

Abundant Splendor

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Abundant Splendor is a publication of Center Point Healing.

It is also the name of an acupuncture point on the stomach meridian. One source says this point can give a glimpse of the abundance of the universe, a connection to a plentiful reservoir, and the possibility that we can receive what we need.

It is about the vitality that comes from feeling full and nourished by our lives. My hope is that the information in this newsletter will help you take a step closer to living a juicy, delicious life!



Make Like a Tree and Drop Your Leaves

Nature is such a wonderful teacher. Every autumn we get a beautiful lesson in the cycles of life when the leaves on the trees change color and drop to the ground. As the leaves die, the trees begin focusing their energy on what really matters – the root of the matter, so to speak – to prepare for a restful winter.

We also have the opportunity to use this season to let go whatever isn't working for us anymore, to change our focus, to prepare for a winter of rest. This is a great time to clean out the garage, the closets, the basement, and to "clean out" old ways of thinking and habits that no longer serve. To reconnect with the people who matter most to us and to let them know it. This season is about embracing the abundance of the harvest, giving thanks for all that we have, and then letting go of what we no longer need.

Take a moment now. Sit up straight, hands in your lap, feet planted firmly on the ground. Close your eyes. Breathe in slowly and deeply to a count of four, completely filling your lungs with air. Hold onto that air for another count of four. Now, exhale slowly and fully to a count of four.

Keep breathing slowly and deeply. Reflect on what is essential. What are you carrying that can be let go? In the end, will it matter whether you carried around a few extra pounds, had the "right" car, computer or television, and never missed an opportunity to work more hours? Or, will you and your loved ones look back on your life to bask in the memories of time spent with family and friends?

Yard Sale It or Freecycle It!



When you start clearing out those closets, garages and basements you may find lot of stuff that you no longer need, but that isn't trash. How about a yard sale? By getting your neighbors together, you could create a wonderful fall event — a community-wide yard sale. Contact your citizen's association to get support. If you don't have a neighborhood association, simply

ask some of your neighbors whether they'd like to join in. Perhaps you can donate the funds raised to a local charity, or to purchase fall plants for the beautification of your community.

If a yard sale isn't for you, there's a wonderful FREE service that you can join called "Freecycle". It is a volunteer network and there is probably a Freecycle community in your

town or a neighboring one. You can sign up online as a member, and the service allows you to list items you no longer need. Other members of that local Freecycle group read the postings. Anyone who wants your stuff just emails or calls you to arrange a time to pick it up. It is quick and easy! You can find the closest Freecycle group to you by checking their website,

Slow Down for Better Digestion and Overall Health!

Quick – when was the last time you sat down to a meal with people whose company you enjoy and ate in a leisurely manner? That’s right, sat down...with people...enjoyed company...of loved ones. Has it been a while? Are most of your meals ”fast food” — not just eaten at fast food restaurants, but eaten quickly and/or alone?

A lot of “nutrition” information out there is focused on *what* we’re eating – fat grams, “good” carbs and “bad” carbs, lots of protein or not, organic or not, etc. What about a “nutrition” program that recognizes that who we are and how we eat are at least as important as what we are eating, if not more so?

Does that sound like a radical idea to you? Think back to the last meal you ate in front of the television, perhaps watching the evening news. Or a time you ate a rushed meal in your car because you were late for work. Or maybe the time you had a fight with a family member at dinner time. Did you experience any digestive discomfort after those meals? Did you actually taste the food or was it just going in as fuel to get you to the next thing on your too-long to-do list?

Your body is very wise and has been designed to adapt to all sorts of environmental cues. Our bodies are constantly surveying the landscape to make whatever adjustments are needed to keep all of our internal organs functioning as well as they can, to maintain a certain temperature and pH balance. In times of stress or danger, our bodies are programmed to save our lives by turning on

the “fight or flight” response, stimulating our sympathetic nervous systems.

What does that have to do with eating? As it turns out, everything! When the sympathetic nervous system is turned on, our bodies prepare us to fight to defend ourselves or to run away to escape the danger. That means our breathing becomes more shallow and high in the chest, blood flows to move the muscles of our legs and arms, and hormones are released that make us stronger and more aggressive. You may have heard stories of people being able to do amazing feats of strength to save loved ones, for instance. What our bodies are suddenly not focused on is digestion and elimination. Using energy to digest food is not an efficient way to fight off danger. Digestion can come later, once the danger is past.

Of course, this response was necessary when our ancestors lived in a constant struggle for survival against predatory animals and extreme weather conditions. How many of us have had to fight off a saber-toothed tiger lately? The problem is that our bodies haven’t had a chance to catch up with modern living. We’re still programmed to ‘fight or flight’, but the stressors of modern living aren’t easily confined to specific instances of danger and then times of calm or peace. Most people nowadays feel like they are constantly “stressed”. There’s bad news about crime, the war, gas prices, trouble at work, issues at home. Too much to do and not enough time to get it all done.

Research has shown that living under constant “stress” takes a toll on our health because our wonderfully wise bodies are working hard to protect us. Trouble is, the longer those stress hormones are circulating in our systems, the more damage they can cause to our hearts, our blood vessels, our kidneys, and our digestion.

