

Human Ecology Project



Freedom
FROM CRAVINGS



**HUMAN ECOLOGY
PROJECT**
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Freedom FROM CRAVINGS

Americans spent an estimated \$30 billion a year in 1992 (the last major study) on all types of diet programmes and products.

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Freedom From Cravings

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FREEDOM FROM CRAVINGS

According to the *U. S. Food and Drug Administration*, Americans spent an estimated \$30 billion a year in 1992 (the last major study) on all types of diet programmes and products, including diet foods and drinks.

Market data, a market research firm that has tracked diet products and programmes since 1989 estimates that the figure in America has now reached over \$60 Billion.

Weight loss is big business. Every few months a new diet plan is launched, but they must not be working since the business is growing rather than shrinking (just like the waistlines).

Originally this interest has been for cosmetic reasons, with everyone wanting to look like a fashion model or to get into last year's swim suit. But the larger issues of health are gaining increased attention. Excess weight gain and obesity are very real health problems. Excess weight is a precursor to so many other serious health issues, from diabetes and heart disease to some cancers.

Because this is a serious health issue we need to understand why the programmes, the pills and the products don't seem to provide consistent and sustainable results.

Here is what I have found out:

- Most weight-loss programmes don't work in the long run because they don't emphasize being healthy. Most dietary programmes are actually harmful since the way they produce weight loss is through malnourishment or starving the body.
- If you are improving your health, your body will reduce in size to its proper proportion.
- Any food-based programme for weight loss without some sort of an exercise component is destined for long-term failure.
- Starvation and **cleansing** or **detoxification** purges are short-term distractions unless part of a comprehensive programme.

One of the reasons I created **Weight Loss Nature's Way** was to introduce people to a simple, inexpensive and effective way to achieve healthy weight loss. I wanted to demonstrate how a healthy diet was delicious and sustainable and how you could lose weight, not be hungry, gain vitality and stay that way.

As clients began to use the programme, one of the first things they mentioned was how surprised they were that the cravings they experienced in the past didn't seem to be such a problem.

Well, there are good reasons for that and while I will not guarantee you will never crave a bar of chocolate again (or even have one) it is important that

we understand the *psychology* and the *biology of cravings* and how to diminish their hold over what we eat.

THE CHEMISTRY OF CRAVINGS

Wouldn't it be nice if logic and common sense ruled our food choices? We could simply do the research, think things through and get on with eating healthy food and enjoy every minute of it. We would eat the foods that help us lose weight, never be hungry, and stay healthy with no looking back. After all, what's stopping us? We all know the answer to that question—habits and cravings.

I see so many men and women lose faith in their ability to change their eating habits because they feel helpless when cravings set in.

The *lure of that sugary dessert* calls out to them from across the room and they can't resist or they emerge from a *mental fog* and realize they *just ate a thousand calories of pizza*.

The result of these setbacks is that there is a loss of confidence, a sense of futility and often—diminished self-worth—that sinking feeling that we are simply not up to the task. This can lead many to give up and simply tuck into another bar of chocolate or have another fizzy drink.

The simple issue of cravings is the most common reason that people fail to keep to dietary changes. Well,

we don't need to throw our hands in the air and give up. There are simple and practical strategies that can help us diminish and even cancel those pesky and destructive desires, but it is important that we understand where these urges come from. They didn't simply fall from the sky. After all, knowledge is power.

Our connections with food encompass nutrition, family, culture and sensory pleasure. Trying to *tough it out* works for some people but not everyone has the steel will to simply put the cravings to the side and stick to the programme. Cravings have both emotional and physical qualities and they are closely related. Perhaps the most important connection is the biology of cravings; it is a primary factor and is tricky since it works below our level of awareness.

The body keeps close track of the nutrients you need and how to use them on a cellular level. It is also very clever in the ways it stores some things for later use and does its best to excrete anything that could be harmful. Your body may crave more protein but never requests a hamburger. This is important; there is no burger demand system.

Your mind may translate protein into hamburger but that simply has to do with past experience not a specific request.

