

food and mood

The quarterly
newsletter of
the Food and
Mood Project

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Living food

by Pat Reeves

What is 'living food', and how can it help your emotional and mental health? This article, contributed by nutritionist and lecturer Pat Reeves, introduces you to a fun and economical way of enhancing the nutritional value of the food you eat.

Living food is distinguished by its content of undamaged enzymes. This single factor is more important both for maintenance nutrition and therapeutic nutrition, than any other dimension of nutritional measurement. It is enzymes which are responsible for the complete and efficient absorption and assimilation of foods, in a form which the body can use to maximise efficiency and minimise toxic by-products.

A way of eating that is based on enzyme-rich foods avoids the processed and adulterated food intake which involves the body in a vast energy expenditure. This energy is required to extract the necessary nutrients and to process the large proportion of resultant waste, some of it toxic.

Mind and body

There is always a physical component to what is considered mental illness and most certainly the reverse is also true. Scientific research can demonstrate this tenacious situation between mental and physical health. Although there is currently a growing awareness of the mind/body connection there is still scepticism from some who insist that the mind and body are entirely separate, with one not exerting any influence on the other. This school of thought is actually stating that our feelings and thoughts which direct our emotional and mental health cannot be affected by the condition of our physical body.

It should really not be too hard to realise that what we put into our body affects the workings of our mind

I have been involved with people suffering from depression to paranoia, for whom when psychological therapy and a living foods programme were combined, these problems simply cease to exist. Although this may sound very far-fetched, especially when one is travelling the drug-therapy route, it should really not be too hard to realise that what we put into our body affects the workings of our mind. The chemicals we ingest, whether through drug therapy or those now unfortunately within our food and drink – pesticides,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...

FROM THE EDITOR



In this, the spring issue, we are thinking about the importance of eating fresh foods and what this has to offer our emotional and mental well-being. But more than just fresh, so-called 'living foods' – that you can grow in your own kitchen (no garden required) for just pence a meal – have the advantage of being packed full of mood-enhancing nutrients plus their magic ingredient, enzymes. Plant enzymes help food digestion but are destroyed by cooking. Those of us wanting to assist a weakened digestive system, or to reduce the 'allergic' load on the body, may use a plant-based enzyme supplement to support food digestion. In certain cases this may still be beneficial, but living foods have the advantage of coming ready-made with digestive enzymes *and* taste delicious into the bargain!

Also in this issue we consider a holistic approach to tackling addictions and (just in time for No Smoking Day) how food can play a part in quitting nicotine addiction. The limitations of over-psychologising an addictive relationship with food are also explored in the review of Susie Orbach's new book *On Eating*.

Eat well!

Amanda Geary
Food and Mood Project Founder

In this issue

Energy salad	3
News	4
Food and Mood conference ...	4
Wholistic addiction therapy ...	5
'I thought I knew it all'	6
Research bites / Letters	7
Review: Orbach's <i>On Eating</i> ...	8

Explore the relationship between what you eat and how you feel

hormones, additives – can cause the brain to react in a negative sense.

Brain pollutants

Once established on a living foods diet, the oxygen, enzymes and simple-to-digest nutrients from the living foods can help treat malfunctioning through nourishing the brain. I have found that in virtually all situations the emotional symptoms of mental illness are greatly exacerbated by pesticide poisoning, through ingesting pesticide residues in produce, hormonal imbalances caused by eating meat and meat products pumped full of hormones which results in a high acidity level. On a living foods plan, it is easy to avoid such a build-up of all these pollutants and enjoy a longer and fulfilling life of health and vitality.

Sprout your own dinner!

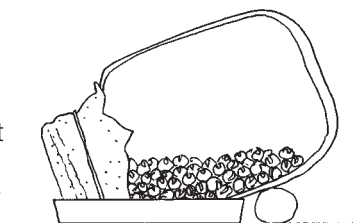
Remember nature studies at school where you grew mustard and cress in an old margarine tub? Well, living foods takes DIY sprouting to sophisticated heights with its own special sprouting equipment and intriguing recipes for 'milks', 'smoothies' and even 'cheeses'.

