

# Five Pillars of Health

How To Look & Feel Better In Your 40's, 50's and 60's Than You Did In Your 30's



Love Yourself First



Eat Nutritious Food



Unwind From Stress



Heal Your Gut



Move Your Body

By Rosie Bank  
Certified Health Coach



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**How to Look & Feel Better in Your 40's,  
50's, and 60's Than You Did in Your 30's**

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## *Foreword: My Commitment*

My commitment as a health coach is to inspire those who desire to live more successfully in their bodies, and to provide the tools to do so.

For example...

Get relief from feeling crummy.

Learn what to do so you can feel vibrant.

There are wholesome alternatives to chronic belly aches and distress.

Even diseases, such as leaky gut (and others) can be helped with whole food plus lifestyle modifications.

Learning how to live and thrive may not be the easiest thing you will learn on your journey of embodiment. But it will become among the most rewarding lessons of your life.

*Health matters...and so do you.*

*I invite you to access my free resources, and to reach out if you wish, at [www.HealthMattersCoaching.com](http://www.HealthMattersCoaching.com). In particular, my [Blog Collection ebook](#) includes over 30 insightful articles that can support you on your health journey. Let me encourage you to find the articles there which resonate the most.*

## *Introduction*

Getting on track and staying on track aren't the result of just one thing.

It's the combination of your practices that improve and optimize your health.

It's your lifestyle.

When you notice lasting and dramatic change in how you look and feel it will be because you intervened on your own behalf in a few key areas in your life ... in what I call the Five Pillars of Health:



### Pillar #1: Love Yourself First

Your health and wellness journey begins with learning to love and appreciate your body. Love your body and get your body to love you back.



### Pillar #2: Eat Nutritious Food

Get relief from craving food that makes you feel crummy. Fall in love with food that is good for you and that helps you look and feel great.



### Pillar #3: Unwind From Stress

Clear the chaos, stress, and perception of not having enough time. Enjoy increased relaxation, peace, and harmony in your body and in your life.



#### Pillar #4: Heal Your Gut

Learn to heal your gut with a variety of pro-health practices. Get relief from gut-related issues to lose weight and increase energy.



#### Pillar #5: Move Your Body

Overcome obstacles to moving your body. Stretch and strengthen your body to bring your energy up and your weight down.

## *Pillar #1: Love Yourself First*



In the Five Pillars of the Health Matters System, it is quite intentional that we want to encourage you to love yourself first. Let's think of loving yourself as foundation to all the ways you take good care of yourself. You take good care of what you cherish. Right?

By regarding your body—indeed your entire being—with love and care, you are able to manifest better health, a more radiant outlook toward life, and a more peaceful and harmonious existence.

These five pillars are intricately interwoven. You will have your own discovery of this as you work your way through this system. When you love yourself first, you will naturally be inclined to eat more nutritious food, to unwind from stress, to heal your gut, and to move your body.

### **BUILD YOUR SELF LOVE AWARENESS**

The following are a few examples of questions you can ask yourself to increase your awareness of and ability to make self-love a part of your essential nature.

- Do you talk to yourself like you do to someone whom you cherish?
- Do you say words to yourself that are positive and encouraging?



- Do you forgive yourself when you are not perfect, allowing yourself to re-balance and have another chance?
- Do you listen to your body when you are hungry, thirsty, tired, stressed, needing companionship, and need to move?
- Do you set good boundaries with others in your life to ensure that you reserve time to take care of yourself?
- Do you welcome wholesome and uplifting relationships into your life with people who are good role models and around whom you feel good about yourself?

*Talk to yourself like you would to someone you love*

One amazing aspect of self-love is that when you do take care of yourself, the rewards of doing so further reinforce your desire and ability to continue. An example is choosing refreshing movement when your body is crying out to get up from your computer. The boost of energy and sense of well-being that comes as a result of loving your body in this way create a compound effect.

When you have more energy and a brighter outlook plus when you feel more relaxed, you can then plough these back into the next time you get up and take your body for a delightful walk. The same is true for creating regular times and rituals for getting a good night's sleep. You may grow to appreciate how good you feel when you are well-rested, as a result of which you are motivated to make this part of your regular practice.

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*People who love themselves first make sure that their bodies and minds get ample restorative sleep.*

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As you move through the Five Pillars, there will be plenty of specific tips, data, and education. Everything at Health Matters Coaching is designed for you to love your body and to get your body to love you back. In particular, this first pillar, is a way for you to get oriented.

## *Where to Start Loving Yourself More*

Let's get you pointed in the right direction to loving yourself.

- Are there any habits that you already know should be added or eliminated for you to feel and look the way you desire?
- Have you been meaning to tackle giving up the pint of ice cream before going to bed?
- Has it been on your mind to stretch your lower back instead of enduring pesky back pain unnecessarily?
- Have you told yourself that staying up past 1:00 AM and dragging yourself out of bed after a mere five hours later is no way to live a life of abundant vitality... and that someday you will get around to a reasonable bed time?

You might or might not relate to any of the examples I just described. That doesn't matter.

The point is for you to do things on purpose that connect you with your own worthiness. As a result there is more wellness, love, and happiness in your life. And so the cycle continues.

## *Drop Your Urges*

My clients have told me that sometimes they have to practically force themselves to make one choice over another. One guy said it was so hard not to isolate himself in the kitchen where all the food was during a family gathering. He felt so belittled by some of his relatives that he had developed the habit of hiding out, misusing food to stuff down his emotions. (More about this in the pillar Unwind from Stress.)

I urged him to identify which relatives were of the so-called toxic variety, and which ones were more positive. Eventually, he went out and sat down with his cousins, who were fun and uplifting and who did not batter him with criticism. He got involved with what was going on in their lives.

Then he felt better because of the connections he made. And no surprise, the urge to eat all of the appetizers simply dropped away.

It wasn't easy for him to do this, but that's okay. But he loved the results in terms of his own aliveness. This became easier for him through continual practice.

For this man, as it can be for you, it's worth it to learn to make decisions through the lens called "what would be the best way for me to love and honor myself?"

As a self-loving being, ask yourself:

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*What is the most wholesome choice you can make at  
this time?*

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Even if you have to muster up extra energy to practice these life-and-health-enhancing habits, it works just as well and you will get the same benefit.

## **MOVE THE NEEDLE**

Here is one of my favorite and simplest suggestions for you to start to get some good results in this health/vitality/love your body arena: simply move the needle.

Make little positive adjustments until you get some feedback that you enjoy. If quitting the habit of mindless snacking is a place where you could get some terrific benefit, start there. Find other ways to sooth yourself so that you don't have to feed your boredom, loneliness, or whatever emotion you are dealing with. (Again, more about this in Unwind from Stress.)

You can imagine that you love yourself and make some life/health/body-affirming decisions from that perspective. I know you are worthy of this because you have a body. Encourage the being who lives in this body to be loved and nurtured. Take care of yourself.

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*Loving yourself first is foundational to all of the ways  
you can transform and live a life of more  
awesomeness.*

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More about the upcoming pillar called Unwind from Stress. (The **Unwind From Stress** online course is available at [www.HealthMattersCoaching.com](http://www.HealthMattersCoaching.com), on the Resources page.) Through the lens of loving yourself first, and even before we focus on the particulars of that pillar, for now, you can allow more peace and harmony (less stress) into your life through simple practices that make a positive difference.

### *Setting Powerful Intentions to Love Yourself First*

By setting the intention to treat yourself, including your body, with more loving care, and by asking yourself those questions I posed above, you can notice where and how you can make some adjustments.

The brutal honesty that this requires may stretch you considerably.

I recall during a seminar I took through the [Klemmer organization](http://www.klemmer.org) leadership training facing off the old habit of bulimia. For me, this was the ultimate test of self-love. Even though I had cornered this atrocious behavior down to once per month (compared to five times per day back in my twenties and thirties), it still stood between me and ultimately loving myself.

I don't know if you experience anything as devastating as a life-threatening eating disorder, but for me, resolving this catapulted me to

an entire new level of being able to nurture and nourish my body and soul.

### WHO ARE YOU HANGING WITH?

Another place to make tremendous progress is by paying attention to the people with whom you spend time. In general, people can be advocates and supporters of your intentions to live a balanced and health-focused life.

It's wonderful to notice among your friends that you are being encouraged to make those wholesome decisions. A recurring theme that runs throughout each of the Five Pillars is the value to you of being part of a community.

Feeling connected to and supported by people who want for you what you want for yourself is a big part of this tapestry.

Let's say one of your primary goals is to avoid diabetes and to have favorable numbers measuring your blood glucose. Maybe your parents had or have diabetes and you know that you need to make changes in your life to stay well and dodge this bullet.

Do your family and friends support you and encourage you?

Just as importantly, do they avoid being critical, negative, or even sabotaging your efforts?

### *Who's Supporting You to Love Yourself First?*

If you encounter people who try to discourage you away from making new and uplifting decisions about what to eat and when to exercise, you might want to turn your focus and energy away from these people. If they are your family members, and you can't end the relationships, learning to

Speak up for yourself can help you feel better and stay on course with your goals.

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*When you love yourself first, you do not allow others to derail you from the goals that you have determined are important to you. You may choose to spend less time with certain people.*

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For example, my 91 year old mother has a habit of being very critical. As one who practices self-love through words and deeds, I have learned ways to be gentle yet firm with my mom.

I'll say to her, "Mom, let's not go there."

Or, "Mom, I'm not in a place where I can have this conversation with you today."

You can see how I've set a boundary and gently taken myself away from her criticism and negativity. It does not help even the strongest of us, nor the most confident, to hear unkind words that put a ding in our intentions to live a healthy and wholesome life.

## BIO DAY

Eating whole foods that are loaded with nutrition, often in the form of fruits, veggies, nuts, seeds, and complete grains will be gifts to your body, and expression of your self-love.

We will get more into the specifics of this kind of food in the next pillar, Eat Nutritious Food.

Back to your Bio Day.

Whether you take an entire twenty-four period, or an afternoon, or even one hour if that is all you have, the results can be powerful and astonishing.

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*What would happen if you spent a dedicated chunk of time nurturing your body like you would a child or kitten?*

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### *Ways to Nurture Your Body*

When you respond to an impulse to move and stretch - and you feel great afterwards.

When you recognize your thirst and you quench your body with filtered water.

When you feel drowsy and surrender to the need to take a nap.

When you are enthusiastic about a work project and spend an hour letting the creative juices flow while on your computer.

When your legs, shoulders and back feel a little bit stiff, so you get up and take a walk.

When you crave quiet time to meditate, breathe or read your book.

When you notice a surge of energy so you jump on your bike, or take your dog to the park to play.

When you were free from meeting other's needs and able to focus on taking care of you.

When the result of hanging out with your body results in a connection and knowing that leave you feeling absolutely energized and full of vitality.

This my friends, is what it looks like when you love yourself first.

Instead of a diet coke, you know that water is better for you, so you choose that. You know that salads are a better choice for lunch, compared with a greasy burger. You know that you simply cannot sit at your desk without getting up to move, release tension and fatigue, and put energy back into the system.

*Loving yourself first is not a gimmick or a fad.*

We don't engage in self-love to give us bragging rights or because of what others think of this. At the beginning, I described this as foundational. This is your relationship with yourself at your core. It is intimately personal.

## **LIVING A SELF-LOVED LIFE**

Imagine yourself stepping on to a conveyor belt.

It takes you around your life with countless stopping points. Along the way you will be able to make many choices.

