



English Introduction to Flow Food

“Let food be thy medicine and let medicine be thy food” - Hippocrates

As a senior lecturer and mother of three, I experienced it overwhelming to stand at 5:30 pm - when I had just reached home - trying to figure out what to eat at 6 pm. Often, it was not as healthy as I would prefer. When I tried to find recipes - I did not have all the ingredients at home. I started making meal plans every Sunday, which I could use hours on creating. But it was so nice not to have to think about what I had to cook for dinner during the week. The purchases were in place, I had a plan and then it was just to get started at 5:30.

To diversify my dinner plans, it was a soup day, a pasta day, a "fast food" day etc. I used inspiration from the international cuisine – for instance Scandinavian, Mexican, Thai, Indian, American - to stimulate all senses and tastes from around the world. Ironically, the structure gave me more freedom in my life. Since my husband was a vegetarian and the rest of the family was not, it became natural to make dishes in two versions.

Although, I have always dreamt of having someone to make the shopping lists and plan a week ahead on what to cook *for* me. Since way to often I ended up with not having the energy to complete the lists, but reusing the recipes from the previous week instead. It felt like mission impossible some days. And how many cans of beans have I not used over the years because I never thought ahead to soak the beans the night before? I ended up with last minute plans way too often. Too much pasta dishes, too much oat meal and egg sandwiches, simply because I got overwhelmed after a long day at work on what to cook that was fast, easy and not too unhealthy. We always ate veggies to the meals, always something raw and with lots of different colors – but not the flow food that I wanted to eat.

Therefore, this is the cookbook I always wished I had at home in my kitchen. Where I don't need to use every Sunday on planning, creating shopping lists and think variation and health or feel guilty because I don't. Also, that the dishes do not take half a day to make or do not cost a fortune. So this Flow Food book is for you, who resonate with some of my issues and frustrations and want to eat good and healthy food that is easy to make.

There are studies that show that we often have a repertoire of max. 10-15 dishes we shift between. Habits make it easier for us and it takes less time. So to expand our repertoire without making it more stressful or difficult, we have structured the dinner plans in a different way; with a soup day,

a pasta day, a salad day, a rice or potato day and a stew day of everyday dinners. The weekends have Saturday night dinners - maybe with a raw dessert - and Sunday fast food for possible cravings or hangovers. Even if you will use this cookbook over and over, every month- you will probably eat more different dishes than you usually do, especially if you try the different combinations and versions.

Flow Food – Easy Organic Food on a Budget is for you who think it's fun - or at least a little bit inspiring - with health and cooking, without you having to be an expert or cook. You're more like me - it is nice and delicious with food, but it should not take too long to make, or be too many ingredients or advanced methods. It should be colorful, different flavors and texture. I am a bit allergic to dull beige colored food that is super sophisticated and takes forever to make.

As a former senior lecturer at Nutrition and Health in Copenhagen, I have had the privilege of having interns from the University College, who have put their heart into this cookbook. In a survey we started off with, we got information from some of you of what your needs and wishes are - to make your life easier to make healthier choices and what some of your favorite dishes are. From these answers, we played and experimented to create healthy and affordable organic versions of our own and your favorite dishes. We made dinner plans that are flexible and manageable.

We have not made recipes for the full day – let us start small with exchanging one main meal a day. The main meal is what I get stuck on the most personally. There are so many concepts and diets out there, but I'll find it difficult to find all of my families preferences in one recipe. We will have to substitute one thing or the other to make it fit into what works for us. So these recipes are made as an inspiration for you, not as fixed recipes that cannot be altered and changed. Feel free to bring out your own creativity when the urge comes forth and create your own favorite version of the dishes.

We have thought of several ways to use *Flow Food – Easy Organic Food on a Budget*. If you do not want to use a dinner plan - you can just find recipes from ingredients in the ingredient index. Or in the table of contents based on categories. We have created color-codes so you can easily find the recipes. We also looked at what vitamins and minerals dominating in every dish - so you get a top list of what recipes has the most of a certain vitamin or mineral. For instance; if you need more vitamin C in your diet, you can look into the chart and find which dishes have most vitamin C. Cool, right? This book is *not* about all the detailed nutritional benefits of the different ingredients. It is more a general overview of some vitamins and minerals. We do not count calories or the exact percentage of fats, carbs and proteins either. It is a general guide.

There is so much focus on how you get illnesses and diseases – what I would call fear based living -instead of focusing on how it makes you feel and if it makes you feel good. So, this is a more practical book with tips on how to add more nutrition in your daily life in an easy and tasty way – that can help you feel more alive, vibrant and good about yourself, without pointing fingers if you don't. We want to assist you to be the healthy super you that you are, without the hassles and negative attitude if you choose to say: “no, thank you”. That makes it so much easier to stay in the flow too. For me it is more about being conscious of what could be a supportive choice for my body, even if I do not do it all the time. If I allow myself to eat whatever I feel like eating – I do not crave and get obsessive about it. Then, when I communicate with my body, the body will choose much healthier than I would... So smart...

