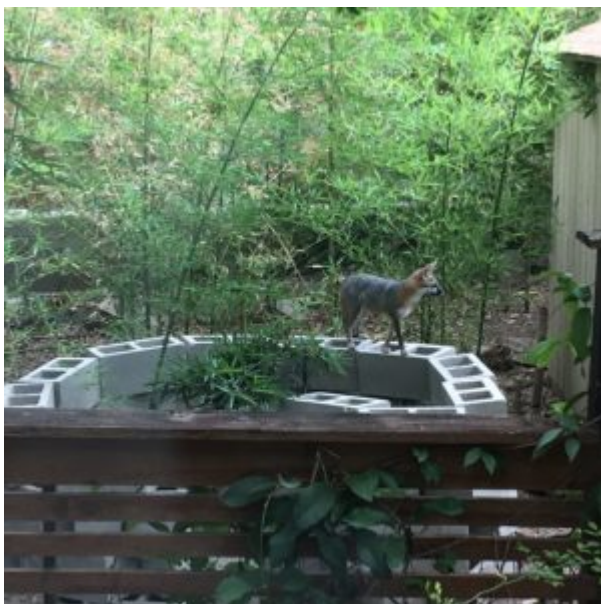


# Family Lunch & A Fox Update

If you happened to read last week's blog post, you discovered that my latest book *Building Natural Immunity in Babies and Young Children* is now in the final edits and design stage. Now comes the fun part for sure as I watch my words come to life with illustrations and designs by the uber talented Christine Terrell.

Thank goodness the bulk of my writing was complete before I came to realize the gray fox family residing within perfect viewing from my office window. Seriously, who wouldn't be mesmerized by the free spirited play of four baby foxes under the close watch of their mama? I've read that when the gray fox feels safe and protected they will alter their nocturnal schedule, which this family has done much to my delight. The kits seem to be allowed out for a play in the late morning and again in the early evening. What a treat it is when I can catch them romping and wrestling just out my window! All is well until mama, sensing I have too much interest, leaps up on a brick planter to give me a few warning growls. Needless to say, they are slightly distracting and I am quite glad they didn't make themselves known a month ago!



Over the long weekend, however, I was able to pull myself away from my fox watching long enough to plan and prep a fabulous Memorial Day lunch with the whole family. Because we are a family of non-traditionalists, it should come as no surprise that while the rest of America was grilling away, I was in the kitchen dry roasting cumin, coriander, and coconut. Yes, I am still obsessed with Meera Sodha's, Fresh India. And, yes, I know this will be the third time I feature her cookbook in my blog, but the recipes are amazing and I do LOVE Indian food! So, if you would kindly allow me this one last gush, then I will let it rest and move on to something new. Honestly.

This time around, the girls and I shared the cooking which gave us an opportunity to have our own Indian feast. Meghan asked to make salad and tried out the **Hill Street Station Salad** of chopped fennel, red onion, sweet peppers, and cucumber. We replaced the Greek yogurt in the sweet and spicy lime dressing with a cashew cream and the whole thing was divine.



Kate took on the **Courgette Kofta in a Ginger Tomato Sauce** which could truly have been our meal in itself if I hadn't insisted on trying a few new recipes as well. Then I couldn't decide between the **Mangalorean Plantain Curry** and the **Weekend Dosas** filled with **Coconut Potatoes** so... What a feast we had!



Here's the plantain curry recipe to convince you to buy your own copy of Fresh India and discover your own family favorites.



Dry roast **2 tsp each of cumin and coriander Seeds** and **2 Tbl of fresh grated or desiccated coconut**. When toasted, remove from pan and grind with mortar and pestle or in a spice grinder as fine as possible.

Put **2 Tbl of coconut oil** in heavy pan to heat and add **250 grams of finely chopped shallots**. Once soft, add **4 cloves of finely chopped garlic**. On medium heat, cook until soft, careful not to burn.

Chop and add **4 large organic tomatoes** and cook until they collapse. Add the ground spices **1 tsp of chili powder, ¼ tsp of turmeric, 1.5 tsp of salt**, blending well,

Remove top and tail from **1.2 kilo of ripe plantains** (they will

have black spots on the skin and be slightly soft) and cut into quarters with peeling still intact. Halve each section then peel adding pieces directly to pan with tomatoes and spices. Stir well to coat.



Cover with **1 can of organic coconut milk** and **100ml of water**. Cook until plantains are tender. Transfer to serving bowl.

