Cathedral
CENTRE FOR WELLNESS

Cathedral Village Wellness News

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Creating Change

By Dr Julie Zepp Rutledge ND

Phew, this is the first newsletter I have put together in awhile as for several seasons we had our lovely receptionist, Sage, one of our long term receptionists who left us earlier this spring to move into a job in her field...we miss you!, put them together. Then this winter we had a U or R practicum student, Larissa, with us and she compiled our articles and put them together into newsletter format for us—thank you Larissa! I sort of forgot how much work they are!

Which makes me appreciate those of you that do take the time to read them. I know that, especially these days, we are bombarded by information and it can be confusing and conflicting, not to mention overwhelming! This is why we have felt it important to continue to provide you with high quality information from people that you know and trust. So thank you! *(even as you read on in this newsletter and see a couple of different perspectives on sunscreen!)

In putting together this newsletter I went back into my archives to pull an older newsletter to use as a template for this one. In so doing I realized that I started an article in Spring 2014 that I had intended to create a "part 2" for in the summer of 2014 however it never happened. That June I had huge issues with a computer meltdown that weren't resolved until November. We basically took a year hiatus from newsletters as I recovered my techno-footing (which is unstable to begin with!) and didn't resume newsletters until Spring 2015.

My "Creating Change" article never did get is part 2 so I decided to repeat part 1 and then perhaps in the fall I will finally get part 2 done and delivered. Still pertinent info so I hope you enjoy!

Each season in our newsletters we try to offer you information and strategies to assist you in optimizing your health goals. In our visits in office with patients or while doing public seminars, as Naturopathic Doctors, we attempt to give you the tools necessary to heal disease, prevent recurrence and generally create and sustain a state of health within your mind-body and spirit!

Generally speaking these tools involve dietary changes: we may suggest incorporating certain foods and/ or avoiding others in order to attain a desired outcome, such as reducing inflammation/ boosting immunity/ balancing hormones, etc. We will likely give you supplement protocols: what to take and when to re-establish healthy physiology. Perhaps yoga, meditation, exercise, counseling or other methods of stress reduction will be added to the list.

Any of these suggestions requires commitment on the part of our patients/ readers/ etc. What I have found in

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my practice is that there are times when people come to see me and perhaps they already know what to do: maybe someone else has already suggested they give up dairy for their chronic sinus issues or they have seen on Dr. Oz that taking Maca root will help give them more energy and vitality. We often know *what* we need to do (exercise more, eat more vegetables, stop drinking pop/ coffee/ etc.) however there are things we don't always realize as obstacles or challenges in our ability to create change. In order to create change in our lives we need to have a properly functioning and fully integrated brain! If one area, particularly our amygdala (part of our primitive brain known as the limbic system) is dominant, learning is halted and our knowledgeable thinking part of our brain goes "off line". This is our "survival brain" and when activated it creates a sense of danger/ angst and hyper-vigilance. In this case we also produce hormones (such as cortisol) that destroy memory cells in the hippocampus which make us seem to forget to stay on track! I would like to discuss a few of the challenges we face when setting out to create new habits and how these can affect our brains and our success.

1) We don't always know *why* the suggested changes are important—what certain nutrients do what they do in the body. I find that "whys" are more important motivators than "hows". If we know why eating 4-5 cups per vegetables per day is important our motivation to incorporate the suggested habit increases dramatically. Taking the time to know "why" produces dopamine (our learning neurotransmitter also needed for motivation) and activates the thinking and decision making area of our brains (called the cortex), pulling us out of our survival brain.

2) We haven't understood what is motivating us to stay stuck in old patterns. If we don't understand why we eat what we eat or cope the way we do with life it will be much more difficult to make change. Old habits may be habits due to time restraints, physical addiction, psychological addiction, emotional triggers, underlying physical conditions and many other reasons. If we don't have an understanding of what is motivating a certain set of behaviors it is actually more difficult to change. Evolutionarily speaking change is a potentially dangerous action. We are still wired to believe this and our survival brain will attempt to keep us "safe" unless our thinking brain has a good argument as to why it is actually safer to change than stay put.

