

Introducing the Restoring Immunity Podcast

Today I am so excited to announce my latest project. With the help and inspiration of one of my new interns and Gemmo Moms, Megan Ethridge, I have created the Restoring Immunity podcast!

This first series with Megan is geared particularly to moms. Each 20-30 minute episode covers a common acute issue and how to resolve symptoms using Gemmotherapy. Listen now to our first episodes on fevers, colds and virus support.

Once this series is complete, I will partner with other co-hosts to dive into topics of emotional immunity, fertility, aging and more. Follow my podcasts on Spotify, Radio Public or Google Podcasts and receive a new episode each Tuesday (coming soon to iTunes). If you like what you hear, please share a link with your family and friends.

Passing along knowledge and wisdom on the subject of restoring immunity is my life passion. Although I'm a writer at heart, publishing takes time. Podcasting, however, offers an opportunity for me to share new insights in a quick and accessible manner. Let's see where this takes us!

Cleansing Kitchari

If you haven't tried Kitchari, now is the time. The traditional Ayurvedic cleansing meal is perfect for fall. If the ingredients listed aren't readily available or you aren't up to tracking down the spices, you can simply order this kit

from Banyan Botanicals and get started. Be sure to plan for a large batch as this simple comfort food can be quite addicting. I like my Kitchari straight up with a simple addition of chopped organic spinach, but feel free to get creative.

Here's a bit on Fall Ayurvedic cleanses, should this recipe spike your interest.

Ingredients

- 1 cup basmati rice
- ½ cup yellow mung dal
- 1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seed
- 1 small pinch of asafoetida (hing) powder
- 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- 4 thin slices of fresh ginger root
- 2 tablespoons coconut oil or ghee
- 6 cups water
- 1–2 cups chopped frozen or fresh spinach (or other seasonal vegetables)

Directions

1. Wash rice and mung dal, strain, cover again with fresh water and soak overnight.
2. When ready to cook your Kitchari, drain dal and rice, setting aside for the moment.
3. In a medium saucepan warm coconut oil and all spices. Sauté for one to two minutes until aromatic. Add rice and mung dal and sauté for another couple of minutes. Cover with 6 cups of water, add ginger root and bring to a boil.
4. Once the Kitchari has come to a boil, reduce the heat, cover and simmer until dal and rice are both tender (30–45 minutes). Stir in spinach, add water if needed to

reach the consistency of a stew. Additional precooked vegetables can also be added at this time. Salt to taste.

5. Garnish with fresh cilantro and lime (optional).

Enjoy!

Makes 4 servings

Adapted from Banyan Botanicals

Everyday Lessons

From the moment we wake up in the morning to the moment we settle in at the end of the day, we are afforded so many authentic places to practice. Every experience of hardship provides fertile ground in which we can root our practice.

– Justin von Bujdoss, “Ask a Teacher”

This beautiful, everyday life that you are living with your loved ones is truly ALL that is needed to grow and become the best version of yourself. Every day is a fresh start, every moment a new and authentic opportunity to grow.

I’ll admit it, I just experienced a “hit my limit moment” with my darling 17-year-old son. I am sure this is shocking to hear, especially if you, too, have raised or been a teen. Seventeen is such a smooth and easy age, right? It turns out that is not true. I’ve personally discovered that there are two particularly challenging periods of being a teen. These periods seem to occur just upon the transition to the teen years and then again for an excruciatingly long stretch between the ages of 17 and 20 years. While discussing the

specifics of what was so excruciating today might be really fulfilling for me at this moment, I will actually set out to share how the last hour or so provided me with countless lessons. The lessons were clear and tangible because I was willing and able to give the situation some time and space.

My experience went something like this. "Fill in the blank" discussion begins innocently, yet quickly hits a point of a standoff. If it were to continue, it would surely escalate and serve no one. We, fortunately, have learned to call it off and each head to our personal spaces, not without just a little bit of foot-stomping (absolutely not me).

Then came the challenging part.

