



OUR JOURNEY WITH FOOD

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Foreword by James L. Wilson, ND, DC, PhD



Foreword

We live in an age in which doctors and scientists are specializing more and more, building their reputations and careers around being experts in ever-narrowing areas of expertise. This has allowed us to make significant advances in medicine and science, but has also left us drowning in a tsunami of often conflicting bits of information that are too overwhelming and confusing to be useful in our daily lives. What is lacking but greatly needed are generalists who can meaningfully integrate all the bits of information generated by specialists, and impart that understanding in a practical way to the rest of us. A very important area desperately in need of unbiased, knowledgeable generalists is the connection between food, nutrition and health because it plays such a central role in our ability to lead full and healthy lives.

I believe Dr. Karr is one of these much needed but rare generalists with no vested interest or ulterior motive except to integrate and synthesize information in a way that both makes sense and is useful. In *Our Journey with Food*, Dr. Karr has provided a sourcebook integrating extensive scientific, historical and traditional information from the fields of food, nutrition and health. She writes from the perspective of one who loves and understands the subject based on her academic training, clinical expertise and hands-on experience living in the wilds of Oregon.

With a grassroots style that is almost folksy at times, she tells it like it is, as a person who has real experience with food—growing, storing, cooking and studying it—and also as a professional with academic knowledge and a clear grasp of practical applicability. This is an unusual book combining many scientific facts, anecdotes, folk tales, history and photos, as well as political issues and fallacies around food and specific nutrients. She does a nice job of debunking the cholesterol and fat myths, and emphasizes the devastating effects of white sugar and flour, while revealing the influences of agribusiness and politics on our daily food intake without being too sinister or fatalistic.

So this book is indeed a “Journey with Food” that also provides a succinct rundown on each of the major vitamins and minerals and their roles in health, plus the medicinal uses of some foods. It makes for entertaining reading!

When so much of the United States’ gross domestic product (GDP) depends upon sickness, you know that overall health in this country is not nearly as good as we

would like to believe. One significant reason for this is that many people no longer recognize good food when they see or taste it, let alone know how to grow, store and cook it. Their taste buds have become so distorted with the excess sugar and artificial sweeteners and flavors present in much of the typical North American diet that if they shift to a diet of natural foods, it takes them approximately six weeks to be able to fully taste the natural flavors. Food has been defined and redefined to fit so many political and economic purposes, but for me the definition of food is simple: Real food is that which comes from or runs around on the ground, or lives in the water. In short, if it does not look like it was once alive it probably is not real food.

Most of you familiar with my writing know that stress and its effects on endocrine function and the overall balance of the body (homeostasis) is a central topic of my work. I can attest from decades of clinical and research experience that without making real food the major component of daily consumption, it is almost impossible to recover from stress, adrenal fatigue, or other forms of debilitation and illness. It is also true that without the basic ingredient of good food, it is very difficult to be and remain healthy and withstand the stresses of life. Food is the raw material that becomes the body. Just as in building a house, substandard raw materials cannot produce a house that will withstand the storms of life.

Too many people drive themselves with caffeine and quick energy concoctions instead of obtaining real energy from good quality foods. Most cannot even imagine functioning properly without their caffeine and sugar fixes. Combine this with the high consumption of over-the-counter, prescription and street drugs and it is not surprising that a large portion of the population no longer knows what it is like to wake up feeling refreshed, healthy and eager to meet the day. We are on a runaway train careening from fast food restaurants to doctor's offices, while accepting these diminished or debilitated states of life as normal. Because we have forgotten or never knew we could be healthy by eating real food and leading less stressful lives, we continue to exist in desensitized overloaded states, just striving to remain functional. This is now so common we do not even recognize how unusual it is to live life unencumbered by sickness, partial disability or degeneration before our time. We must change!

So thank you, Dr. Karr, for writing this book! It is a place where people can find practical guidance on how to incorporate real food as the major portion of their daily diet, as well as answers that lead the way back to health. With the shift in healthcare currently taking place in the U.S., there will be an ever greater divide between the people who know how to live a healthy lifestyle and take care of themselves, and those who depend on the medical system for their "health" (i.e. sick) care. Over time the former will fare much better. We would all greatly benefit from having more generalists like Dr. Karr who have lived their subjects as she has lived food, nutrition and health.

