Holy kitchen

Description

Gentle Reader,

I opened the quarterly Earth Letter from Earth Ministry to read the lead article, “The Work at Hand”. It’s about making a holy kitchen. Let me explain. The author’s name, Carol Flinders, did not ring a bell until I came across a reference to “all the things we said in Laurel’s Kitchen” and I was flooded with emotional memories. In 1973, it had been a couple years since I was diagnosed with breast cancer, had the mastectomy and continued merrily on my way. I deftly covered up the deep dread about a recurrence of cancer. I was 36 years old.



What are the odds we can change their diet easily?

With four little girls to feed and a diet of Fruit Loops, Velveeta cheese, Chitos and Oreo cookies, day old Wonder bread and ice cream to consider, I slowly explored the possible dietary contributions to developing cancer. *Laurel’s Kitchen* fell into my lap. I remember tearfully reading Carol’s introduction. I was just like her in my innocent acceptance of advertised foods, packaged cake mixes, a meat heavy diet and cutting costs on everything. Our milk came from powder. I secretly ate whole packages of day old sugar donuts on the way home from the grocery store.

The dietary changes seemed necessary if I was going to prevent future cancers. They came slowly and the children didn't like them. They traded my homemade brick-bread sandwiches for their classmates' Wonder bread when they could. Vacations at my mother's began with filling the cart with sugared cereals and steak.



My mother shared her sweet tooth.

I had no idea how to get enough protein into my body before I met Laurel, and ended up in the doctor's office so anemic, they ran blood tests to see if the cancer had metastasized into the blood.

Gradually my entire life style changed to include fresh foods, far less meat, and more exercise. I didn't enjoy good health, free from frequent colds, however, until I added supplements made by Shaklee. That was when I met my own Laurel, Jayme Curley, who introduced me to a peaceful life style and good food as well as foundational supplementation to fill in the gaps and bring me up to a high level of wellness.

Today we are surrounded by the Laurel's kitchen choices in our high-end health food grocery stores. A small percentage of the population has made a shift in their relationship to food. But what about everyone else who hasn't responded to something that leads them to make these dietary discoveries? In her Earth Letter article, Carol calls us to be pioneers, people who choose a different kind of life.



simple meal from fresh foods

She encourages us into the kitchen preparing a balanced appetizing meal with unprocessed foods, even when it takes a chuck of our day. She quotes a friend, “I don’t know, really, what changed. I just know that one evening I walked in there grim as usual, determined to get it over with, and instead I found myself relaxing—accepting that I was there and willing to do it as well as I possibly could. And even since then, it’s been completely different.” It’s recognition that what goes on in the kitchen is holy making it a **holy kitchen**.

She ends her article: “Perhaps, though, the real point is not so much to find the holy places as to make them. Do we not hallow places by our very commitment to them? When we turn our home into a place that nourishes and heals and contents, we are meeting directly all the hungers that a consumer society exacerbates but never satisfies…that home becomes a genuine counterforce to the corporate powers-that-be, asserting the priority of a very different kind of power.”

My own take away is that we are not striving for “being good” and avoiding the guilt of “I ate badly today.” We are embracing nourishing others and ourselves from a deep place of gladness. Perhaps being pioneers means showing the way to others.

Peacefully preparing good food day in and day out has not been easy for me. I am part of the “hurry-up and get stuff done” life we all inhabit. Years after the cancer, when my daughters were all away at college or beyond, one sent me a beautiful hand painted card

with a sunset over a meadow and these words *“The slower you go/the more you get done.”*
I wrote a little poem in gratitude.

Mom Says

The slower you go

the more you get done.



make choping onions a zen practice

The note writ large comes in a card

from one of several daughters

grown up and gone away

I stare at the words on paper

and remember days of kneading bread

the phone in one ear

a child in the other

lists, meetings, clamor, time

ticking, running

running late

I learned then to pay attention

show up to the bread

to the friend

to the child

one thing at a time

I must have repeated

slow down

for all my daughters

for myself

stop doing three things at once

make chopping onions

a zen practice

She sent my words back to me.

I need them again.

Be well, Do well and Keep Moving.

Betsy

Please, leave your comments.



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