



7 Ways to Transform Your Practice

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Yes, food is a gateway to our personal growth! That is why it's so important to help your clients identify their personal strategy to food and spirit!

Eating is an essential part of all of our lives – we simply can't escape it. How we choose to experience food is up to us as individuals. We can think of food as pure physical nourishment – to give us the calories we need to function – to move, speak, and think. Or, we can expand our vision to encompass eating as something that connects us to our inner and outer landscapes – our emotions, creativity, mind, heart, truth, expression, intuition, and need for connection with the environment, people, animals, plants, earth, water, planet, and universe.



Research shows us that we interact with food and eating on an average of 200 times daily. If we tally up our daily interactions and calculate a lifetime of interactions with food and eating, your clients might reach close to 6 million opportunities to heal their physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual selves through the amazing miracle of a meal. Remember that, how we eat is how we live, and how we live is how we eat. By becoming aware of their eating, they have the potential to change their life in a great, big, huge way.

I've had much academic training in the scientific aspects of nutrition through my Master's and Doctorate degrees. I have also been taught ancient medical and spiritual traditions such as yoga, Ayurveda, Native American healing, and energy medicine. I have taken the best of my scientific knowledge and integrated it with an amalgam of ancient spirituality to create a unique approach to food, health, and healing. I believe that our clients interface with food needs to be practical as much as it needs to be poetic; literal as much as symbolic; and science-based as much as spiritually-steeped. My approach unites the best of opposites!

The intention of this booklet and the Food & Spirit™ work is to help you guide your clients to the place of the essential "I"s of the eating experience — Instinct, Intuition, Inspiration, and Information. I look forward to the unfolding of you and your clients physical and spiritual nourishment through this booklet and with the Certified Food & Spirit Practitioner Program. I wish you both a journey to inner and outer bliss with every bite taken!

Nourishing blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Deanna Minich



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REPORT

7 Ways to Transform Your Practice

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on wanting to guide your clients on this journey to wellness and wholeness through foods and eating! This booklet provides you with ways you can transform your practice by analyzing the intersections between foods, eating, and aspects of your clients' life. Many people are surprised to find out that foods can impact more than just our physical body, and that their effects can ripple through the entirety of our being, including:

- Our PHYSICAL BODY and our ability to feel grounded and secure;
- Our EMOTIONS and our ability to feel creative and open to the flow of what is coming through us to express;
- Our sense of PERSONAL POWER and our ability to feel confident and radiant;
- Our sense of EXPANSION IN OUR HEART and our ability to love and serve ourselves and others;
- Our sense of EXPRESSION FROM OUR THROAT and our ability to speak our truth and be heard;
- Our INTUITION and our ability to tap into our internal insight and wisdom;
- Our sense of CONNECTION with all of life and our ability to integrate our body with our soul.

Indeed, we are multi-faceted beings. It is almost as though we are like a web – if you pluck a thread somewhere in the web, chances are it will be felt in the entire structure. Ancient traditions have long recognized our complex, holistic nature, and modern science is on the forefront of acknowledging the interconnection of body systems.

In this booklet, you will gain scientific and spiritual insight on how your clients' whole being is relating to foods and eating. You will learn about how your clients' eating relates to these seven aspects of their self. As you navigate this information, I encourage you to allow your own inner guide to take you through what you feel comfortable with...



CHAPTER 1 - ROOT

Be More Grounded in Your Practice - Eating for Stability

OVERVIEW

Much of what we do and how we live is connected to the vitality of our physical body. The body is a vehicle for allowing passions, desires, and dreams to unfold in this physical reality. When we are in sync with our physical self, we will feel capable to survive adequately, even in a world of change and instability.

Along with sleep, sex, water, and air, one of the most important aspects of survival is food. Our physical body needs food to survive – it is one of the primal acts that all human beings on the planet must take part in to some extent to exist. Eating results in a sense of being “grounded,” or “rooted” into the physical body. After a meal, we feel the physical anchoring of food in our stomach, followed by the subsequent surge of energy extracted from the food which imparts us with a sense of stability. After eating, we might feel more present or able to concentrate on the task at hand because we are activated fully in our bodies (through altering our blood sugar, hormones, and neurotransmitters) and we have calories to perform. At a basic level, the physical body is also connected to key elements that are formed from a very young age by our family patterns - aspects like safety, trust, and boundaries. When we are grounded in these fundamentals of everyday living, we feel secure and at ease in our physical bodies, ultimately translating into our relationship with foods and our eating practices and patterns.