3) We may need to re-evaluate our motivations for change. It is important to determine what our inner motivation is to change and typically the larger the scale of motivation, the better success we have. For instance if our goal is simply to lose weight, get rid of headaches, stop our IBS flare-ups, etc. our motivation might not be as strong as if we dig a big deeper and look at the "bigger why" behind our desire to change: perhaps increase our vitality, our passion for life, our contributions to our family or the world. Poor health, illness, physical discomfort and pain stand in the way of being able to engage in the world in a way we might want to. These are all stress/ danger signals that keep us trapped in our survival brain. Rather than focussing on the smaller goal of ridding ourselves of the physical condition, digging deep for a larger, often more powerful, motivation will help give us more momentum for change by activating our cortex and also pulling online our soul's desire for change.

3) Self-esteem: we have to believe we are worth the effort it takes to keep ourselves healthy. If we have any issues with self-worth it may be tough to treat ourselves like the "best friend" we need to. Coming home to an empty house we might be tempted to grab whatever from the fridge and stand and eat from the container. Would we ever invite our best friend over to stand at our fridge and eat this way? No! usually we would prepare a nice meal, sit down and enjoy the experience. Imagine if we could treat ourselves in this generous and loving way how different our choices might be?

4) Another aspect of self-esteem is the willingness to go "against the grain". Our society is not yet evolved to the point where health is common practice. The social emphasis on food, especially unhealthful food and drinks, is very high. We are conditioned to feel

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like we are being deprived if we are not able to partake. This is an evolutionary belief that our brains have not yet adapted to change. In the past it was necessary to be included in part of a group for survival (hunting, shelter, etc.) We are wired to want to belong in groups. For some people, an inner sense of isolation can cause us to go into a fear mode on a deep level and the thought of not fitting in with a group may be extremely distressing and so the importance of fitting in and not being seen as different overrides the importance of making a decision to take care of ourselves.

It is important to realize that it is ok to say no and honor your own choices: bring your own food to a meal out, opt for the veggies and not the dessert, maybe prepare a healthy not-so-mainstream dessert for the pot-luck and start to influence health in your work or social setting. The key here is being willing to sit with the discomfort of worrying "what will people think?". Examining and shifting this old program is important for lasting success.

5) Look closely at your relationship with "willpower". Generally willpower has become associated with a virtue or moral trait. That we are somehow "better" when we have willpower then when we don't. When we start to think about willpower in this way, we tend to forget that willpower is about doing the things that matter most to us, even when they're difficult.

There are three types of willpower: classic "I won't" power, "I will" power and "I want" power. Most commonly we attempt to use "I won't" power: *I won't eat dessert, I won't smoke* in attempt to resist temptation.

A more under-utilized willpower is "I will" power. This is finding the energy and motivation to do something that is overwhelming. *I will get out of bed and go for a walk, I will make a salad with supper.* If we feel bored, anxious, uncomfortable "I will" power is the ability to say YES even if you are stressed out, tired or would rather not.

The last type of willpower is "I want" power. This relates to connecting to our "bigger why". Holding onto your goals, your values, your relationship and bigger picture of your life helps to give us the strength to say "no" when we want to give into temptation (I won't), and find our strength and courage when we are overwhelmed or stressed.

It is important to draw on all three types of willpower when seeking to achieve our goals. Different parts of the brain govern the different aspects of willpower and it is necessary to have an integrated brain so we don't get stuck!

6) Gentleness and self-compassion is essential for creating change. We are not well-designed to learn in situations of stress. The more stress we are under the more difficult learning and pattern changing is. When we begin to beat ourselves up for changes we have not make, things we could be doing better, etc. this essentially paralyzes us into our old patterns by activating our amygdala by having us believe we are in danger. Being kind and forgiving with ourselves helps decrease the stress response and increases the likelihood of creating and sustaining new habits.

> You have to care about yourself before you can really care about other people. If you are continually judging and criticizing yourself while trying to be kind to others, you are drawing artificial boundaries and distinctions that only lead to feelings of separation and isolation. This is the opposite of oneness, interconnection, and universal love-the ultimate goal of most spiritual paths, no matter which tradition.
>
> ~ Kristin Neff Ph.D.