There are some foods that do produce a chemical reaction that is addictive in nature.

These addictions are about physical health they produce mental or emotional responses that either give us pleasure or stimulate us.

Caffeine is a good example. We may feel that we **need** that double latte, but the body doesn't really need it.

In fact, the caffeine may be a primary reason we cannot make it through the afternoon without a stimulant, but our experience is that the coffee opens up those weary eyes and gives the boost to soldier through.

We don't stop to consider that one of the criteria of good health is to be alert and energetic. Our push for a short-term fix overrides our consideration for a long term and more healthy solution.

Trying to second-guess your body's needs with supplements or the latest fad food is a waste of time and money. Your body is a miraculous organism that is constantly focused on creating health, our job is to give it the basic building blocks and let it function. This involves a little training. The body develops habits, the same as the mind. The habits of the body are expressed in

chemical reactions and often involve the hormonal system. The results of these chemical reactions affect our brain and are fundamental to many physical habits—or we could name them correctly and say addictions.

Tasty food is one of life's big pleasures, why not?

The problem is that our taste buds are easily tricked and can be numbed by the onslaught of many modern foods particularly snack foods.

The food industry has learned how to layer their products with just the right, scientifically determined amounts of salt, fat and sugar to produce what they call ***super-palatable*** foods. These foods are easy to identify, they include anything where you open the package for ***just a couple*** and end up eating the whole bag.

The food industry makes it's money by tricking our mind into thinking we are eating something we aren't, and tricking our taste buds with advanced food technology.

The high levels of sodium, sugar, and/or fat in processed food reduce your ability to taste these flavours naturally.

This is most dramatic with sugar! Most people are not aware of the number of foods that have sugar added to them as a hidden flavour. Many soups, snacks and sauces in addition to most fast foods have huge quantities of

sugar along with a strange mix of other artificial ingredients.

Let's take a simple lunch at MacDonald's for example.

A Big Mac Meal contains:

- ◆ 69 ingredients containing 840 calories,
- ◆ 1,880 mg of salt and
- ◆ 56 grams of sugar (that's 11 teaspoons).

McDonald's fries contain:

- ◆ 530 calories,
- ◆ 350 mg of salt and
- ◆ 56 grams of sugar (that's another 11 teaspoons).

We estimate that a Big Mac and Fries contain more than:

- ◆ 2,230 mg of salt and
- ◆ 150 grams of sugar.

A Coca-Cola contains:

- ◆ 140 calories (super-sized 410 calories),
- ◆ 39 grams of sugar and
- ◆ 40 grams of fructose (that is just under 16 teaspoons).

So, this lunch would have you consuming at least 38 teaspoons of sugar alone!

Try to imagine 38 teaspoons of sugar in a bowl, quite a bit. This meal comes in at just under 1,600 calories. If you weighed 150 pounds it would take about an hour of rope skipping or step aerobics to burn off those calories.

Since the body stores what it cannot use, this is where the trouble begins. We are challenging our body and

creating biological stress by eating foods that we cannot use. If you were an Olympic athlete who was burning off those calories you would not be storing them—you would be using them. That doesn't mean that the *happy meal* makes your body happy, simply that the calories consumed have to match the calories being burned. That seems fairly straightforward but there are other issues aside from calories.

The big question is: “If I know this, why would I still want a hamburger and fries or a pint of ice cream?”

The answer to this question lies in a very primitive response that is built into the body.

As part of our evolution, we developed the ability to *remember* on a cellular level, things were pleasurable in our past experience. Part of this facility hinges on the function of a peculiar little chemical called *Dopamine*; it is an essential, but sneaky little devil.

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter, a substance released by nerve cells to signal to other nerve cells, dopamine is a *good news* messenger.

If something is pleasurable, dopamine gets excited and stimulates pleasure centers in the brain.

The problem is that dopamine hasn't got a clue if the pleasure is harmful or not. Dopamine gets busy with drugs such as cocaine and methamphetamine as well as

with alcohol. It simply remembers the first experience of pleasure and stimulates the desire for more.