1. Really stopping and not following up with all of the snarky comments that came flooding into my head (and I am sure, his)
2. Cooling down
3. Considering what was underneath my frustration, what emotion was driving this confrontation and sitting with that emotion until it dissipated
4. Considering what might be underneath his frustration and some questions I might ask to help me understand his position

While this looks like a lot of processing it actually happened within a span of 30 minutes or less. I then got myself a cup of tea and did something entirely unrelated.

Within an hour we met up again, my son initiating it this time, which was a cause for celebration itself. In a short stretch, we each listened to one another and found an agreeable place in which we could park the topic for now. So there was not a full resolution, but we found a place in which we both could find some comfort and were able to get back to relating with one another with ease.

In this everyday experience, I learned that sometimes my son

I can both fear the same thing but for different reasons. I learned that having a better understanding of his perspective reduces my fear. I also learned that when I get caught up in what's not working, I lose sight of all the things that are going well, and I can choose where I want to place my focus.

This simple yet very real story is an example of mindfulness off the cushion... and an everyday lesson. You, too, can reap these benefits from a short and sweet daily meditation practice. While getting to and sitting on that cushion is a story in itself, the rewards of that practice look just like I described above. It's the skill to become an observer of yourself and of others, and the ability to question the story you are telling yourself. Instead of letting your emotions roll you into a place that is limiting and without perspective, try something different. Try stepping back, physically, as I did with my son if that is possible. If not, do so internally by checking in on your breath and placing your focus there. Then, check in with some other possible story lines. Are there other ways this story could end than the one you have created? Finally, find the courage to say, "Hey I don't like the way we left this. Is there a way we could move forward?" That last step does take courage but is the most important in our personal growth.

So what do you think? Are you ready to tune into your day and the lessons within your reach?

Spicy Chickpea Soup

I first made this recipe during a cold, wet March in Austin. The good news is, I happen to love soup and have an endless array of recipes to help us wait out these Austin-style cold fronts.

My daughter Kate shared this recipe when she gifted me a jar of homemade harissa paste. While she hasn't yet shared the harissa paste recipe (hmmmm), I have continued to make the soup with this ready-made blend from Vermont's Teeny Tiny Spice company, and it is delicious.

Chickpeas are a wonderful plant-based protein to be served in the evening when your body can spare the extra energy it takes to digest and is preparing for long stretch of sleep. Chickpeas are neutral when it comes to pH, so start your meal with a high alkaline serving of mixed greens or kale salad to balance things out.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 small onions, cut into 3/8 inch (1 cm) dice
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 large carrots, peeled and cut into 3/8 inch (1 cm) dice
- 4 celery stalks, cut into 3/8 inch (1 cm) dice
- 2 T harissa paste or 1 T harissa spice blend
- 1 t freshly ground cumin
- 1 t freshly ground coriander
- 1 1/2 t whole caraway seeds
- 2 1/2 C (500 g) drained cooked chickpeas (canned are fine, but rinse well)
- 4-5 C (1 liter) water
- 3/4 C (100 g) coarse bulgur wheat (or rice, millet or quinoa all substitute well)
- 3 t fine grain salt, or to taste
- Black pepper, to taste
- Cilantro, chopped
- One lemon
- Dukka seasoning, optional

Directions

1. Heat olive oil in a saucepan. Add onions and sauté 5 minutes, stirring from time to time, until translucent. Add the garlic, carrots and celery and continue cooking another 8 minutes. Add the harissa, cumin, coriander and caraway seeds and cook for a further 2 minutes, stirring well. Gently mix the chickpeas into the vegetable mixture (you don't want them to break down) along with most of the salt and plenty of black pepper. Add most of the water and bring to a boil. Turn down the heat and simmer gently 10 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, rinse the bulgur, put in a small saucepan, and cover generously with cold water. Bring to a boil and immediately remove from the heat. Drain, refresh under cold water, drain again and set aside.
3. Before serving, add the cooked bulgur to the soup and bring to a gentle simmer. Divide the soup among bowls and serve at once. Top with chopped cilantro and a squeeze of lemon and/or dukka, an Egyptian nut and spice mix.

Enjoy!