All year round you can enjoy freshly grown produce that has been cultivated with the minimum of effort on your kitchen worktop – and for just a few pence per meal!

- 1 Soak seeds, nuts or grains overnight in water.
- 2 Rinse, drain and spread over the tub or along the inner length of jam jar (use kitchen roll and rubber band to prevent sprouts from tumbling out).
- 3 Rinse and drain, morning and evening, for 2-5 days (depending on type of sprout) until you have a little 'shoot' approx 1-2cm long.
- 4 Eat the whole sprouts raw for maximum nutrient value or add, at the end of cooking, to soups and stews.

Kit yourself out

Make your own sprouting kit using foil trays left over from that take-out meal you had at the weekend and/or glass jars with a rubber band and piece of cloth or kitchen roll (see picture). Alternatively,



sprouting trays



sprouting jars

ready-made kits can be purchased from specialist health food shops or by mail order from the Organic Gardening Catalogue on 01932 253666.

Depression

If we look at one example – let's say depression – which, in general, results from three primary sources (1) lack of certain minerals required by the nervous system, (2) hormonal imbalances which weaken the immune system and (3) poor self-image. Conventional medicine categorises depression by the extent of emotional turmoil, but the other two sources also play critical roles.

There is no cooking involved ... living food is eaten, basically, as it comes

People who have strong nervous and immune systems are rarely challenged by depression. Some patients notice significant, positive changes in their personality in only two weeks and are thus enabled to take themselves off medication in approximately one month. This is obviously dependent upon their personal situation but, if the programme is followed meticulously, a reversal of the condition is assured. But I am not advising anyone to discontinue medication without being under the care of a qualified practitioner conversant in the application of living foods.

Outstanding results

Why does a programme of living foods – combined with caring psychological therapeutic help – give such outstanding results? Simply expressed, the components of living foods create the conditions necessary for healing to take place. This is a very different approach to conventional treatment which is symptom-based, usually resulting in the patient becoming dependent on medication, fearful to discontinue in case they cannot cope. Hooked on fear, without underlying issues becoming resolved, is hardly creating an environment for optimum healing.

There are six vitally important components of good health which cannot be obtained on a diet of cooked-devitalised food, and one which relies on meat, dairy products and processed foods. Optimum health and function requires the following:

- 1 Electrically charged tissues and cells which then have the ability to build strong muscles, bones and organs.
- 2 Uncompromised immune function.
- 3 Oxygenated blood so that the body's system, brain and organs are optimally fed.
- 4 A healthy system of digestion, absorption and elimination.
- 5 Sufficient enzymes.
- 6 A pH-balanced blood supply which is more alkaline than acid.

A living foods programme

The application of a living foods based programme embraces these six health requirements of health, both mental and physical. Embarking upon this healing nutritive eating plan requires one to not only, in some cases, consider foods which may have not been consumed

before – or at least in any sufficient quantity – but also to completely review their preparation.

This is really simple as there is no cooking involved! Living food is eaten, basically, as it comes. So we are looking at:

- **Organically produced** This is a necessity – foodstuffs such as fruit, vegetables, pulses, minor amounts of whole grains, nuts and seeds.
- **As fresh as possible** and put through an enzymatic process called ‘sprouting’. This is incredibly simple (see box).
- **Absolutely vegan** No meat, fish or dairy produce.

Depending on the healing required, a typical day for the living food enthusiast could look as follows:

Breakfast – sprouted oat groats/quinoa, topped with a seed/fruit mix

Mid-morning – wheatgrass juice, fruit

Lunch – vegetable platter with sprouted pulses, nori seaweed rolls, avocado dressing

Mid-afternoon – sprouted nutmilk/fruit smoothie

Evening – interchangeable with lunch.