FOOD ADDICTIONS

I often hear people say that they are addicted to chocolate, or diet drinks or any number of foods, they say it as a joke, but the reality is, they are right.

Let's start with our relationship with sugar as an example, since it is one of the most common food addictions and one of the most damaging of all the cravings.

Early in our evolution there were some foods that were scarce, but contained concentrated calories. Since we were in *survival mode* we developed a heightened sensitivity to these foods.

Simple sugars were paramount; the strong, sweet taste indicated energy density.

Remember this all occurred long before 400-calorie snack foods.

Foods such as ripe fruits and honey were greatly prized. Since we have a unique ability to start digestion of complex sugars in the mouth, foods such as primitive grains and some root vegetables also gave us the sugar message.

Sweetness is one of the five basic tastes and is almost universally regarded as a pleasurable experience. Sweetness has the highest taste

recognition and is detectable in very small concentrations. To a certain degree, the hunger for *sugars* is hard-wired and has an ancient source. After all, we run on sugars, carbohydrates are the primary source of energy for both the body and the brain.

The problem lies in three facts:

- 1 Processed or refined sugars are not used in the body in the same way as the sugars we are programmed to seek out. They are damaging to our health
- 2 Eating refined sugars trick the brains *reward* system and push us to seek out more
- 3 Eating refined sugars desensitize our ability to taste the full range of more complex and subtle sugars in other foods

There are very few people who have not received the memo regarding the dangers of refined sugar consumption so I am not going to spend much time on that issue.

Simple sugars that are not used quickly (as in exercise) are stored as fat.

It is important to remember the distinction between complex carbohydrates such as those in whole grains and root vegetables, and refined or simple sugars such as fructose, white or brown sugar, molasses, maple sugar, honey or agave. These refined products have a negative nutritional value,

create a spike in blood sugar that places a stress on the pancreas and are usually converted into body fat. In addition to these problems, regular use of sugar undermines our ability to control our diet and eat healthily as well as damaging and desensitizing our taste buds.

The brain's ability to sniff out calories in the form of sugar depends upon sugar's drug-like effect on the dopamine-rich reward centre in the brain. This is a tiny structure in the brain called the nucleus accumbens, a structure known to be involved with ***reward activity*** for all addictive drugs. The scary part of this addictive quality of sugar on the brain, is that you don't even have to be aware that something is sweet for the dopamine effect to trigger your desire for more, the pasta sauce with sugar in it, or the French fries with sugar as an ingredient will still push you to want more. This is where the scary science fiction music starts to play—it seems like a Frankenstein plot. And we wonder why we cannot seem to pass up the dessert?

In an article in ***New Scientist***, ***Dr. De Araujo***, one of the scientists in the study of dopamine by ***Duke University*** and The ***University of Porto (Portugal)*** stated,

“even when you do not stimulate the sensory pathways in the mouth, you still have this reward signal in the brain.”

So, when you smell a food that one time gave you pleasure, there is literally part of your brain that cries out, ***Eat me***. This is part of the learning cycle of the brain. Even when you know (logically) that something is destructive, this primitive function rebels and wants you to repeat the old behavior. It is the bio-chemical equivalent of the ***inner child***, it stomps its feet, screams or sulks till it gets its way. It is important to note that the dopamine doesn't make the experience more pleasurable—it simply wants you to repeat it.

I have focused here on sugar, but the exact same response can happen with any food.



Our love affair with sugar is the most common and most dramatic. Unfortunately this love is more like a *Fatal Attraction* than a nurturing affair of the heart. We naturally want pleasure and we often use pleasure to balance out feelings such as

sadness, anxiety or depression. Here is where pleasure/comfort aspect of dietary change comes into focus. The question then is how can we change this destructive cycle and create a healthy reward system.

EMBRACING HEALTH AND DISCARDING THE CRAVINGS

1. Create a New Normal

Since the dopamine reward system works around pleasure, simply making healthy choices that make you feel good can rewire it! This little trick usually takes a few weeks to get into place, but it is worth the trouble. This is the process of creating a *new normal*. As you get good results and begin to achieve health benefits of your actions they cease to become disciplines and begin to become rewarding.