Adapted from Heidi Swanson's 101 Cookbooks

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Photo by Xufanc

Why I Study Gemmotherapy:

Dana Campaen

by Dana Campaen

A few years ago, my homeopath doctor gave me some “drops” when I had some health problems. And it worked like a miracle. I live in Cluj-Napoca, a beautiful town in Transylvania where Gemmos are produced at a very high level. My primary healthcare training is as an M.D. I have been working as a pediatrician for more than 20 years, and as a homeopath the last 8 years.

After that experience, I started to participate in some Gemmotherapy meetings and found it very interesting. The plant stem cell within Gemmotherapy extracts can resolve symptoms in babies or adults, without doing any harm. Gemmotherapy can restore our health, working from the inside out.

I am using Gemmotherapy in my daily practice for children and adults. My patients are babies and children, or adults who are looking for a different way of healing. This year, during Lauren’s stay in Cluj-Napoca, we organized a first Gemmo Moms meeting Together with a dear friend of mine and health coach, Dumitrita Marginean, we intend to start the first Gemmo Moms group in Romania, to share our experience and to train moms how to use Gemmo extracts to restore immunity in their children or cure some acute conditions.

I still have more to discover about the power of Gemmotherapy. Recently, I have become fascinated by Gemmo extracts given in very small micro-doses, which can restore the entire body. Lauren and her webinars have given me a lot of information about this new strategy. I would like to learn more about how to use Gemmotherapy in cases like autism and behavior disorders in children, or in autoimmune diseases.

I am absolutely sure that Gemmotherapy will live forever. My belief is that in the future we will have much more

information about Gemmo extracts, and we will be able to do more for our patients to be happy and healthy. If you're interested in Gemmotherapy, my advice is to trust the practice and use it first whenever possible. It is a harmless medicine, and everyone can discover its power in restoring health. If you want to take care of your help, take Gemmo extracts!

Mushroom Spinach Soup with Cinnamon, Coriander and Cumin

Here's my take on a yummy mushroom soup that appeared in a New York Times fall soup feature. I love the challenge of taking on conventional recipes and creating a vegan/gluten-free version – and this one is no exception. Although I rarely pass up a mushroom recipe, this one has a combination of cinnamon, coriander and cumin that totally caught my attention.

Ingredients

- 6 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ pounds mixed mushrooms (such as cremini, oyster, chanterelles and shiitake), chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound shallots, finely diced
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- Pinch ground allspice
- 1 veggie broth cube
- Sea salt to taste
- 1 teaspoon black pepper

- 5 ounces baby spinach fresh or $\frac{1}{2}$ bag of frozen spinach
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- Plant-based yogurt or sour cream

Directions

Heat 3 tablespoons butter or oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add half the mushrooms and half the shallots; cook, stirring occasionally until most of the liquid has evaporated and the mushrooms are well browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Transfer mushrooms to a bowl and repeat with remaining butter, mushrooms and shallots.

Return all mushrooms to the pot and stir in tomato paste, thyme, cumin, coriander, cinnamon and allspice; cook until fragrant, about one minute.

Stir in 5 cups water, veggie broth cube, black pepper and salt to taste. Bring mixture to a simmer over medium heat and cook gently for 20 minutes.

Using an immersion blender or food processor, coarsely purée soup. Mix in lime juice and spinach. Thin with water as needed and adjust seasoning if necessary. Serve with dollops of yogurt or sour cream.

Enjoy!

Adapted from Melissa Clark's recipe

First published October 2018

Where Does Gemmotherapy Fit in the World of Herbal Medicine?

It isn't often that my schedule permits me to offer a live class in the U.S., but I cleared the weekend of Nov. 9 when an invitation to teach at AOMA Graduate School for Integrative Medicine arrived. If you are looking for an opportunity to study with me directly, here is your personal invitation! (Register online)

Meanwhile, you may enjoy this interview with AOMA, where I discuss my approach to Gemmotherapy and its place among other therapies.

Watermelon Gazpacho

You are going to love this recipe for its ease and flavor. This gazpacho is so good I could eat it for three meals a day... seriously. So what are you waiting for? Grab these ingredients, power up your blender and in minutes, your meal is ready!