I am not a vegetarian, vegan or anything really. I eat what resonates with me, what feels good in my body. There are foods I prefer, but I have no rules to what to eat or not. If I feel like eating fish, I will. I believe it is important that we don't get hooked in *identities*, being vegetarian, vegan,

fruitarian – they are all just identities. Or eat what is so called spiritual, conscious or trendy food at the moment, but instead, really *listen* to our bodies. There is much more flow and freedom in our choices when we listen to what *we really want*. In general we spend too much energy preparing for the future, so if we can help you enjoy the cooking instead - mindfully in the present - staying in your body while doing it - we love to be at service. May you go with the flow and become a healthier, more relaxed and happier person than ever before. That is what this book is all about.

Survey results

We went out and asked, mainly students in their 20's, what they liked and preferred when cooking. Almost half of them cooked at home 6-7 times a week and another 37% 4-5 times a week. From those results we created four weekly dinner plans to assist you in your everyday life.

The survey participants preferred spending maximum between 30-60 minutes cooking, so our dishes will never take more time than that.

The majority spent between \$50-\$120/ week (300-800 DKK) on groceries per person and cooked mainly for 2-4 people. So our cheap organic recipes are for four people, within that budget. Those of you living in households with less than four, can have leftovers for lunch if you don't want to cut the recipe in half.

Most participants looked for recipes online or made up recipes themselves. The main reason was because it is an easy and fast way to get recipes. We tried to approach that through an easy index to look for ingredients and keep the recipes flexible and variable. We also worked on making it easy and fast to cook since those were keywords that came up almost every time.

We were happily surprised to learn that more than half of the participants were interested in a food plan, since it would make it easier to make healthier choices and to not waste food. Those who didn't want a food plan needed to be flexible due to irregular schedules and didn't want to plan a food plan. So we have done the planning for you, have flexible recipes and you don't have to follow the plan if you don't want to. You can easily just use the categories instead.

The participants' favorite dishes were a lot of different pasta dishes and lasagnas, woks, spring rolls, curry, salads, burgers, pizza, chilies, omelets, soups etc. So, of course, those are the dishes we have included. We have made cheap and healthy versions, with tips on how to change ingredients and flavors, serving suggestions and meat and fish alternatives. That was in fact one student's wish; if to follow a food plan – there had to be options to what types of vegetables and meats to use. We love flexibility and to go with the flow of what we are in the mood for, so why keep recipes one sided?

When we asked: "*what is the most important criteria for you when choosing a recipe for daily life cooking?*" The answers were diverse, but "*few ingredients, fast to make and from ingredients I already have at home*", were most common. Your wish is our demand, so we have tried to live up to that in this book.

Lastly, we asked about organic foods. Almost 50% prioritize to eat organic. For those who didn't, the main reason for *not* choosing organic, was that it is experienced too expensive. Some didn't see the reason for buying organic and a few didn't have a particular reason at all. This really showed us that there is a lot of conscious people out there who really wants to eat organic, but think it is too expensive. By creating cheap recipes we can help those who find that an issue. We have explained why organic is a good choice for those who wants to know too.

Hopefully we have succeeded to co-create more than a regular cookbook – but a lifestyle book with tips and information that is perfect for you and your needs and preferences - that will make your life easier and cheaper to live the life you want to live.

From Fibromyalgia to Flow Food Life

You might be curious of how this book came about? Well, I have always had an interest in health and food, so in the beginning of 2006 I started writing down some recipes and tips around health, since people kept asking me about what we ate and why. A few months into the project other projects came up and I never finished it. Although, I have used the recipes from that book draft, all these years. While living in Costa Rica - changing the breakfast buffet at the hotel we ran, finding new habits that felt good etc. That is where the Flow Food concept as born. The motivation in Costa Rica to start writing this cookbook was mainly from my own diagnosis of fibromyalgia that was eating me alive.

When I first was diagnosed with fibromyalgia in January 2014, I didn't know what it was. I had been in constant pain for over six months by then. 24/7 of pain, without a second of relief. It was a nightmare. I used to say that I prefer giving birth every day (I have tried that naturally three times) – than to have fibromyalgia. After some research I could see that symptoms I had for many years and thought was different diseases, could all be related to fibromyalgia. My main symptoms were fevers, headaches, chronic joint and muscle pains, oversensitivity to stimuli and nausea. My doctor's only suggestion was to take antidepressants (has to do with increasing your serotonin level) and strong pain killers.

I had mixed feelings around the diagnosis. From one perspective it felt good to have a diagnosis that related to all my different symptoms, instead of me feeling that I was always getting sick. I once had fever for three months. No one understood why. Doctors said it was impossible. Every time I tried to do anything the fever went up, forcing me back to bed. It was really hard to accept my inability to not do anything. Also, I thought I was going down with stress looking at the symptoms, but it didn't make sense why I would be stressed. So getting a name to it all was a relief.

What wasn't a relief, was the fact that it is a chronic autoimmune disease, they say only get worse over the years. Therefore there are so many suicides related to the disease...

I started to read everything I could come across about fibromyalgia; everything from what experts are saying and suggesting to alternative medications, foods, treatments and views on it.

Some of the views were that it is part of awakening Kundalini, or that your spirit doesn't feel safe in your body and therefore leaves. That makes your body interpret itself as the enemy and goes to attack.

Some of the diet suggestions are no sugar and carbs (which is what you crave the most), and no dairy products. Best choices are raw vegan food to sum it up.

Also the word dis-ease means that your body is not at ease (no shit) – so put your body and spirit at ease and then the symptoms will disappear. Few writes about *how* though, or has a simple suggestion such as meditate, do yoga etc. But I had done that for years so I guess that would not work for me.