As we all know, humans are creatures of habit. The best way to change unproductive habits is to create new ones. Getting that reward system under control requires understanding the triggers that set the old cravings in motion. Our dopamine rewards are often associated with social or emotional triggers that transform our firm resolve into a weak-kneed zombie dance. A little consciousness goes a long way.

If you are used to having a cup of tea with two teaspoons of sugar and a doughnut during the morning

break with your office associates, guess what? The first time you go to the break, your little dopamine reflex cries out for sugar. That means it is a good idea to make a list of the kinds of places where you are most likely to binge and eat foods that do not suit your long-term weight and health goals.

This does not mean that you have to avoid those situations; it simply means you need to be prepared to manage them. Have healthy drink options (herbal tea bags, rice malt sweetener maybe a healthy snack) to take to your morning break. Plan to win. Do you have lunch dates with friends? Make sure to have a quick check that the restaurant offers a nice salad or a healthy vegan option, something that fits your needs. If it doesn't, suggest another location.

Don't feel the need to suit other people's desires first. If you eat at work, start making yourself lunches that are in line with your diet and have healthy snacks handy, both at

work and at home.

(You will see some healthy options at the end of this booklet.)

You simply need to avoid the harmful calorie-packed foods and have more healthy options. The dopamine reward will change its

alliance and start to be satisfied with the new options. After all the dopamine system is really not very smart, it simply wants to feel good. Snacking late at night is a habit that can keep the pounds on. Have only healthy options available.

2. Variety is the Spice of Life

Many diets fail because the foods are boring; the answer is diversity. I have learned quite a bit about health through my studies of **Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)**; one of their theories regarding food has to do with the **importance of the Five Tastes**.

There are five tastes—Salty, Bitter, Sweet, Pungent and Sour. If you are having all of these tastes in your food, you tend to not overeat or have wild cravings. This is one of the reasons why I stress this way of cooking in my weight loss programme. It is possible to have delicious meals every day and not spend all your time in the kitchen. Quick healthy meals

include a variety of tasty treats and so the dopamine switch starts to have some new pleasures to play with.

Many of the meals in **Weight Loss Nature's Way** give you the option of freezing some food for later use, or rotating foods through to the next day with some additional ingredients.

Research suggests that **Iron, Vitamin B6, Folate** and **Vitamin E** are key to maintaining healthy levels of dopamine and dopamine receptors in your brain, so you get the proper reward you deserve from eating a healthy diet that is nutrient dense not simply calorie dense.

3. Enjoy your Food

A big part of cutting down the cravings and feeling happy with your new food choices has to do with changing habits. We associate the **way** we do things with the **what** we do. If you want to dance differently, you have to change the rhythm. How you eat can be just as important as what you eat. **You can't change your life without changing your life!**

It is often true that we get hungry and eat faster. This leads to poor digestion, dissatisfaction and weight gain. Eating slowly is a habit worth developing. Become aware of the pace of your eating and consciously slow down. When we slow down we usually chew our food more completely.

Chewing well means better digestion, more enjoyment and appreciation of what we are eating. It is a great tool for portion control. Chew more to weigh less. Chewing your food 40 times (instead of the average 15 times) can help you eat about 12 percent less food, says a **new study from China** published in the ***American Journal of Clinical Nutrition***. The study found a direct correlation between chewing more and lower levels of the appetite stimulating hormone **ghrelin** and higher levels of **CCK**, the hormone believed to reduce appetite. Cutting your calorie intake by only 12 percent may not sound like much, but that translates to a loss of almost 25 pounds over 12 months.

Eating smaller meals more often is a good idea. There is no reason to go hungry and then grab anything handy when we are ravenous. A good breakfast followed by a mid-morning snack, followed by a healthy lunch and an afternoon snack means that your blood sugar is more apt to stay at a stable level and cut down on

unhealthy urges. The same is true in the evening. A smaller dinner of healthy food, followed by an evening snack, works much better than trying to skip meals! If you are making good food choices, chewing your food and eating slowly, there is no reason to starve. You will never be hungry and the weight will start to fall away.