When you love yourself first, and as you get better at practicing this, these wholesome choices will become more second nature.

Along the way you may have to stare down old habits... you know those ones that aren't so high in healthfulness. You may discover ways you have engaged in self-destructive habits and it might not be easy to reconcile changing.



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*When loving yourself is foundational, you are more  
equipped to navigate unfamiliar territory. Be patient  
with yourself. Accept your imperfections.  
Always encourage yourself to try again.*

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Thank goodness perfectionism is overrated (see the article in my [Blog Collection](#)) and that's not what we are talking about.

Here is a resource for you. The very first podcast in the Health Matters System is called... you guessed it... Love Yourself First. (Links: [audio](#) and [transcript](#).)

### *Who Is Supporting You?*

Working with a coach can make a huge difference in your ability to get on track, move past barriers, and develop a sustained loving relationship with yourself. A coach is an ally, someone who will encourage and equip you to achieve the goals that you desire.

You can always [email me](#) and let me know how you are progressing. You have the power to make my day by sharing your successes with me.

### **PILLAR 1 BONUS: THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SELF-LOVE AND FORGIVENESS (VIDEO)**

Rosie made a video just for this pillar called The Ultimate Guide to Self-Love and Forgiveness.



Let Rosie inspire you to finally give up negativity and criticism so that you can claim the benefits of gratitude and appreciation, and quit being your own worst enemy.

She will lead you and your body to be in sync so that you can make significant progress on your wellness journey.

This video is available for free (no opt-in) at [this link](#).

## *Pillar #2: Eat Nutritious Food*



Here are the most common concerns that my clients present to me in their earnest attempt to eat healthy and nutritious food, improve their diets, their health, and often to lose weight.

- What am I going to eat?
- What is the best way to lose weight?
- Are carbs good for me, or should I avoid them?
- Why do I run out of energy in the middle of the day?
- What's the deal with fat, and should I avoid that too?
- Do I have to be a vegetarian or vegan to be healthy?
- What if I'm so busy and don't have time to cook?

It no longer surprises me how often educated and smart people find themselves confused and frustrated about how, when, and what food to eat to be healthy. Your parents, the media, your friends, and family may have fed you mistruths about food and nutrition.

Being confused is not your fault.

You may need to go out on your own, deliberately, to learn how to eat and nurture your body with food that is truly healthy and healing for you. Don't be hard on yourself if you are confused or overwhelmed. There is light at the end of this tunnel. And it is shining from a more vibrant version of you.

Allow me to lead you to more clarity and confidence.

Let's start with some simple concepts that can help you get some positive results fairly quickly. You may know much of this already. But since you are reading this on my website, I assume that you are ready to make significant and positive change. And in a bit, I'll share ten rules that are simple, and with which you can live and thrive.

(I made an online video course for this specific topic. **"Where Is Your Next Meal Coming From"** is available at [www.HealthMattersCoaching.com](http://www.HealthMattersCoaching.com), on the Resources page.)

## THE BASICS

First I'm going to make some suggestions of what to avoid. After that I will make some suggestions about what food will make you love the way you look and feel.

### *Avoid Processed Foods*

The more food you eat that is refined and processed, the more your body might be missing out on essential nutrients. This means that all junk food, most breakfast cereals, store-bought pastries, bagels, cookies, cake, and "white flour anything" is low on the nutrition scale.

A bowl of corn chips is not a health food. Even if the pretzels are organic, still, processed flour taken in large amounts will increase the inflammation in your body. At least, don't let this be what you eat mostly. Although I personally choose to avoid foods like this, you can do yourself a favor and do an upgrade. Practice saying "no, thank you" to these foods that are mostly empty calories.

Before I get to what you should eat primarily in your healthy food plan, let's go over two more categories that you would be smart to avoid or eliminate.

### *Avoid Excess Simple Carbs*

The first often overlaps with the category above. Excess simple carbohydrates, or processed sugar, in all its forms, can wreak havoc with your weight, your heart, your joints, and even your brain. I'll say more about inflammation in a bit, but for now, consider that some of the things you might be struggling with (cravings, brain fog, sore joints, elevated cholesterol, hypertension, gut issues, unwanted weight, fatigue... and so many more) are correlated with taking in too much sugar, in all its forms, in your diet.

For example, a breakfast of bagel, coffee, and orange juice will take your blood glucose through the roof. This is related to increased inflammation in your body. Even though I am oversimplifying it here, the take-away for you is to cut way back on – better yet, eliminate – sugary snacks and drinks.

### *Avoid Artificial Sweeteners*

A quick word on [artificial sweeteners](#). They are among the unhealthiest foods that you can eat. If you don't want to gain weight, or have difficulty losing weight, you will like the results of switching to water, herbal tea, or unsweetened coffee. One of my students discontinued drinking a few diet sodas per day. She dropped twelve pounds, felt much happier, and got her mojo back with her husband.

This is a great example of how eliminating toxins can give you a big positive noticeable change. You might not be like my student, but you can apply this to you if you find yourself scarfing down either sugary or artificially sweetened food or drink and want to improve what you eat and how you feel.

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*Eating nutrient-dense food will give you a fantastic feeling of increased vitality plus a full-body satisfaction.*

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## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Through several of my certification courses\*, I learned the following three specific guiding principles to ensure we all eat nutritious and healthy food.

(\*Two of my primary certifications were through the Institute of Integrated Nutrition, and e-Cornell T. Colin Campbell's Nutrition and Society.)

1. The field of nutrition is inherently controversial.

Never expect all of the experts to agree. It is not easy to sort through the myths and the truths, but it worth attempting to do so. It is most important that you find what works best for you, your body, your tastes, and your goals.

2. There is no one dietary practice that works for everybody.

Those who tout their diet as the be-all and end-all for all humans are sorely missing the point. We were never meant to eat the same kinds of food. Depending on heredity, geography, lifestyle, and religion, people do and ought to have their own eating styles. This is why you can feel confused when someone is vehement about a dietary approach that won't work for you.

3. Veggies and plants rule.

I admit, as a practicing compassionate vegan, I have a bias toward this kind of lifestyle. Neither you, nor my students and clients I admit, as a practicing compassionate vegan, I have a bias toward this kind of lifestyle. Neither you, nor my students and clients are expected to adopt this way of eating unless it works for them. Either way, keep in mind that the health benefits

of whole foods, living plants, fruits, veggies, beans, seeds, and nuts are tremendous.

The tricky part about eating this way is that it requires some education. What if you wanted to learn to eat less meat? (see the article in my [Blog Collection](#)) What if you decided to forgo animal protein... how can you make sure that you aren't missing some essential nutrients?

## GO SANE AROUND NUTRITION

At Health Matters Coaching, my job is to help you go sane around nutrition.

I coined this term to address how often and easy it is for people to go, well, crazy around what to eat. I love the part of my job where someone asks me if a food is healthy, or if it is bad to eat.

It's true that some food items are flat-out disastrous to your health and should never be consumed, unless you are willing to tolerate the effects on your body.

That might be more than some of you want to read, especially if we are just beginning to know each other. But I've been at this too long and seen too many people suffer unnecessarily to keep quiet. For example, according to the World Health Organization processed meat is categorized at the [same level of carcinogens](#) as cigarette smoke.

### *Is any amount of toxic food okay?*

One may argue that a little bit of these toxic foods is okay. That is a very compelling and interesting argument.

For instance, [smoked sausage](#) is very bad for your arteries and your immune system. It's toxic to your liver because of all of saturated fat (usually cooked at high temperatures), additives, and chemicals. Toxic

processed meat can cause digestive issues. I used to cringe when I heard certain food types described as poisonous. And then I did my homework and now fully embrace this word.

So, if eating poisonous food is justifiable on occasion, that reminds me that maybe it's okay to cheat on my husband, but just a little bit. Or to steal from the store, but very infrequently.

Remember, I am passionate about your health. That's why you are reading this. I know my analogy is absurd. But did it help you get my point?

My commitment to help you navigate the world of food with its confusing twists and turns is among the strongest forces in my life.

It is in my DNA.

As a result, I will tell you what I believe you need to know, but perhaps not what you want to hear.

If you learn that something you thought was good for you turns out to be problematic, simply keep an open mind and be willing to learn.

I lead the Vitality Club here in the community where I live. One woman thought that Honey Nut Cheerios was a health food because they contained honey and nuts. No wonder some people are frustrated and befuddled.

### *Fall In Love With Food That Is Good For You*

My goal for you is to fall in love with food that is good for you.

Since I have had my own debilitating struggles around food in the past, and since I learn from my clients how difficult it is to know what food is



healthy and how to eat, I feel strongly about the importance of helping people in this way.

If you are trying to “eat healthy food” but find yourself confused by the varying points of view from so-called experts, I promise that there is a way to higher ground. And your body will reveal this sooner than you can say homegrown sprouts.

## FOOD RULES

1. Dial back or eliminate the junk (non-nutritive) food
2. Learn to cook at home
3. Think of food as medicine
4. Speaking of whole grains
5. About fiber
6. More about fruits, veggies, and other plants
7. Portion control is key
8. Regarding those unwanted pounds
9. Rejoice in the process of nurturing and nourishing your body
10. Be patient

Here are ten rules that are simple and will help you eat healthy nutritious food. You can live and thrive with these friendly guidelines:

1. Dial back the junk food  
Get rid of it in your house.

Eating [junk food](#) can become something you did in the past.

Raise your standards. If you doubt that you can do this, do a Google search to learn about people, perhaps who are just like you, who reversed diabetes, heart disease, and even cancer by changing their diets.

No one ever said they preferred feeling crummy when they used to eat food that left them feeling depleted.

One of the most reliable experts in the field, Dr. Michael Greger (author of *How Not to Die* and *How Not to Die Cookbook*) recommends [The Daily Dozen](#). You can eat from this list and be well on your way.

## 2. Learn to cook at home

Simple is delicious.

By making your own food you are in control of the ingredients, the quality of the food, and the portions. You can avoid processed oils, sugars, animal fats, flavors, and colorings.

Sticking to the basics is a wonderful way to approach food. Steamed broccoli with some Savory Blend from Dr. Michael Greger's [How Not to Die Cookbook](#) will tantalize your taste buds. The turmeric will help your joints.

My husband and I eat lots of turmeric. We are in our mid-60's and do sports like we are in our 30's. I did not feel as good in my 20's even though I've always loved sports. Back in my 20's I poisoned my body with a tragic amount of junk food. My health was poor then, but now it's fantastic.

By the way, it is a myth that whole foods are more expensive than lower quality food, especially when you look at your overall budget. Meats, cheeses, and seafood, for example, are more costly per serving than whole fruits, veggies, and complete grains. Plus, when you factor in the devastating cost of lifestyle induced diseases, it really does pay to be healthy.

### 3. Think of food as medicine

When choosing “this” over “that”, pause and consider the nutrition of the food you are thinking about eating.

Healthy food choices to eat are always fruits, veggies, nuts (no salt, oil, or sugar added), one-ingredient nut butter (no salt, oil, or sugar added), seeds, and whole grains. Whole grains is the opposite of processed or refined.

You will need to look at labels, which can be very misleading. By the way, my favorite concoction of seeds is a blend of equal parts chia, ground flax, and hemp. Add them to nut butters, smoothies, salads, rice, and anything you desire.

### 4. Speaking of whole grains

Look at all of your bread products. Bagels, English muffins, tortillas, pasta, and crackers can be loaded with high-glycemic, processed, and refined flour.

The challenge to your body in eating foods like these happens on several levels.

