



Reflections

It has been an amazing year of learning for me. This issue I offer a peek behind the scenes of the experiences that are shifting my approach to nutrition.

A big chunk of my 30+ years as a dietitian was in management, so when I felt called to start something new, I had a lot of catching up to do. I trained as a life coach, and started reading nutrition journals and books as I launched my own business. Those first few years I really focused on catching up with current nutritional concepts.

Soon I was interested in learning more about the newest research and alternative approaches, and was looking for a credible source. I found that in a group of dietitians, physicians and others practicing Functional Medicine. In January I attended a 4-day conference called Food as Medicine, and since then I've taken 1-2 webinars (online seminars) a month. My new education was launched!

I also started working one day a month in the office of a group of gastrointestinal (GI) physicians. I do nutrition consults for their patients with Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Inflammatory Bowel, Celiac disease, and all kinds of interesting GI conditions. I have learned so much, including how to work with common problems like constipation, diarrhea, abdominal pains, gas and bloating. What we eat really is important!

The more I learn about the gut, the more I'm convinced that a healthy gut plays a critical role in our overall health. And sure enough, some of the newest research even links weight gain to the types of bacteria in our gut.

Other ways I continue to learn are through a Nutrition Study group and talks. I've spoken to two physician groups this year—about healthy fats and vitamin D—and have given many other talks to various groups.

I also think I'm becoming a foodie! My farm box and the Farmers Market keep me trying new veggies and learning new cooking techniques. I have significantly cut back the animal proteins in my diet. I'm not vegetarian, but most of my meals are vegetarian now. My own diet keeps improving.

I will be recording a CD on mindful eating in the next few weeks – so that should be available soon. And I have other fun projects lined up for next year.

This year I have really rediscovered my passion in food and nutrition. I've learned so much – *and* there is so much more to learn. I truly love what I do.



Finding the Eye of the Storm

Some of us humans spend a lot of time wishing things were different than they are. I often feel over-committed and overwhelmed this time of year, and wish I could slow down and do less. Wishing things were different takes up a lot of energy and is a waste of time, but what can we do?

We can plan ahead and change our expectations, which helps us choose the activities and level of busyness that we'll enjoy the most. Yet even with planning, we can still end up feeling like we are in a storm of activity. That's when it helps to find the quiet spot in the eye of the storm.

One way to do this is to focus on what you appreciate the most. If you send cards, focus on the connection you are making with friends. When going to a party or event, focus on the people you look forward to seeing, the beautiful decorations – all that you enjoy most about the event. Focusing on what you enjoy is a way of bringing awareness to your activities and to make them more nourishing. It's going with the flow.

Another way to find the eye of the storm is to be fully present with what you are doing. Put down your expectations of what *should* be happening. Put down thoughts of what is still left to do or what you could/should be doing instead. You are here, doing this: so get the full experience of it.

Be willing to let things go. So often we take on more than we can truly manage. You can make yourself crazy trying to squeeze 10 things into a space that is just big enough for 5 things; or you can choose which 5 are the most important.

When you find the eye of the storm, you are not trying to control the situation or make it less crazy. You find your peace within it. *Wishing you a joyful holiday season, and may you find your peace and savor every moment!*

Recipes for the Month

[Winter Squash Soup](#)

[Chilies Stuffed with Squash](#)

[Quick Chicken Cassoulet](#)

Click the links to the recipe, or find them on

my blog at www.HealthyHabitsCoach.wordpress.com.



Want help setting up your healthy new year?

As you reflect on your 2009 experiences and think of your goals for 2010, let me help! Contact me at 707 431-7524 or kathy@HealthyHabitsCoach.com

Kathy Nichols: Life Coach & Registered Dietitian

Are you ready to stop dieting and looking for a way of eating that is sustainable, enjoyable and healthy?

Discover Wellness from the Inside Out!



Kathy Nichols is the Healthy Habits Coach. A nutrition expert with 30 years experience as a registered Dietitian, her life coach training and certification is through the Coaches Training Institute. Change how you think about food!
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