If our digestive systems aren’t functioning well, eating a “healthy” diet isn’t going to prevent the bloating, indiges-

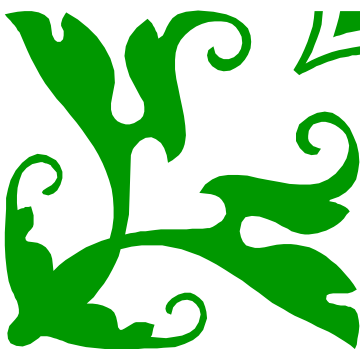


tion, acid reflux, constipation and/or diarrhea that so many people experience. We can also be fatigued, angry, frustrated or depressed and experience a host of other health issues (hair falling out, skin problems, etc.). That’s because our bodies are not able to absorb nutrients from the food we are consuming.

If you suffer from any digestive or elimination problems, try this the next time you eat (no matter *what* you’re eating) – sit down with no television, radio or reading material; if you can sit with someone you enjoy being with, all the better. Before you begin your meal, take five deep breaths, sending your breath down into your lower abdomen. Your belly should expand as you inhale. Remind yourself that no matter what else is going on in the world or in your life, you are going to take a break to eat. Take your time with the meal, taste and chew thoroughly. Converse with your friends or loved ones.

Notice how your digestion changes. Start practicing once or twice a week. If you notice positive changes, increase to one meal per day where you eat without stress. Make your meal time sacred by adding a blessing if you like. Let the contentious issues wait until later. Don’t talk about work unless it is pleasant for you to do so.

Slow down. Allow yourself this moment to just be present. There’s no saber-toothed tiger crouching outside the dining room door.



Grand Opening of Center Point Healing, September 2006

I am delighted to have moved in to University Town Center in Hyattsville, Maryland!! The office is located in a beautiful building two blocks from Metro and is also accessible by car and bus.

Look for me on the World Wide Web later this month at www.CenterPointHealing.com. My wonderful website was designed by Joan Martinez, who lives in Hyattsville. On it you'll find a description of the services I offer, electronic copies of my newsletters, class offerings, and recipes.

I have a large, comfortable space and will be hosting many programs in addition to providing acupuncture and holistic health counseling. During the month of September, mention this newsletter and receive **50%** off your first acupuncture treatment!

On September 11th, I will be offering a community acupuncture clinic for police, firefighters and other public service employees. To register, send an email to Register@CenterPointHealing.com, or call (301) 277-9020.

On September 14th from noon until 7:00 p.m., I will be hosting an Open House with an acupuncture demonstration, tours of the office, prize drawings, and refreshments. Please stop in to see me.

Starting September 18th, I will be offering a drop-in space for free stress-reduction treatments on Monday mornings and lunchtimes.

Watch the website for these upcoming programs — Sugar Blues class and a ***NEW*** Smoking Cessation Program!

Recipe Corner: Butternut Barley Risotto

This warm, nourishing dish is rich in beta-carotene, potassium and fiber! Plus, it's delicious!

Ingredients:

1 butternut squash (1 1/2 pounds),
peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch
pieces
3 TBSP olive oil
1 onion, cut into 1/4-inch dice
1 cup diced plum tomatoes
5 cups hot chicken or vegetable broth
1 cinnamon stick
1 cup whole-grain barley, soaked over-
night **OR** 1 cup pearly barley
4 TBSP chopped parsley
Salt and pepper to taste

Method:

1. The night before making this dish, measure barley into a bowl, squeeze in one TBSP of lemon juice or apple cider vinegar, then cover with warm water.
2. When ready to proceed, rinse barley well.
3. Warm the stock with cinnamon stick, simmering for about 5 minutes.

4. Blanch the squash in boiling, salted water until just tender, about 3 minutes. Drain and reserve.
5. Place the oil in a heavy pot over low heat; add the onion and cook until tender, stirring, about 10 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook, stirring, another 2 minutes.
6. Stir barley into the onion mixture, stirring to coat well.
7. Stir about 1/2 cup of the hot broth into the barley mixture; cook, stirring frequently, until it has been absorbed.
8. Repeat, making sure each addition of the stock is fully absorbed before adding more.
9. Once the barley is tender and most of the broth has been used, discard the cinnamon stick.
10. Carefully fold in the reserved butternut squash along with 2 TBSP of the parsley. Cook about 1 minute more, then season to taste with salt and pepper.
11. Serve immediately, garnished with the remaining parsley.

Enjoy!!

Want more?

For more recipes, a six-month plan to learn what foods and lifestyle habits will have you feeling and looking GREAT, and how to have fun cooking and eating — contact me!





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Wellness for body, mind and spirit

Contact me to find out how
acupuncture, food and lifestyle changes
can help you feel great!

Wild Geese
---Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
 You do not have to walk on your knees
 for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.
 You only have to let the soft animal of your body
 love what it loves.

Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
 Meanwhile the world goes on.
 Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain
 are moving across the landscapes,
 over the prairies and the deep trees,
 the mountains and the rivers.

Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,
 are heading home again.

Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
 the world offers itself to your imagination,
 calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting –
 over and over announcing your place
 in the family of things.



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