White flour and all refined varieties will cause the same rapid rise to your blood glucose as table sugar.

Because grains that are refined get absorbed easily, they can also produce unwanted inflammation in your gut.

A diet of highly processed food is correlated with diseases of the gut, even relatively benign ones, such as gas, bloating, constipation, diarrhea, and cramping. Diseases of the gut can be serious. Colon cancer, for example, is correlated with a diet high in processed foods and insufficient fiber. More on fiber in a bit.

Whole grains are dense, chewy, and far more flavorful once you acquire a taste for food like this. They are also nutrient-dense and way more satisfying than, say, a white dinner roll that is soft and fluffy, but sorely lacking in nutrients and fiber. Three of my favorite brands of super-healthy, yummy, nutrient-dense grain food products to eat are [Grindstone Bakery](#), [Ezekiel](#) and [Explore Cuisine](#).

## 5. About fiber

I highly recommend [this amazing video](#) by my hero, Dr. Michael Greger. He explains why we should be more concerned with fiber than we are about protein. (I recommend all of the videos and blog at <https://nutritionfacts.org/> . It's free and an unbelievable resource for you as you create healthier foods for you and your family.)

Your body needs fiber, and you can only get fiber from plants. Animal products do not contain fiber.

Fiber – soluble and insoluble – supports heart health, digestive health, the absorption of nutrients, bowel health, and slows down the absorption of carbohydrates, thus giving you more sustained energy than the refined foods from which fiber has been stripped (along with other essential nutrients.)

## 6. More about fruits, veggies, and other plants

My husband and I enjoy a vegan lifestyle. It has been life-changing for me, more than I expected.

I am sensitive to the fact that many people would never consider giving up animal products. And this might be you. It's true that you can modify your diet without giving up animal products.

As you can see in my [blog](#) article, How to Eat Meat, I am able to help guide you to make some food adjustments for healthy benefits.

I implore you to make this shift.

Interestingly, the benefit of fruits and veggies appears in almost all dietary theories. There are a few wacky ones that disallow you from eating fruit, and I highly suggest that you forget such nonsense.

Eating fruits and veggies is not a fad or a trend. It's not hip or a diet. It's just the smartest thing you can do to help your body thrive.

## 7. Portion control is key

Although you may not be able to do this right now, you can set the intention to move towards a more sane approach to eating. This includes, in particular, waiting until you are hungry before you eat, and stopping when you are comfortably satisfied.

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*The three keys for being a good, health-conscious eater are the how, when, and what you eat.*

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This is a perfect example of how the Five Pillars of the Health Matters System are integrated. The Pillar called Healthy Gut and the one called Unwind from Stress are directly tied into the effect on your body by how you approach food.

Inversely, the mindfulness and embodiment practices you will learn through Unwind from Stress will favorably impact your ability to relax around food, make consistent good choices, and move toward a wholesome relationship with food and your body.

By the way, if you are struggling with bingeing or BED (binge-eating disorder), i.e. habitually eating so much that you feel stuffed, or debilitating cravings, you may reach out to me for help.

## 8. Regarding those unwanted pounds

We must include a section on weight loss in this pillar.

I urge you to forget about wacky diets. The quick-fix approach works for some good short-term benefits. The programs that run for fourteen and twenty-eight days can really help you cleanse your body, get off the high-fat high-sugar track, and experience relief. It does a body good to have a good cleaning out, especially if the program you are doing leads you to give up some of the foods I've encouraged you to dial back.

However, for sustained weight loss, a lifestyle change is going to serve you best in the long-run.

Any diet that you start, knowing that it is going to end, will not give you the lasting results that are such a joy to live with. Not lugging around unwanted weight, not having your knees and back ache due to excess pounds, not looking in the mirror and feeling frustrated and defeated, not hating the foods that you have to eat but resent doing it... you get the picture.

I promise you, when you experience weight loss as a side-effect of a new lifestyle that you enjoy, eating foods that taste amazing and that give you an abundance of energy, and that put you in a great mood... you will discover how life-changing this approach really is.

## 9. Rejoice in the process of nurturing and nourishing your body

From the Love Yourself First pillar, it should be apparent why and how this is the place from which you make your best decisions.

Call me an optimist, but when you love yourself first, stuffing yourself with a greasy pepperoni pizza loses its appeal.

When you love yourself first, you might turn to a walk instead of a bag of chips to help you relax.

When self-love is part of your operating system, you learn to breathe to help yourself fall asleep, rather than using ice cream as a bedtime snack.

It's easy to imagine how many examples we can come up with.

Food can be heavenly. I wrote an eBook titled Love How You Look and Feel for the purpose of inspiring you to consider how you approach food. When you think about your relationship with food, what do you realize? If this is an abusive relationship, then you have your work cut out for you.

A self-loving, self-nurturing relationship with food and your body can be among the most transformational journeys of your life. This has been true for me.

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*A self-loving, self-nurturing relationship with food and your body can be among the most transformational journeys of your life.*

---

## 10. Be patient

Patience is not my middle name, so if you want results yesterday, I promise that I can relate to that.

However, when it comes to improving your diet, choosing something more wholesome over something that might hit your blood sugar out of the park, or that might send a surge of inflammation throughout your entire body, you will need time – and lots of self-love – to make these changes part of your lifestyle.

This is why I suggested that you avoid dieting based on deprivation and move toward new habits that make you feel great and inspire you to stay on the path.

Think of your diet (what you eat, now how to lose weight) as an evolutionary process. This week you might want to ditch the artificial sugar. Next month you may be ready to quit processed meat and other forms of saturated fat. Soon you may want to embrace Meatless Mondays, or find new veggies to prepare to your taste.

A really good timeframe is one year.

Sure, if it were up to me, I'd say jump in with both feet and astonish yourself with an awe-inspiring transformation. But it's not up to me. This is a decision between you and your body.

For me personally, my diet (food choices) have become refined over a very long period. My husband and I are both 66 and we continue to make changes that we believe support our very sporty and active lifestyle.



## PILLAR 2 BONUS: YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND IN THE KITCHEN (TEN-TEN-TEN)

TEN recipes for under TEN dollars (for 2 people) that take less then TEN minutes.

You will love "Ten-Ten-Ten"

Let Rosie help you to finally stop stressing over making nutritious meals so that you can relax, knowing that you are prepared to feed yourself and your family food that is simple and delicious.

(Now with twenty recipes - the original ten plus the newly added ALL PLANT VEGAN TEN-TEN-TEN!)

The TEN-TEN-TEN PDF is available for free (no opt-in) at [this link](#).



### *Pillar #3: Unwind From Stress*



By now I'm sure you realize that all of the Five Pillars of the Health Matters System are interconnected. I could explain how each pillar is my favorite. How to find relief, which I call "Unwind from Stress", is definitely one of my favorite pillars.

I'm kidding – I love them all.

They are parts to a whole. This whole is your life that is balanced, peaceful, fun, energetic, and in which you nourish your body and soul with radiantly wholesome food plus relaxing activities. That was a long sentence. And remember that getting yourself in top performance health-and-energy-wise similarly has a number of moving parts. It's more like a story than a simple phrase.

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*Unwinding from stress and living a life of peace and harmony will benefit every aspect of your life.*

---

(I made an online video course for this specific topic. "**Unwind From Stress**" is available at [www.HealthMattersCoaching.com](http://www.HealthMattersCoaching.com), on the Resources page.)

## STRESS SYMPTOMS

If you have any struggle whatsoever with misusing food, then this pillar will be like a pair of handrails for you.

Stress around food and your body is a circular set of events. If you turn to food for relief when you feel stress, the way you feel afterward will continue the cycle. If you have the habit to take in large amounts of food that leave you feeling depleted, bloated, in a crummy mood, and unable to focus, you have just turned on the stress response in your body as clearly as if you flicked a switch.

My team and I identified the desire for relief as among the number one challenges among people with stress who just want to feel better and have life be easier.

We conducted a survey to help us determine what is really bugging seekers of health and relief. The ways excess stress manifest are too numerous to give you an exhaustive list. Here is some info from the Unwind From Stress course that can help you understand your own body.

Do you recognize any of these as any symptoms or issues with which you have been dealing?

- Do you experience muscle tension or soreness?
- Do you have a “short fuse” and get upset or frustrated easily?
- Do you frequently experience “not enough time?”
- Do you have worrisome, obsessive, or recurring negative thoughts?
- Do you struggle with being angry, hostile, critical, or judgmental?
- Do you crave alcohol, caffeine, salty, sugary or starchy foods?
- Are you frequently tired and/or run out of energy during the day?
- Do you get colds, flus or feel unwell frequently?

- Have you experienced heart palpitations, racing mind, or chest pains?
- Do you ever feel out of control of your life?
- Do you feel out of control regarding your health?
- Do you experience low libido or disassociation with sex?
- Are you anxious or fearful about the future?
- Do you hear negative self-talk and are you habitually self-critical?
- Do you hear yourself saying something like “crazy busy” when someone asks how you are doing?

Although there are a lot of moving parts to stepping out from under the burden of too much stress, surely you can get relief by taking some steps that I will outline for you. And then you can get more relief by adopting some of these practices into your daily routine around stress, consistently and over time.

## HOLISTIC APPROACH

Once again, you will see clearly how the pillars are integrated. In fact, each pillar shines even brighter when looked at in relationship to the other four. Even as my team and I assembled this for you, the integration, the interrelatedness presented itself to us over and over. There is a message in this for all of us.

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*Our bodies are not composed of separated islands.  
We are whole beings.  
All of our parts are connected and interrelated.*

---

It is this, your discovery of your own inner connectedness, which leads you to treat yourself well.

Conversely, if you do feel stressed, you can regard this as a sign of inner disconnectedness.

### *Feeling Connected*

Here is an illustrative example of feeling connected.

- When you are tired, you know to put yourself to sleep in order to get plenty of rest.
- Waking up refreshed helps you get to your morning practice, be it prayer, breathing, meditation, yoga, journal writing, or jumping on your trampoline. (I have a strong bias that you do something physical to energize and wake up your body fairly early after you get out of bed. My morning exercise feels to me every day like I've got my body plugged in and charged up.) Then, you are ready to tackle the day.
- Next a wholesome breakfast void of processed carbs and empty calories, and full of anti-oxidant-nutrient-rich whole grains, fruits and/or veggies. You have prepared yourself for your best possible day. From a wellness perspective, you did not leave things to chance.

That entire ritual, starting the night before and stretching into the next day, helps you feel great, and definitely unwind and get some relief from stress. This is an extension of feeling connected plus knowing how to give your body what your body needs to thrive.

A good time to implement a routine like this would be tomorrow morning.

The antithesis of that little ritual I described above paints a different picture.

Going to bed way past the time you are exhausted, skipping any self-care routines in the morning, skipping breakfast or trying to get by on sugary cereal and/or lots of coffee – and things of that nature – will perpetuate

the stress cycle. You can lead yourself deeper into depletion, irritability, and inability to focus. Or, you can select a different route. Unwind from stress means that you habitually pick the more wholesome path to relief in order to put your body in peak performance, physically, mentally, psychologically, and even spiritually if that is part of your self-reference.

In the Unwind From Stress course, one of the first things I taught was that wanting relief and less stress was an okay goal. But it's not as significant as choosing to add more peace, harmony, and calmness in your life. Wanting less stress is like wanting less debt. Peace, harmony, and calmness are like financial freedom. In the former, stress is not in the equation. In the latter, neither is debt.