It is important that you pay attention to the quality of the food you eat. **Most manufactured foods are filled with chemical additives that flavour, emulsify, preserve and colour our food.** These substances are all there for commercial reasons, not to enhance the health benefits. This includes the use of artificial sweeteners.

One of the results of eating highly processed foods is that they desensitize our tastes so that we can't appreciate the flavour of simple foods. We start to crave that complexity. When we wean ourselves off the chemical diet our body has a chance to get the enjoyment of simple foods again.

4. Read the Small Print

Food manufacturers are the masters of dopamine. The next time you feel yourself being magnetically pulled to eat a particular food, just know that there is some **mad food scientist** smiling somewhere, eager to line his pockets at your expense. Get your revenge by turning your

back. It is easy to be tricked if you don't read the labels of your food. This is true of so called **diet** products or **health** products as well as conventional food items.

Think about this, have you noticed that an overlapping flap

in the packaging now conceals the ingredient lists on so many foods? As consumers get smarter, manufacturers have to become more devious. They will do anything to distract you from knowing what you are eating. The methods of manipulation are several. One has to do with dazzling you with language.

Manufacturers have to list ingredients used in greatest amounts listed first. Since everyone knows that simple sugars are toxic, they split them up so they seem different things. Listing sugar, fructose, dextrose, lactose, maltodextrin and dehydrated cane juice as separate ingredients, they try to conceal the fact that you may be holding a product that is 60% simple sugar. You probably think I was traumatized by sugar as a child,

but I only focus on it because it is so harmful—**Sugar is the Killer**.

Another simple ploy is to leverage popular health myths. Words like *natural*, *wholesome*, *natures best* or even *healthy* are meaningless on a food label, you still have to check the ingredients. Many people buy snack size pots of yogurt thinking that it is a healthy snack, tasty and obviously good for you. Most never wonder at the delicious fruity goo in the bottom of the container that must be stirred in and make it so enjoyable. What is that stuff? What makes it so sweet? Has it even got any fruit in it? We will never know till we read the list.

If we don't—we will be kicking off the *dopamine rush* and wonder why we never seem to lose the weight.

5. Don't Feed the Emotions

The use of food for emotional comfort is very common and not difficult to understand. After all, food can give us pleasure and it doesn't talk back. It is a short term and temporary relief that produces no real benefit. The fact is that using reward foods in times of emotional discomfort can make them worse. It is common for many men and women to try and use alcohol or sugar as self-medication, a route that generally not only leads to weight gain and diabetes, but also increases a sense of despair and lack of self-worth.

These ways of coping are not a sign of stupidity or weakness. We simply want to feel good and don't know how to do it in a way that is healthy. Loneliness requires friendship and social interaction, not a pint of ice cream. Look at your daily activities and make some changes, schedule in things you like to do. A long walk is a better solution to feeling depressed or sad than by having a toasted cheese sandwich. Simply slow down, relax and replace. Learn some simple relaxation exercises or practice deep breathing.

Remember this, comfort food may feel good for a moment

but is only going to promote tomorrow's discomfort.

6. Get Regular Exercise

Next to diet, exercise has been seen to be an important factor in healthy weight loss. Many more enlightened doctors encourage their patients to exercise daily. If you get no exercise in your daily life, a simple walk for half an hour daily can improve general health and get the pounds moving. It has been shown that more vigorous exercise increases health in even more dramatic ways. When you have food cravings get up and move. Do something different.

Exercise also helps to reduce unhealthy cravings since it increases circulation and aerobic health. When we are adding to our muscle tone and reducing body fat, there is an improvement in hormonal balances in the body, more regulation of blood sugar levels and greater feelings of vitality. People who exercise regularly find that they start to crave it! Well, you see that dopamine can learn to behave if a little tough love is used for a short period of time.

