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The Raw Food Solution with Paul Nison

By Boyd Martin

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"Your food shall be your remedies, and your remedies shall be your food." — Hippocrates

"Always take a good look at what you're about to eat. It's not so important to know what it is, but it's critical to know what it was." —Texas Bix Bender, "Cowboy Wisdom"

It seems a particularly Western idea that in order to attain a high level of health, it must be something we eat, drink or otherwise ingest. The search for a "magic pill," fueled by unrelenting pharmaceutical media campaigns, enforces this belief. "Here, take this for your headache, take these to lose that weight, and smear this stuff on your face for everlasting beauty," yell the pitch men—and we obey, opening our wallets and in many cases ignoring common sense in doing so.

Other cultures focus on such things as yoga, breath, mantras and karma. More archaic societies focused on spirits, gods, ancestor worship, and shamanistic blessings. Of course, these time-intensive alternatives would never do for our breakneck lifestyles where instant gratification is aim of most daily or weekly endeavors.

A fine compromise between these two divergent health strategies is the raw food lifestyle. This month we spoke with raw food advocate, Paul Nison, who was in town on yet another tour of the country touting the true health benefits of eating raw food.

"People are getting interested in it for several reasons,' observes Paul. "One reason is that they're sick and they hear that it will cure them. Another reason is it's a trend, or people think it's a trend. Hollywood's picking up on it, so people want to follow what's in trend. But it's not really a trend. It's a diet—it's a way of eating. People just want to feel better, and they want to avoid disease and illness. They see people who are doing this with such great results, and it makes so much sense, that they figure they're going to try it."

Paul was led inadvertently to the raw food lifestyle at age 19 via a diagnosis of ulcerative colitis—one of the most painful of intestinal disorders. "I got colitis flare-ups about six times per year," says Paul.

"Every time I went to the doctor, she told me to stay away from dairy foods until I felt better. Then she increased the dosage of steroids she was giving me. When I felt better after a few weeks, she said it was okay to eat dairy foods again. After that I began to eliminate whatever the doctors told me was okay to eat. Eggs, meat, and sugar to name just a few. I told my doctor I felt better without these foods. She told me food had nothing to do with my condition. After hearing that from her, I knew I was on the right track."

As Paul continued to eliminate cooked foods from his diet, he also continued to research the lifestyle, being greatly influenced by Dave Klein (Publisher/Editor of Living Nutrition magazine), and David Wolfe, who had books and radio programs circulating. Joining raw food support groups, and networking with other raw fooders, Paul ended up with a 100% raw diet. "Since going 100% raw, I have completely overcome ulcerative colitis. I feel better than ever and have become increasingly

inspired about life. I quit my stressful job and began working as a raw food chef in a vegetarian restaurant. I organize raw-food potlucks every month. I have started a raw food support group, and I give lectures on the raw food lifestyle to help others that have gotten their wake-up call."

One misconception about adopting a raw food diet is that it is time-consuming, and complicated. Paul points out that it is really just a matter of doing the learning curve and being aware and alert to raw opportunities. "It's the quickest, the easiest, the cheapest, and has the most variety of foods of any type of diet in the world. So any of those reasons alone would be positive reasons why to eat this way," enthuses Paul.

Transitioning

Paul has written three books. His first, *The Raw Life* presents practical, easy and smart ways to incorporate raw foods into a cooked diet, and how to transition to 100% raw. He has interviewed dozens of long-time raw foodists, who divulge their strategies and ways of thinking about eating.

Making the transition to raw food also takes some self-reflection and an awareness of habitual patterns. "I find that people eat too much sugar, too much fat, too much protein and too little green food," says Paul. "Then they switch to a vegetarian diet, but keep doing the same thing, and keep running into the same problems. Then they switch to a raw diet, but continue to eat too much sugar and too much fat and too little green food, and they run into the same health problems."

Variety is the key to consistency in any diet, and raw fooding is no exception. Cravings for such things as pizza, lasagna, ice cream, pies, and candy can, amazingly enough, be mimicked with raw, uncooked foods. "There is such an amazing variety of raw foods, but people aren't aware of it," says Paul. "People need to get a raw food recipe book and make some recipes. Anything you can make on a cooked food diet, you can eat on a raw food diet. You can make raw food pizzas, you can make raw food hamburgers, raw food pies. You can make lasagna—you can make everything with raw foods."