I could feel a lot of resistance reading or hearing that I have created this disease myself. It was like hitting one who already lies down. It was criticism about the diet I had, which didn't make sense, since I used to work as a senior lecturer at University College for Nutrition and Health - so I knew my diet was "better" than most people, even if it was far from "perfect"(says who?). Or that it was because I'm so emotionally weak, since I had a depression in the past. It didn't make me feel better, only worse. "*Here we go again; I screw up, I'm not good enough, it is my fault*" etc. etc. And it didn't make me feel better to hear that I was doomed as a victim to an incurable disease either. So, what to do?

Our family moved to Costa Rica in April 2014, hoping the warm climate could help, which I read it could somewhere. Also, the beach we lived by was magnetic, which is really good for your joints. So there were all these things that could make the symptoms less intense. Which it did. But the symptoms were still there.

I didn't know why I had chosen to get fibromyalgia – what the gift was. I knew there was one, and that eventually it would become clear. I chose to see the disease as a part of my journey. I didn't see it as a permanent disease, but as a gift in disguise. I was not going to try to do a million different things to get *rid* of it, but more about accepting it was here, listen to what my body was trying to tell me and be with it. I was so sick and tired of all the doing, trying to change myself for the better. I wanted to feel good about myself as I am, with or without fibromyalgia. Less doing - more being. If I felt inspired to take action on something, I did. But I refused to force myself to do things I didn't feel inspired to change. I'm good as I am. Perfect, just as we all are, as we are.

I was so sick and tired of being fixed. I decided: No more fixing – because we are not broken. Instead, I wanted to accept and listen to my body. To feel a bit sorry for myself too when needed, just because I wanted to. And a bit because we are not "suppose to" do so.

The more I shifted my perspective of looking at my pain as something to escape and more into an instant healing taking place - that my body was changing and expanding – the less symptoms. The more I grounded myself and learned to discern when I was in or out of the body – the less intense symptoms. The more I listened to what foods and drinks my body wanted – the healthier it got – automatically and naturally. The fevers didn't break out if I listened to my body. If I say no to *force* myself doing things as much as I can, the fevers will stay down. I see them as a sign to take "me-time". My body communicate with me by giving me symptoms saying; "*Hey, you! Forgot something?*" So, I have learned how to communicate with my body and read its communication to me. That changed everything.

I have been more or less symptom free since January 2015.

I learned that if we don't identify with a disease and don't try to fix it – we can use it to expand our consciousness. Everything is a gift. Looking back, I'm so grateful for this experience. We have the power to heal, expand and change, when we stop thinking that we need to... Loving all parts of us - is really the key to everything. Everything is possible – even the impossible...

"Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm possible!'"

— *Audrey Hepburn*

So when people ask me how I came up with the Flow Food concept, my answer is – it is a work in process. It has been a long journey for me, creating a lifestyle that works for the whole family – that is flexible, holistic, non-judgmental and balanced. It is about *feeling good*. When we feel good about ourselves and the choices we make we are in the flow. Flow Food is for me a way of living where we are inspired to listen to our bodies, experiment and play with food and our habits, to

support our own journey to be the one we came here to be. You cannot get it wrong. If you feel you are stuck, or going against the flow – there is a gift in that too. So all is well. Healthy living is not a quick fix – it is a process. So instead of judging yourself for eating junk food or candy, give yourself a hug and say: “All is well”. Don’t be so hard on yourself. Allow yourself to make unhealthy choices too. It’s all good. It is more important to listen to our bodies. Start communicating with it. When we start asking what we want – we automatically make healthier and more conscious choices. It’s about respecting ourselves *and* the planet – since it is all connected. Keywords are: Communicate, respect, play, have fun and laugh – and you’ll have an empowered flow food lifestyle...

What is Flow Food?

Flow food is light, grounding and it is conscious. It is made from the heart to honor the planet and our bodies. The more conscious and aware we become, the more we listen to our bodies and we realize that some foods resonates more with us than others.

When we tried to find a shorter name for: *organic, sustainable, whole, vegan/ vegetarian based, easy, healthy, conscious, balanced, high frequency, alkaline, rainbow colored, something raw, sugar free and GMO free food*, we realized it all came down to **energy**. Everything, including us, is made of energy. The difference is the frequency of the matter. Some types of energy vibrate faster than others. We vibrate at different frequencies, as well as the food we eat. This type of food in this book is high frequency food, which means it vibrates at a faster rate and helps us stay connected to our hearts – to stay in the flow. Frequencies are just as radio stations – you tune into your favorite channel. I think this Flow Food channel is very juicy and yummy...

All recipes are made from this Flow Food concept as much as possible and available. That means it does not say “Himalayan salt”, just “salt”. It doesn’t say “whole grain” or “organic” this or that – all recipes are based on whole grain and organic products. It is embedded in the concept. When it says “sugar” – it is not refined sugar, it is the natural sugars such as honey, xylitol, palm sugar etc. When it says cream/milk or other dairy products – if you are vegan, feel free to use vegan versions such as oat, soya or cashew cream or milk substitutes of your choice. If you are gluten intolerant – there is a list of gluten free alternatives later in the book, as substitutes. Rainbow colored food is not calculated in every dish, but approximate over a week, just so you get a sense. Although, being 100% sustainable or alkaline might be a huge leap and therefore it is about making conscious choices, in a pace that fits you. Remember, it is an individual process and journey. Where the journey leads, is up to you.