PROMOTE A HEALTHY ROOT THROUGH EATING

HONOR THE BODY’S WISDOM: One of the most core principles when it comes to eating is to know your body and to be in touch with your sense of instinct. Teach your clients to check in with their body on food choices. What language does their body use to tell them what to eat and when? Does their

energy level drop? Also, note whether some foods make them feel “grounded” or “ungrounded”.

FEEL SAFE AND SECURE: Survival is linked to feeling safe and secure. When we don’t feel safe in our environment, or we perceive our body as a threat to our security, we may change our eating patterns, to either not eating or overeating. Work with your clients to journal on which aspects of eating, their environment and their body make them feel unsafe. Help them find ways they may feel safe without looking to food. Teach your clients to cultivate a “safe place” internally and within their living space.

EAT SPECIFIC FOODS FOR THE ROOT: Feeling grounded and safe is often connected to feeling part of a “tribe” or community – or having loved ones support you. When we do not feel safe or supported by the tribe, we may not be comfortable eating with a community or being a part of traditions created by a family. You may want your clients to create a community of individuals with like-minded thoughts about eating to get together on a regular basis to share a meal.

EAT SPECIFIC FOODS FOR THE ROOT

PROTEIN: Protein assists us in reestablishing and strengthening our integration with the earthy, physical vibration within us, bringing us back to our roots. It makes us feel heavy and slower moving, a welcome feeling if we are feeling fragmented or spacey. Vary your protein sources to get a sampling of different degrees of “grounding”.

MINERALS: Minerals, which are stable compounds from the Earth’s crust, impart structure and stability to the body.



CHAPTER 1 - ROOT

Be More Grounded in Your Practice - Eating for Stability

ROOT VEGETABLES: These tenacious vegetables grow deep within the dark, quiet earth, thereby embodying cool, centered, earthy energy. The long roots and the insoluble fiber they contain help us to feel bulk within our gastrointestinal tract to give us a feeling of anchoring, in addition to sweeping through substances that we need to let go of. The energy of root vegetables allows us the ability to nestle into our internal, lower core and to be comfortable and safe in its depth and stillness. Examples of grounding root vegetables include beets, turnips, parsnips, taro, burdock, and rutabaga.

RED-COLORED FOODS: The color red is symbolic of grounding – it represents the blood, which serves our being by keeping us infused with the life force of oxygen and nutrients. In addition to the vibration of the color of red, red-colored foods usually contain relatively high levels of vitamin C, a vitamin utilized by several body parts that connect to structure and survival such as the skeleton, gums, skin, and adrenals (“fight-or-flight” response).

These foods also contain protective components like the red-colored carotenoid, lycopene, to help defend our body from attack by reactive compounds. Examples of red-colored foods include tomatoes, strawberries, raspberries, watermelon, and cherries.





CHAPTER 2 - FLOW

Be Creative in Your Practice - Eating with Creativity

OVERVIEW

Within the grounded structure of the physical body, there is an energy that is dynamic and flowing, which is often associated with emotions and creativity. Indeed, we need to let “e-motions” (energy in motion) move through our physical body so they do not stagnate in any one place to create symptoms or disease. Issues relating to food and emotions are very much intertwined. In fact, it has been estimated that over 75% of overeating can be attributed to emotions. When we feel out of control with our ability to process emotions, we may feel tempted to stuff them down with food to feel a sense of temporary comfort. Since emotions are intimately enmeshed with our creative spirit, it helps to tap into this force, so that our emotions can surface and release. Conversely, when we lose sight of our creativity due to lack of time or stress, we indirectly affect our ability to express emotions. Emotions and creativity are joined together, and are associated with other aspects such as playfulness, openness, pleasure, sensuality, and flexibility. When connected to these elements of our being, we are able to extend into the experience of eating that goes beyond function and rigidity, and into the realm of freedom, fluidity, and flexibility (“going with the flow”).