## **TAKING ACTION TOWARD STRESS RELIEF**

Here are ten ways to help you unwind from stress and get some relief:

1. Quit or dial back non-nutritive (junk) food
2. Eat more whole foods – like plants
3. Maintain some kind of self-care practice
4. Rely on movement to stay calm and in a good mood
5. Get plenty of sleep
6. Be a master of your calendar
7. Speaking of support, who are you hanging with?
8. Fill your own tank
9. Become your own best support person
10. Laugh and play

The goal is for you to change your point of focus.

Instead of searching for less stress, focus on enjoying a life that is balanced, peaceful, fun, energetic, and in which you nourish your body and soul in an ongoing way.

1. Quit or dial back non-nutritive (junk) food

Food that is low quality often contains high amounts of processed sugar, unhealthy fats, artificial chemicals, and salt. Examples are food from a vending machine, from your corner mini-mart or 7-Eleven. Packaged, manufactured, in a box, refined, commercialized are often associated with non-nutritive food like this.

This food does not contribute to your feeling calm, grounded and most importantly well-nourished. Sure, there is a buzz of pleasure and reward from the simple carbohydrates, but this will compound stress more than it will help you unwind and find relief.

2. Eat more whole foods – like plants

In the Unwind from Stress course I spoke about a time when I was sitting at my desk, practically pulling my hair out because I could not unravel a technology puzzle. I announced to my husband that I had to get up, take the dogs around the block, and come home and eat vegetables. Foods like fruits, veggies, seeds, nuts, beans, and whole complete grains will help your brain function better, in particular in comparison to your body's response to junk food.

When you refer back to the first two pillars – Love Yourself First and Eat Nutritious Food – it all falls into place. Eat food that puts you in a good mood, without a crash afterward. This will help increase a sense of peace, harmony, and calm in your body.

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*Veggies are from the earth.  
This is why they help you feel more grounded.*

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3. Maintain some kind of self-care practice

With countless options to choose from, there is something for everyone.

Meditation and breathing are not only for monks in orange robes. Yoga stretches are not gimmicky or faddish. Relaxing your mind through sitting quietly (see the [blog article on meditation](#)) in the morning has an impact on your whole body/mind/soul, and it is pure science. You can, on purpose, literally, impact favorably your mood, your outlook, your ability to concentrate, your brain, and the health of your entire body through a relaxation practice.

By the way, the best time to stretch or engage in self-care practices is when you want to do it. In the morning when you first get up, mid-day, before or after the evening meal, or before you go to bed are all as good as each other.

Consistency is the key, more than which time of day you engage in this practice.

4. Rely on movement to stay calm and in a good mood

In *Unwind from Stress*, I taught that creating calm, peace, and harmony is far better than trying to gain relief of your stress.

Exercise is a sure-fire way to energize your body and put you in a very good head-space. There is a physiological impact, just like the breathing and meditation practices I mentioned above. If you want to clear your mind, feel more alive, and put yourself in a good mood, most forms of exercise will do just that.

Refreshing movement can reverse the effect of stress hormones, and cause your brain to switch-over to feel-good neurotransmitters.



5. Get plenty of sleep

When it comes to unwinding from stress, nothing beats a good night sleep to create some relief.

Your entire body relies on rest to remove debris from your nervous system, your internal organs, your blood, your muscles, and well, pretty much every cell in your body.

Our bodies work during the day performing countless functions. Restorative sleep will be among your greatest allies if performing and feeling your best are important to you.

Chronic exhaustion will compromise all of your body's functions, exacerbate stress, and put you at risk for a variety of undesirable health challenges. Having a bed time ritual and getting ready for bed before you are completely exhausted are recommended. A cool room, darkness, and quiet help as well.

6. Be a master of your calendar

This segment is for you if you perceive an insufficiency of time.

If you hear yourself chanting the “not enough time refrain” then you understand how this can become a gnawing stressor in your life. We spent quite a bit of time on this issue in the course because it is both common as well as distressing for so many people.

Practice saying “no” to people who place demands on you, especially if you feel that they are unreasonable and unfair.

Among the many reasons for you to dictate your calendar and schedule versus your calendar and schedule dictating you is for you to get to taking care of yourself.

If you notice that you are the last one to receive exercise, rest, nourishment, and support because you are either “too busy” or “too busy taking care of everyone else”, carve out time, make dates with yourself, and let others know that you aren’t available on their time frame. (This takes practice!)

7. Speaking of support, who are you hanging with?

I assume that you have the goal or intention to relax and unwind.

Isn’t that what we are talking about here?

I figure you not only want some relief from stress, but you also resonate with what I wrote about increasing peace and harmony in your life.

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*Look around at the people with whom you live and work. If you are putting up with people who are demanding, critical, toxic, and negative, could you create some distance between you and them?*

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Some people will suck the energy right out of you if you allow them. Some will bring you down because of their negativity, criticism, and complaining.

If you can’t break away entirely, at least spend way less time with people like these. You deserve to be part of an uplifting group of friends, family, and perhaps co-workers.

You might need time to make some adjustments, but you will find yourself feeling so much better, and realize how worthwhile it is to do this.

## 8. Fill your own tank

Do things that make you happy, but only those that are wholesome and nurturing.

Learn to distinguish between “It makes me feel good to eat an entire pizza” and “A spinach salad would really be good for me now.”

Discover the difference between playing a video game because it is relaxing, compared with spending so many hours in front of the screen that you cut yourself off from meaningful relationships.

Similarly, taking a walk by yourself because it is relaxing is different than disconnecting from family and friends who can support you in your life. Staying connected to you is something you can learn to do with practice.

As I mentioned in the Eat Nutritious Food pillar, it is stressful to eat until you are stuffed. It is relaxing and promotes peace and harmony to complete a meal when you are comfortably satisfied.

All of this in-touch-ness comes with practice.

Fill your own tank also means that you practice getting your emotional needs met. Recognizing any signs of depletion or distress can help you turn the dial toward these activities that make you feel good, in a sustained, pro-health kind of way.

## A CLIENT STORY

One of my clients had a friend who frequently wanted to come over to drink beer, watch TV, and basically – in my client’s opinion – waste an otherwise perfectly good evening. My client had the habit of saying okay,

and then regretting the friend and resenting himself for not guarding his time and setting boundaries with this friend.

He learned a simple technique. When his friend called, he said, “Sorry, I’m not available that evening.” This was very uncomfortable at first, but, you guessed it, he loved having a peaceful evening with his wife and daughter.

Consider “upgrading” your friends if you know of people who enjoy a more wholesome life. People who love to exercise, eat nutritious food, take long walks, and read good books make good friends. Even if you can’t choose your relatives, you can at least spend less time with the ones who do nothing to enhance your life.

#### 9. Become your own best support person

Listen to what you tell yourself. Being your own worst critic can be a huge drag on so many parts of your life.

Whispering unkind words to yourself is a habit, and one that’s worth adjusting.

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*Speak to yourself like you do to someone you love*

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Practice speaking to yourself like you do to someone you love. Whisper words of encouragement and celebrate all of your accomplishments, even the little ones.

Forget about perfectionism because it’s overrated.

Like one of my friends told me recently, remember that you are one of those humans. If you did not do something up to your highest expectations, go out of your way to tell yourself something encouraging.

## 10. Laugh and play

When you are having fun, when you feel the wonderful sense of your smile muscles being stretched, you are also unwinding from stress.

Laughter helps you relax. It even supports your digestive system. More about that in the next pillar about your healthy gut.

Let's assume that playing and having fun does not entail harming your body, such as over-consuming alcohol or food. If fun for you leaves you feeling depleted, gassy, bloated, lethargic, or unable to feel fully conscious, know that this is not the kind of play I am suggesting. Plus, that doesn't sound so fun, does it?

When you have fun in a wholesome way, your body will refill its reserves of immune support, it will balance your nervous system, and enjoy reduced inflammation.

One of the core practices in the Health Matters system is for you to have an ample personalized list of your go-to self-loving and self-soothing activities. For me, this one relates to every pillar. If and when you feel exhausted, achy in your body, unable to concentrate, overwhelmed by unpleasant emotions, or just in a crummy mood, going to your favorite ways to relax and have fun will be life-saving.

Today I was working in my kitchen and learning about growing microgreens. I love growing sprouts, but I am new to microgreens. My husband was in his office singing, getting ready for the next karaoke night. We compared notes afterward, remarking how much we enjoy our hobbies. We also have two beautiful dogs. Taking care of them is a reliable way for me to fill my tank.

But what about you? What do you love to do, that helps you feel relaxed and happy, or even makes you laugh? [Carlos Castaneda](#), author of the books about Don Juan, the Indian shaman spiritualist, says,

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*The trick is in what one emphasizes. We either make ourselves miserable, or we make ourselves happy. The amount of work is the same.*

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## **WISHING YOU PEACE**

I wish for you a lovely, calm, and harmonious life. There are no prizes for having a crazy busy life. But there are rewards for unwinding from stress, learning to let go, and to give peace a chance.

Resource: Give Peace a Chance podcast (Links: [audio](#) and [transcript](#).)

## **PILLAR 3 BONUS: RELEASE TENSION AND STRESS THROUGH THE GUIDED BODY SCAN MEDITATION**

Here is the ultimate guide for you to be able to unwind from stress.



A body scan is a way to gently invite your body to relax, and for you to feel way more connected to and aware of your body.

On this guided meditation audio recording, Rosie will lead you to release tension and stress so that you can feel in control of your body and able to relax on purpose.

Say good-bye to tension, pain, and discomfort and hello to more energy, peace and harmony.

The free (no opt-in) Guided Body Scan Meditation Audio is at [this link](#).

## *Pillar #4: Heal Your Gut*



There are eleven systems in the body. Most of these functions happen below our conscious awareness. For example, usually our hearts beat whether we think about this or not.

One of the most important systems in our bodies is our gut, and good gut health is one of the pillars to a life of vitality.

This is another reason to remember to thank our bodies for being so smart.

Of course, you knew that you had lungs. But did you know that your lungs function as part of a larger respiratory system?

And that the circulatory system (heart and vessels) and the respiratory system (lungs and trachea) are interdependent?

Similarly, your muscular system and your nervous system are on the same functional team.

You can have a look at the [list of these systems](#), some of which are more familiar to you than others. By looking at the list, you can get a sense of the complexity of these inter-related functions that contribute to our overall health, well-being, and happiness.

## AN ABUNDANCE OF WELL-BEING

I'll explain in a moment why the digestive system, which includes the gut, gets its very own pillar.

But I'd like to draw an analogy before I do that.

Now that we are on the next to last pillar, I must emphasize once again that our radiant health, indeed, when our bodies are performing in a peak state, is the result of a variety of ways that we intervene on our own behalf.

Here are some ways that we can experience an abundance of well-being:

- Feeling and looking great
- Having a weight with which we are happy, relaxed, and confident
- Enjoying an abundance of physical energy and mental clarity
- Feeling uplifted and enjoying a positive outlook
- Feeling well-rested
- Freedom from dependence on or cravings toward substances that wipe us out (What I love to call being in love with food that is good for us.)

We take care of ourselves in a variety of ways. The Health Matters system embraces this multi-pronged approach.

I realize that if you are nowhere near living a lifestyle that rewards you in the ways I just described, that this might seem overwhelming.

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*Your most harmonious life is the result of a symphony  
of pro-health practices.*

---

In the same way, your healthy gut, perhaps on a smaller scale, is your reward for taking such good care of all of you. As a result, you feel relief



and noticeably better, and the benefits are compounded. In other words, you may improve how you eat because you want to lose weight. And then when your belly feels better, that's the kind of side-benefit I am referring to.