There are endless combinations, but this approach does have to be tailored to meet individual needs, tastes and preferences. Just introducing a small amount of living food will be of benefit.

For latest living foods information and courses contact Pat Reeves at email: pat@reeves-online.fsnet.co.uk or visit Pat’s website at: www.reeves-online.fsnet.co.uk

Enzyme fact file

- Enzymes are protein-based substances found in every cell of every living plant and animal.
- Enzymes are catalysts which accelerate the chemical reactions that take place in the body, whilst remaining unchanged themselves. Life cannot exist without enzymes: they are what make the chemical reactions in the body possible.
- The names of enzymes are recognisable by ending in ‘ase’. For example, protease (for protein digestion), lipase (for fat digestion).
- The body’s ability to produce enzymes can be reduced through illness, injury, stress or ageing.
- Having pineapple with gammon makes digestive sense as pineapple contains an enzyme called bromelain which tenderises meat and aids protein digestion.
- Raw foods naturally contain enzymes but these are destroyed by cooking and processing.
- Enzyme supplements can survive the acid pH of the fed stomach (about 4.5 to 5.5) for some time and so can contribute to the digestion of food while in the stomach. Plant based supplements are available from the Nutri Centre on 0207 436 5122 or visit www.nutricentre.com. Also from Higher Nature (01435 882880) and BioCare (0121 433 3727).

Good mood food

Energy salad

* indicates the time required for sprouting

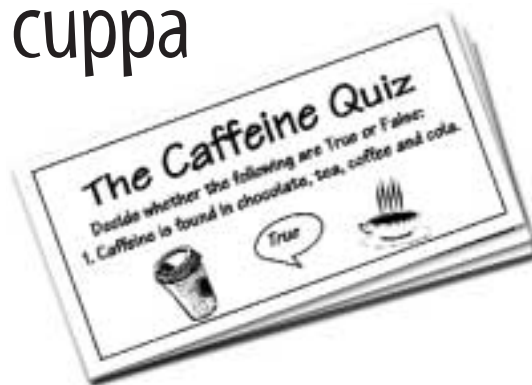
- 2 cups alfalfa sprouts (2 days*)
- 1 cup lentil sprouts (3 days)
- 1 cup mung sprouts 1/2 cup sunflower sprouts (1 day)
- 1/4 cup raisins (soaked for 3 hours)
- 1/4 cup wheat sprouts (2 days)
- 1/4 cup walnuts (soaked for 6 hours)
- 1/2 red pepper, finely sliced
- 1 sweet orange, peeled and divided
- 1 stick celery, sliced

Simply mix all ingredients together and serve with or without dressing, as desired.

This recipe is taken from *The Sprouters Handbook* by Edward Cairney. Also recommended is *The Sprouting Book* by Anne Wigmore.

BRIGHT IDEA

Quiz your friends over a cuppa



A host of interesting facts about the ‘most widely used behaviour modifying drug in the world’ has now been made into a handy, credit card sized leaflet ideal for a ‘quick quiz’ amongst friends over a cup of tea, coffee (or perhaps something stronger). Inspired by the Caffeine Quiz in *The Food and Mood Handbook*, Kim Clarke of St. Anne’s Orchard Psychiatric Day Hospital in Malvern reworked the questions-and-answers into a fun-sized caffeine awareness-raising health promotion tool. ‘The idea was that it is both informative and fun’, says Kim, who adds ‘I hope that this way people will re-read it and refer to it’. Copies are available priced 20p each or £1 for a laminated master copy for photocopying. Please include large sae and send payment to Kim Clarke, FOSA, c/o St Anne’s Orchard, Link Top Worcester Road, Malvern, Worcs WR14 1QH.