PROMOTE HEALTHY FLOW THROUGH EATING

SPEND TIME TO CREATE MEALS: We have become consumers of convenience and dashboard diners, eating in our cars, in the spirit of always “being on the run.” Your clients may be confined to a car for a long commute or to a cubicle in an office for a long day, which may translate into a certain structure of life that stifles their creativity and motivation for preparing meals. As a result of “containment,” they may buy predominantly processed foods for the sake of eating fast and without having to put energy into creating

something. By balancing the intake of prepared foods with the process of developing a meal from scratch, your clients can tap into their ability to be creative rather than giving their creative power over to store-bought processed foods. And through this vehicle of creation, it allows your clients’ emotions to flow in the process.

PAY ATTENTION TO SENSES WHEN EATING: You have probably heard about eating “mindlessly”, but you may also agree that many people eat “senselessly” – or without their five-player team of bodily senses (sight, sound, taste, touch, smell). Teach your clients to tune in to the here-and-now when they are selecting, preparing, or eating food so that they can get the most out of their eating experience.

ENGAGE IN PLAYFUL EATING: Children embody unbridled creativity, and you may recall how you ate when you were young – you were likely messy, ate with your fingers, didn’t finish everything at once, or played with your food on your plate. Our creative self yearns for play and as hard-working, responsible, structured adults, we may not get enough playfulness sprinkled throughout our daily routine. Honor the flow within by allowing your clients to tap into their inner child’s sense of play when it comes to eating.

EAT SPECIFIC FOODS FOR THE FLOW

WATER: There is nothing more conducive to establishing flow in the body than ensuring we are properly hydrated. It’s one of the simplest things we can do, yet most of our clients overlook its importance. We are 60-80% water and the high water content is responsible for helping us to flow and function internally – with its help, our cells are able to transport nutrients, toxins, and waste products.



CHAPTER 2 - FLOW

Be Creative in Your Practice - Eating with Creativity

FATS & OILS: Many people are “fat-phobic” or afraid of eating fat because they think they will become fat. Unfortunately, the low-fat trend of the early 1990s has resulted in lingering false notions about the role of fat in the diet. The essential fats are wiggly, flowing fats that are needed by the cell membranes for important functions related to flow and fluidity. Don’t let your clients skimp on these fats! Make sure that they get enough of the pivotal omega-3 fats from food or supplement sources: flaxseed oil, fish oil, salmon, leafy, green vegetables, nuts and seeds.

FISH: Fish live in the water, and, therefore, symbolically embody the energy of flow and fluidity. Salmon is one of the most ideal foods for flow since it contains an appreciable, healthy amount of essential, fluid fats. Additionally, its flesh is the color orange, the color associated with creativity. Other types of low-mercury-containing fish and seafood are also good to include (unless you have a shellfish allergy): shrimp, canned light tuna, sardines, tilapia, perch, mackerel, pollock, and catfish.

ORANGE-COLORED FOODS: The color orange is symbolic of creativity – it represents a juicy force that disperses throughout our being, allowing for our cells to flow with the rhythm of life. In addition to feeding on the vibrant vibration of the color of orange, we can become nourished through orange-colored compounds like carotenoids.





CHAPTER 3 - FIRE

Be Powerful in Your Practice - Eating with Confidence

OVERVIEW

We live in a power-hungry, stress-filled society that is always expecting more and more of us. Our ability to maintain balance in the midst of chaos becomes increasingly difficult when demands and responsibilities begin to pile high. We try to accommodate and stay in control by saying "yes" when we really mean "no," and after a short while, we feel burdened with life and everyday events become drudgery. Finally, with too much energy going out, we collapse in utter exhaustion. Conversely, when there is an excessive amount of energy being taken in, there may be an inability to integrate this energy with the self. Often, the imbalance manifests as conditions that represent stagnation and blocks, including weight gain in the abdomen or metabolic issues like type 2 diabetes, particularly when the individual takes in energy and cannot balance the intake with the output. Harnessing our inner sense of balance and transformation can assist us in creating an integrated, powerful exchange of energy in and out of the body in a way that generates the radiance of "presence". When we are the master of our own energy, we are able to transform the input provided to us into a form that we can assimilate or let go of, resulting in confidence, endurance, empowerment, and achievement in its highest capacity.