7. Avoid Saboteurs – Locate Allies

Making changes in our way of life has its challenges and we can all use all the help we can get. Keep on the lookout for people who are also interested in creating a healthy life, and form some partnerships. Go walking together; share health goals, support each other in your adventure. We can all learn from each other and it is good to know that you are not alone in your quest for a healthier life.

Dealing with other people's scepticism needs to be addressed. How many times do you hear someone say, "Oh a little bit won't hurt you" or "Don't be a killjoy, have a drink"?

If you are going to live a healthy life, be aware that others may not understand your actions. A good sense of humour and some humility are called for.

Sharing food, drink and amusement are part of social bonding. If you start to refuse certain foods or drinks, it can be interpreted as an act of arrogance or judgement. It is your responsibility to keep it light. Remember that weight loss is a health issue. Being healthy doesn't mean you can't live in the real world; it also doesn't mean you run blindly with the crowd. Everyone has their own decisions to make in their own time.

Having said that, there will always be the friendly saboteurs!

The friendly saboteur most commonly comes in two varieties. The first is simply concerned for your well-being. When someone starts to try something new, there are questions. Is this safe; are there hidden dangers; is this some cult behaviour? The concern is genuine; there is simply an information deficit. They will be concerned that there is not enough protein in your diet, or that you might get scurvy or any number of imagined problems. They simply need information.

The second variety of saboteur is perhaps more defensive than friendly. They may feel threatened by your decisions to change routine. They are sometimes family members. They will tell you that what you are doing is nonsense, that it's dangerous, that it's anti-social. They may try to convince you that your problem is genetic. In fact, what they are doing is attempting to justify their own behaviour. After all, if what you are doing is valid, what does that say about what they do? If you want different results you have to do things that are different.

SOME REPLACEMENT FOODS FOR A HEALTHY TRANSITION

In addition to the above suggestions, it is a good idea to use replacements for some of the foods we crave. It is a good idea to consider not only flavour, but also colours and textures in finding replacements for foods you are used to.

Breads & Pastry

Breads and pastry are popular snack foods. Try out the selection of fresh breads made at traditional bakeries; sourdough or real wholemeal breads are usually a good choice. Commercial breads are often loaded with sugar, additives and colouring agents. **If you are on a serious weight loss journey, you will want**

to try and avoid all breads for a while till your weight goals are in sight. Refined grains such as flour are more difficult to digest and tend to slow down weight loss; the same is true with pastry. Your best bet is to only use homemade breads and pastry. You know what's in it.

Coffee & Tea

Coffee and black teas are a usual craving and are easily replaced by some of the natural teas or herbal beverages. Bancha twig tea is a hearty flavoured tea that can be purchased in tea bags, as can Rooibos tea or any number of herbal teas.

Dairy Milk vs Plant Milk

Dairy foods are not helpful at all when losing weight. As far as milk goes, the use of rice milk, almond milk or oat milk are good choices if you want something to use on a sugar free breakfast cereal. For use in hot drinks, it is the oat milk that will serve you best, or soya milk. I usually don't recommend soya milk since raw soya is so difficult on digestion.

Tofu

Tofu is a much-maligned product, but is very versatile especially when used in desserts. It can add a creamy texture to puddings and sauces you will find many recipes for using tofu creatively even in making *mock scrambled eggs*, a favourite of mine. Baked and smoked tofu products have a strong cheesy taste and are easily available in health shops.

Sweets

We have talked quite a bit about the sweet tooth, but sometimes we need a little sweetness in our diet.

Fruit is obviously the best choice with more northern fruits such as apples or pears being the best. Having some raw apple slices as a morning or afternoon snack can really take the edge off a sugar craving. In cooking, you can use brown rice syrup or barley malt as sweeteners with a more subtle effect on blood sugar.

Protein

If you have cravings for meat or the meaty taste, try some of the soya-based products from the Far East. Foods such as Seitan (wheat meat), Tempeh (fermented soya cake), Tofu or even bean dishes will do the trick.

Savoury Taste

Using the fermented soya bean paste called miso, or using naturally fermented soya sauce also add a savoury taste to soups, stews or sauces.