The bottom line is that creating change is difficult! We are not wired (in our brains) for change to be easy. So if you are struggling with changing your health habits stop and take a breath. You are not alone!

Go through some of the above points to find which may be pertinent to you. Take the time to journal: find your "bigger why"; watch your thoughts and the type of willpower you operate from most often. Make a point to practice playing with the other types. And most importantly, in order to effect change, work on cultivating love and compassion for yourself. Starting with a mindset of self-love is crucial as it is a tough life and it takes work! Work that is much easier and more fun if we understand that we are perfect as we are amidst our imperfections AND there is always room for improvement!

<u>Further reading:</u>

Mindsight by Daniel Siegel MD

Self-compassion: stop beating yourself up and leave insecurity behind. By Kristin Neff PhD

The Willpower Instinct by Kelly McGonigal PhD ♥

Coming Full Circle: the enduring beauty of bone broth

By Dr. Marika Geis N.D.

I've once heard it said that a good bone broth can bring someone back from the dead. After seeing a variety of conditions improve with this form of nutrition despite an entire arsenal of naturopathic therapies, I wholeheartedly believe it. In an age where we seek to understand our natural world by breaking down complex scenarios into increasingly smaller, simpler, and thus tractable units, we fail to appreciate the characteristics of the system being acted upon. Put another way, do we necessarily need to find the 'magic bullet' for those troublesome symptoms or can we get out of the way of our body's attempts to heal and broaden our scope to include the system in question? The beauty of the naturopathic model is that it allows for exactly this type of approach and is central to many of our interventions. While bone broth lacks the specificity of being an agent to say, decrease inflammation or fight infection, the synergism of its compounds work to rebuild tissue (particularly our gut lining) literally from the ground up so that the system functions better as a whole regardless of how problems manifest. When used in conjunction with targeted dietary interventions we see our clients improve on a number of levels sooner than with foods and digestive aids alone. Further, in cases of severe inflammatory bowel disease, bone broth might be the only food our clients can tolerate without compromising nutrition. So what is it about bone broth that allows it to persist as a functional food?

You may already know that bone broths have been around for as long as anyone can remember. I personally recall the perpetual pot of chicken broth on my grandmother's stove when I was a child. Nothing was left to waste! What you may not realize though is that bone broths have been around for as long as there have been people. Archaeological evidence reveals the use of animal stomachs stuffed with herbs, meat, bones and animal fat being placed over hot rocks to yield the first primitive bone broth. Over time the practice evolved and grew to touch every known modern culture. Meat and fish broths play a central role in French, Italian, Chinese, Japanese, African, South American, Middle Eastern, and Russian cuisines. References to its medicinal properties can be found as far back as 12th century Egypt when it was used to treat colds and asthma. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, bone broths were used to treat ulcers, tuberculosis, diabetes, infections, muscle diseases, jaundice and cancer. Babies were known to experience less digestive upsets when bone broth was added to milk. When meat and vegetables were scarce during the 4-month long siege of Paris in 1870, families were able to survive in good health with nothing more than bone broth and added fat. Formal research into its health properties started in 17th century France and persisted until 1950 when food producers found cheaper ways to duplicate meat flavours in the lab thus removing bone broth and all its health benefits from their cuisine.

One might think that the healing and immune enhancing properties of bone broths are attributable to its mineral content (why wouldn't you? You're boiling up bones after all), however the benefits derive mainly from the presence of collagen, our body's most abundant protein; the principle building block of bones, cartilage, skin, arteries, corneas, placentas and just about every other structure in our body. It's true that bone broth supplies easily absorbable minerals including calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, silica, and sulphur among others. However, they are not present in substantial amounts and yet bone broth is said to be beneficial for our bones and tissues. Why is this? Using bones as an example, these highly bioavailable minerals get woven into the greater collagen matrix that provides our bones with tensile strength and resists fractures (Think of collagen as the rebar in concrete). Research from the Czech Republic, Germany and the United States have verified this showing that collagen supplementation significantly reduced the rate of bone turnover and fracture risk in those suffering from osteoporosis and osteopenia. As an aside, one may ask whether or not there is something

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Coming Full Circle: the enduring beauty of bone broth— continued

By Dr Marika Geis ND

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missing in so called 'bone building' supplements as the bigger issue seems to be the ratios/source and not the amounts of the minerals themselves that have the bigger impact on bone health?