Herbal anti-anxiety remedy under threat

Kava Kava (*piper methysticum*) is the Pacific Island herb (featured in *Food and Mood* issue 2) that can improve anxiety with minimal side effects. It offers an alternative to benzodiazepine medication, but is now under 'temporary and voluntary quarantine' pending investigation into concerns over its safety.

The withdrawal of stocks from the shelves of health food shops around the country has been 'recommended' by the Medicines Control Agency who are looking into reports of 30 cases of liver damage in Germany and Switzerland that are associated with the use of products containing Kava Kava.

There are now an estimated two million women in Britain who are addicted to benzodiazepines

Arguments against what is, effectively, a ban on Kava Kava, are being presented by nutritionists and nutritional and herbal supplement manufacturers who are angered by the restrictions. They claim that the MCA's actions appear to be motivated more by the financial interests of pharmaceutical companies than by concern of the possible risk to consumers.

A risk assessment of the herb poses several problems. The reported cases are made complex through other factors such as the concurrent use of other drugs (which themselves have previously been linked with liver problems) or alcohol.

This reaction to the issue of Kava Kava's safety is sharply contrasted by the MCA's lack of action in protecting the public against prescribed drugs such as anti-depressants and tranquillisers.

The right to choose

Parents concerned about the possibility of a link between the triple MMR vaccine and autism in children may wish to arrange to have these vaccines administered separately. Unfortunately this option is not currently available through the NHS. The Breakspear Hospital, the private day hospital in Hemel Hempstead that specialises in treating patients for allergies and environmental disorders run by Dr Jean Munro, should be able to help. Telephone 01442 261333.

CONFERENCE

Let food be your medicine ...

A groundbreaking food and mood conference is scheduled to take place in London this autumn. Presented by Pavilion Publishing in association with the Food and Mood Project, it aims to consider the application of nutritional and dietary approaches for improving mental and emotional health in adults.

Speakers include:

Richard Brook, Mind

Alison Faulkner, Mental Health Foundation

Amanda Geary, The Food and Mood Project

Patrick Holford, The Institute for Optimum Nutrition

Paul Shattock, Autism Research Unit, University of Sunderland

Jan Wallcraft, Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health

This national conference takes place at the ORT Conference Centre, 126 Albert Street, Camden, London NW1 on Wednesday 18 September 2002. It will bring together a broad range of expertise and experience to provide a unique opportunity to explore this emerging complementary approach to mental health care.

Researchers and clinicians will report on their findings together with service users and support group leaders who are experts in the self-help approach. The day will offer a valuable learning and networking opportunity for statutory and voluntary sector professionals responsible for the mental health and social care of adults, as well as service users and interested members of the public.

The programme, which includes refreshments and lunch, also gives delegates the opportunity to gather in smaller working groups for seminars on a range of nutritional topics led by leading nutritionists working in the field. The seminars include nutritional approaches to:

Anxiety and depression with Kate Neil (Nutrition practitioner and Director of NS3UK's Centre for Nutrition Education)

Behaviour and criminality with Peter Bennett (Director of Restorative Health Co Ltd and former Superintendent)

Cravings and addictions with Margaret Moss (Nutritionist and Nutrition & Allergy Clinic Director)

Mood swings and PMS with Dr Marilyn Glenville (Nutrition practitioner and author)

Schizophrenia with Lorraine Perretta (Nutrition practitioner and author)

The day will conclude with all speakers and seminar leaders on stage to take questions and discuss issues raised during the day.

There are reduced rates for students and a limited number of free places for service users. For further details please contact Pavilion Publishing on 01273 623222 or visit www.pavpub.com.



Wholistic addiction therapy

by Barrie Anson

With National No Smoking Day on 13 March just around the corner, it seemed timely to consider how nutrition can help with giving up cigarettes. In this article Barrie Anson, a homeopath, nutritional therapist and hypnotherapist, describes how – when tackling addiction problems – a wholistic approach can prove particularly powerful. Here he describes his combination strategy for attacking nicotine addiction....

