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Negotiables & Non-Negotiables

I like how the functional medicine doctor Dr. Andrea Nakayama talks about negotiable and non-negotiable foods in our health and wellness path.

What is Negotiable? What should I eat?????

Food is very individual — no one diet will work for everyone.

I know working out the food can be challenging ... its worth it. It takes some time and effort to figure out what is right for you. This is why I put so much study time into nutrition. Much of the challenge was the “powers that be” kept trying to make one nutrition plan right for everyone — and we kept running into issues with this. We are now understanding there is not one diet that will work for everyone. You need to find your way of eating that keeps you healthy.

It is realizing that some of us thrive on a meat diet (those with a blood line/ genetics from colder climates) and others on a more vegetarian diet (perhaps those with genetics from a warmer climate). Some do ok with a little sugar, others its an inflammation, disease causing food. Some thrive on high fat, others get fat on it . . . Some have a ‘carb gene’ and can eat more carbs, others cannot. Some of these concerns can now be tested with genetic testing; they can see if you thrive on a high fat or reduced fat diet, a meat based diet or a more vegetarian diet, etc. Genetic testing is going to change the way we do health and health care.

Also if you want a hint at what foods are best for you; visiting an Ayurvedic doctor who can help you determine your dosha—your mix of vata, pitta, kapha—can be helpful as these different body/mind/personality types help to reflect which foods serve who best.

Also seasons play a role in diet too; in the winter we need more warming heavier foods, in the spring we need lighter fare and less calories, in the summer we need slightly more carbs (from fruit and vegetables!) to get us through the longer working days.

Preparation also plays a role in foods; for example the lectin issue, or gluten sensitivities are not so much that we are now reacting to foods we didn't used to — it is more how we prepare our foods. Wheat, beans, nuts and seeds produce protective chemicals that make them hard to digest. Our ancient methods of preparation (like soaking, boiling, twice-baking, etc.) makes food better to digest. Yes it takes time to prepare foods.

Also, the state of our food supple comes into play here; wheat that is not organic is desiccated with roundup just before going to be milled this is done to shorten the processing time of the wheat! Literally non-organic wheat is slowly destroying the gut



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lining of most anyone who eats it! This is why clean food is so important to understand in this day and age of high calorie/low nutrition foods.

Figuring some of this out is easier if you look at how our ancestors — and the old societies that have a strong medical system like Ayurveda prepared their food.

Prepare your food how your grandparents might have is the best advice right now . . .

At starting point

The simplest diet advice from all the research I have been doing over the last 10 years ... the **Mediterranean Diet** seems to be the best tolerated and most healthy in general — some may need to modify it a bit; for example personally I follow a Mediterranean based vegetarian/pescatarian diet with slightly less carbs.

These are our negotiable-s and yes you need to find what works for you and yes it will take some time and effort.

It is worth it.

The Non-Negotiable-s

☯ Clean food tops the list — avoid processed foods. In the words of Michael Pollan “Eat real food, mostly plants, not too much”.

- * Organic, NON-GMO food from good farmers, small farms, locally grown, by famers that feed their soils compost and other natural materials. If you eat meat it is imperative to avoid factory farmed meat and find animal farmers that care for their animals with love. Eating lots of vegetables (some need more raw some need more cooked . . .) also is very high on the non-negotiable list, as are including herbs and spices in your diet, and eating a variety of foods in a balanced way.

The other non-negotiable items are:

☯ clean filtered water — approx. 1/2 your body weight in ounces.

☯ We need to detox!

- Exercise and/or sweat (sauna, steam bath, etc.) most everyday
- Eat Vegetables everyday containing sulforaphane; these cruciferous vegetables include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, horseradish, kale, kohlrabi, mustard leaves, radish, turnips, watercress, and bok choy. For therapeutic benefit, try to consume 1-3 cups per day
- Drink plenty of water

☯ 7-9 hours quality sleep per night

☯ low stress lifestyle

☯ Find Meaning and Purpose in Life

The new Vitamins on the block :)



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- ☪ Vitamin L (L for Love) — We need loving relationships in our life; family, friends, romance. Build community.
- ☪ Vitamin P for Pleasure :) We need to do something that brings us pleasure every day — even if it is a 5-10 minute walk around your garden or a path through a wooded area, listening to music, being with a loved one . . .