



Saved By Food: How Healthy Foods Led To My Healthier Life

By Harriett Belue

When I was 27, I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. If you're unfamiliar with RA, it's a chronic, autoimmune disorder that causes the body to attack its own tissue and joints, as well as the eyes, heart and lungs. The inflammation caused by RA can lead to bone loss, infections, lymphoma, and a lifetime of medications and drug complications.

For 10 years, I took nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) as well as remission drugs such as methotrexate, antacids for med-related digestive distress, antibiotics for chronic sinus infections, and prescribed mouthwash for throat and mouth ulcers, all common to RA. In addition, I had signs of colitis and fibromyalgia, along with sleep issues. At one point, I was on Ativan, Ambien and Xanax for sleep, and muscle relaxers to make it through the day. Essentially, I was a walking zombie.

Concerned about all the drugs I consumed, I kept a log of prescriptions, symptoms, and issues. When my RA symptoms did not improve, my doctor suggested I try psychotherapy to help reconcile pain and emotions. What I discovered was my *life* was making me sick, and I needed positive changes to reclaim my health.

Regular chiropractic treatment and massage helped relieve inflammation, while homeopathy and flower essences eased RA symptoms and emotional stress. I started meditating, journaling, and through acupuncture, I gained an understanding of the body's energy and how food fuels that energy. Collectively, these modalities helped break the pain cycle so I could start making lifestyle and dietary changes.

Gradually, I stopped all prescriptions and, instead, devoured nutritional books suggested by alternative and integrative practitioners. I began rotating foods to isolate those which caused reactions in my body. Gluten, for example, proved a significant trigger, and omitting it made a huge difference in how I felt and how I digested food after years of RA meds. I vividly remember the misery of life before and will never touch gluten again.

Having a B.S. degree in home economics, I understood the science of food and nutrition. For years, I was unable to enjoy dairy products. After researching raw milk, I realized the way milk is processed causes my dairy intolerance. Not only did I find I could digest raw milk and cheese, but I found a husband in dairyman LD Peeler of Milky Way Farms. My success with raw milk reminded me that foods are always best in their most natural form, unprocessed with

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nothing added. More importantly, I learned the human body is our greatest gift. If we take care of it, it will take care of us.

Ironically, 17 years ago while I was on my quest for better health, I returned to my family's farm. Growing up on a farm, you associate food with business. My journey taught me food has the power to heal. I function best when I choose more natural, less processed foods, and knew others would as well. This inspired me to transform our farm produce market into a small grocery store, stocking the holistic foods I traveled many miles to find.

Today, my life includes rebounding, dry brushing, ionic foot baths, and regular exercise, not to lose weight but to clear my lymphatic system and eliminate toxins. The products at Belue Farms Natural Market match those in my diet—foods free of additives, preservatives, soy, and high-fructose corn syrup. Meats without antibiotics and hormones. Organic and local produce with supplements for balance. Our Market tagline is *Eat Healthy. Be Happy.* For me, these words are more than a slogan. They affirm healthy food can save a life. I know because it saved mine.

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