Given that there are eleven systems, let's talk about why the digestive system, including the gut, is the only one that gets its very own pillar in the Health Matters System.

It's not because the other systems are unimportant. However, we might find the answer in this quote:

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*"All disease begins in the gut."*  
*-Hippocrates*

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I think it would be fair to extrapolate from this ancient wisdom and declare that all health begins in the gut.

## WHAT YOUR GUT DOES

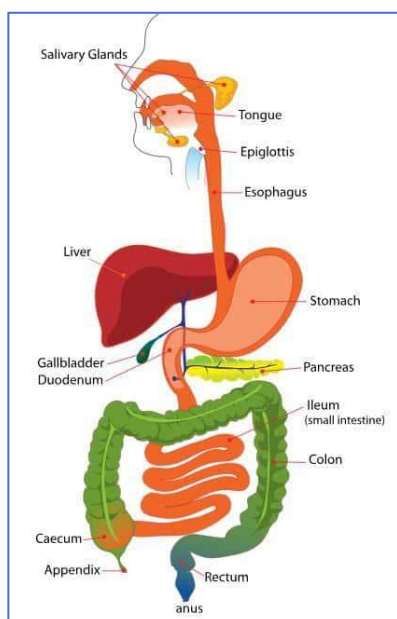
- breaks down your food
- absorbs the nutrients
- gets the nutrients to the vessels that carry them to every cell in your body
- provides healthy barriers between fluids, particles, and various organs
- keeps the stuff on the correct side of the barriers
- lets the right stuff go through the barrier to the adjacent physiologic container
- eliminates waste
- maintains a balance of healthy bacteria

- helps to promote serotonin and other brain-health neurotransmitters
- provides immune protection

Wow!

## THE SECOND BRAIN

The gut is also called the second brain. It has to be really smart to do all of these things without our even thinking about it.



As you can see by this image, the digestive system takes up quite a bit of real estate in our bodies.

You can think of this as a long tube with an opening at the top and at the bottom.

It's amazing to see how many inter-related parts there are. We feel great when the parts work well. But when they don't, the results can be disastrous.

If optimizing your health is important to you, I urge you to have a look at the

ways the gut and [digestive system can malfunction](#).

If you are experiencing any of these conditions and they seem medium to serious in severity, then you have some health and body homework.

It's most likely connected to food. This is not only what you eat, but also how you eat. Mindful eating is a theme that runs throughout each of these pillars.

One cannot say that one is healthy except for, as an example, having chronic diarrhea.

Or that one feels terrific, except for this pesky issue with painful bloating after consuming a meal.

This reminds me of something someone said to me, and I'm not making this up. His words exactly, speaking of himself, "I'm very healthy except for diabetes."

If your gut is unwell, then we need to heal your body.

And for this discussion, I'd like to encourage you to pay attention to how your body works in response to taking in food.

### *What About Gas*

Every body produces gas. This is a normal bi-product of digesting certain kinds of food.

Distress and gas can also be the result of eating while under stress; eating too much food; eating foods that do not agree with our bodies; and several more serious medical issues.

You might be interested in [why people fart](#). It's useful to know that this is not necessarily a sign of trouble down there. But it can be.

Healthy gas does not necessarily come with severe pain, a distended abdomen, and cramping. If you have any of those symptoms, I urge you to make ample time for sitting on the toilet and let your body release the excess gas. This is a more wholesome approach than trying to figure out what to eat or drink to settle your stomach. Learning to allow your body to rest is a powerful strategy.

## Good Mood Food

You learned about neurotransmitters in the pillar titled Unwind from Stress. You don't need a degree in physiology to recognize that you feel better mentally after eating certain foods. Good mood food is part of each pillar so far and was covered in the Unwind from Stress online course.

Imagine a meal of steamed kale with roasted butternut squash, baked chick peas and toasted pumpkin seeds. Whole food like this is nutritionally complete; is void of processed and refined sugars, oils, and fats; and might make you fart because of the fiber and the complex carbohydrates you are consuming. But it won't make you feel like you have brain fog. Especially if you eat in a calm and relaxed state, and if you ask your body to digest a reasonable amount of food.

Stuffing yourself is asking too much of all of those parts you saw in that illustration. It is unreasonable that you expect to feel happy and energetic if you, oops, forgot, and overfilled your tank.

When you feel comfortable in your body, plus satisfied and complete after a meal that is nutrient-dense, you are probably also on track with your digestion and gut health.

There are medical conditions, food sensitivities, and allergies that may complicate your body's gut health. For the most part, they are beyond the scope of the description of the fourth pillar. However, it is still important to feed your body wholesome food in order to promote the health and the optimal function of your gut.

Relief from brain fog, moodiness, irritability, and exhaustion can often be achieved through the what, how, and when you eat. This is what Pillar Three – Unwind from Stress – is all about.

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*The pleasure of a healthy gut will spill over into your life, unlike your waistline, which will remain comfortable behind the top of your pants.*

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In the Health Matters system, and in particular in this pillar, you are asked to respect your gut, be thankful to your body for the way your body works, and make choices to ensure that you will enjoy this system in your body for the rest of your long and vibrant life.

### **A WORD ABOUT MEDICINE**

What I'm about to share with you is something I have learned both academically as well as personally.

Throughout my extensive training in nutrition, the emphasis on gut health was central to all things related to longevity, disease prevention, and optimal performance in our bodies.

I hope the physician with whom you work is an exception to what I am about to write. Please accept this comment as very general. Most medical schools provide [little training in nutrition](#). This means, potentially, that your physician may or may not talk about proper nutrition as it pertains to your gut. I have seen this and heard this from over one dozen clients and family members.

A member of my family has extreme distress in her digestive system. I'll spare you the details, but suffice to say, what comes out at both ends is explosive. Her physician has offered no nutritional advice, other than to mention that she should probably cut back on the sugar, since her blood glucose numbers are borderline for Type II Diabetes. (He did not mention reducing the saturated fat in her diet, which is the unsung culprit for Type II Diabetes). Her diet contains large amounts of refined carbohydrates, which are correlated with a variety of gut health issues. There is a connection between her elevated blood glucose and her malfunctioning

digestive track. Her doctor knows his medicine, but he has offered no support to what might be the root cause, namely her nutrient deficient diet.

I offer this illustration, plus the comments above as encouragement to move toward a wholesome lifestyle. If you do things that make you – including your gut – feel crummy, might that be a good place to start?

What would your life be like if you felt great after you ate, had healthy poops, enjoyed the feeling of being comfortably satisfied after a meal, and achieved a great weight without deprivation dieting? All of these, and more, are achievable through lifestyle modifications that help heal your gut.

### *Recover From Antibiotics*

One thing you must know is how to balance your gut after a course of antibiotics.

[Antibiotics can destroy](#) friendly gut flora, which can be a problem given the role these microbes play in immune protection.

The [Mayo Clinic](#) recommends a responsible approach to antibiotics. This includes a follow up course of gut-friendly foods such as fermented foods, pro-biotics, and whole, nutrient-dense foods that help gut bacterial to flourish.

## **NINE STEPS TO GUT HEALTH**

1. Eat for now, not for later
2. Consider eating square meals
3. Be in a relaxed state when you eat
4. Consider holistic alternatives to medicine
5. Eat this not that
6. A word about fiber
7. Reduce or eliminate toxins

8. Give it a rest
9. Think holistically

1. Eat for now, not for later

Let your digestive system do its thing without taxing it with too much volume.

Consider that the food you put in your mouth can not only taste fantastic. It can also provide nourishment to every cell in your body.

Allow the digestion, absorption, elimination process to work its magic. Notice if you make unreasonable demands on your digestion system, and if so, learn how to make pro-health adjustments.

2. Consider eating square meals

My husband and I enjoy three fantastic meals per day. Each meal is a little celebration and I have learned to be a terrific cook.

(Author's note: When this eBook was first written, I had not begun practicing intermittent fasting. It has been over a year now since I switched from three to two meals per day and began a later start and an earlier finish to taking my meals. The details of my journey that includes guidelines for you to get the benefit from intermittent fasting can be found here, [\*The Ultimate Guide to Intermittent Fasting.\*](#))

I mention the square meals to make a point.

When you allow your body to complete the digestion process, and you wait until you are hungry to eat again, you are allowing your digestive system to perform its functions in the way it was designed. If you introduce food into this system by eating

something, and the food you ate, say an hour ago, is still being digested, you tax the system.

This makes intuitive sense.

Not only did my weight change when I adopted this, but my life changed.

I learned to use the food at each meal to energize my body for hours, before getting hungry again. The best book on this topic that I recommend heartily is [Mastering Leptin](#) by Byron J. Richards.

3. Be in a relaxed state when you eat

As you learned in Unwind from Stress, stress hormones compromise your digestive process. If the blood goes to your extremities (so that you can fight, flee, or freeze in response to a perceived threat or challenge), then your gut does not get the biological support it needs from your vessels. (You learned that everything is connected, right?)

If you do suffer from any of the classic gut health issues that have been described throughout this pillar, practicing breathing and relaxation before and during your meal, plus slowing down and resting your fork on your plate between bites, can make a world of wonder.

4. Consider holistic alternatives to medicine

I do not disparage medicine categorically. There is a time and place for traditional interventions. However, with a mindset of healing your body (including your gut) you can shift from medicating to sustainable wholesome self-care practices.



Two practical examples are to chew your food thoroughly and stop before you are full. This can help reduce the discomfort and pain of indigestion and reflux, or [GERD](#).

Bloating can be alleviated by choosing more whole foods and skipping foods that you determine upset your stomach.

Constipation can be helped by eating more fibrous plants.

It is beyond the scope of this description to go into detail of some of the side-effects of medication for gut and digestion related issues. But if you want to eat, digest, and poop in a healthful manner, use food that is nutrient dense, and try to move away from a dependency on medicine. Your behaviors address the underlying issues. Medicine does not.

#### 5. Eat this not that

Pizza made on processed and refined white flour, dripping with melted cheese, and covered in pepperoni cooked in rancid oil might give your gut grief after you indulged.

Seriously assess how your body responds after you eat certain foods.

When I gave up dairy completely and adopted a vegan lifestyle, my body practically sang its thanks and I felt so much better. I did not even have a cheese allergy or a milk sensitivity, yet still my body knew. (Dairy products is a topic for a whole other discussion, but the point is for you to inquire which foods put your gut health at risk.)

There are some foods that are associated with healing your gut, in particular fermented foods. They do this because the bacteria present promotes healthy bacteria growth in the gut itself.

[Dysbiosis](#) is a condition in which the delicate balance of microflora in your gut is disrupted. It is very individualized which foods are most soothing for your gut, but you can start by [increasing whole plant foods](#) and eliminating processed foods.

#### 6. A word about fiber

If you are used to a diet high in processed foods, it would be extremely beneficial to you for your overall health, including gut health, to include plant fiber on a regular basis.

Besides supporting bowel health and elimination, fiber helps you feel full after a meal.

Fiber tablets do not always contain the same quality of soluble and insoluble fiber that is ideal to boost health in your digestive track.

Neither does fruit juice, from which the fiber has almost always been removed. Whole fruits and veggies do.

If you are not used to eating like this, be patient as you give your entire digestive track time to learn how to use fiber for a variety of health benefits.

#### 7. Reduce or eliminate toxins

At the simplest level, a toxin is something capable of causing disease or damaging tissue when it enters our bodies.

