



## Seeing Things in a New Way

Have you ever wished there was a magic pill, something you could take to make your health better? So often we want to be fixed, we want it fast, and with minimal impact on our life.

At the same time, it is getting increasingly clear how much lifestyle choices impact our health. It doesn't matter how many pills we take—our basic habits still matter. Creating new, healthy habits is a journey. It is not fast; not always linear. It is gradual and transformative.

It is not uncommon that when someone first steps onto the path of lifestyle change, it feels restrictive. They are doing it because they *should* or even because they *have to*. They fear they will have to give up everything they like, and that they will lose their quality of life. But that is not what happens.

When you really explore your habits in an open and curious way, things shift. We experience the world through the filter of our assumptions and experiences. We expect certain things to happen: if the cookie is there, I'm going to eat it. But what if you suspended all that you *know*? What if you were able to step back and just observe? The more you are able to stay neutral, without judgment, the more you learn.

There is more than one way to look at a situation. For example, let's say you set the goal to avoid sugar for three days, and you make it for two. You may feel like you failed (*and that you will always fail*.) While it is true that you didn't achieve your full goal, it is equally true that you had 66% less sugar than before. That's significant progress!

Let's try another reframe, using the example of someone who feels the need to eat the cookie because it is there. There are several automatic assumptions to explore. What do you believe?: "I will eat it because I have no will power?", "I'm the kind of person that if it's there, I'm going to eat it?", "I have to eat it so I don't hurt anyone's feelings?" These unexamined assumptions may or may not be true.

What else can be true? Are you hungry? Does it taste good to you right now? Can you have it later when you *are* hungry and it *does* taste good? People experience a big shift when they tell me that they stopped eating, not because they are depriving themselves, but because they just weren't hungry. They shifted their perspective from the external cue (the cookie is there) to internal cues (hunger and taste.)

Sometimes perspectives change quickly—a whole new view pops open. Sometimes it is gradual. Sometimes we are too attached to our viewpoint to allow change. But generally, when you allow time and continue to pay attention, shift happens. You truly see things in new way.

## Daily Practice of Silence

We live in a culture that values productivity and action. And these are good things. It is also good to balance them with quiet reflection. Quiet time is essential, a time to check in with how we feel, what we value; to fully take in all that is happening in our lives.

Fall can be a great time to begin a daily practice of reflection. It is part of the natural, seasonal rhythm. The days are getting shorter. It is time to enjoy the bounty of the season, both from the fields and what we cultivate within.



The cost of not having quiet time is high: we numb out. It could be eating, drinking, shopping, TV, anything that will distract us. These are ways that avoid feelings, avoid integrating our experiences. But when we are numb (besides the dangers of gaining weight, spending too much, wasting our time), we are not fully alive. We are sleepwalking.

Reflection is a form of self-nurturance. By learning how to take time out from our relationships with others, and to sit quietly with our own thoughts and feelings, we are nourished. It can take different forms. Meditation is an excellent way to be silent and just rest in the moment. Other ways to invite the silence into our lives are prayer, journaling, sitting quietly in the garden, or walking alone and enjoying nature. Do what works best for you, but do something. A daily practice of silence feeds our spiritual and emotional hunger. Try it.

## Two New Classes

I will be teaching two series of workshops over the next few months. They are offered through the Healdsburg Parks and Recreation department:

### Food Strategies to Optimize Health

5 Tuesday evenings, beginning Oct 3 6:00—7:30 pm  
Second series starts Jan 2 5:00—6:30 pm

### Stop Stress Eating

5 Tuesday evenings starting Nov 7, 6:00—7:30 pm  
Second series starts Feb 6 5:00—6:30 pm

More details on my website. Enroll at:

[www.healdsburgparksandrec.com](http://www.healdsburgparksandrec.com)

## Kathy Nichols: Life Coach & Registered Dietitian

Health and Wellness Coaching and Nutrition Consulting.

Transform the challenges of stress eating.

Create a healthy lifestyle tailored just to you.

*Discover Wellness from the Inside Out!*



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Find copies of this and past newsletters on the website: [www.kathynichols.net](http://www.kathynichols.net)

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