PROMOTE A HEALTHY FIRE THROUGH EATING

GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR HUNGER GAUGE: Often, people lose sight of our innate sense of physical hunger and responding to their bodies' physical cues to eat due to the demands of a busy life. By tapping into their internal rhythm to eat, and eating regularly, they will help themselves to keep their internal power rather than giving it over to irregular eating times and over or under doing their eating. A rough guideline is to eat to the level at which you are able to take a light walk after eating.

KNOW THY FUEL: Eating is meant to energize you rather than deplete your reserves. There are certain foods that give you the punch of power you need and others that seem to drain you of your power, or take your power away. You may find yourself eating these foods even though you know they "run you down". Have clients avoid artificial sweeteners as they can set them up for additional cravings and metabolic imbalance.

SCHEDULE REGULAR EATING TIMES: You may want to start by first creating a regular eating schedule for your clients, having them eat small meals 4 to 6 times per day - so that they can retrain themselves to get in touch with their eating rhythm.

EAT SPECIFIC FOODS FOR THE FIRE

CARBOHYDRATES: In addition to the type of carbohydrate, it is also worthwhile to note the quantity of carbohydrates consumed in the diet. If we eat too many carbohydrates for our bodily needs, we create a deluge of energy input. If we eat too little for our body requirements, we do not equip it with the energy it needs to have momentum and direction. To empower our being with the energy it needs, we have to constantly be in touch with our "fuel" gauge, balancing the different carbohydrates in the diet in amount and type, to give us the return we need for radiance and power.

YELLOW-COLORED FOODS: The color yellow is symbolic of power – it represents the radiance of self-confidence and the fire of endurance. The color feeds our being with a specific vibration, and also reflects the presence of yellow-colored plant compounds like lutein.





CHAPTER 4 - LOVE

Nourish with Love in Your Practice - Eating with Love

OVERVIEW

There is no greater food than love. Human beings thrive on it. We feed ourselves with symbols of the heart plastered on t-shirts, bumper stickers, books, and cards. In several cultures, food is used to show love. The message being delivered on many levels is that if we care about someone, we share food with them, whether preparing it for them, serving it, or even eating with them. Frequently, love travels through the conduit of food. Also, we may overlook love for ourselves, but it is through the act of eating that we show we value and love our bodies. Religious traditions have used the phrase, "Your body is your temple." Indeed, loving and caring for ourselves implies providing our bodies with quality nourishment. The heart is the inner fulcrum that aligns to our eating experience. Without a solid foundation of love of self and a free, open heart, we may not be lovingly tapped into the foods we need for our bodies in any given moment. A healthy, balanced sense of expansion in the heart can harmonize feelings and love for others without compromising the expression of feelings and love of self. Those who are truly tapped into their wellspring of self-love will let their passions be their guiding principle for decision-making, or, in other words, they will "follow their heart," connecting in the highest way to related qualities of forgiveness, gratitude, love and service.

PROMOTE A HEALTHY LOVE THROUGH EATING:

GROW, EAT, AND SERVE FOOD WITH LOVE:

There is a good chance that you have had a meal made with love, or had a meal carefully, lovingly created, prepared, and served to you. It is quite a treat to have nurturing baked into your nourishment, as it feeds the body along with the spirit. When food marinades in love, it is saturated with a high vibration, along with making it taste sweeter and

more flavorful. People who buy organically grown food claim that it tastes better than conventionally-grown food when compared side by side, even when they do not know which one is which. There certainly is an element of 'love' that appears to go into organic gardening that you don't find in mass, industrial farming. And when we make the selection for organic food, we are actively tapping into the energetic lineage of love that has grown into the food imparted from the sun, stars, moon, sky, farmer, harvester and grocer. To help your clients cultivate love in their food, have them do the following: Before starting to eat a meal, shift their consciousness from their head into their heart; imagine their heart being filled with love; to come into this place, they may need to "feel" love from a previous memory or experience, or simply conjure it up; allow their food to bask in this feeling of love for 20 to 30 seconds.

