive and *eat* less than they desire if they are ever to achieve an optimal weight. This seems reasonable, since by *eating* to satiation, they appear unable to normalize their weight. But, in reality, nothing could be further from the truth. People above their healthy weight do not need to "learn to push away from the table." They need only to learn the true nature of the Law of Satiation, and then act and eat accordingly. The secret lies in WHAT we eat, not in how much! This is where education is so necessary. We must study and gain knowledge for ourselves!!

Caloric density of food is determined by

- 1. The amount of water**
- 2. The amount of fiber**

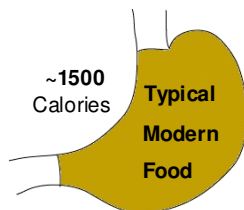
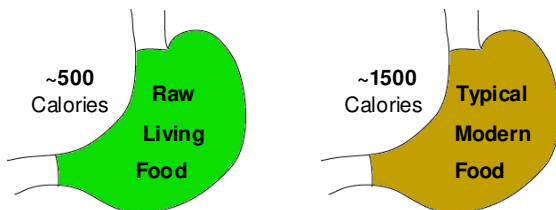
### 3. The amount of fat

“Our natural calorie-counting inner machinery is fooled in two ways:

1. ...through excessive fat intake. Fat is calorically concentrated, it has nine calories per gram as compared to four calories per gram for both ‘carbs’ and proteins.
2. ...through the decrease of fiber which is so common in refined carbohydrates. “Elimination of these foods will solve the problem of weight management “(Lisle 74). The lack of fiber and the excess of fat both increase the caloric density of our food in an unhealthy manner. When we eat calorically dense foods such as butter, eggs, ice cream, burgers, fried foods, etc. as well as refined carbohydrates, we sometimes think we have **pleasure**.

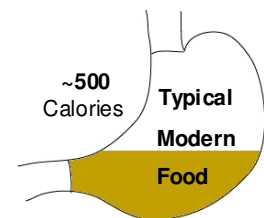
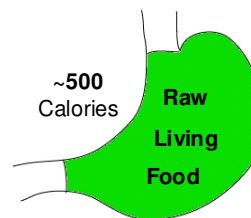
It is now known that it takes about one pound of food to create a feeling of fullness.

Raw Living Foods Fill You Up With  
Less Calories and More Nutrients



OR

Raw Living Foods Fill You Up With  
Less Calories and More Nutrients



The pound of food will activate the stretch receptors in the stomach which will create a feeling of satiation.. Two other mechanisms related to the law of satiation, along with the 1 )stretch receptors are, 2)the nutrient sensation, and 3) something called the ‘yowel’ circuit.

Notice the amount of calories it would take to activate the stretch receptors in diagram one. If the stretch receptors are not activated by the calorically dense food, as shown in diagram two, a feeling of deprivation, or **pain** is created.

Instincts, unmet, over time cause a feeling of deprivation...leaving a portion of a person’s basic human needs unfulfilled. A person cannot deprive themselves into health. Willpower is not infinitely sustainable.

**Energy conservation** Most persons want to accomplish as much as possible with the least expenditure of energy. The caloric density of the food we desire is a good example of that. Binging, an attempt to consume calorically dense food (**energy conservation**), often occurs when we have felt deprived of calories for an extended time...when we have allowed our bodies to become too hungry. Our body senses starvation (**pain**), and our willpower (brain) may weaken (possibly from a low glucose levels), and a very strong instinct takes over to insure our very survival. A person feels a need to get as many calories as they can as fast as they can (**energy conservation**).

**Energy conservation** will dictate to us that we seek **pleasure** with the least possible output of energy. Modern food industries have figured out how to get right to the heart of a person's **pleasure** architecture.

**Pleasure** seeking and **pain avoidance** work together to produce hunger, an essential and very powerful motivational force!

**The pleasure trap is the trapping of the motivational triad, in one of its aspects, to the detriment of the happiness and health of the person.**

**“Moods of Happiness”** Nature has an additional and related system to the motivational triad, a set of signals to let pleasure-seeking animals know whether they are on the right path to pleasure and survival. Those signals are the **moods of happiness** and unhappiness, and they work like the clues in a treasure hunt. Moods of happiness have their own neurochemistry and mechanics. These mood-regulating structures are regulated primarily by **serotonin**. **Pleasure** is very intense and short-term. They are the endpoints. **Moods of happiness** are more subtle feelings associated with steady progress. Happiness is the subtle reinforcing experiences along the way. They are not time limited. Although pleasure reactions and mood reactions are partly integrated, they are largely independent. Sigmund Freud thought he found the key to **happiness**. He thought it was cocaine. He made a mistake in thinking that more **pleasure** is the key to **happiness**. It did not create **happiness**. **Pleasure** and **happiness** are different experiences. We need them both. The moods of happiness, together with moments of pleasure, make up the best that life has to offer.

REALIZE that the majority of people in westernized society die from cardiovascular disease and cancer. The majority of those cases are completely preventable. The primary cause of these conditions is from putting too much of the wrong things into our bodies. These diseases are some of the many results caused by being caught in the **pleasure trap**.

RESOLUTION or positive affirmation. Once we have RECOGNIZED and understood our challenge, we can set our desires and intents as to what we want to create. Affirmations are a vital step.

1. A positive, yet realistic statement to use as a positive affirmation might be...
  - a. I have....experienced dis-ease or discomfort of some kind.
  - b. I am now....improving my choices....one at a time.
  - c. I am on my way to...vibrant health and well-being.

RESULTS from simple choices towards health all add up. Any effort you put forth towards increased health is beneficial.

There are no adverse RESULTS from healthy choices.

A person will often feel overwhelmed as they seek to obtain, regain, or maintain their health and desired weight. Actually, those choices are just made one bite at a time, one meal at a time, one day at a time. My grandma used to always tell me that out of small things proceed that which is great. I have come to find out that this is true. It is true in many areas...in eating, in raising children, in cleaning, in studying, etc. Each small, but good, choice for health that we make increases our vitality. We have a saying on our fridge, "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted" We think that is the same about our food choices. Eat the best you can. Give yourself credit for your healthy choices. Each choice has a consequence, and every good choice leads you closer to your RESOLUTION. If you do not eat as good as you would like to one day, just do better the next time you eat. It seems if a person looks too far ahead, it can be a little overpowering. I suggest just doing the best in the present. Think of food in terms of ADDING healthy choices. Less desirable choices will be crowded out naturally as we add enough good choices. When the appropriate foods are eaten, the body will naturally shed excessive fat and restore the body to health and fitness. Health has many aspects. Think of each choice for health as a "present" to yourself. We can only learn from the PAST. We live in the PRESENT. Make your choice for health now...today...and your FUTURE will be healthy. Food is an important part of health. It has been estimated that a person makes at least sixty to a hundred choices concerning food each day. Health and VITALITY can be obtained...one choice at a time. If the quality of food consumed was increased by just two percent each week a person would have improved their diet over one hundred percent within a year. It is possible! We can DO it...one bite at a time.

Coming Next month...heart health, how to prevent a 'broken' heart.