We are very focused on ecology and sustainability in our family, as many are in Scandinavia. For instance, the EU commission has a strategy of increasing biodiversity and support the natural ecosystem in EU by 2020. Their goals are to implement laws around protecting nature, support and protect ecosystems and use of green infrastructure, sustainable farming and contribute to protect the global biodiversity. So this is our small contribution to be at service in fulfilling that vision. Therefore, it has become a natural part of *Flow Food – Easy Organic Food on a Budget*.

Now, let’s go through the different aspects of the Flow Food concept:

Organic

“Organic’ is a labeling term that denotes products produced under the authority of the Organic Foods Production Act. The principal guidelines for organic production are to use materials and practices that enhance the ecological balance of natural systems and that integrate the parts of the farming system into an ecological whole. Organic agriculture practices cannot ensure that products are completely free of residues; however, methods are used to minimize pollution from air, soil and water.”

- US Department of Agriculture

There are many opinions and studies that are in contradiction when it comes to conventional vs. organic and biodynamic products. Some say there are no evidence that it is healthier, others say it is. For me personally, it is just more logical and makes more sense that *the more natural the better*. How can chemicals be good for us? Just because there is no evidence for it, doesn't make it untrue.

Although, in 2014 there was a meta-analysis of 346 scientific studies about organically produced foods. The results were very logical in my world:

- The concentration of several **antioxidants** were between 19-69% *higher* in organically grown foods, than in conventionally grown.
- There were four times *less* **pesticides** in organic, than in the conventional.
- There are also 48% *less* levels of the heavy metal **cadmium** in the organic, than the conventional.

What are antioxidants?

Antioxidants are natural and can prevent or slow cell damage. An “antioxidant” is *not* a substance - it's a behavior. Any compound that can donate electrons and counteract free radicals has antioxidant properties. Natural antioxidants are mainly found in fruits and vegetables, marine plants, and some seafood that eat marine plants. There are thousands of antioxidant compounds out there, but the most common dietary ones are vitamins A, C, and E, beta-carotene, and lycopene.

What are pesticides?

In general, a pesticide is a chemical or biological agent (such as a virus, bacterium, antimicrobial or disinfectant) that deters, incapacitates or kills pests. Target pests can include insects, plant pathogens, weeds, birds, mammals and fish etc. that destroy property or spread disease. Although pesticides have benefits, they also have big drawbacks, such as potential toxicity to humans and other species. Studies have for instance shown that pesticides can have an inhibitory effect on children's development – both the hormonal- and nervous system. Well, it does kill animals, so how can it not harm humans?

What is cadmium?

Cadmium is an extremely toxic metal commonly found in industrial workplaces. Cadmium is also found in some industrial paints and may represent a hazard even when only sprayed or removed. Plants take up cadmium from its roots and there is often cadmium in grains, oily seeds and vegetables such as potatoes. Meat – especially kidney – also often contains cadmium. It is mainly in the kidneys and liver cadmium is collected in the body, causing kidney problems over time.

On the average, organic food is 25% more nutritious in terms of vitamins and minerals than products derived from industrial agriculture. That can be converted into that you should eat 1-2 times more conventionally grown fruits and vegetables to get the same nutritional value as if you eat organically grown. If I'm calculating this correctly, that would mean it is cheaper to eat

organically produced products in the long run, since you would need to eat *less* for the same nutritional value. Since on the average, organic food's shelf price is only 20% higher than conventional food, this makes it *cheaper*, gram for gram, than conventional food, even ignoring the hidden costs (damage to health, climate, environment, and government subsidies) of industrial food production.

Additionally:

- Organic foods are **free of neurotoxins**—toxins that are damaging to brain and nerve cells. Many pesticides are still considered neurotoxins.
- Organic products reduce pollution in our drinking **water** and are **earth-supportive**.
- Most organic food simply **tastes better** and has **more flavor** than the conventionally grown - that also contains more water. In other words, you pay for more nutrition and less water when you buy organic.
- Organic food is **not exposed to gas-ripening** like some non-organic fruits and vegetables, such as bananas. Research has shown that monkeys at zoo will peel the bananas if they are conventionally grown and eat the whole banana if it is organic – so maybe we should learn from the monkeys?

Sustainable

Sustainable living is a *lifestyle* – where we reduce our carbon footprint and support the Earth's natural resources. We look at transportation, energy consumption and diet. We try to buy local products, use alternative energy sources such as solar energy and eat more raw food. It is about natural balance and respect for nature and a symbiotic relationship with nature's ecology and cycles. We want to protect the environment by not doing harm. The food should be healthy not only for us, but also for the environment. It does not just create more flow for us, but also for the planet.

Sustainability could be defined as an ability or capacity of something to be maintained or to sustain itself. It's about taking what we need to live now, without jeopardizing the potential for people in the future to meet their needs. If an activity is said to be fully sustainable, it should be able to continue forever.

Unsustainable activities could be extinction of some species of animals, often due to the activities of humans. Or at home, the amount of packaging you put in the bin that has to go into landfill – and not recycled.

Living sustainably is also about living within the means of our natural systems (environment) and ensuring that our lifestyle doesn't harm other people (society and culture). It's a big idea to get your head around, for all of us. It's really about thinking about where your food, clothes, energy and other products come from and deciding whether you should buy and consume these things. For example, you can buy imported fruits and vegetables from other countries to use in your home, but do you know enough about the rules in place in those countries to prevent animals from being harmed during the harvesting process? Or, do the local indigenous people support the harvesting? Or, how much they get paid?