Nutritional therapy

I usually ask my clients to bring a list of everything they have eaten and drunk for an average three days. They would record the first thing they eat or drink on rising and then note everything they consume for the next three days. The very act of doing this can increase their awareness of the amount of sugar, stimulants and other suspect foods they subject their body to each day. If these foods are frequently listed, then hypoglycaemia – low blood sugar – or at least the danger of developing it soon becomes fairly obvious.

It seems to me that most smokers suffer from a degree of hypoglycaemia

It seems to me that most smokers suffer from a degree of hypoglycaemia. The act of smoking gives them a temporary lift but, of course, within half an hour or so the blood sugar level will have dropped and they will want some kind of stimulant to get them going again.

I think it important that smokers are advised to cut out or reduce their coffee intake, limit the amount of junk food consumed and instead try to present unrefined carbohydrate to their digestive systems in frequent small amounts.

Homeopathy

In my role as a homeopath I take a fairly detailed case history and to facilitate this I suggest they break their life into seven year segments. This might include illnesses, emotional upsets, family dramas, accidents, first experiences at school and so on. When the client looks back and reviews those experiences it is easier for them to understand just why their body might now be showing a few signs of strain!

After completing the case history I have a pretty good idea of the constitutional type of the person concerned or at least I know a homeopathic remedy that will be helpful to them.

Hypnotherapy

Hypnotherapy can be used in various ways. It is sometimes as well to speak about relaxation or meditation rather than hypnosis as the word is inclined to put some people on their guard. Clients do not lose control in hypnosis but there are so many misconceptions about it and some people do fear it. In the relaxed or meditative state the subconscious mind is much more accessible and it is a good moment to implant positive suggestions regarding the advantages of not smoking.

Barrie's tips for quitting smoking

1 Take steps to control hypoglycaemia – dips in blood sugar levels that can trigger a craving for a quick fix sugary or stimulant food or nicotine. [Chapters 7 and 8 of *The Food and Mood Handbook*, contains details of how to tackle this problem – Ed].

A preliminary study by Robert West of the Department of Psychology at the University of London found that glucose tablets reduced cravings for cigarettes in people attending a smoking cessation clinic. These results support the theory of a link between gluco-regulation – blood sugar control – and cigarette cravings.

2 At the subconscious level the body does know what is best for it. The key here is to encourage the smoker to silently observe his situation and not to make a judgement.

3 Against the usual advice my view (in the case of a smoker) is that it is best not to throw away whatever cigarettes the potential non-smoker has in his possession. Throwing the cigarettes away can cause a panic situation and he will buy some more or have to scrounge a cigarette from friends.

After a cup of coffee, when the phone rings, after switching on the television, smokers will perform the act of lighting a cigarette quite unconsciously

4 Most smokers are aware of the cues that get them to light a cigarette. For example after a cup of coffee, when the phone rings, after switching on the television and so on. Usually they will perform the act of lighting a cigarette quite unconsciously. The way forward is to make that action conscious. The individual should become very conscious of his body and with that heightened awareness ask the body if it wants to smoke. Curious as it may seem they may then hear their body reply to that mentally posed question – perhaps the lungs will wheeze or the body will attempt to cough? The obvious interpretation is that the body does not want to smoke.

Barrie Anson is based in Somerset but also practices in Hampshire and Dorset. His book *Ancient Wisdom–Present Day Healing* presents some unusual thoughts about complementary practice and true holistic healing. It is available at £8.95 including p& p. Please phone 01460 63238 for more information.

I thought I knew it all...

This case study is told in the words of Sandra, who, prior to consulting a nutritionist had been taking Prozac for six months. The last time she saw her nutritionist, she had been able to stop her medication and was saying that she felt better than she ever had in her life. She was just angry that no-one had told her about nutrition ten years ago – as she felt it could have saved her, and her family, a lot of misery!

