

INTRODUCTION

Growing up in Alberta, Canada, I was raised on meat and potatoes --- lots of it. We ate homemade, well-rounded meals and rarely went out to eat. Mom often had a chocolate cake baked and the cookie jar was usually full. Getting dessert was contingent upon having a cleaned dinner plate. My inherited sweet tooth ensured that every morsel of my dinner was consumed. Although I was active, overeating led to my dreaded nickname-- JELLY ROLL.

In high school I became obsessed with dieting and losing weight. My version of healthy eating changed several times during the following decade. I tried all sorts of fad weight loss methods; low-fat, low-carb, artificial sweeteners, over-the-counter diet pills, ephedra drinks, “fat-grabbing” pills, over-exercising, and eliminating meat, dairy, and gluten. Nothing seemed to result in the weight loss that I wanted. I loved food and planned my days around my next meal. My desire to eat and fear of gaining weight led to bulimia, which made my food obsession much worse, damaged my health, and despite my efforts, did not make me lose weight.

It wasn't until I went to chiropractic school that I became educated about true health, and how to achieve it. I started to eat organic --- real food. I eliminated artificial sweeteners, preservatives, chemicals, and fad diet foods, which I replaced with food in its natural state. Instead of focusing on losing weight, I focused on being healthy. I stopped overeating “diet foods” that society told me would miraculously help me drop the pounds and stopped counting calories and grams of fat. I allowed myself to eat fulfilling and satisfying amounts of whatever I wanted and to my surprise, my body actually started wanting healthy foods. I realized how physically awful I felt after eating harmful foods, and how great I felt mentally after releasing my food obsession.

Incorporating foods that increased my energy and improved my health was not difficult to do. Coconut oil, whole grains, stevia, agave nectar, nuts, and seeds became staples in my diet. I eliminated (or drastically reduced) white flour, refined oils, and refined sugar. In addition to feeling better, I really enjoyed the quality and tastes of different foods. I ate when I was hungry and until I was satisfied, and stopped before I was full. Rather than eating mindlessly, I made a conscious decision to stop when the food stopped tasting as good as that first bite. Even though a meal was delicious, I didn't have to finish all of it --- I could save some for the next day or make the same delicious meal again. There was one side effect to my new way of living ---for the first time in my life I was losing weight without even trying.

Instead of an unhealthy obsession, food became a joy. Today, I love healthy, delicious recipes that empower my body. Though I searched for healthy recipes in countless cookbooks, more often than not I found most books only supported aspects of healthy eating. I found no single book that encompassed all of my food philosophies, so I took

it upon myself. By experimenting and substituting wholesome foods in existing recipes and making up new recipes, I created nutritious dishes that didn't taste "healthy." I snuck whole wheat pastry flour into my husband's favorite cookie recipe and, to my surprise, he still said they were delicious! My husband, friends, and three beautiful boys became my sounding board for the new recipes that I created. My family and I are healthy and active and I now lead a truly balanced, happy life.

As holistic chiropractors, my husband and I educate our patients about how to improve their overall health by moving more, eating better, and having a well-functioning nervous system. When patients started asking me for healthy (yet tasty) recipes, or a cookbook that I would recommend to buy, I clearly could not confidently recommend any that encompassed my philosophy --- my way of life; however, I realized that I already had a collection of my own recipes. Initially, I intended to produce a small leaflet to share with patients, but I soon realized that my recipe collection was so big that, if I wanted to share it all, I would have to write a cookbook.