In small skillet, heat **1 Tbl coconut oil** and quickly fry **15 fresh curry leaves**. They will crackle and harden within a minute. Pour oil and leaves over top of curry and serve.

Lastly, because I am never quite sure when I will get my kids all together at the same time, I took this opportunity to get a photo for the back cover of my book. Trying to get them to be serious for any length of time is a challenge, but I think we captured one moment here.



This mom is pretty proud of her plant based crew!

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## A Fox & A Final Draft



Last March, deep in the woods outside Leydon, MA on a brisk predawn walk, I had my first encounter with a gray fox. It was quite dramatic as it bounded down the ice crusted hillside, capturing my attention as we appeared to be the only two creatures up and active early that morning. There was one brief moment when we both locked eyes and then, in a split second, she was off on her way.

That happened to be the opening day of my Gemmotherapy Practitioner Weekend Retreat so I could not help myself from searching for the meaning of a fox encounter.

Here is one source I found and certainly worth reflection:

*Fox medicine involves adaptability, cunning, observation, integration, and swiftness of thought and action. These traits may also include quick decisiveness, and sure-footedness in the physical world. If Fox has chosen to share its medicine with you, it is a sign that you are to become like the wind, which is unseen yet is about to weave into and through any location or situation.*

Following the beautiful retreat weekend, I returned home carrying with me the magic and blessings bestowed and dove into working on my next book with a focus on Gemmotherapy for babies. That's when another gray fox began making its appearance. Each dawn as I made my way back to my office for a writing session, it would appear out our front window as if checking to see that I was up and going. At first it seemed by chance but then on the days I would miss it in the morning it would appear as we ate our evening meal, just long enough to look into our dining room window. This continued and my book progressed. I could not help but become fascinated with the sightings. We all speculated on where it made its home, fairly sure the overgrown garden of a nearby empty house was the logical spot.

So now we come to this past weekend and the time I had set aside to work through edits on my final manuscript.



Taking a break late in the afternoon between spring downpours, I carried some boxes out to our recycling bins and came face-to-face with none other than "my" fox.

"Well hello there," I say, because isn't that what one always says when surprised by a wild animal? As I stepped forward toward the bins I realized the fox is there to block my path. Any further movement is withheld by its territorial bark. Wow. "Well, that's curious," I think as this is actually my back garden, but I wasn't inclined to argue so I cautiously backed

away.

Returning to my office with windows open to that same back garden, I see the fox disappear behind the garden shed and wood pile and hear the unmistakable sound of baby kits. The head of a second fox now appears. **It seems that in all my gazing out the front for the singular fox each day, I had missed the fact that there was a whole family residing within 20 feet of my office!**

Thus, receiving my own personal lesson in the obvious skills of the fox.

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## **On The Homestretch & A Green Bean Salad**



So, it's come to this and I am really not sure if it's even such a bad thing. I have a confession: After a beautiful morning swim at Barton Springs pool, I admit I then spent a good portion of my Mother's Day writing a chapter on the

importance of babies pooping on a regular basis. Well, to be exact, the chapter is on the vital role of healthy elimination that begins at birth.

I don't know if I would have believed this of myself five years ago when my dream Mother's Day was to sleep in, be served breakfast in bed, and read. While there's nothing wrong with that scenario (At all!), it's just not where I happen to be right now. In reflection, I also can't think of any greater tribute to mothers than dedicating my time to a book that offers support as we raise the next generation. If I have any positive influence, it will be for a generation that is healthier and wiser about maintaining their own health.

That's my true confession of the week with the exciting news that the end is in sight! (At least as far as my writing is concerned anyway.) It won't be long before we can pass this manuscript of *Supporting Babies and Young Children with Gemmotherapy* along for editing and then design. Sighs of relief will be audible from all of us in the office and no doubt my sweet family.

And now a bit about green beans...



### **Haree Phalee Salad**

(Green Beans, Cashew, and Coconut)

I haven't met a vegetable I don't love but some admittedly are just so-so. Green beans happen to fall in that category for me, most likely because I was raised on the Del Monte canned



version that don't taste like any vegetable I know. As green bean season hits it's short stride here in Texas before the oppressive heat sets in I found myself searching for something new. Fortunately for me, my own copy of Meera Sodha's Fresh India arrived in the post this weekend offering several enticing options. The flavor combinations of tamarind, cashew, and coconut won me over and the results may have turned me into a green bean consumer!