When a bone broth is properly prepared the collagen present in joints, skin, meat and bones gets broken down into two principle amino acids: glycine and proline which ultimately serve as building blocks for our bodies own collagen production. They are not considered 'essential' amino acids but given the fact that most people cannot produce enough to keep up with the demand for tissue repair, think: big wounds, microscopic damage to the gut and vasculature by inflammation, infection and a disordered immune response, top researchers are opting to call them 'conditionally essential'. Indeed, people falling into any of these categories (read: most of us) benefit greatly from supplementation of proline and glycine rich foods. This is especially true as we age when our tissues become drier, less pliant, thinner and weaker, all due to our body's decrease in collagen production.

Beyond it's effect on tissue repair, glycine has numerous other benefits. It aids digestion by regulating the production of bile salts and secretion of gastric juices likely contributing to it's label as 'the digestor' in 17th century France. Further, glycine is required for glutathione production (the most abundant antioxidant in the body) by the liver in addition to regulating glucose production in the same organ. Low levels of glycine render the immune system more prone to activation (think eczema, allergies, and asthma along with autoimmune disorders). It has multiple effects on our nervous system. It calms our excitatory neurotransmitters, improves mental alertness, memory and mood thereby collectively reducing the harmful effects of stress. Additionally, while this discussion has focused mainly on the effects of glycine and proline, bone broths' benefits can be extended to include joint repair due to the presence of glucosamine and chondroitin.

The successes of the reductionist model that characterizes modern medicine are undeniable. Where would we be without insulin for diabetes or epinephrine for anaphylactic shock? When the human body is viewed as a collection of components, the natural inclination of medicine is to isolate the single factor most responsible for the observed condition. Much like a mechanic who repairs a broken car by locating the defective part, physicians typically treat disease by identifying an isolated abnormality. Implicit within this practice is the deeply rooted belief that each disease has a single target for medical treatment. Without contextual information, one might see the folly of approaching all issues in the same fashion and say that we are attempting to understand the forest by studying the trees alone. Using bones again as an example, we see how the focus on mineralization has lead to over-supplementation of large, hard to digest and absorb compounds that fall short of their desired intent in the absence of a full complement of bone building trace minerals and collagen. Simply taking a small step back and understanding osteoporosis as a disorder of connective tissue and not the bone itself provided researchers the perspective that allowed them to confirm that something was missing from conventional approaches. Likewise, when it comes to seeking out therapies that are going to yield the maximum possible benefit to our bodies as a whole, they need to function on multiple levels. Looking to Mother Nature for solutions provides us time and again with remedies that do just that and bone broth is no exception. It reminds me of a comic that I often find hanging on the walls of labs and medical reception desks. You may have seen it?

A Short History of Medicine

I have a headache:

2000 BCE: Here, eat this root.
1000 AD: That root is heathen. Here, say this prayer.
1850 AD: That prayer is superstition. Here, drink this potion.
1940 AD: That potion is snake oil. Here, swallow this pill.
1985 AD: That pill is ineffective. Here, take this antibiotic.
2011 AD: That antibiotic is artificial. Here, eat this root.

~anon

Healing broths and how to make them -

(Both recipes excerpted from Sally Fallon's Broth is Beautiful article for the Weston A Price Foundation)

Chicken Stock

1 whole free-range chicken or 2 to 3 pounds of bony chicken parts, such as necks, backs, breastbones and wings*
gizzards from one chicken (optional)
2-4 chicken feet (optional)
4 quarts cold filtered water
2 tablespoons vinegar
1 large onion, coarsely chopped
2 carrots, peeled and coarsely chopped
3 celery stalks, coarsely chopped
1 bunch parsley

*Note: Farm-raised, free-range chickens give the best results. Many battery-raised chickens will not produce stock that gels.