For us is living sustainable to be conscious and aware of the choices we make. It might be more sustainable to take the train instead of the airplane, and here we have to make a choice. Shall we never travel to faraway places because we don't want to fly? Or can we donate some money to fly greener as a compensation? Or? There are no right or wrongs here, and therefore it is more about

being aware of the consequences of our actions and come at peace with the choices we do take. Balance again....

This book is not 100% sustainable – it is about creating awareness and making conscious choices around the lifestyle we have. In our family we buy imported fruits and vegetables, we eat super foods from around the world, chlorella, coconut oil and Himalayan salt to name some. To balance some of those choices we try to eat as much local, seasonal and organic as possible without having to eat only cabbage and potatoes in the winter. But the cabbage and potatoes we *do* buy – we try to get organic and local when possible. We buy fair trade – so we at least increases the chances of that the workers get decent work situations, and so on. Again, it is not to go obsessed here, but feeling into what feels right for you, finding your own balance.

Whole

Whole foods contain more nutrition, since it is unrefined and unprocessed. Foods that have been processed have no or little life force to nurture us and are often full of additives that are harmful or difficult to digest. The fresher and more full of life your food is, the more full of life you will be. Foods that are as natural as possible - whole and unprocessed – vibrates at a higher frequency than foods that are processed. No matter how consciously we process the food we imprint the food with our information (our unique frequency). So to keep the food as “clean” and natural as possible, eat whole foods. Whole grain, whole nuts and seeds, whole as much as you can.

It is about natural ingredients, cooking from scratch, with high quality products, which is harvest and produced with love. That makes it flow food.

Tip: At home we have cut down on the oils too, to make our food more whole. Sometimes we use for instance dressings with activated nuts and seeds instead of using oil. Many oils are healthy, even essential – but it is less whole. We get the oils naturally in the activated nuts and seeds, but even more nutrition packed.

Vegan or vegetarian based

Many people are dropping meat these days. The problem is that they do not know what to eat instead. So they become sick after a while. They only cut out the meat, without substituting with other foods to cover the nutritional value of the meat. It is important to know what to eat to have a balanced diet. Vegetarian or not.

We are not trying to say what to eat or not in this book. If you want to eat meat and fish – go for it! A big reason for us to choose to create a vegetarian base in the recipes - is budget. It is cheaper to eat vegetarian. You need your veggies anyway so you can't get around that part if you want to stay healthy. So our suggestion is: the days you are on a tight budget – eat the vegetarian version.

We have learned that we should have loads of protein and many are therefore concerned of getting enough when eating vegetarian. Keep in mind, that protein from meat, fish and eggs can't be assimilated by the body, until it is broken down into amino acids first. Amino acids are found in a variety of fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds as well. Some even say that 50% of the calories found in green vegetables can come from protein, so as long as we eat a varied diet loaded with whole foods, we are good to go.

Sometimes there is a lot of confusion of what it means to be vegetarian and vegan. Short explanation:

- Vegetarians do not eat any meat – from any animal. Not even from fish.
- Vegans have also cut out dairy products and eggs, as well as other animal products. In other words, everything that comes from animals.

And to be honest, I don't think one diet is better than the other. It is what feels best in your body that counts. Some people are meat eaters, others not. And it is all ok. I believe it is more important that we take a look at *how* we process and treat the foods we *do* eat. That we honor and respect mother Earth and what lives on her - eating fresh, unprocessed, living foods.

Easy

When life is easy we don't experience stress. Stress is the main cause to many diseases. The word *DisEase* means: “*not at EASE*”, as mentioned before. So the best way to not get diseases is to live life at ease, right? To not stress. It is easier said than done in the society today. We have so much pressure, so much “have to's” and “shoulds”. Trying to change our diet can add to the stress even if in the long run it is worth it. To remove some of the stressors we want to make it *easier* to eat healthy and consciously. Plan, making grocery lists, give tips and fast and easy recipes, is our contribution for an easy, non-stress lifestyle.

Easy also means *simplicity*. Keeping the food clean, simple and full of goodness is the key. Studies have shown that humans have a tendency to overeat when we are offered a wide variety of foods during a meal. So, by simplifying our meals, we will naturally eat less, without counting calories or worrying about portion sizes.

Also, easy means *fast*. The recipes will take between 10 min. – max. 1 hour in total – including cooking time (for the average cook...)

Healthy

Healthy foods can be defined in many ways. One is: “*Healing food, Health-promoting food and Nutrition*”. Any food believed to be 'good for you', especially if high in fiber, natural vitamins and minerals. But healthy food is also good for the environment.

Conscious

“I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness.”

– Max Planck, theoretical physicist who originated quantum theory, Nobel Prize winner in Physics in 1918

Consciousness is all that is. Conscious foods are for me high in frequency and also grounding. It is mindful and healing for the planet and ourselves. Conscious choices are what *feel good* for you. It could be choosing natural, organic, fair trade, local, sugar free – or all of it. It is an individual choice that is aligned with your values and beliefs. There is no manual of what is conscious for you – that is part of your journey to find out.