## **Ingredients**

700g green beans

40g fresh or desiccated coconut (I used large flakes)

2 Tbl oil (I used coconut)

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp black mustard seeds

4 shallots

150g unsalted raw cashews

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp tamarind paste

1 cayenne chili or a pinch of cayenne powder to taste

$\frac{3}{4}$  tsp salt

1. Clean green beans, remove tops and tails, and blanch in large pot of salted boiling water for 3-4 minutes. Beans should be tender yet crisp. Rinse in cold water immediately to stop the cooking process and allow to dry.
2. Dry roast coconut in pan over low heat, tossing gently, take care not to burn. Set aside on small plate to cool.
3. In a large skillet, heat the oil, adding mustard seeds and cooking until they pop.
4. Add sliced shallots, sauteing over low/medium heat until soft and slightly brown.
5. Add cashews cooking further until golden brown.
6. Add tamarind paste, chilies or chili powder and salt followed by the green beans. Toss to mix.

7. Once beans are warmed through, transfer to plate to serve.

Enjoy!

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## Happy Hour Hubele Style

If you've been following along these past weeks, you'll know I'm getting into the final weeks of a fast approaching self-imposed book deadline. This phase always feels to me like uphill cycling, the kind I like to avoid. Yes, it's fantastic when you reach the top, but the mental effort of not being able to quite see the top from here can be excruciating.

And, truth be told, it was a challenging writing week both emotionally and physically from early risings to meeting daily deadlines. By Friday morning, it was clear I had hit my wall and any brain power I had left needed to be put into figuring out how to quickly recover. What would recharge me so that I could dive back in and keep at it over the weekend? As I sat contemplating what I needed, I recalled the creek at the back of my parents' property where I would sit to deal with my teenage overwhelm or angst. Hmmm, yes, one of the elements had to be water and the other was simply peace and quiet. With a quick text to my husband and an early plan for dinner, it was agreed that we'd head out for our evening at the less populated Upper Falls of McKinney Falls State Park, 15 minutes from our house.



The fact that both Joachim and I could clear the space for this on a Friday was one the first miracles. The next was that we had the entire area to ourselves. Seriously! Well, ok, not quite as we did have to share it with this gorgeous egret who entertained us for an hour with his fishing dance.

Now this was the perfect recipe for recharge a *Friday Happy Hour*, courtesy of mother nature!



What could make the evening even better? Oh, yes, remembering we had just enough left over dessert from last night's dinner party to share together!

**Raw Berry Slices/ Tarts**



### **Equipment**

Freezer

Food processor or blender

Spatula

Muffin pan or custard cups for individual servings or 4" x 8" freezer safe form

### **Crust**

8-10 pitted dates

1 cup raw coconut flakes or shreds

1 cup raw almonds

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup of raw cacao nibs or 2 Tbl raw cacao

2 Tbl maple syrup

2 Tbl melted coconut oil (more as needed)

1. Blend dates, coconut, almonds, cacao in food processor or high speed blender and empty into a mixing bowl.
2. Add maple syrup and coconut oil, mixing with hands to combine. (If too dry to form a dough, add more coconut oil 1 Tbl at a time.)
3. Press dough into bottom of form or individual muffin cups and set aside.

### **Filling**

3 cups cashews (soaked to soften and drained)

1 can coconut milk

1 tsp vanilla

2 Tbl melted coconut oil  
2 Tbl maple syrup (adjust to taste)  
2 cups cherry and berry mix (fresh or frozen and thawed)

1. Blend soaked cashews, coconut milk, vanilla, coconut oil and maple syrup on high until smooth and creamy.
2. Adjust sweetness to taste.
3. Place fruit on prepared crust, cover with creamy filling smoothing the top with a spatula.
4. Freeze until firm, approx 2 hours.
5. Remove from freezer 15-20 minutes before serving for easier slicing or removal from individual forms.

Enjoy!

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## Cowboy: A "Squirrely" Case To Consider

*This is far from a typical case in my office but there were multiple positive lessons involved!*



Three weeks ago, on a beautiful Saturday morning, I gave an informal talk in the garden of a South Austin treasure, The Herb Bar. Well, as you can imagine, it attracts an eclectic bunch and I always come prepared for all things possible. What I actually wasn't prepared for, however, was to meet Suzanne and her rat poison damaged squirrel, Cowboy.

Suzanne had driven 3 hours across Texas to come hear me speak as she had a sense Gemmotherapy might be the answer she was in search of. Cowboy was the only survivor of his litter after his mom ate rat poison. Unwilling to leave him in the garden unprotected, Suzanne brought him inside expecting him to pass quietly in the night. That was 18 months ago.