If you are using a whole chicken, cut off the wings and remove the neck, fat glands and the gizzards from the cavity. Cut chicken parts into several pieces. (If you are using a whole chicken, remove the neck and wings and cut them into several pieces.) Place chicken or chicken pieces in a large stainless steel pot with water, vinegar and all vegetables except parsley. Let stand 30 minutes to 1 hour. Bring to a boil, and remove scum that rises to the top. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 6 to 8 hours. The longer you cook the stock, the richer and more flavorful it will be. About 10 minutes before finishing the stock, add parsley. This will impart additional mineral ions to the broth.

Remove whole chicken or pieces with a slotted spoon. If you are using a whole chicken, let cool and remove chicken meat from the carcass. Reserve for other uses, such as chicken salads, enchiladas, sandwiches or curries. Strain the stock into a large bowl and reserve in your refrigerator until the fat rises to the top and congeals. Skim off this fat and reserve the stock in covered containers in your refrigerator or freezer.

Beef Stock

About 4 pounds beef marrow and knuckle bones
1 calves foot, cut into pieces (optional)
3 pounds meaty rib or neck bones
4 or more quarts cold filtered water
1/2 cup vinegar
3 onions, coarsely chopped
3 carrots, coarsely chopped
3 celery stalks, coarsely chopped
several sprigs of fresh thyme, tied together
1 teaspoon dried green peppercorns, crushed
l bunch parsley

Place the knuckle and marrow bones and optional calves foot in a very large pot with vinegar and cover with water. Let stand for one hour. Meanwhile, place the meaty bones in a roasting pan and brown at 350 degrees in the oven. When well browned, add to the pot along with the vegetables. Pour the fat out of the roasting pan, add cold

Healing broths and how to make them—continued

water to the pan, set over a high flame and bring to a boil, stirring with a wooden spoon to loosen up coagulated juices. Add this liquid to the pot. Add additional water, if necessary, to cover the bones; but the liquid should come no higher than within one inch of the rim of the pot, as the volume expands slightly during cooking. Bring to a boil. A large amount of scum will come to the top, and it is important to remove this with a spoon. After you have skimmed, reduce heat and add the thyme and crushed peppercorns.

Simmer stock for at least 12 and as long as 72 hours. Just before finishing, add the parsley and simmer another 10 minutes. You will now have a pot of rather repulsive-looking brown liquid containing globs of gelatinous and fatty material. It doesn't even smell particularly good. But don't despair. After straining you will have a delicious and nourishing clear broth that forms the basis for many other recipes in this book.

Remove bones with tongs or a slotted spoon. Strain the stock into a large bowl. Let cool in the refrigerator and remove the congealed fat that rises to the top. Transfer to smaller containers and to the freezer for long-term storage. ♥

Recipe: DIY *Healthy* Deodorant

By Dr Laura Stark ND

After a long quest of trialing many "natural" deodorants which either did absolutely nothing, caked up my armpits, stained my clothes, or still had questionable ingredients, I dove into the world of DIY deodorants. Now, don't get me wrong, I have nothing against body odour. I don't want to just cover it up. Our personal aromas help us to determine the people we are most compatible with! Foul body odour though is not that great to the senses. This odour is not from our sweat, but from the bacteria on our skin that feeds on it. A toxic diet and wearing clothes made of synthetic materials makes this foul body odour much worse. So, cleaning up from the inside and out is the path toward blissful BO!

Sometimes, especially in the upcoming heat of summer, our pits need a little help staying sweet. This recipe has proved its power in keeping pits fresh while wearing synthetics, neutralizing already stinky pits, and being easy on skin and clothes.

Ingredients:

Witch Hazel extract (1 part)
Baking soda (1 part)
Essential oils (20-30 drops)

The most difficult part for me was finding an appropriate container. A spray bottle becomes quickly clogged with baking soda, so I found bottles with an applicator brush that keep hands clean and do the trick nicely.
Fill bottle half full with witch hazel extract then add in baking soda until saturated. Add 20-30 drops of essential oil as desired. 10 drops of an anti-microbial oil such as eucalyptus, tea tree, lavender, frankincense, etc.
Sandalwood is an especially good oil for pits, and citrus scents tend to combine well with the stronger anti-microbials.