Although, cutting down on these things, *can* support your health:

- Meat
- Sugar
- Alcohol
- Caffeine

- Processed foods
- GMO foods, especially corn

Balanced

The recipes in *Flow Food – Easy Organic Food on a Budget* are in balance. The more variation - the easier it is to get the nutrients we need. It is not necessary to eat all the nutrients every single day - variation of approximately one week is fine.

In our lives we experience all opposites; such as good and bad, black and white, warm and cold, yin and yang. When the forces are in balance we are in the flow. Females are more yin and men more yang – but we all have both forces within. Food is also yin and yang. By being conscious about combining the foods - spicy and mild, hot and cold, high and low energy - we become more balanced and thereby more in the flow.

Balance is also about *variation*. If we only eat pasta every day – we are not balanced. If we let our habits control everything we eat and choose – we are not balanced. Sometimes we need to make a different choice to realign ourselves. Habits keeps the energy stagnated and fixed, but a new choice can help us circulate that energy and it can flow freely again. However, what is balance for me, doesn't necessary mean balance for you. So it is about you finding your own balance.

On the other hand, to keep the amount of ingredients in the food restricted is also important to stay balanced. Everything is energy and everything contains information. If we put too much information in the food we eat, our systems easily get over stimulated and overloaded. So it's about a good balance - variation, but not too many ingredients.

We also look at the balance of texture, flavor and types of food over a week. There may be, for example: Asian, Italian-, Mexican-, Scandinavian-, Continental cuisine, Eastern flavors - which offers tastes from around the world.

That is balance.

High Frequency

We tend to forget a very crucial part in the way we live. We tend to trust authorities and experts more than ourselves. When we start reconnecting to ourselves more and more, we also start to ask our bodies for what it wants. An easy way to connect and communicate with our bodies– and get into our subconscious mind – is to simply ask: "*Do you want this?*" "*Or this?*" until you find what resonates with you. There are different ways to “read” the answers to our questions, which should be asked as yes or no questions, by the way.

Try this for instance: Take a deep breath. Focus on your breath. Now, ask: "*Do I want this candy bar/ apple/ soda/ glass of water?*" – whatever.

The answer of what is a yes or no can be experienced in different ways. If you focus on your stomach area – your solar plexus: Do you feel like you're opening or closing? Some can have an experience of contraction in the gut area if it is a no, and an expansion for a yes.

Others use kinesiology to communicate with the body: You can for instance stand up straight, with your feet on the floor. Ask: "*what is a no?*" - and you might sway at a certain direction (back or forth, to one side etc.). Ask: "*what is a yes?*" and you might sway a different way. When we know

what yes and no are for us – we can ask any question that the subconscious can answer with yes and no - reading the answers by the sways.

These are super simple and easy ways to communicate with our body and the subconscious. And a great way to find out what is the most expanding choice we can make for ourselves. Those expanding choices are always at a higher frequency than the contracting ones. Going with the highest good and frequency = going with the flow.

One way to raise the frequency of the food is to express gratitude. So a simple: “**Thank you**” to the food on your plate, can honor and respect nature and raise its frequency. As I see it, we can eat more or less as we want as long as we bless the food and are grateful for it. We can raise the frequency by the *intention* we put on the food. Organic and healthy foods have naturally a higher frequency, which makes it flow more automatically. So, find what works for you and above all – communicate with your body.

Alkaline

These recipes are not 100% alkaline. They *do* have loads of alkaline products in them. For us it is more about being conscious of *how* and *why* we tend to be too acid, and walk towards a more alkaline diet, without being fanatic about it.

Alkaline foods are foods that raise the amount of oxygen that your blood takes in. The most alkalizing foods are raw green leafy vegetables, fruits and vegetables. The opposite of alkaline foods are acid foods. How much oxygen your blood can absorb is measured on a pH-scale that ranges from 0 to 14. A pH of 0 is most acidic while a pH of 14 is most alkaline.

The Right Acid - Alkaline Balance

Our blood is in balance when we're slightly alkaline: with a pH of 7.365. When our pH is too high or too low, we don't feel well; we can feel tired, gain weight, have poor digestion and/or get aches and pains.

Most people in the US and Europe are too acidic: they cannot absorb enough oxygen. That's one reason for why cancer, heart disease, arthritis and diabetes are epidemic.

Why are we too acidic? The famous four:

- Stress
- Toxins
- Parasites
- Food

Acid Foods List

- Junk & Processed foods
- Sugar - especially artificial and refined
- All animal foods (meat, eggs, chicken, fish, lobster, oysters)
- Grains - especially *white* wheat, rice, pasta, flour, bread etc.
- Some Fruits – especially bananas, blueberries, canned and glazed fruits
- Dairy products (E.g. milk, cheese, butter)
- “Bad” fats – especially *refined* safflower, sunflower, corn and canola oil
- Peanuts and cashews

- Alcohol and drugs

Alkaline Foods List

By eating more alkaline foods and drinks, we can help our body to heal it self from most diseases:

- Vegetables - especially raw green leafy vegetables.
- Fresh Herbs & Spices – e.g. parsley, basil, cilantro, cayenne, ginger, turmeric
- Fruits – especially lemons, watermelon, kiwi, apples, avocado, cucumber, young coconuts etc.
- Wheat grass – e.g. alfalfa, wheat, barley etc.
- Sprouts – e.g. alfalfa, mung beans, broccoli etc.