In general, toxins can take the form of food additives, flavorings, commercial oils, refined foods, antibiotics, pesticides, herbicides, and artificial sweeteners. Food contains messenger chemicals that play out when metabolized and are either eliminated or sent via the blood as nourishment to the cells.

It is the role of the gut to extract the waste and utilize the rest. Eating organic food, for example, can make a huge difference to gut health because of the absence of toxic chemicals. Drinking clear water instead of sugary or artificially sweetened drinks will definitely help your gut.

#### 8. Give it a rest

Like I mentioned above, it may not be the best thing to try to find something to eat to help settle your stomach. I think in part some people do this because they learned it from their parents.

My mom fed us ginger ale when our bellies hurt. [Ginger](#) is good for settling your stomach. But the sugar in the ginger ale is not.

You might consider some intermittent fasting. You can literally give your entire digestive system a rest. If you don't feel well in your belly, sipping some soothing herbal tea, like chamomile, can help. Caffeine can exacerbate acid reflux, so this is a good thing to avoid. Not eating can be the best remedy of all.

#### 9. Think holistically

Your gut is a part of your whole body.

It is not something that is “down there”.

As you can see in the illustration above, like I mentioned, it starts in your mouth and runs through your entire torso. Actually, digestion begins in your brain where you might experience cravings, the need for something sweet, a tremendous desire for a reward, or the need to overcome exhaustion.

One client told me that her main goal was to overcome a pressing need to use sugar to wake up her exhausted brain. We did that by going through the distinctions I am laying out for you here. Her issue was, on the surface, merely a craving for sugar.

Looked at through the lens of her whole body, we found clues that explained this dependency. She was lonely.

Eating sugar at midnight kept her up until 3:00 AM. She was depleted the next day, and the cycle continued. When we focused on her making meaningful social contacts, she was able to get sooth herself more easily. The social contacts helped put out the fire of isolation. A side-benefit was that she became more regular, and the bloating and diarrhea vanished. Her body was not tolerating all that sugar. I love this illustration because it points poignantly to the misuse of diarrhea medicine, and to the need to love our bodies in their entirety.

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*"The doctor of the future will give no medication, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, diet and in the cause and prevention of disease."*

*-Thomas Edison*

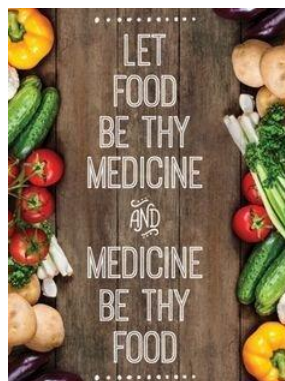
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#### **PILLAR 4 BONUS: HELP YOUR GUT FEEL BETTER – THE GUIDED MINDFUL EATING MEDITATION**

Discover the key to feeling way better in your gut.

Let Rosie inspire you to pay attention to what, when, and how you eat so that you can get relief from all kinds of gut issues, enjoy better digestion, and quit abusing your body with food.

This is Rosie's guided meditation on mindful eating.



Take a deep breath, pull up a chair, grab a fork, and tune in.

*The Guided Mindful Eating Meditation* Audio is available for free (no opt-in) at [this link](#).

## *Pillar #5: Move Your Body*



"Move Your Body" could be called "Confessions of an Exercise Nut". Or, "Why I Won't Give Up Exercise Even for the Revolution". Jane Fonda once said that about getting a massage. I liked how her message was made clear.

Once you make it a habit to move your body, you will find it much easier to continue to do so. Getting hooked on how you feel after a hearty workout is part of your success formula.

In this last pillar, I have a clear intent. Namely, to share with you how and where movement and exercise show up in my life, for the express purpose of inspiring you to incorporate it into your life.

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*My intent is to inspire you to incorporate movement  
and exercise into your life.*

---

Many of you reading this are already in love with moving your body. In that way, we are kindred spirit.

My husband and I live in a 55-plus community in Northern California. We are surrounded by exercise nuts. I take a Zumba class with a spry eighty-three year old woman who shakes her booty with the best of us.

***Question: What do getting older and moving your body have to do with each other?***

***Answer: Everything.***

I was once on an inline skate expedition. We skated through Idaho over five days for a total of 187 miles. At one of the lodges, we got to soak in a hot tub. There were four couples who had been meeting for bike trips since college, which was over fifty years ago! I wish I could find them to thank them for such lasting inspiration.

Ever since then I've held this sense inside of me, the commitment and desire to be able to move freely and pleasurably for decades to come.

Your reading this means the world to me. Sharing a lifetime of sporty adventures is among my greatest joys. This really has been my life.



## **MY INLINE SKATING DREAM**

In 2016 I fulfilled a dream of skating in an annual race to raise money for the True Health Foundation. I had race-walked the race for over fifteen

years. This year, along with my buddy from Canada, we skated the race, which was a complete peak experience for me. You might or might not be as enthralled as I am in the pursuit of sporty adventures. However, I hope I can inspire you to become enthralled with how you feel when you move your body. Skating might not be your thing. But everybody can find something that they enjoy doing.

## A CLIENT'S DISCOVERY

A new client discovered that the most important thing she could do to launch her new wellness lifestyle was to get off her butt and walk daily. We agreed that she would text me each day for accountability. (This is not a requirement for my clients, although many find it encouraging and helpful.) After three days, she texted me, “Can I tell you how AMAZING I feel?” I texted her after a couple of weeks of daily check-in texts that she sent me. (She was now walking every day.) Here was my question: “What do you most enjoy about walking every day?” Her answer, “My ankles are less swollen, and it gets easier every time to forget the time. Also my mind and spirit are more focused. One strange thing: I’m not as hungry. I thought the opposite would happen.”

You can see how I just had to share this with you! When my clients give me feedback like this I tell them that they have the power to make my day.

Moving your body is the last in the Five Pillars of the Health Matters System. I do not have enough fingers and toes to even begin to tell you all of the times that refreshing movement improved every aspect of my day. Nor the countless times others have told me the same thing. Since you have been with me on this journey, and we are still in this together, let’s wrap up the five pillars with a bang.



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*Refreshing movement can improve every aspect of  
your day.*

---

Fundamentally, you must move your body to optimize your health.

I saw a beautiful sports car on the freeway today. That machine, like our bodies, is built to move. We don't have to move fast like the sports car. Speed is not for everyone. But if you are ready to take complete responsibility for your body serving you with radiant vitality, you must move.

There are some key functions in your body that literally depend on moving your bones and muscles and breathing fully in order to provide you with excellent health.

These are a few examples of that:

1. Muscle strength and tone
2. Heart and vessel health
3. Immune support
4. Healthy levels of blood glucose
5. Lung health
6. Brain health ([exercise improves cognitive function](#))

## **REWARDS AND BENEFITS**

There is an excellent description of the benefits of getting regular exercise on the [Psychology Today](#) website. I urge you to have a look in order to determine the benefits that could have the greatest impact for you personally.

These benefits can be used to motivate you to get up and get moving. Another way to consider the author's recommendations is to imagine

what it would be like if you didn't have that particular benefit in your life. In the Health Matters System we call this your Personal Motivator.

Having compelling reasons to move is a powerful way to overcome excuses not to. You can easily do a Google search for all of the benefits of getting exercise. You will see physiological and psychological rewards, and you can experience them for yourself like my client who sent me that an enthusiastic text. Since this information is so readily available online, I'd like to take a different approach and share with you what movement and exercise mean to me personally, in hopes of leaving some clues for you to find your own path.

Here are 5 benefits of regular movement/exercise:

1. Feeling Strong
2. Feeling Flexible
3. Feeling Alive
4. Feeling Positive
5. Feeling Healthy

1. Feeling Strong

Doing push-ups is symbolic to me to build a reserve of strength.

There are countless times during the day when I feel a payback from the strengthening routine I do in the morning.

These are usually mundane moments but they are more special when I feel the strength in my body.

Bringing groceries in from the car is an example.

Our dog had an injury so we push her in a stroller in our hilly neighborhood. I love being able to do this comfortably.

I lift my carry-on bag up and down the stairs in the airport. I figure that if I keep doing this I will always be able to do this.

Where would it make a difference for you to have more reliable strength in your body? If you keep this in mind, I bet you will find many examples.

I'm sharing one of my all-time favorite pictures with you. My friend, Russell, is a practicing vegan, like my husband and I are. We asked him to demonstrate his strength, since he loves to work out. This picture says a thousand words.



## 2. Feeling Flexible

Yoga came into my life when I was 19. (If you want, you can read about this at my About page.)

I have had a love affair with yoga for over forty-five years. I realize what a great blessing this is.

For you, if you are new to stretching, there is no time like the present to begin to bend, twist, and reach your body into new positions.

I prepared for you a two part podcast to coax you into stretching:  
Episode 14 Why Stretching Matters Part 1 ([Audio](#), [transcript](#))  
Episode 15 Why Stretching Matters Part 2 ([Audio](#), [transcript](#))

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*The most common mistake people make about stretching is thinking that they are too stiff and as a result, don't even try.*

*Nothing could be further from the truth!  
The lengthening and softening of your muscles is a glorious gift to give your body if you feel that your body is tight.*

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Since the experiences and history in your body are completely different than the experiences and history in someone else's body, then obviously you will have different capacities when it comes to how flexible you are.

#### *Getting Instruction*

In my own experience, I believe I am doing you a huge service by encouraging you to take a stretching class, or work with an instructor privately. Learning to do yoga through online videos is okay, but not great. Without the eye of a trained instructor, it's next to impossible to release all of the strain patterns in your body that lurk in your posture. One can do yoga stretches without unwinding from one's holding patterns, which limits the ultimate benefit to you. Having said that, if online videos are all you are able to access, that is way better than not stretching at all.

Being flexible is obviously a physical phenomenon in your body. But it is not only physical. When you stretch and open your body, there is a lovely effect in your mind. The relaxation helps you navigate through life.

This can make a huge difference if you encounter challenging situations, difficult people, or emotional traumas. The way you open your body through stretching and yoga literally gets energy

moving. It is easy to imagine all the ways you will feel better when you get unstuck.

### 3. Feeling Alive

I coined this phrase after experiencing this countless times: Get the exercise in your body.

Getting the exercise in your body, so that after you move, breathe, and stretch, there is an afterglow.

In my book, [\*Health Matters\*](#), I dedicated an entire chapter to this concept of taking your body with you.

How alive are you able to feel?

How awake are you throughout your day?

How much do you feel your body parts?

Movement and exercise will give you a huge payback to these questions.

One of the reasons I am so dedicated to my morning routine is because I want to spend my entire day with the results of my work-out. Swimming, biking, kayaking, and hiking are often the highlights of my day. This is not only because of how enjoyable these activities are. It is because the feeling of turning all of the lights on in my body is sacred to me.

### 4. Feeling Positive

Exercise has a direct impact on the chemicals released by your brain. Not only does movement increase the feel-good neurotransmitters from your brain, movement also mitigates the negative impact of stress hormones.

Movement and exercise are essential components of living a life of positivity and maintaining a bright outlook. Perhaps you or someone you know swears by the fact that one always feels better after a yoga class, spin class, or Zumba class.

I told a story in the Unwind from Stress online course about a time recently when I was about to pull my hair out because of a technology snag I hit while at my computer. My frustration was reaching epic proportions. My husband told me to get up, it was time to take the dogs around the block. That was all I needed to get out of feeling overwhelmed and able to tackle the problem again. The technology riddle was solved. The only way I could get through this was by shaking it off physically.