Dr. Stark's Simple Clean Deodorant – DIY or have me make some for you.
Made with witch hazel extract, baking soda and essential oils to keep pits fresh without toxic ingredients.

- Bottles to make your own for $2.
- With witch hazel and baking soda to add your own oils for $5.
- Or have me complete your bottle with an essential oil blend for $8. ♥

To screen or not to screen: the facts about sunscreen

By Dr Allison Ziegler ND

It's a hot summer day – not a cloud in the sky or a breeze in the air. You decide to take a trip to the beach to bask in the sun and enjoy the warmth of the day. In preparation, you grab your beach bag and fill it with all the beach necessities - towel and bathing suit, a water bottle, some snacks, sunglasses and hat. Before you leave you decide to lather on the sunscreen as the morning news indicated a high UV index. All prepared for the day, you make your journey to the beach unaware that the "safety" benefits listed on your sunscreen and what it contains may be causing more harm than good.

Sunscreen has long been known as the protective mechanism against sunburns, skin cancer and declining skin health. More recently we know that beyond preventing sunburns, there is little known about the safety and efficacy of sunscreen. In 2011, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which is responsible for regulation of products, released sunscreen regulations; however, they still allow the products to contain potentially hazardous ingredients and make exaggerated claims. As a result, it is important to understand what to look for when selecting sunscreen products.

Getting the Facts:

Vitamin A

The common form of vitamin A added to sunscreens is retinyl palmitate. Vitamin A is a popular anti-oxidant used in skin products in order to prevent or slow skin damage and aging. The FDA has recently conducted a study that showed in the presence of sunlight, topical application of retinyl palmitate increases the development of cancerous skin lesions. It is thought that when vitamin A is exposed to sunlight, free radicals are formed,

which damage skin cells and predispose them to cancer development. This becomes an issue with the vitamin A content in sunscreens as opposed to other skin care products because of the vast sunlight exposure endured while wearing sunscreen. Furthermore, claims made by sunscreen products that they protect against skin cancer become a concern; as such products may in fact increase risk of skin cancer development.

Oxybenzone

Oxybenzone is added to sunscreen to absorb UV-B and UV-A rays; however, it is known to penetrate the skin and can lead to development of allergies and disrupt hormone balance. It is strongly urged to avoid use of oxybenzone containing products especially in children because of the hormone disrupter properties.

SPF

SPF, or Sun Protection Factor, of sunscreen is a measure of effectiveness of the sunscreen, meaning that the higher the SPF, the more protection against UV-B radiation. The FDA has prohibited companies from indicating SPF 50+ because there is lack of evidence that 50+ exhibits any additional protection and in fact may promote people to stay in the sun longer, thus increasing radiation exposure and damage. Despite the FDA's efforts, companies continue to advertise SPF50+.

UV-A & UV-B Protection

UV-A and UV-B radiation are both responsible for skin damage; however, many conventional sunscreens do not protect against UV-A rays. UV-B rays only penetrate the outer skin layer and are primarily responsible for causing sunburns and non-melanoma skin cancer. UV-A rays penetrate deep into the skin to cause DNA damage increasing the risk of malignant melanoma. The sunscreens labeled as "broad-spectrum" are designed to block both UV-A and UV-B; however, many do not contain the ingredients to actually protect against the UV-A rays.

Form

Sunscreens in the form of liquid or powder should be avoided because the health effects due to inhalation have not been investigated. Additionally, sunscreens containing bug spray should be avoided and applied separately if needed.

What to Choose

Mineral sunscreens tend to be the safest and effective choice. Mineral sunscreens (zinc and titanium) are stable in sunlight, do not penetrate the skin and tend to be the most effective at blocking UV-A radiation. Those who do not like mineral sunscreens are encouraged to try sunscreens with 3% avobenzone and products without oxybenzone (for reasons listed above).