OK I admit it, I am a bit of a food snob. Not a nice thing to have to admit, but I feel I must explain why it took me so long to even consider that my diet was the cause of my poor health.

For nearly 15 years I had been eating a low fat diet incorporating only the best organic produce available. I am that woman who bores friends and family with horror stories of intensive farming, the one who stands smugly in the supermarket queue with my full trolley, judging others by their collection of frozen cakes, crisps and fizzy drinks.

Slowly but surely, I had become increasingly out of sorts and overweight

In my professional life as a freelance interior designer, I ran around carrying wallpaper books, which are heavy to say the least. Recent projects had been the full renovation of two large houses and the landscaping of gardens. Constantly up and down ladders and digging should be enough exercise for anyone, but no. Slowly but surely, I had become increasingly out of sorts and overweight.

In the years before, I had undergone two major operations and had to deal with the stress of numerous house moves around the country with my husband and two children. After seeing numerous GPs and consultants regarding hormone imbalances and trying various prescriptions for PMS, I was then diagnosed as menopausal – at the age of 39.

I developed every symptom, including forgetfulness and lack of focus

In the following five years, medical advice led me to try combinations of HRT and injections. I developed seemingly every symptom of the menopause including forgetfulness and lack of focus.

Either I was losing my marbles or there was something very wrong

Suffering in this manner, in a way that added up to a constant hell every living moment, I eventually reached a point where I thought that maybe I was either losing my marbles or that there must be something very wrong. If none of those GPs could help me then I must do something for myself.

I bought a book on the natural treatment of hormone imbalances, gave up the prescribed hormones (telling my GP what I was doing) and took a few herbal treatments. Some months later I had ballooned to 12st 10lbs and my symptoms had become more severe. I had also reached a point where I was sleeping 12 hours at night and needed a few naps during the day. I was avoiding taking on any more design commissions, felt a complete nervous wreck and relations with my family were at an all time low.

So what did I do at this point? I went back on to the hormone treatment, felt great for about six weeks, and then the symptoms all returned with a vengeance. Reaching rock bottom once more and re-disillusioned with the hormones, I gave them up again. Now I had no idea which way to turn.

I re-read the book that I had bought the year previously and noticed a reference to taking nutritional advice. Still thinking that I knew all there was to know about good eating habits, I made an appointment with the nutri-

tionist at the local health food shop. Really I felt that it was going to be a waste of my time – and hers.

What a joy it was when I found that I was really listened to! Not once did she look at me as if I was a bored, middle-aged, hypochondriac housewife with nothing better to do than waste professionals' time with my list of innocuous-sounding symptoms. She was able, very quickly, to diagnose candida,* and explain to me the causes and effects. Instantly, everything fell into place!

I am regaining my vitality and my emotional and mental state has improved ...

Yes, the prescribed diet was – and still can be – hard, but for the first time in years I was hopeful that maybe I could find the old me again. The old me that was a happy and energetic person. Four months on, I still have the occasional bad day, but for the most part all aspects of my life have improved dramatically. I am regaining my vitality and my emotional and mental state has improved beyond my husband's wildest dreams. And as an added bonus I am now at the same weight I was at age 18.

With the nutritionist's help I have modified my diet and given my immune system the support it needed to heal by taking added minerals and vitamins. I am confident that soon all the remaining symptoms will have diminished, and that with my re-educated eating habits I will be able to get on with my life. Creating again to my heart's content and enjoying a much happier family life.

The nutritionist Sandra consulted was Christine Blakey, who practises at Abercrombie House (Abercrombie Nutrition and North-East Fife Physiotherapy), Abercrombie, Fife KY10 2DE. Tel: 01333 7390145 www.abercrombiehouse.com and also at Napiers Herbal Clinic in Edinburgh 35 Hamilton Place, Edinburgh EH9 5BA Tel: 0131 315 2130

* Candida Albicans is a yeast that occurs naturally in the gut but sometimes can proliferate so that the 'bowel flora' becomes out of balance. Treatment usually involves a combination of a special diet and some nutritional supplements, and may sometimes include antifungal medication.