To put it simply – the easiest way to stay alkaline is to eat; more greens, fruits and vegetables – especially raw. That does not mean you cannot eat meat or grains etc. You just need to learn how to balance it!

Tip: A great way to stay alkaline is to take a glass of water with 1 tsp. baking soda a couple of times a day on an empty stomach.

Rainbow Colored

“Nutrients and phytochemicals appear to work synergistically, so maintaining a varied, colorful diet with healthful whole foods is a pragmatic approach to optimal nutrition.”

- Kathy Hoy, EdD, RD, nutrition research manager for the PBH

Healthy eating is a combination of techniques, one of which is eating a variety of fruits and vegetables that provide an abundance of color. The color or pigments found in plants are known as phytochemicals. The vast array of colors in fruits and vegetables represent over 25,000 phytochemicals. They have specific functions in the plants, but also exhibit positive benefits in our body. There is evidence that interaction between the colors provides additional benefits, so it is important to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables.

- **Red:**

Food sources: tomato, tomato products, red carrots, watermelon, papaya, pink grapefruit, strawberries, raspberries etc.

Red foods are filled with Lycopene – which is a carotenoid that provides a red pigment in plants and is an antioxidant.

Tip: Cooked tomato sauces are associated with greater health benefits compared with the uncooked version because the heating process allows all carotenoids, including lycopene, to be more easily absorbed by the body. To make it even better – cook it in a cast iron pan, to increase iron in your diet. Iron and tomatoes are good friends...

- **Orange/Yellow:**

Food sources: carrots, winter squash, sweet potato, yams, mango, peach, nectarines, apricots, cantaloupe, citrus, yellow summer squash etc.

Beta-carotene is a carotenoid that provides orange and yellow pigments in plants. It is a pro-vitamin and an antioxidant, and functions as vitamin A to maintain the health of the eye, aid in immune system function and is involved in the production of cells that form a protective lining of the lungs, GI tract, urinary tract, and other organs.

- **Green:**

Food sources: kale, collards, chard, parsley, broccoli, spinach, green beans, peas, cabbage, lettuces, herbs, zucchini, cucumbers, chlorella, spirulina, algae, alfalfa, barley and wheat grass, green leafy vegetables etc.

Chlorophyll is the most abundant pigment in plants and provides a green color. It is an antioxidant, and is studied for its anti-cancer and detoxifying properties. Green vegetables are excellent sources of vitamin K, folic acid, potassium, as well as carotenoids and omega-3 fatty acids.

Lots of seaweeds have chlorophyll. Seaweeds are the most nutritionally dense plants on the planet as they have access to all the nutrients in the ocean. They can contain up to 10 times more calcium than milk and eight times as much as beef. The chemical composition of seaweeds is so close to human blood plasma, that perhaps their greatest benefit is regulating and purifying our blood system.

- **Yellow/Green**

Food sources: Avocado, kiwifruit, spinach and other leafy greens, pistachios etc.

A variation of the green color category, these foods exhibit a richness in lutein.

- **Blue/Purple:**

Food sources: blueberries, blackberries, purple cabbage, purple carrots, purple potatoes, purple asparagus, red onions, red grapes, beets, eggplant, prunes, plums and pomegranates etc.

Anthocyanidin is a purple, blue, and red pigment found in plants. It is a powerful antioxidant in the flavonoid family. It is found in wine and is commonly used to help explain the “French Paradox” which is high consumption of wine, saturated fat, cholesterol, and low rates of heart disease.

The blue/purple hues in foods are due primarily to their anthocyanin content. The darker selections - as the darker the blue hue - the higher the phytochemical concentration. In other words; go for the more intense colors.

- **White:**

Food sources: onions, garlic, leeks, green onions, pears, apples, cauliflower, endive and bok choy etc.

Anthoxanthins provide a white pigment and are found in the flavonoid family. They are antioxidants and help in detoxification, killing cancer cells, decreasing inflammation, and preventing tumor invasion.

To sum it up: the more colors you eat per week – even the more *intense* colors you eat - the more likely you cover your nutrients. So choose as many colors as you can to create a rainbow of foods that are powerful, healthy and creates flow and balance in your body.

Something raw

Whether to eat cooked or raw foods is an individual choice, but every diet should include a balance of raw foods (salads, carrots, apples, etc.) so that you ingest living enzymes in your foods. A raw food diet is certainly closer to living foods, yet lightly steaming foods also retains the life of the food.

More than half a century ago in his book “Prescription for Energy”, Charles de Coti-Marsh explained:

“By eating live foods you create a live body. Live foods contain essential nutrients the body needs to create and maintain energy. Dead foods speed age, decrease ability, and decrease energy ... they are useless when dead...”

The best way to approach raw foods is to gradually incorporate more and more raw fruits and vegetables into your diet. If you are ready to move to a raw diet, choose a warm season to begin the process, because it is more difficult to give the body the fuel it needs through raw foods in cold temperatures. Choose according to your own body's needs.

Kids tend to prefer more grounding foods – eg. Cooked. Also, some vegetables release more nutrients when prepared with heat, for instance tomatoes, carrots and broccoli. So I’m not suggesting a fully raw diet – I encourage you to increase the living and raw foods in your life, one fruit or vegetable at the time.

Tip: Our recommendation is to eat something raw with every meal.

Tip: Activating and sprouting nuts/seeds and legumes also create more aliveness in your diet.