- 4 large heirloom tomatoes, chopped and cored
- 6 cups cubed seedless watermelon
- 1 cucumber, peeled, seeded and cut into large chunks
- 1 red pepper, seeded and cut into large chunks
- 1 large garlic clove or shallot
- 3 tablespoon coconut vinegar
- Juice from one freshly squeezed lime
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes (more or less to taste)

- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 slices of stale or toasted bread, torn in chunks
- A handful of mint and/or basil leaves
- Microgreens or freshly torn basil, for garnish

Blend all ingredients, except greens for garnish, on high speed until desired consistency. You can leave the soup a bit chunky if you prefer some texture or blend until quite smooth. Check seasonings and serve right away, garnished with greens, or allow to chill and meld flavors overnight.

Enjoy!

Coaching Stories: Addie

by Addie Naquin

I was initially interested in coaching to help my 1-year-old daughter with her eczema and food allergies. I quickly realized my own health struggles with severe abdominal pain and “ulcers” needed to be addressed, as well as my 4-month-old son’s reflux and constipation. I was hoping to gain true healing for my daughter, and I felt deep within that a 1-year-old did not need to be on Zyrtec or any other daily medications.

Gemmotherapy has been an eye-opening experience for me. It has provided me with an understanding that the body has its own natural ability to heal itself. I’ve now realized that suppressing our immune systems with medications (which only treat symptoms) sets our health on a path to deterioration. The joy I feel cannot be measured. It comes from being able to take charge of my family’s health and having the confidence to

do so.

First and foremost, I learned that physical health is greatly tied to emotional, mental and spiritual health. There cannot be true healing in one area without addressing the others. I now have opportunities to provide myself and my family members with true, natural healing! I don't have to worry over every fever, virus and allergy. I know I will be able to provide our bodies with support to do what they were made to do.

This experience was everything to me. Lauren has a special gift, and it has changed me for the better forever. She aided me in the healing process of a deep, embedded grief that came from losing my firstborn baby boy – a grief I truly thought I had worked through... I was wrong but I couldn't see it. My physical ailments only became more agitated by grief, fear and anxiety. Lauren equipped me with a new mindset on how I perceive my emotional health, as well as my physical health, and I am forever grateful.

I believe there is always room for improvement when working on one's own health and happiness. For me that will come from joining Lauren's beginner Gemmotherapy course. I want to gain more knowledge in using Gemmos on my own for my entire future. If you are considering coaching too, know that there is a reason. And whatever that situation may be, it will benefit from a coaching commitment with Lauren.

Roasted Eggplant with Spiced Chickpeas

If you eat seasonally and live in Texas, late summer means eggplant, zucchini and peppers. And the best way to use this limited range of veggies is to get creative – something I don't mind doing. This week, with a nudge from Julie Moskin, we enjoyed this gorgeous, Middle Eastern-inspired dish.

Ingredients

- 3-4 narrow eggplants, sliced into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick wheels (be sure to choose eggplants with shiny skin and that feel heavy for their size)
- Sunflower oil and olive oil
- 1 onion, minced
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons allspice
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons pomegranate molasses
- Splash of maple syrup
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 15-ounce cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed (about 1 cup)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pine nuts, toasted for garnish
- Fresh mint leaves, for garnish
- Plant-based yogurt for serving (optional)

Directions

1. In a large cast-iron or heavy skillet, heat enough sunflower oil to cover the bottom of the pan, over medium heat. Fill the bottom of the skillet with eggplant, cooking 5-7 minutes until golden and softened, then flipping to produce the same effect on the other side. Remove with tongs or fork to a platter kept warm

- in the oven. Continue until all eggplant is cooked.
2. Wipe out the cast iron skillet and heat enough olive oil to cover the bottom of the pan, over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring, until soft and translucent, about 10 minutes. Add tomatoes, spices and molasses, and bring to a simmer. Add maple syrup, salt and pepper to taste (adjust seasonings until you have created a hint of both spice and sweetness). Simmer until slightly thickened, about 15 minutes. Add chickpeas and cook until thick, 5 to 10 minutes more.
 3. To serve, place slices of eggplant on a plate and spoon tomato-chickpea mixture on top. Garnish with mint and toasted pine nuts, and serve with yogurt if desired. Repeat for each serving.