Sun protection is important; however, sunscreen should not be the first-line protection mechanism. Use of protective clothing, hats, sunglasses and monitoring time of direct sun exposure are primary in reducing the risk of skin damage and skin cancer. Selecting a sunscreen more carefully can aid in the protection but should not be the sole action to do so.♥

Sun Protection from the Inside Out

By Dr Laura Stark ND

A number of months ago while researching the use of grapeseed extract topically for healing damage from radiation therapy, I came across and an interesting idea that has become my summer self-experiment: using grapeseed extract internally and topically as sunburn prevention and treatment. This potent antioxidant nutrient helps our body to recycle the vitamin C in our skin back into its reduced (unoxidized) form in order to repair the damage from the sun's radiation.

I have had more than one second degree sunburn to my nose and every summer thereafter, my first day of any significant sun exposure leads to a big red blister on my nose that refuses to heal all summer. My strategy thus far has been to try to remember before I get the blister and use my SPF 60 toxin laden sunscreen religiously on my nose all summer once I do, to protect from further damage.

Last year, I started taking Nasobih Nutra-caps in April. Nasobih is a high quality grapeseed extract and the Nutra-caps include the synergistic antioxidants resveratrol, vitamin C and citrus bioflavonoids. I bike to work and have major yard work to do this year, so the regularity of my sun exposure is greatly increased this year compared to the last 6 years which had only one or two good sun days to create my nose blister. The big test came the weekend Chaun (my other half) and I finished constructing our hugelculture garden (you should look up this cool permaculture idea by the way). We got roasted that day with nearly 12 full hours of work out in the sun that Saturday. I woke up on Sunday morning with my nose blister. I had double dosed my grapeseed Nutra-caps on Saturday and I triple dosed them on Sunday and started applying Nasobih Nutra-cream (the topical version) on my nose before going out in the sun and at the end of the day. We spent about 5 hours in the sun on Sunday and on Monday morning I woke up with NO NOSE BLISTER! It was gone - completely healed in one day even with continued sun exposure. In the weeks that followed, the burn I received on my shoulders that first day never peeled as I would have expected it to. Chaun sure peeled (acting as my non-grapeseed control group). I was shocked and thrilled. I have continued this summer without a nose blister through our fence building project as well! My pale Irish skin is more tanned than it has been in years, my vitamin D levels must be glorious, and I am revelling in the life-giving sun rather than hiding away in the shade!

Now, this summer, I have had a full year of taking grapeseed extract regularly. I switched to a higher dose capsule by NFH which gives me 500mg in one capsule daily. I've had a couple of days so far this summer that I've preventatively put the Nasobih grapeseed cream on my nose, but nothing close to getting a burn so far! I haven't had any overwhelming doses of sunshine yet – evidenced by the height of the weeds growing on my hugelculture – but have been tanning wonderfully which is a lovely change from my typical summer sun woes. Chaun on the other hand has had one big day of working in the yard with his shirt off and his back to the sun for 6 hours. Chaun has not been using any grapeseed. He was fried to a crisp. To help him heel, I mixed the Nasobih cream in some vitamin C lotion since we had such a large area to cover. We let that absorb in then sealed it in with a coat of aloe gel. I also had him take about 2g of grapeseed extract capsules that night. This took away all the pain and itchiness he had, but in a couple days his back did still blister and peel. The interesting part was that the skin below the blisters was not at all raw like we would have expected. Perhaps one big acute dose of grapeseed topically and internally can make a difference in repairing sunburn damage, but I'm certainly sticking with my preventative medicine! My faith in the resilience of the human body is once again re-affirmed. Humans co-existed harmoniously with the sun long before sunscreen was invented and certainly even long before we wore protective clothing. I firmly believe that when our bodies have the nutrients and other resources it requires for optimal functioning, we can be perfectly resilient to our environment – healing what needs to be healed and growing to overcome what needs to be overcome. I think this is one of those perfect examples – if the body has sufficient antioxidant nutrition, it is able to repair and compensate for the oxidant damage our skin receives from the sun!♥