Lately Paul has been traveling the world to experience new cultures and exotic fruits, and although he travels to native climes, most exotic fruits and vegetables are available in America. "There are so many kinds of fruits in this world, you could eat one different fruit every day for the rest of your life and not come close to tasting all the fruits of the world. We get most of them in this country. They don't grow

here, but we get them here. People have to open up their horizons and shop at Asian markets or Latin groceries and see the different types of foods that are out there."

Just going to Safeway and rummaging around in the produce section, isn't going to fully accomplish shopping goals for raw fooding. Several factors come into play, as Paul points out: "The most important thing when eating raw food, is we want it to be the highest quality possible. That would be raw, fresh, ripe and organic. Now, it's very easy in today's world to get raw and organic. Ripe and fresh is another story. You've got to work really hard to find where we can get ripe and fresh foods. But raw and organic is everywhere. Organic is so important because it's a high quality food, and when it's not, it's a low quality food. Some of the dirtiest water we can get comes from un-organic fruits and vegetables." Paul recommends searching the internet for resources in local areas, as well as hooking up with raw food groups that are springing up everywhere.

Raw fooding is basically anti-technological. ""We don't need anything other than our fingers. We don't even need utensils when we're eating raw, uncooked vegetables and fruits," notes Paul. "However, there are some things that will make things easier, but they're not definitely needed. A good blender, a juicer, a knife and a cutting board, are the four things I would highly recommend."

Food isn't everything...

In his travels, Paul has heard it all when it comes to symptoms, diseases and conditions people want to heal by raw fooding. "Probably the most popular problem is problems with Candida, which is actually one of the major causes of more severe health problems," declares Paul. "Everything from cancer to arthritis, to chronic fatigue syndrome, irritable bowel disease, inflammatory bowel disease, diabetes—the raw food diet will heal every disease out there that is caused by diet. But, a person won't necessarily stay healed if they're only going to look to food for the answer. There are spiritual ways to heal, also. For example, if a person is eating the best diet in the world, but they're holding on to bitterness, and they're not forgiving other people for things, they could very well get some diseases. Vice versa, somebody could eat badly, and have that down and be healthy. There are many factors other than just food that affect our health, but we don't have to worry about food when we eat raw food."

GRAPHICS/LINKS: <http://www.subtleenergysolutions.com/newsletter-paulnison.html>

Boyd is the webmaster of www.subtleenergysolutions.com and the newsletter writer for that site. He enjoys a wide range of experience both in the ways of the internet, alternative health, environmental issues, and in freelance writing. An active, professional drummer, Boyd performs in the Portland area with several area blues and R&B bands. Boyd is also an avid, daily practicing Bikram Yoga student.

Best Recipes: Raw Vegetable Smoothie

By Donna Monday

If you enjoy the taste of raw vegetables, then you'll love this Raw Vegetable Smoothie. The health benefits of raw vegetables are well known and many people enjoy drinking their raw vegetables just as

much as eating them.

This Raw Vegetable Smoothie has a wonderful twang to it because of the picante salsa. It's very flavorful and you will want to make this a regular staple of your raw foods diet.

Raw Vegetable Smoothie 1 – 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice OR balsamic vinegar 4 tablespoons picante salsa 1 cup raw broccoli 1 raw tomato, quartered 1/2 raw carrot, cut into 1–inch pieces 1 cup raw kale, or any leafy green 1 – 2 cloves raw garlic 1/2 cup raw hulled sunflower seeds 1/2 cup raw un–hulled sesame seeds 1 – 2 slices onion

Directions

Start by pouring liquid ingredients (lemon juice, salsa) into blender. Add remaining ingredients and blend until texture is that of a creamy milkshake.

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Donna Monday

Easy to make - fun to drink

Best Recipes: Raw Vegetable Smoothie

Can A Raw Food Diet Help You Lose Weight?

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