Nutritional support for people with Alzheimer's

High levels of homocysteine – a breakdown product from protein digestion – have been found in people suffering with Alzheimer's disease. It is speculated that there may be a link between the body's overproduction of this naturally occurring substance and the degenerative disease which currently affects over 700,000 people in the UK.

Hyperhomocysteinemia – excess homocysteine in the blood – is associated with low levels of folic acid. Vitamin B12 and B6 are also thought to be important for keeping homocysteine levels under control. The fortification of foods with folic acid is suggested as potentially having a beneficial effect against dementia.

Leblhuber et al (2000), Hyperhomocysteinemia in Dementia, *J Neural Transm*, 197: 1469-1474.

- Fresh vegetables provide a good source of folic acid (folate) but this nutrient is very easily destroyed by storage and cooking. Particularly good vegetable sources of folic acid include: yeast extract, spinach, potatoes, chicory, brussel sprouts, chickpeas, asparagus, kale, broccoli, cauliflower, peanuts and sprouted mung beans.

Food and Mood Survey

The Food and Mood Project's *Food and Mood Survey* is now well under way. A selected sample from the Project's database have now received a Food and Mood questionnaire that asks for information and insights about the experience and the process of trying to improve emotional and mental health with food and nutritional supplements.

Participants in the survey have the opportunity to report on the dietary and nutritional self help strategies they have used, and also the apparent effects of the changes they have made. The full report, which will be available in the autumn of this year, will include – in the participants' own words – advice and recommendations to others who wish to adopt a similar self-help approach to their symptoms. A summary of the findings will also feature in this newsletter and on the website.

Shocking revelations

The *Food and Mood Handbook* inspired me to go and see a practitioner. I'm so glad I did as I have suffered from depression, low mood, irritability, PMS for years – and I'm only 28! The nutritionist did a series of kinesiology tests and found out that I have blood sugar problems, and intolerances to many foods such as dairy, wheat, gluten, corn, spinach, yeast. I was quite shocked by this. I started to avoid these foods and lo and behold my depression seems to have gone! If I accidentally eat one of these, I notice the difference right away – I become irritable and depressed. I am amazed! In the past, I believed that depression was mainly due to psychological reasons. There are many people out there that do too, and they need to be educated. If they were, I'm sure the world would be a better place!

Just to let you know, I am studying to be a nutritionist at ION and I can't wait to qualify and start helping other people overcome problems such as depression.

Julie Haslam, St Albans

The power of protein

I was one of the 'satisfied' (in many ways!) participants at your course in Brighton. Being a massage therapist who's studied food quite extensively, I thought I understood my nutritional needs. I realised on your course that I am not taking enough protein since drastically reducing my consumption of 'flesh'. I have upped my nut intake and reintroduced tofu and am staggered by the fact that I have stopped feeling 'hungry'. That irritating internal itch has gone!! I haven't so much as sniffed chocolate or butter (my big craves) since that day. So simple...so effective. I've also lost four uncomfortable, bloating pounds!

Thank you..I'm now avidly digesting your book!

Then ...

It's one week now and I still feel great and actually started menstruating today with no PMT cravings...I'm stunned!

And later ...

I managed Xmas and New Year with you on my shoulder (or your words in my head) and successfully negotiated my way through with no extra weight and clear skin! Thanks!