I love this quote:

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*“A vigorous five-mile walk will do more good for an unhappy but otherwise healthy adult than all the medicine and psychology in the world.”*  
*- Paul Dudley White*

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## 5. Feeling Healthy

Either through the article on Psychology Today that I mentioned, or through your own online search, the physical benefits of movement and stretching are significant.

With that, I feel it is most important to help you feel healthy, literally, not just put the information in your head.

What does it mean to feel healthy?

What palpable signs lead you to sense, deep in your experience, that you and your body are on the same page?

Here are a few that I believe correlate with boosting your body's health through movement and exercise.

### Signs of Feeling Healthy

- Wanting to eat more nutritious food.  
There are so many parts to this equation. But suffice to say that when you feel energized and relaxed from exercising, you can connect the dots to your food choices
- Being more resistant to outside forces.  
Although exercise is not a panacea, you will certainly notice a bump in your immunity when you get moving. Part of that strength includes a hearty avoidance of colds, flus, and other ordinary ailments. According to the Mayo Clinic, people who exercise are more protected against all forms of chronic and inflammatory diseases. Although this might be difficult to feel, namely not getting sick, the flip side of feeling the protection of a robust immune system is something you can feel.
- Seeing the future.  
This is among my most cherished topics when we are talking about fitness, exercise, strength, and movement. Those people in the hot tub became my idols. My husband and I are planning on being sporty and adventurous for decades to come. We recently declined an offer by our timeshare resort to upgrade our membership because we are not done doing sporty travel excursions. We are booked for a river cruise this year between Budapest and Prague. We found a cruise company that has... get this... all sporty and athletic excursions at each of the stops. Biking, hiking, and kayaking in each town is our favorite way to see the world. One of my clients revealed that he and his wife had not discussed travel because of his fear of not being around to enjoy it. That was one of the first things we worked on. He got on the wellness

track and for the first time, began to plan activity trips that he, his wife, and his son could take as a family.

## ENCOURAGEMENT

I'd like to leave you with some encouragement.

If there is a word that is stronger than passionate to describe how I feel about you giving yourself the gift of movement, I would choose that word.

Your body is built to move.

Your muscles are built to store energy, strength and power, and you have the influence to turn on that switch.

Your heart is designed to support you while riding your bike up a hill or making love with your partner.

But your heart needs for you to provide it with some exertion and exercise. Your metabolism is designed to burn fat while you rest, one of the most glorious rewards to you for getting a sweaty workout. I love what Jim Rohn said. "If you don't have a body, where will you live?"

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*"If you don't have a body, where will you live?"*

*- Jim Rohn*

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That we are on our fifth and last pillar of the Health Matters System touches me. There are so many parts to your living a life of vitality.

As you embrace the lifestyle component of enjoying a life of health and vitality, many pieces fall in place for you.



**PILLAR 5 BONUS: THE 'MOVE IT OR LOSE IT' AUDIO –  
STOP PROCRASTINATING AND GET MOVING!**

Break free from your  
sedentary habit.

Finally - get up, get out, and  
get going.



Feel more alive in your body by creating strength and flexibility.

In "Move It or Lose It", Rosie reveals her best tips for you to quit procrastinating, quit making excuses ... and get your body moving to shed the weight and have more energy.

Discover "NEAT" - the secret strategy that could change everything about how good you feel and how good you look.

The Move It or Lose It Audio is available for free (no opt-in) at [this link](#).

## *Conclusion: The Five Pillars*

In the Five Pillars we have addressed loving yourself first, falling in love with nutritious food, unwinding from stress, healing your gut, and now movement and exercise. Getting on a healthy track has countless rewards, many of which have been described to you throughout this five-part discussion.

Like I tell my clients, you can make my day by letting me know how you resonate with this series. I hope you will pour your heart into taking care of yourself.

Today I asked a new client what would be the most significant first step she could take on her wellness journey, something that she already knows would be smart for her to do. Each time I ask someone this, the person intuitively knows the answer right away.

So, I will ask you. What is the single, most important thing that you should start to do, or stop doing, to show your body that you care, and to demonstrate your commitment to be well? You are welcome to text me or send me an email with this information so that I can cheer you on. I know that you know the answer, and you know this too.

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*What is the single, most important thing that you should start to do, or stop doing, to show your body that you care, and to demonstrate your commitment to be well?*

---

It's never too early to get started on your wellness journey, and it's always too late to wait. Please let me know if you want help.

I did not get to my own radiant state of health by myself. I believe in coaching for so many reasons. For you, in this case, because you are worth it.

## *Afterward: Living Well*

Now that you have learned about the Pillars, I want to remind you about getting help.

I have coaches in a variety of aspects of my life. When someone knows more than I do on a subject where I long to improve, and she or he can lead me to achieve my particular goals, I bring that coach on to my team.

It makes sense to me that a coach will guide me to get the results I am looking for faster, smoother, and with less pain, suffering, and frustration.

If you resonate with this, and if you are willing to find out how I can help you move forward with your life, health, food, and body goals, please email me at [rosie@healthmatterscoaching.com](mailto:rosie@healthmatterscoaching.com) or find me on my webpage [www.HealthMattersCoaching.com](http://www.HealthMattersCoaching.com). I make space in my practice for just a few committed clients.

My passion for guiding you to feel and look better is in my DNA.

## *About Rosie Bank*

Rosie's journey, which includes Yoga, Rolfing, Nutrition, Personal Development, as well as overcoming a disabling eating disorder, now allows her to enjoy more vitality in her 60's than she did in her 20's and 30's.

It also provides her a unique knowledge and experience base – both personal and as a coach – for her to support others who are seeing improvements in their health.

Here is Rosie's journey in her own words:

### **PART ONE... BROKEN BY BULIMIA**

The most painful experience of my life was struggling with a debilitating, life-threatening eating disorder in my teens, throughout my twenties, and a bit into my thirties. It's called bulimia and I would not wish this on anyone.

Being addicted to carbohydrates in the form of processed sugar, practically in any form, made me fat, sick, and literally starving for nutrition.

It is no exaggeration that I was slowly poisoning and destroying my body. Although this was a very long time ago, when I peer over my shoulder, into my past, I can make out how weak, exhausted, overwhelmed, depleted, stressed, confused, and scared I was.

Add to this self-loathing and filled with shame, and you get the picture. The disconnect between practicing yoga and body therapy while feeling trapped behind these heinous habits was an excruciating reality for me back then.

My parents had between them a generous amount of lifestyle induced diseases. Had I not jumped the track and gotten myself vectored in a new direction, including mending my most self-destructive habits around food, I would have “inherited” the risk that lived in my genes. This is called epigenetics, and we can work this biochemical system to our advantage, or not, like what I have chosen to do.

This is a very long story, but essentially it's about how you too can create your own health transformation in spite of your family history.

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*I needed to choose between two parts of me that  
could no longer co-exist.*

---

I could not fulfill my calling as a trustworthy leader and inspiration for others as long as I was destroying my body. Gorging and purging carried with it enough disgrace to fill an ocean. The tricky part about being addicted to a certain type of food is, unlike other substances, you still have to consume food even as you recover from the addiction.

For me, the two biggest goals, the ones I refused to live without, were:

1. *Fulfilling my work authentically, without the weight of shame, in order to serve others.*
2. *Attracting a husband and love-life partner in an intimate, wholesome, and healthy marriage.*

I could not achieve either of these with my head in a toilet about twenty times per day.

It took me many years to be able to describe this without revisiting that pain. Although this almost cost me my life, it now makes sense that this taught me to be with my clients with compassion and no judgement. I know what this feels like from my own experience. It was also through this that I began to believe that if I could break free, anyone can. I think

this hope and optimism serves my clients well, the ones who feel stuck and trapped.

*I quit bingeing and purging.*

I felt the emotions that I had managed to stuff down with food that were practically unbearable, yet essential to my survival. I allowed myself a taste of freedom; it was intoxicating, sublime, and delicious. This was nothing like the bile and self-loathing I had been choking on for so many years.

Life gradually became easier. Not overnight, because healing is a process that occurs over time. My relationships became easier because I was learning to love and connect with myself. This taught me patience with any health transformation and I remind my clients of this all of the time.

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*Our bodies need time to heal.*

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We get better by loving ourselves first.

The other bump along the way were three sport-related surgeries to repair damages from playing hard and injuring myself. During this five year period, I was very involved with nutrition, supplementation, and of course yoga and body therapy.

Bouncing back from these three surgeries in my 50's caused my surgeon to remark that even his college-age sports-scholarship patients did not recover as quickly. Had I attempted to heal my body during the time I was also poisoning it would have been another story.

## PART TWO... TRANSFORMED DEVASTATION INTO GUIDING LIGHT

I have been blessed with a body-and-health-focused life, and I am meant to help others achieve the same for themselves.

Some of the earliest memories of my life take me back to when I was a little kid.

My ambitions were to be a wife, a healer, and a P.E. instructor. How I knew of these dreams when I was in elementary school remains a mystery to me. But I did know.

Being happily married, working as a body therapist and health transformation coach, and teaching yoga and body-based mindfulness suggest that my dreams and purpose have aligned with my life.

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*The devastating bumps I described above enable me to be even more committed to be a guiding light for others to have their own health transformation.*

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Recovering from accident and illness is one of the hallmarks of living successfully in our bodies.

I loved sports when I was a kid. Waterskiing, jumping on a trampoline, skating, gymnastics, and biking occupied countless recreational hours and are some of my best memories.

However, it wasn't until I was 19 years old that this became a purpose, as well as a passion.



Miraculously, meditation, yoga, and body therapy came into my life when I was a teenager.

I remember the introductions of these three enduring disciplines as if it was yesterday.

My friend, Howard, showed me this new thing he learned called yoga.



We were at a park, near a lake, down the street from my parents' home.

Howard showed me some basic yoga stretch and got my attention immediately.

### **PART THREE... NAMASTÉ, MY INSTANT LOVE AFFAIR**

Meditation came through a Kundalini organization I was introduced to, became affiliated with, and that led me to countless hours of disciplined practice. The first yoga class I taught was in the summer of 1973.

I was living in a Kundalini yoga ashram in Mexico City.

The teacher's wife went into labor.

He asked me to lead the class. The first class I ever taught was in Spanish. Again, instant love affair. In those days, living in the ashram, we got up at 5:00 AM and practiced yoga and meditation until 8:00. I can't put my finger on it, but I can feel how doing this for years left an indelible imprint in my spirit and further defined my health transformation.

I still practice, of course, but for more like one to one-and-a-half hours rather than three hours.

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*I started this love affair with yoga at 19 years old and have never stopped my practice. Doing what inspires you doesn't require discipline, just a connection to your why.*

---

Massage and bodywork appeared in the form of a brown book by George Downing. It was called The Massage Book and it became my bible until I started training formally.

I remember kneeling on the floor, with some unsuspecting human guinea pig, carefully following the instructions that the author spelled out in that early, and primitive, but incredibly useful book for me.

I can still see the tattered, oil-stained, dog-eared pages of that book that set me on a course of a lifetime.

Now here I am, forty-six years later, and my involvement with meditation, yoga, and body therapy are still dominant themes for me personally and professionally.



It is in my consciousness every day the gratitude I feel for having fallen in love with massage, yoga, and meditation at such a tender age. Little did I know then how long and winding this health transformation journey would become.

I did not see into the future. I just knew that I loved doing this. I think that this was the point in my life where I discovered how much I love to help people.