Other than looking like a squirrel, he lacked most squirrel-like abilities and behaviors due to neurological damage from the poison and he suffered 6-8 seizures a day. I watched him twitch and jerk myself throughout my talk at the Herb Bar. When it came time for Q & A, Suzanne asked what I thought might help Cowboy. It didn't take much thought as he clearly needed the kidney support of Silver Birch Sap to do any detoxing and the neurological support of Silver Lime to resolve the twitching. My belief was that after a few months, we could move to other extracts for seizures and cleaning the blood. Because my practice is just a few blocks away, Suzanne came by for a small bottled blend of Silver Birch Sap and Silver Lime and off she and Cowboy drove, happily back to East Texas.



Although the impression of Cowboy and his condition stuck with me, I honestly didn't expect to hear a response as that's the way it is sometimes in the work we do. So, when an email came in from Suzanne a week later, I was pleasantly surprised and even more so when I read what she had to say. With only 1 week of her rubbing 1 drop of the Gemmo combination into Cowboy's ear twice a day he, according to Suzanne, was exhibiting more squirrel-like behaviors such as showing an interest in climbing and feeding himself, was no longer twitching, and had only had one seizure. Even with my tremendous belief in the power of Gemmotherapy, this seemed pretty incredible!

What a pair they make and what advocates they will be for the healing potential of Gemmotherapy!

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## **Bike Riding, Bread Baking & A Book To Complete**

If you haven't heard already, I am full swing into my next book on Gemmotherapy support for babies and young children.

It's been percolating for well over a year and I've finally found the space to commit to some consecutive weeks of writing. While I am so excited about this book, I realize what excites me is the prospect of it being finished and sitting on a bookshelf, not necessarily the process I am in right now.

What I've come to learn is that I absolutely LOVE the idea of being an author yet, at the same time, I absolutely agonize over the discipline it requires. There is no doubt that I can be disciplined, but I know the discipline comes with an expiration date. That free spirit in me just doesn't stand for the same routine weeks on end and, because of that, I tend to set ridiculously tight deadlines. This one means waking daily before the sun to write as much as I can before my 'normal day' begins and then also dedicating as much of my weekends as I can stand.

This all sounds great in theory and then the weekend comes around and that free spirit starts getting a little louder. I shared last week how the win from that struggle was a delicious Indian inspired meal. This past weekend turned out slightly different... And my horoscope didn't help.

*While getting down to work may be easy at first, you might find that your concentration could wane throughout the day. Giving yourself short breaks to recharge and let your mind rest could go a long way toward making you work much more efficiently today. Getting up and taking a short walk, for example, can do wonders toward reenergizing and refreshing you enough to get back down to work, and you may notice that these breaks are more valuable to your work than you ever could have imagined.*

I may have pushed the idea of short breaks. But, along with revising seven chapters, I felt the need to bake this lovely loaf.

**Nut & Seed Bread**





Combine In Large Mixing Bowl:

300g gluten free organic oats

270g mixed raw, unsalted sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, and sesame seeds (all organic)

180g ground organic flax

130g ground nuts (hazel, walnuts, or almonds)

4 Tbl chia seeds

8 Tbl psyllium husks

3 Tbl sea salt

Mix With Dry Ingredients:

2 Tbl maple syrup or honey

6 Tbl melted coconut oil

700 ml filtered water

Instructions:

1. Blend with hands until all dry ingredients are moist.
2. Press into a 10 x 5 inch bread pan, cover with a cloth, and let stand on counter for minimum of 6 hours or overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Bake for 45 mins.
4. Gently remove from pan onto baking stone or cookie sheet. (Consider leaving loaf on it's side to prevent it from breaking.)
5. Continue to bake for another 45 mins.

This loaf must cool completely to slice! I find it helpful to turn off the oven and let it cool inside by itself. It can store in the fridge for one week or be frozen into single slices. It is even more excellent when toasted.

Ah, and then we had that beautiful cold front blow in Saturday night which made a Sunday morning bike ride after some predawn writing sound like a perfect reward. While Austin has its bike enthusiasts, I am not one of them. It's not that I don't like biking, I just don't like to share the road with Texas drivers. So I was delighted to hear about the new stretch of Walnut Creek Trail opening and couldn't wait to give it a try. It was gorgeous! The 15 mile loop was just what my tired brain needed to recharge and certainly added great value to the next chapter I took on.



Check back next week when I may officially be celebrating the halfway point!