Philippa King, Brighton

Webwatch

www.foodandmood.org

www.thewayup.com

This site contains an eBook release of Dr Priscilla Slagle's book *The Way Up from Down* which describes her nutrition-based and drug-free approach to overcoming depression. Also includes an online depression-rating test.

www.ukselfhelp.info

Directory of UK self help groups and support organisations.

www.wheatwatchers.com

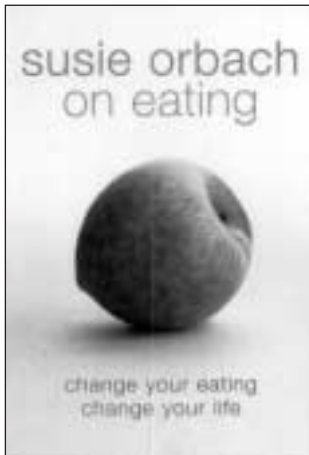
The new range of wheat free products from Antoinette Saville now available at Waitrose.

www.greenpeople.co.uk

Organic, vegan and GMO-free dietary, skin and body care formulations based on natural plant extracts, vegetable oils and essential oils.

www.dietaryneedsdirect.co.uk

A 'one-stop food shop for allergy sufferers'.



On Eating

by Susie Orbach
published by Penguin (Jan 2002)
price £4.99 (128 pages, paperback)

Susie Orbach the psychotherapist who wrote the landmark *Fat is a Feminist Issue* and who has

the public image of 'the therapist who helped Princess Diana overcome her eating disorder', has entered the self-help market with a little book on eating.

The sensible strategies Orbach recommends to help you 'transform the way you think about food forever' consist of (1) eat when you are hungry, (2) eat the food your body is hungry for, (3) find out why you eat when you aren't hungry, (4) taste every mouthful and (5) stop eating when you are full. Each key is presented in a compassionate and caring style which recognises that our relationship with food is complex rather than straightforward and simple.

The guilt we feel upon consuming certain foods is proportional to the idea we have of how 'good' or 'bad' the food is for us. Orbach suggests rethinking this idea and in doing so, she makes 'foods that can harm you because they are made up of chemicals and flavourings and aren't really food' the villain of the piece, and gives the thumbs up to 'treats' such as chocolate, cakes, cream and crisps.

Those who can heed the body's signals and trust themselves around food – any food, even chocolate gateaux – are to be admired absolutely. However, whether Susie Orbach's five keys to food heaven really are 'foolproof', as claimed, remains debatable.

It is an approach that does not allow for the addictive-like effects that foods such as caffeine, chocolate and sugar can have on the biochemistry of the brain

The basic idea of eating what you want, when you are hungry and then stopping when you are full, may remove food anxiety – certainly in the short-term – but it is an approach that does not allow for the addictive-like effects that foods such as caffeine, chocolate and sugar can have on the brain. Also, food sensitivities can create a gnawing 'false hunger' that is experienced as quite separate from

the amount of food in the stomach, and falling blood sugar levels can induce a feeling of nausea that can remove any inclination to eat.

To psychologise these biochemical and physiological events may be fascinating, even fruitful in terms of learning about an individual's psychological make-up, but this approach is misleading – even harmful – when the bigger picture calls for other perspectives to be considered as well.

And Orbach really does go all the way with her revolutionary advice. For example; 'If certain foods worry you ... try having enough of the particular food around so that you can never eat it all. If you think you could binge on: three chocolate bars, a packet of biscuits, a pot of chocolate mousse, keep eight or ten times as many of them in the house.'

Becoming aware of, and even being able to 'put names to the emotions' is empowering; choosing health-supporting foods can build confidence. The experimentation with different approaches to choosing and consuming food, and the use of the imagination to rehearse different behaviours, are all excellent strategies introduced in *On Eating*.

But let's not forget that we are physical and biochemical – as well as psychological – human beings. And, that all these things are in fact connected.

food and mood

The Food and Mood Project was started in 1998 with a Millennium Award from Mind, the mental health charity. The aim of the Project is to empower individuals to explore the relationship between diet, nutrition and emotional and mental health, and to share this information with others.

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PO Box 2737, LEWES
East Sussex BN7 2GN, UK
+44 (0) 1273 478108

Editor: Amanda Geary
Design: Julian Howell
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