Sugar free

Sugar we often think of as; plain white sugar, powdered sugar, brown sugar, cane sugar, etc. There is no significant difference on health value on the various sugars. It is simply refined sugar with different texture and/or flavor.

Sugar is divided into different groups of sugars, mostly known are; sucrose, glucose (dextrose), fructose (fruit sugar) and lactose (milk sugar).

The desire for sugar is affected by several factors - including a physiological need for energy to muscle and brain activity - as well as several different hormonal releases in the body, which promotes good mood. The problem is that refined sugars have a similar chemical reaction in the brain as drugs and alcohol. One main problem with sugar and many junk foods is that they can cause massive dopamine releases. Scientists now know that sugar is more addictive than cocaine or heroine. The National Institutes of Health and the WHO have stated that sugar is harmful to the physical body. The evidence is mounting that sugar, NOT fat, may be one of the leading drivers of heart disease via the harmful effects of fructose on metabolism.

Though sugar in some form is naturally present in many foods, by itself, it contains:

- no nutrients

- no protein
- no healthy fats
- no enzymes

Sugars added to food during preparation and afterwards (sugar on cereal, in coffee and tea, etc.). Those used in foods (cakes, sweets, bread, soft drinks, etc.) are easy to forget we eat. One of the biggest negative effects of the intake of these sugar sources is that the calorie content of the food increases considerably, but without adding any kinds of vitamins and minerals. The sugar is therefore considered empty calories. Sugar contributes only with energy for the body.

Naturally occurring sugar as in for instance milk, fruits and vegetables are not as harmful to the body, as the added sugar. Naturally occurring sugars are not considered empty calories, as it is natural and contain protein, fat, fiber, etc.

The daily sugar intake is recommended to be below 10% of the daily caloric intake. This attempt to make sure that today's diet contains enough healthy foods and minimize empty calories.

5 tips to cut down on sugar:

- Avoid drinks with added sugar as eg. Sodas/soft drinks and lemonade.
- Do you have a sweet tooth? Choose fruit or dark chocolate (72% +) instead of candy. This gives you antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, while you get the sweetness.
- Reduce sugar in coffee and tea. If you cannot go without – it is better to have a little bit of sugar than the artificial sweeteners, which can have far worse consequences than natural sugars (don't even let me get started on that discussion...).
- For breakfast/snack time; exchange the fruit yogurt with plain yogurt, and add some sweet fruit and/or non-sugared dried fruits instead.
- Read the product labels to avoid foods with high sugar content. If sugar – of any kind – is in the top three of the product label – choose a different kind of food if possible.

Instead of refined sugars, use *whole natural sweeteners* such as; honey, xylitol, coconut palm sugar, maple syrup, stevia, or dried fruits such as dates, raisins or figs. That doesn't mean you can eat unlimited amounts. But when you choose sugars, these are to prefer.

Tip: I rather choose no sugar (even natural) in coffee, smoothies etc. – to then eat my favorite candy when I really want it. Or to bake with natural sugars such dates or xylitol and then when I eat out or is invited to a party – eat what I want and what is served. In other words – make a conscious choice of when you really want to eat the sugar – instead of prohibit yourself of it. If we say we cannot have it – the desire is going to take over. Allowing ourselves some sugar when the body says “yes” – then we feel the flow.

Tip: If you reverse your preferences and eat your fruits before your meal (or even better, completely separately from your meal), your digestive system will thank you. Sweet foods are quickly digested when eaten alone or before a meal. When eaten after a meal, they can ferment, causing intestinal flora imbalances while waiting for the other things you have eaten to digest.

GMO free

GMO is often found in soy and corn products. Especially corn has inflammatory properties, and eating it may cause physical inflammation, inflammatory emotional reactions, heightened states of fear, and addiction to eating more corn.

Here are four reasons not to eat genetically modified food:

1. **GMOs destroy the environment:** The repeated use of land for single-crop agriculture (monoculture) has resulted in dead soil that requires heavy doses of chemical fertilizer and pesticides to be productive. Significantly, GMOs were primarily designed to be resistant to powerful pesticides to encourage their use. These deadly pesticides are applied in heavier doses than traditional crops need and then leach into waterways, polluting everything in their path.
2. **GMOs are unhealthy:** GMO foods have undergone little long-term safety testing for humans, but several animal tests have shown negative health effects. Major studies verified that the substance used in most major pesticides including best-selling Roundup, glyphosate, causes birth defects and induced sterility in male lab rats. Studies pertaining to eating GMOs resulted in some form of bacterial gut rot and new allergies in the test animals. Eighteen percent of all GMO seeds (and therefore foods that grow from them) are engineered to produce their own pesticides. Research shows that these seeds may continue producing pesticides inside your body once you've eaten the food that grown from them!
3. **Unnatural genetic contamination:** Releasing any foreign genetic mutation into the wild can have unpredictable consequences. GMOs aggressively cross-contaminate neighboring organic plants, causing incalculable damage. A Spanish study found that GMO maize: *“has caused a drastic reduction in organic cultivations of this grain and is making their coexistence practically impossible”*.
4. As an additional motivation to avoid GMOs, you may wish to **take a lesson from the animals**. Eyewitness reports from around the world describe several situations where animals, when given a choice, avoid genetically modified food. These include cows, pigs, geese, elk, deer, raccoons, mice, rats, squirrels, chicken, and buffalo. Just saying...