Enjoy!

Adapted from Julie Moskin's recipe in the New York Times

Raw Tabbouleh

My favorite restaurant in Cluj is Samsara. It is so good, it is nearly worth the three flights and layovers required, just for a meal! Although everything is delicious, I was especially intrigued by their raw tabbouleh. I took a photo and made note of the ingredients while enjoying each bite, vowing to make it at home. This week, when I hosted three brilliant women for an afternoon idea exchange, I had the perfect opportunity to recreate it. Naturally, I could not leave well enough alone and added a few ingredients, creating my own inspired version. Please don't be put off by the long list here. You can make quick work with a food processor or veggie bullet.

Ingredients

- 1 small head cauliflower, finely chopped or shredded
- 1 bunch of broccoli, finely chopped or shredded
- 1 small bunch of kale, destemmed, chiffonade
- 1 small red onion, minced
- 2 large bunches flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons fresh mint, finely chopped, plus more to taste
- 8 large tomatoes, halved, flesh scooped out, finely diced
- 1 small red onion, minced
- bunch green onions, finely chopped (white and green parts)
- 1 English cucumber, flesh scooped out and diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sunflower seeds
- Seeds from one pomegranate

Combine ingredients in a large salad bowl, reserving pomegranate seeds.

Dressing

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh lemon juice, plus more to taste
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup (more or less according to taste)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Celtic sea salt, plus more to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste

Add all ingredients to a lidded glass jar, shake well and pour a generous amount over the tabbouleh. Mix well and allow to chill for a few hours for the flavors to meld. Add more dressing if needed. Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds before serving.

Enjoy!

Swimming Upstream

Every morning, between 7:30 and 8 a.m., I sit on the steps that lead into the San Marcos River, put on my fins and goggles, and head upstream. Returning downstream, I'm often asked how far I made it, and my answer is always this: "As far as the river and I could agree on today." And that is the truth, because each day my swim is a negotiation between my body and the ever-changing current of the river. What started out as a pure curiosity to see what was around the bend upstream has spun into a rich and rewarding daily ritual.

I was born an Aquarian, and my earliest joyful memories as a child are those of wading in creeks. Weekends in the Bay Area always involved a trip to the beach. Then, in my adolescence, when we moved to the Sacramento Valley, I swam on swim teams, river rafted and worked summers as swim instructor and lifeguard through college. Wild swimming, however, was never really my thing. Mostly because wild swimming also included other wild things that I wasn't so sure I wanted to share my swim experience with. But something changed when I reached my 50s, and I started challenging a variety of limiting behaviors I had adopted over a lifetime. Today I am so grateful I broke through all my fears regarding open-water swims. I can't imagine missing out on my morning interactions with the San Marcos River.

Here are some lessons that my swims upstream have taught me. These lessons have become equally useful in and out of the water:

The current is constantly changing, and so is my body.

Navigating is more about technique than strength. Swimming smarter is more useful than swimming harder.

A new angle of approach on a challenging stretch can get me to the other side of it.

Pausing to reassess may be all that is needed.

Let go of any expectations to reach a certain destination. Swim for the experience, enjoying all the lessons along the way.

Interactions with nature hold so many metaphors for life, whether you sit in the garden observing insects on the ground, stand under the night sky, take a hike among the trees or swim like I do. Connecting with nature on a regular basis keeps us in check. It keeps us on an authentic path. Everything I encounter on my swim is real. There is nothing contrived about it. Yet the moment I leave it, I encounter a world so vastly different. Carrying the lessons learned into my day is a simple yet profound way of remembering what is really important and focusing my energy there.

Is there a ritual in nature you have found to connect with your authentic self? Is there one you would like to create? Keep it simple so it fits your life today, and as your life changes, you can make room for more. What small step can you say yes to? Pay attention to the lessons that nature shares so generously.