GIVE THANKS: Gratitude is the nourishment of the heart. When we give thanks for a meal, our heart expands in kind, like a rose coming into full spiraled blossom, extending to reach its petals as far as they can go.

SHARE MEALS WITH OTHERS: Love grows exponentially when it is shared. By loving others, we never become depleted of love. In fact, quite the opposite! However, that said, it's important to balance love of others with love of self. Our wellspring of love comes from our healthy self-love and self-esteem first. In much the same way, sharing meals with others feeds our heart. The more we share the more nourishment that is available to all.

EAT SPECIFIC FOODS FOR THE LOVE

VEGETABLES: The heart field expands in the presence of plant foods, and, in particular, vegetables. Vegetables contain the grounded energy of the earth combined with an expansion or blossoming into the world in the form of a flower, bud, or vegetable.



CHAPTER 4 - LOVE

Nourish with Love in Your Practice - Eating with Love

CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES: Cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli, cauliflower, collard greens, mustard greens, cabbage, bok choy, arugula, and Brussels sprouts, are especially balancing for the heart and serve our body through their protective mechanisms against conditions like cancer and inflammation.

SPROUTS AND LEAFY GREENS: The live, active components and nutrients of young sprouts, whether broccoli, alfalfa, or mung, along with leafy greens such as romaine, red leaf, butterhead, escarole, iceberg, and spinach, provide us with the vital, soothing healing elements that move us into expansion.

GREEN-COLORED FOODS: The color green is symbolic of healing and expansion – it represents an unfolding of love, service, and gratitude from within, similar to leaves on a tree, green and open to the rays of the sun. The color itself is very nourishing and healing, and is found extensively throughout the plant kingdom.





CHAPTER 5 - TRUTH

Speak Truth in Your Practice – Eating with Truth

OVERVIEW

As human beings, one of our unifying gifts is to express ourselves. The vehicle of the voice is one of the most impactful means of communication we are capable of. After all, we cannot fully release the chaotic, raw thoughts and emotions that arise within us without being able to speak, write, or communicate in some way. Therefore, our throat becomes a “birth canal” for the passions and feelings of the heart. It is important to be true to ourselves in all aspects of our lives, even when it comes to foods, eating, and our health. If we can’t say “no”, we may find ourselves in a predicament where we must eat certain foods that don’t benefit our bodies, minds, or spirits. The expression energy held in the throat area holds not only the physical structure of the throat, but the ears, mouth, nose, thyroid gland, lips, and cheeks; therefore, this space is essential for our connection to food. It serves as the gateway for food to enter our physical body. When we come from a place of healthy expression by speaking clearly and truthfully, eating mindfully, and synchronizing all the activities that take place in this concentrated area (e.g., hearing, talking, tasting, chewing, breathing, and swallowing), we can anchor into related concepts of authenticity, mindfulness, choice, and integration.

PROMOTE A HEALTHY TRUTH THROUGH EATING

CHEW FOOD THOROUGHLY AND EAT WITH CONSCIOUSNESS: In the age of fast living, we are doing everything fast, including eating. If clients are eating on the run, they may tend to shortcut their eating by gulping and swallowing rather than chewing and assimilating. If they are not chewing their food thoroughly, chances are they won’t be able to digest, absorb, and eventually, assimilate it into their body. Thus, chewing serves an important function.

EAT HIGH-QUALITY FOODS: Every day we are bombarded with food choices. Therefore, the goal is to have your clients listen to their authentic self when it comes to making a decision. Know that every choice they make bears an endless string of consequences.

BROADEN YOUR FOOD HORIZON: When we cave into food ruts, we let go of our ability to choose and experience. Habits are an indirect indicator that our daily living is on auto-pilot and we have released our power of choice. Our energy of expression encourages us to be expansive like the overarching sky – to look wider and broader, to explore and discover, to be adventurous. One of the ways we can do this is by shaking up our clients food routine and getting them greater exposure to foods. Eating ethnic foods – foods they may not normally eat, whether Thai, Indian, Middle-Eastern, European, or Ethiopian, to name a few, is an effective way to experience an expanse of food.

