

Revelation from Beyond

A DREAM'S MESSAGE SPURRED DRAMATIC DIETARY CHANGE

by Necia Liles, Sebastopol, California

"I've been poisoning my babies." The feeling of terror hauled me out of what may have been a dream, may have been an epiphany. My toddlers were so new to this world, a world in which my kid brother was off earning a combat bronze star in Vietnam and I was joining every nearby peace march.

With the oracular voice still ringing in my ears, I leapt up, ran downstairs, and set about dumping packaged and canned foods into the trash. Born during the depression to destitute parents, I had learned early to never waste a single bean.

But that morning I knew that this... stuff!...was not really food. It was deadly, and I wasn't going to poison anyone by giving it to those who didn't know better. It was going right where it belonged, into the dump.

My husband shrugged and said, "Okay." We ate no meat after that, but we still endorsed the protein hype and continued to use dairy and eggs.

When our kids were nearly grown, we went on vacation without them. On a ferry, in the midst of a conversation about dreadlocks, my husband divulged that he was lusting for some Puget Sound salmon. He had to be kidding. It had been nearly two decades since we'd tasted meat. He wasn't. I tasted it. Hmm. After that, we ate fish or fowl occasionally, but never brought it home.

Warp-speed now to February 2013 when the oracle speaks again. On waking, I hear words pass from my mouth that had not gone through my conscious brain: "I think I'll go vegan now." I lived alone then, so there was no compromising. I made no promises to myself

or anyone else and had no idea whether the impulse would last an hour or a month.

I live near Santa Rosa, CA, and knew of Dr. John McDougall and TrueNorth Health Center, the fasting clinic, and I am blissfully grateful to them both. I didn't make appointments with them just then; instead I rummaged through my home library and found *The McDougall Plan*. Though I had often been impressed by their recipes, I bought two more plant-based cookbooks by different authors that day.

My health has always been reasonably good except for a cold now and then and often a visiting creak here and there. No chronic illnesses or excised body parts, but I had been diagnosed a couple of times as prediabetic. I hadn't bothered to find out what that entailed. My bloodwork was always "pretty good," but I often packed around 35 to 50 pounds of butter and cheese on my bones, and my energy was transitory.

Visits to a doctor happened when an injury or an acute affliction proved to be unfazed by my favorite healer, Dr. Time. My meds consisted (then and now) of a half-full, 12-tablet Bayer aspirin box with a pull date of 1998, but for years I'd been sapping my kids' birthright on supplements.

A week into the WFPB program, I realized my knee no longer nagged me. I'd been whining about something else, too, but couldn't remember what. My jeans, with no spandex in the waistband, buttoned with ease, in spite of my not having given a thought to calories or portions.

Okay. I could do this for another week. And another. And now it's been more than



eight years. My hedonistic taste buds are completely submissive to nutrient overloads, and I would not change my eating choices for a bushel of See's dark chocolate mints. It's amusing to have a lunch out with SAD-eating friends, who often will apologize for "tempting" me with their orders. I try not to tell them how smug I feel.

Recent comprehensive blood tests were declared "ideal." (Or, in the words of my doctor, "[expletive] awesome!"). He, who had coaxed me for years to occasionally eat fish, told me to just keep doing whatever I was doing.

Now I walk—with intermittent running—three to four miles every day, have no creaks, take yoga and water aerobics classes (when the gym is open), wear a single-digit size I haven't worn since I was a single-digit age, and take no meds or supplements, conceding only to a sporadic squirt of sublingual B12.

During this current planetary memento mori, many local grocers offer exclusive early entry for shoppers over 60. Last year, Whole Foods refused my entry. I protested, and the door monitor insisted on seeing my ID, suggesting that I might compromise vulnerable seniors in the store. Carded! At 82!

On a recent visit to a cousin in Alaska, her hunter/fisher husband offered me "the best salmon in the world." I smiled, but was not tempted.

Glad I finally found your magazine. 🌱