

Who I Am

I am a child of the 60's. My understanding that food could make a difference started in the 80's. At which time, I went from SAD (Standard American Diet—all I knew for 18 years) to *bad*, meaning bad vegetarianism upon entering college. What made it bad? I didn't know beans about beans being a form of protein as the Scanlon household was rife with meat, potatoes and pasta, pasta, pasta!

I wasn't overweight, but, boy, did I ever have muscles! How can I convey the disproportionate-ness of the look I was sporting? Think [Carl Lewis](#). (The link is for the Gen Z-er who doesn't inherently know that Lewis won four Olympic Gold medals in track & Field in 1984.) My great aunt once poked me in the thigh and said, "Holy cow! You have big muscles." Another noteworthy moment was when I was sitting in class, wearing those gym shorts with the piping (cuz cuter styles didn't FIT), and the guy sitting next to me looks at my legs and said, "My God, are you a gymnast?" I replied no, I rode horses. His response? "Geez, I thought horses were supposed to do all the work." MORTIFIED!

So, yes, it was noticeable. Why I thought going meat-free would be the answer to losing the bulk, I can't tell you. I just knew. And you know what, it worked for the most part. I love dance and yoga and to jog for stress reduction, so I maintain tone and strength. I can't tell you how glad I was to be rid of Schwazenegger's legs.

What really got me into connecting lifestyle choices to life results came soon thereafter. My best friend-college roommate in my junior year turned psycho. At the time I didn't know what was happening, I just knew I no longer had my friend of three years, and things were nasty. I took it all on as somehow my fault and this manifested in my body as Intestinal Distress and Insomnia—the Big I's, where neither existed before. All within a ½ a year's time.

The doctor prescribed Metamucil for the pooper and Sominex for the sleep. Neither worked. Again on the “not sure how I knew, I just did” phenomenon, I turned to food as the solution. And it was, to a degree. Admittedly, results were varied and inconsistent.

My search for a lasting solution continued. During, this extensive period of self-exploration and -experimentation, I learned how to appropriately be vegetarian. Not to race ahead, but ... ultimately I am now a flexitarian—I eat what I crave. As I ate more and more whole foods, the more and more I crave dark leafy greens, root veggies and beans. Presently, I do eat animal protein generally every other week. It really does describe my approach to whole-food eating the best.

But back to the journey ... regularity and sleep were still, well, not regular, after 15 years of self-testing. I was quite frustrated! As I have come to learn, there are no accidents. I was laid off from an unsatisfying job with an ad agency. I was 35, and it occurred to me that this was as good a time as any to consider my options. So I made my way to New Career Town. My search brought me to the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, and the rest they say is history!

Those specifics can be found on my professional biography page. What is here is a description as personal, with an attempt at brevity, as I can make it. Through my certification and my in-depth training with Tom Monte, I learned the true meaning of mind/body/spirit integration.

My issues w/ my I's are truly me, myself and I-related. Irony reigns supreme. It's more about my childhood defensive mechanism of holding and internalizing than an actual problem with my bowels or my sleep. Yes, there are issues w/ my physical being that lend a hand in the imbalance. However, I sure wish I knew more about how to deal with my emotions, life disappointments and how I

perceived them in my 20's versus assaulting my body with supplements and some of the harshest self-talk you could imagine for 15 or 20 years.

It is part of my mission now to help people understand that disease is not a reflection of our body letting us down. It is, indeed, quite the opposite. It's the brain that lets the body down. And most of us continue to do so w/ non-stop inner-dialogue, whose nastiness is matched only by Cruella De Vil. Worse, cuz it knows all: our weakness, our sensitivities, our triggers. And like the Terminator, "it absolutely will not stop, ever, until you are dead." Unless we empower ourselves, tip the scales and start to embrace ourselves with the love deserving a newborn baby.

I am here to help you learn what foods heal your body, as well as force feed you compassion, and challenge you to shift your perspective of what constitutes a healthy mind, body and spirit. Together we can do it. I am here for you.

Karen