My brand – decades before we used the word brand to describe our work – was to teach people to live more successfully in their bodies.

#### PART FOUR... ROLFING THE GATEWAY TO PAIN-FREE LIVING & HEALTH TRANSFORMATION

I had been receiving Rolfing treatments since 1972, when I lived in Boulder, the home of the Rolf Institute. This technique is named after its founder, Dr. Ida Rolf.

Rolfing is a form of hands-on body therapy. Through manipulations and education, individuals who get Rolfed discover balance and alignment in their bodies, plus astonishing new levels of relaxation, body awareness, and energy.

This exquisite form of body therapy opened me to releasing an unimaginable amount of pain and strain in my body. I recall Chet Wilson, my first Rolfer, telling me that Rolfing my body was like Rolfing an old sow. This was how constricted and blocked my body was at that time. I can still recall moving my arm after one of Chet's manipulations. The freedom was exhilarating, as well disorienting and unfamiliar.

Rolfing changed my life. I had a lot of stored armor in my body.

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*"Stored armor" is the word we use to describe deep, chronic, adhesions in the connective tissue. Rolfing became the gateway to helping my clients experience more energy and move toward pain-free bodies.*

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To this day, I see strain patterns in peoples' bodies, and I also see what a difference it would make to break free. This is what Rolfers are trained to do.

## GRADUATING FROM MASSAGE THERAPIST TO ADVANCED ROLFER & MOVEMENT TEACHER

At the time, I had been a massage therapist for twelve years. I remember vividly the desire to help my clients at a more significant level, like what Rolfers had been able to do for me.

We have extensive training to view bodies holistically, learning how the segments are part of a larger system. This is similar to my eventual training in nutrition. Sensing the interconnectedness in our bodies structurally, nutritionally, energetically, and functionally has been one of the primary themes in my work with my clients and students.

I pursued my training at the Rolf Institute in Boulder, where I returned to study. It was there that I received my certification as an Advanced Rolfer and a Rolf Movement teacher.

In 1975 I moved to California which, at this time, was like being at the epicenter of the human potential movement, something I pursued actively. This was the ideal environment for me to develop the Roling-plus-yoga approach.

My movement training enabled me to see yoga as a fluid, not-static process. I branded my approach Yoga in Motion. This partially explains why I am so dedicated to inspire my clients to move, stretch, and breathe in their bodies.

Not only was Roling the perfect marriage with yoga, but that theme was the primary focus of my practice for over thirty-five years. Through Roling and yoga, for myself and for my clients and students, our bodies become available to us. As one of my Roling clients recently put it, he and his body are now on speaking terms.

## BIRTH OF MY BOOK: BODIES, HEALTH, AND CONSCIOUSNESS

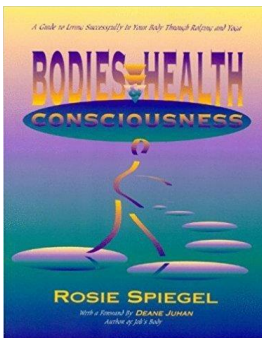
I took what I knew about the two disciplines and created a union.

Teaching yoga at the Rolfer's International Conference for sixteen consecutive years holds countless cherished memories and lessons for me. Teaching yoga to people who already inhabited their bodies is a yoga teacher's dream.

Meditation, yoga, and Rolfing took me all over the world in my quest to transform the health of my body.

Training in India and traveling through the country for a total of six months in 1979 and 1981 remains one of the greatest adventures of my life. My practice was already solidified. But the intensive teacher training at the Iyengar Yoga Institute drove this commitment deeper into my soul. Mainly, this enabled me to have so much more to give back to students.

This has been the theme: I learn from my own experience and practice, then turn around and share it with others.



Spending a month in Florence to further my abilities as a yoga teacher is something I will never forget. It has been a pivotal part of my ongoing health transformation.

Yoga teachers bring their own flavor to their teaching style. Training with such diverse teachers enabled me to find my own groove.

Incorporating yoga with movement and hands-on therapies gave me what I was looking for, namely a way to understand structure and energy, and impart this to students and clients who were looking to become free in their bodies.

(Check out my podcast on the subject, Why yoga matters)

I am grateful for a fantastic two-year education through the Iyengar Yoga Institute in San Francisco.

It was here that, along with the prerequisites for the Rolf Institute, I learned more anatomy, physiology, and kinesiology. To this day, when I hear of someone getting certified as a yoga teacher in a weekend workshop, I cringe.

Yoga is a complex discipline. Recognizing patterns in a variety of students' bodies and addressing these through the yoga asanas comes as a result of practicing for years, months at least. Certainly not over a weekend.

## **PART FIVE... HEALTH TRANSFORMATION & HEALING WITH NUTRITION**

In 1999 I stumbled into nutrition when I was introduced to a company called USANA Health Sciences. This was the beginning of the next layer of healing my body. Quickly after I began taking the USANA products and implementing the science behind vital health, I noticed some remarkable positive health benefits that expedited my transformation.

- My gums healed and stopped bleeding
- The chronic and debilitating ache in my left kidney subsided
- The aches and pains in my body went away
- I enjoyed much more reliable and predictable energy
- My debilitating carb cravings subsided

Again, my own experience went into my tool box.

I became a distributor for USANA and have taken the products daily for over twenty years. Studying nutrition for well over 10,000 hours opened

up doors to me that I was unaware of previously. I fell in love with network marketing and wrote the book *You, Inc.*

As I write this I still love enabling family, friends, and clients to enjoy the benefits of the USANA products. However, I am no longer focused on recruiting others to market the products nor team-building.

### *A year devoted to healing through anti-aging nutrition practice*

I undertook a long study about the science of anti-aging. Depending on your health transformation goals, it can be broken down into several easy to adopt ways to get your body to take you where you want to go in your life.

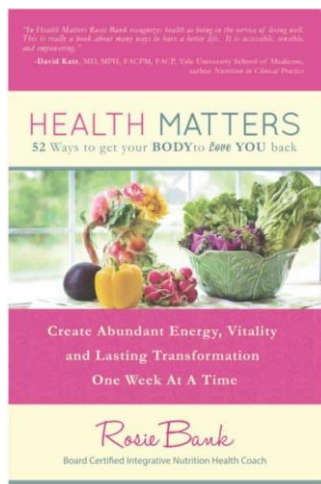
- how to use food as medicine
- how to enjoy weight loss as a side-benefit of healthy eating
- how to heal the gut
- how to level blood glucose levels
- how to remedy brain fog and create mental clarity
- how to naturally boost mood and outlook
- how to balance macro and micro nutrients
- how to benefit from a plant-based diet (even for non-vegetarians)
- how to balance the hormones
- how to detox our bodies
- how to benefit from an alkaline state
- how to dismantle cravings
- how to fortify the immune system

## GET YOUR BODY TO LOVE YOU BACK...THE MISSING PIECE

Learning how to enjoy sustained weight loss as a side-benefit of a healthy lifestyle... and so many more topics like this... became another wellness mountain to climb.

And for me, another way to serve people.

Because I had been seeing clients and teaching classes for so many years, becoming a Health Transformation Coach was the obvious next step.



Through the certification program at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, I learned how to apply my skills while remaining true to my purpose. Leading others to fall in love with food that is good for them, to love their bodies first, and to get their bodies to love them back is as deeply satisfying as the previous forms my wellness practice has taken.

In my next book, Health Matters, I am able to help my readers move toward transformational lifestyle practices rather than quickie gimmicks, which I do not practice or endorse.

## PART SIX... BETTER IN MY 60'S THAN IN MY 20'S

In December of 2017, my husband, Mark, "the kids" and I moved from the hustle and bustle of Silicon Valley to the orchards and vineyards of tranquil Brentwood, California to live in our dream home.





In this gorgeous setting, surrounded by many orchards, olive trees and vineyards, we have met and become friends with some of the most amazing people.

This includes my clients who are often in their forties to sixties and well into their seventies. These people inspire me with their desire to break free from limiting or debilitating health patterns.

I am finding that even among some of my clients who are seventy and eighty years and older, there is a keen longing to reconnect with their bodies and finally, while they still can, make life-enhancing and health - transforming choices. I founded the Vitality Club in our new community, and discovered that there are plenty of people who still want to get better. To eat better, to feel more alive, and to know how to nourish their bodies and souls.

*Are you crazy? You're doing that at your age?*

One of my favorite sayings is that a good time to focus on healing our bodies was about thirty years ago. The next best time is today.

Yoga, Rolfing and movement, plus nutrition and health coaching have gifted me with countless peak experiences. You don't have to subscribe to the idea that your age defines your physical capabilities and the experiences you want to get from your life.



**Ice Hiking**



**"Flying" in New Zealand**



### **Mountain Biking with Mark**

And I still get to do this, after all these years. It is extremely satisfying to work with a client or student who has struggled with weight and a carb addiction for his entire life. And now, miraculously, despite all odds, he is willing to step into a new reality with what he tells himself and how he lives, moves, eats, and breathes.

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*There is nothing like having a front row seat when  
someone discovers the joy of living an embodied life  
plus sustainable self-care and self-nourishment  
practices.*

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### **GOING ALL IN ... PLANT BASED DIET**

In addition to refining my practices over the years, Mark and I decided on a vegan (whole-foods plant-based) lifestyle. I love to explore a variety of flavors, spices, ingredients, and styles of preparing food like this. We love the results, as we believe there has been a positive impact on our weight, mental clarity, energy level, and health in general. However, I don't believe that giving up all animal products is something that everyone wants to do.

This is why my work with clients and students focuses on the best choices they can make within their dietary preferences and that address their goals and concerns. However, full disclosure: I do have a bias toward a plant-based diet, so recommendations in this arena are built-in to my practice.

Through mindfulness practices, meditation, embodiment practices, good nutrition, self-loving practices, body-therapy, yoga, and sports I have enjoyed a sublime relationship with my body. The fact that I feel better in my 60's than I did in my 20's is a testament to the power of sustained practices.

## IT'S YOUR TURN TO LIVE WITH RADIANT VITALITY

It's not enough for me to experience radiant vitality just for myself.

The calling to help others transform their health is also alive and well.

Feeling moved by purpose and passion, I want to thank you for following along in my story. It is this precise piece of work—namely the story we tell about our bodies—that gives me the chance to inspire others to find their own next level of freedom and transformation.

### *Why I'm so committed to you*

Since I know from personal experience the agony of being exhausted, sick, and hooked on the wrong kinds of food, I feel a great desire to help others break free as I finally did. Perhaps having someone who is a bit further down the path, lighting the way, holding your hand, and encouraging you every step is what it takes.

Every time you choose to nourish and feed your body, mind, and spirit instead of other less wholesome decisions, your life gets a little bit better. Imagine the impact on your health, how you feel, and how you look, by

making a string of these health transforming choices. This process contains the seeds of personal transformation.

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*I long for you to receive what you want most for  
yourself.  
To break free, feel confident, and know you're on  
track.*

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I can show you how to recognize obstacles and maneuver around them.

Everyone I work with has one of these:

- Big health challenge you want solved yesterday
- Desire to transform your health to meet a big goal

Together we can determine the goals that are the most meaningful for you, plus devise a plan to achieve them. I can show you the baby steps that will lead you to a life that is better, brighter, and filled with greater vitality.

Working with a Health Transformation Coach is a partnership. Please let me know if you are up to this collaborative approach. (Email [rosie@HealthMattersCoaching.com](mailto:rosie@HealthMattersCoaching.com))

If not now, when will you make the choice to experience your best health ever?