Making Goals

I hope all of this is helpful, but it all depends on you. If you aren't sure what you want to do, you probably won't do it. If you want to lose weight and create a better state of health, then make some goals and focus on a healthy diet.

Don't make your goals unreachable, but make them challenging. Know how much you want to lose and what your time frame is. You can kick the weight gain habit but it takes a certain focus to re-educate the body.

If you are on the **Weight Loss Nature's Way programme**, we figure that two to three pounds of weight loss per week is a healthy goal.

Healthy Weight Loss

You don't want to lose weight too fast or you will gain it right back. This healthy weight loss means you are burning fat and not simply passing fluid. You may lose more weight, especially in the first few weeks and that's all right, but not through starvation.

It is not uncommon that in the course of a month, you can have a reduction of about ten to sixteen pounds.

A client I am currently working with is over the moon with her current weight loss of 33 lbs in 8 weeks. She has had great success removing sugar from her diet, and week after week, she emails me to say that she cannot believe she has had no sugar cravings. She was into sugar—hook line and sinker, 24/7. She has kept a daily food journal throughout her programme and believes 100% that her two spoonful's of apple/pear purée, morning, afternoon and evening (recipe below) has been her saviour. Talk about a spoonful of sugar helping the medicine go down!! Could be **the song** needs rewritten!!

So, on that happy note, enjoy this delicious naturally sweet dessert along with some of my favourite **healthy snacks** below.





Apple Pear Purée

Apple/Pear Purée topped with oat cream & roasted slivered almonds—this is Mr. Tara’s favourite dessert! I always have this tasty dessert in glass jars in the fridge. This is a great dish for taking the edge of any sugar cravings.

Ingredients

- 4 organic apples
- 4 organic pears
- pinch of sea salt

Instructions

1. Wash the fruit, top and tail the pears, and slice them into bite-size chunks. Use an apple corer and remove the core from the apples and slice them into similar size pieces as the pears.
2. Place in a pot with a little water and add a pinch of sea salt. Simmer on a very low heat until the fruit is soft, approximately 10 minutes.
3. Blend to a cream in an upright blender or use a stick blender.

Notes!

- Serve in a dessert bowl. You can top with some oat cream and chopped nuts if desired.
- Pears are a high-fibre, low calorie snack, and they contain twice as much fibre as apples.
- Slice into salads, roast or bake whole for dessert.



Toasted Seed Bars

Ingredients

- 1 cup sesame seeds
- 1 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup sunflower seeds
- 1 cup pine nuts
- ¼ cup mixed dried fruit
- ½ cup desiccated coconut
- ½ cup brown rice syrup

Instructions

1. In a dry pan, toast the seeds, nuts and coconut together at a low-medium heat.
2. When the seeds start to pop, turn off the heat and stir in the dried fruit. Add the rice syrup and mix well until you achieve a sticky mixture.
3. Spread the mixture onto a baking sheet and flatten it down to achieve a thickness of about two inches.
4. Leave to set, then cut into small bit size squares.

Notes!

- These are delicious to use as a healthy snack.



Chestnut Balls

Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked and peeled organic chestnuts
- 1 cup roasted and finely chopped pecans
- pinch of sea salt
- 3 tablespoons rice syrup
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1 teaspoon of natural vanilla essence
- 4 tablespoons cocoa powder

Instructions

1. Blend the pecans until very fine in a blender. Add the chestnuts and blend together until they start to combine into a paste.
2. Add 2 teaspoons of cocoa powder, 1 tablespoon peanut butter and a pinch of salt and mix in.
3. Add the rice syrup, chia seeds and the vanilla essence, adjusting to taste.
4. Fill a bowl of cold water and wet your hands. Take a small amount of the paste and roll into a small ball.
5. Pour the remaining cocoa powder into a container.
6. Place the ball in the container and shake to cover with the powder.
7. Alternatively roll the balls in rice or malt syrup and cover in desiccated coconut.
8. Leave to set in the fridge for a couple of hours before serving.

In good health!
Marlene X

*Health is Everything! Without
Health Everything is Nothing!*





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