EAT SPECIFIC FOODS FOR THE TRUTH

SEA PLANTS: Sea plants such as nori, agar, dulse, hijiki, arame, and kelp, are not common foods for most people, but they have value for the throat area because they supply iodine and other minerals for our thyroid gland.

SOUPS/SAUCES/JUICES: These foods are moistening and lubricating for the mouth and throat. They help quench our thirst or help us to sustain our bodies with a variety of nutrients. On a symbolic level, the throat transforms the messages of the heart into the language of voice, words, song, and poetry. In a similar way with food, we bring together the elements of earth, water, and fire to create transformation - water and earth, fire and water, fire and earth.





CHAPTER 6 - INSIGHT

Be Insightful in Your Practice – Eating with Mindfulness

OVERVIEW

When we think about “seeing,” we might conjure up an image of our physical eyes which allow us to peer into the external world. However, there is another, less literal, interpretation of eyesight that involves “in-sight,” or the ability to gain perspective from within through the combination of our inner wisdom and vision. Our intuitive sense, often referred to as the “sixth sense”, is a culmination of our earthly experience combined with our senses and “gut feeling”. It moves us from the microcosm of our being into the macrocosm of all interconnectedness. If we harness our intuition effectively, it can guide our lives, helping us to make choices that serve us and others best. Sometimes we perceive our intuition outright through what we hear, see, and feel, and other times, we are imparted information we need to know through the conduit of our dreams or messages received during stillness and contemplation as brought forth in practices like meditation or mindfulness. If we are paying attention and are mindful, we will be able to connect our small and big selves using the bridge of intuition. When it comes to food and eating, many of us have lost sight of our inner wisdom about what to eat, how to eat, and how much to eat. By listening to the higher, intuitive self, we realign with our true body and soul needs and are better apt to make good, true, and beautiful choices. This part of us – our wise self – is our higher visionary self and uses the body organs of eyes, brain, and the coordination of the incredible network of hormones through the hypothalamus, pituitary and pineal glands, through which we form a constellation with concepts of discernment, mindfulness, imagination, symbolism, and self-realization.

PROMOTE A HEALTHY INSIGHT THROUGH EATING

EAT WITH YOUR EYES – You may have heard the expression – “you eat with your eyes” – and, indeed, there is some truth to this statement as our eating process begins before we’ve even taken a bite of food. We begin the process of transformation in the body by first seeing the food – noticing its rainbow array of colors and the artistry of food arranged on the plate. This interaction feeds us – it sparks our brain to start sending signals to the rest of our physiology, primarily the gut that we’ve got food coming. Therefore, have your clients use the wonderful sense of sight to connect to food at the grocery store and in the kitchen.

EAT INTUITIVELY – We are all intuitive beings, but sometimes we put our intellect on overdrive when it comes to eating. Keep in mind that intuition is mainly a divine calling that is linked to our bodily experience. By tuning into our soulful needs through the vehicle of our intuitive voice, we will be in harmony with what both our body and soul require to resonate to their fullest.

KEEP THE BRAIN “PLASTIC” WITH CHANGE AND FLEXIBILITY – There is a new concept called “neuronal plasticity,” which refers to the ability of the neurons in the brain to remain fluid and flexible, transmitting their messages with ease. As we become older, the brain becomes less “plastic” and more stagnant in routines and ruts. One of the ways to cultivate flexibility is to ensure that clients are constantly “shaking things up” in their daily regimen. Instead of having the same foods every day, it is important to consider variety.

EAT TO SLEEP WELL – There is a “new” disorder that has emerged – it’s called “Nighttime Eating Syndrome”. When people have lots of extra time at night, they may settle into a routine of relaxing at



CHAPTER 6 - INSIGHT

Be Insightful in Your Practice – Eating with Mindfulness

home, watching television and eating snacks. These snacks may amount to a significant proportion of their daily intake – in some cases about 15% of the total calories can be eaten at night after dinner! Eating close to bedtime may result in disruptions in sleep patterns for some people. Not eating two to three hours before bedtime works well for most.