James L. Wilson, DC, ND, PhD, author of
Adrenal Fatigue: The 21st Century Stress Syndrome

Introduction

My journey into the world of natural health began in the late 1970s when a great aunt gave my mother a copy of the book *Back to Eden* by Jethro Klose. It wasn't long before the book caught my attention and my newfound passion was inspired. Years later, I went from being a "dabbler" to a serious student of nutrition.

In 1996, I became a nutraceutical representative. This came about, not because of a drive for a home-based business, but because my best friend and husband was daily enduring chronic pain due to a motorcycle accident. There were more days than I care to remember when he was unable to sit upright or play with his toddler son due to the pain from damaged discs in his back and severe, nerve-pinching muscle spasms.

We took some herbal supplements and ate reasonably well, but it wasn't until my husband tried a liquid mineral supplement from humus plant sources that pain relief occurred. That single event propelled me to learn more about nutrition and how it might help my family. With the encouragement of friends and a chiropractor, I started distance schooling in the field of holistic nutrition. I don't know if it was because I had already been working with nutritional products or if I was just a natural, but before I knew it I had completed my bachelor's of science degree and signed on for the master's and the doctorate of holistic nutrition programs.

In 2002, I was offered an opportunity to work with a small alternative medical group in rural Southern Oregon. Everything I thought I knew quickly went out of the window as I was introduced to clients who were dealing with such issues as having more titanium in their backs than bone, failed gastric bypasses, migraines, glaucoma, rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes 1 and 2, hepatitis C, thyroid and endocrine system illnesses, PTSD, depression, bipolar disorder, drug addiction and cancer. School was now truly in session, and these folks were desperate for help.

In time I was introduced to national accreditation bodies and have since dedicated time to serving on their various boards. I am very proud of the work being done by the National Association of Nutrition Professionals and the American Association of Integrative Medicine to further the profession of holistic nutritionists, integrated, culturally traditional medicine, and natural health and dietary modalities. The students graduating from schools like the Wellspring School of Healing Arts are a joy to mentor and give me confidence in the work I and many others are doing to build a brighter future for natural health practitioners.

Clients' symptoms vary from brain fog, leg cramps and digestive complaints to more serious conditions such as Parkinson's disease, MS, cancer and the rare Pick's Disease (rapid deterioration of the brain's frontal lobe). So many of these degenerative and chronic illnesses could have been prevented with real food and optimized nutrition.

One of the topics I have chosen to write about involves alcoholic drinks. I know this can be a controversial subject for nutritionists to write about, but the fact remains that I have told clients countless times to eliminate alcohol for their blood sugar levels, waistline and health, but they rarely do. I found myself wondering about all the reasons why. There are the obvious ones about deficiency craving, brain chemistry, self-medication, addiction and diabetic sugar cravings. However, I thought there had to be



more to this question and began looking into the history of spirits, beer and wine and how they affect our health and our innate desire to imbibe. The story is long and may be surprising.

Over time, I have developed a theory that “our cells carry the memories of our ancestors.” All of us are suffering from progressive generational malnutrition. Each successive generation that digresses further from our ancestral and “real” foods former diet suffers more genetic and nutritional imbalances and more chronic, life-shortening illnesses. Fortunately, the new field of nutrigenomics is validating the superiority of real foods over those synthesized by man.

Every year, science opens more doors of understanding into the wisdom and knowledge of our ancestors. Ancient man did not need a microscope or mass-spectrometer to determine what foods and herbs to eat, they learned from experience and observation. Throughout time, this knowledge was passed forward until “modern” medicine and technology overshadowed common sense and tradition.

Native Americans fishing at Celilo Falls on the Columbia River, 1950s. Photo by Benjamin Gifford – OHS Image BB001038. The roughly horseshoe-shaped falls 14 miles upstream from present-day The Dalles, Oregon, were one of two important Native American fishing and trading places on the Columbia River. Celilo Falls disappeared under the water behind The Dalles Dam in 1957. Bonneville Power Agency operates and maintains about three-fourths of the high-voltage transmission in its service territory which includes Idaho, Oregon, Washington, western Montana and small parts of eastern Montana, California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming.

The following pages will detail some of the information from patient studies, clinical research and practical application

garnered over my years of private practice in the fields of holistic nutrition and integrative medicine.

Food is very much a part of our history and our health. Enjoy the journey.

Tammera