EAT SPECIFIC FOODS FOR THE INSIGHT

HEALTHY FATS: Since about 60% of the brain is fat, we can alter the composition of the brain by feeding it good, healthy, unsaturated omega-3 fats, like those you'd get from fish, nuts, seeds, and vegetables. Feeding the body and, ultimately, the brain with healthy fats will ensure that your neurotransmitters are flowing fluidly, and keep you in a good, positive mood.

BLUE-PURPLE BERRIES: Berries, particularly the dark blue-purple kind, like blueberries, have been shown to help animals learn better and improve their memory. Researchers have shown that giving berries to aged animals (the equivalent of about ½ cup for humans) resulted in cognitive improvements. And if that weren't interesting enough, what we now know is that berries aren't just brain-wonder foods because they are potent antioxidants. Scientists have shown that the two berries, blueberries and strawberries, influence different types of learning and memory. They appear to be very specific both in function and where they end up localizing in the brain. Think small, dark berries for breakfast in a smoothie (try them frozen if you can't obtain fresh berries) or as part of a meal for adults to help slow down brain aging, and even for kids to help them learn at school.

SPICE IT UP!: If you look at some of the healing diets in the Mediterranean and in India, they use an abundance of spices like oregano, dill, tarragon, ginger, black peppercorns, rosemary, and turmeric, to name a few. Herbs and spices have been referred to as the "jewels of the plant kingdom" as they have a multitude of properties which make them desirable for adding zest and zing to a meal and for having anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, and free-radical-quenching effects in the body.

CHOCOLATE: Chocolate is one of the most powerful foods for the brain and offers its gift of insight – the cocoa polyphenols are protective to the brain matter and the cardiovascular system. Dark chocolate contains small amounts of caffeine which stimulates the brain and thinking, enabling us to focus on a task at hand better. It also contains antioxidants known as flavonoids which help to open up the blood vessels. We may even become more relaxed and lower our blood pressure as a result of this effect. Aside from its physiological effects, it can certainly alter our psychology, and most notably, our mood, as it contains several constituents that act as stimulants or that give us the comforting "I'm in love" feeling.





CHAPTER 7 - SPIRIT

Embrace Spirituality in Your Practice - Eating with Integration

OVERVIEW

Of course, the body, emotions, and mind are all facets of who we are as human beings. However, the overarching aspect of what animates us into motion at a deep level is the life force energy that invigorates every cell in our body. Some people refer to this energy as cellular intelligence, chi, qi, prana, and some might contextualize this part of who we are as the "soul". Ancient spiritual texts refer to this life force energy as what connects us to a greater, divine presence. Often, this force is perceived as "electricity" in the body, and captured through the conduit of the central nervous system network of interlacing nerves threading through the spinal column out to every square inch of the body. As individuals, we may think of ourselves as separate entities, and yet, there is a soul part of us that is not separate but integrated into all forms of life. Within the vast collective unconscious and conscious, we have commonalities as human beings. For example, in our daily lives, we are all linked to certain archetypes or symbols, such as what it means to be a "mother" or to be a "hero". We also all connect through the experience of eating. Furthermore, these universal archetypes may come through our persona through our relationship with food. As American businessman and author Stephen Covey has said, 'We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings on a human journey.' Indeed, we are soul-full beings with the ability to believe, connect, and be clear on our life purpose. When we bridge together body and soul, we are empowered and enlightened in our living.

PROMOTE A HEALTHY SPIRIT THROUGH EATING

CONNECT WITH LIFE THROUGH EATING: Many of us realize that eating is a physical act – our bodies harness energy from the food in order to move around, be active, live life – but how many of us

recognize the inherent spiritual aspects of eating? The act of eating is spiritual, or connects us to all of life. There are actually many layers of interconnection that can occur within a meal besides relating to another human being. We would nourish not only our bodies but also our souls if we were able to see the cosmos in our plate – an energetic lineage – spanning from the seed, which was planted in a field and tended to by a caring farmer and workers, bathed in sunlight and moonlight, visited by a multitude of insects, to when, eventually, the seed transformed into a vegetable picked by someone's loving hand. The vegetable made a hearty journey to ultimately make it to the store or farmer's market. It connected with someone enough for it to be selected and bought. A chef or cook took great skill in preparing it into a dish, and days later, it has found its way to your plate. So when we are eating, we are not just eating a blip in time, savoring a present moment of goodness, but a whole past history of connection. We eat our connections and take in not only the physical energy of each one, but the non-physical energy as well. Therefore, it is very important to eat the energy you want to become!

BALANCE THE BODY AND SOUL THROUGH EATING: Eating nourishes the physical body, and it can also impact the soul. Have your clients create a practice around their eating events that encourages spirituality. Every meal is indeed a miracle.

PURIFY THE BODY WITH PURE FOODS: The soul is concerned with purification, essentially releasing the physical body from debris so that there is a better connection with one's higher power or source. One of the ways to purify the body is to refrain from eating foods that have been contaminated with artificial ingredients or additives, such as artificial sweeteners, dyes, preservatives, and colorings.

INCORPORATE GENTLE DETOX EVERY DAY: By making sure your clients do something every day to keep them "clean", they will keep their toxin load



CHAPTER 7 - SPIRIT

Embrace Spirituality in Your Practice - Eating with Integration

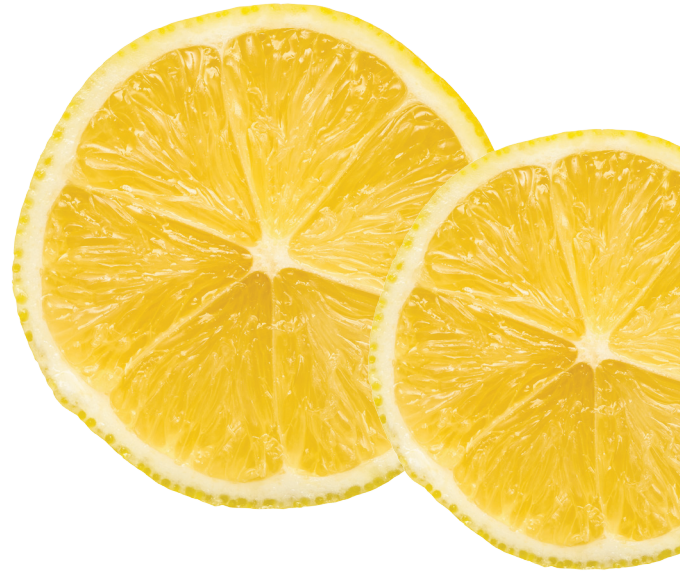
to a minimum, and thus, feel and function better. Eating high-fiber foods like non-starchy vegetables, berries, and legumes are excellent ways to trap toxins in the gut and carry them out.

EAT SPECIFIC FOODS FOR THE SPIRIT

SUNLIGHT: The healing power of the sun is immense. It is radiant and provides nourishment to all of life. Like the individual photons vibrating within the glorious sun rays, the soul resonates to the fine vibration of the source of universal light. Sunlight and soul energy can permeate our physical being and spark certain cell processes. Connecting with the sun's rays fills us with the nourishment of hope, love, and divine grace. It balances the body and the soul.

OXYGEN: Oxygen, extracted from breath (referred to as "chi" or "prana"), is the subtle substance we are always sipping in to keep our cells vibrant and flowing with life. We couldn't survive without it. With oxygen, our being stays conscious, alive, and invigorated. Deep breathing and oxygenation therapies help to clear the body of toxins and to deliver to the body the raw material to burn food for energy.

LOVE: Ultimately, love alone nourishes us. It is different than food in that the more we allow it to feed us, the more it grows, enabling others to be fed. When we are ready to accept love fully and completely, without limits, we are liberated from having to ingest any food to feed our vibration. We can experience love in its many facets – love of self, of others, of nature, of planet, of our higher power. By practicing indulging on love in all its many rainbowed forms, we open ourselves to a connection that our bodies, hearts, and spirits crave most!





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