



# e BUBBLE *Life*

L a u g h • L o v e • L i v e

Your Authentic Lifestyle Magazine

34<sup>th</sup> Edition

Sticking to your  
**healthy habits**

The importance  
of fostering a  
positive and  
**collaborative  
workplace**

**Movie review**  
Australian  
made in June

**SENSUALITY**  
hacks

**a**

**PLANT-BASED**

**lifestyle**

**Eliminate chronic  
illness and disease  
with nutrition**

**Through the  
eyes of a child:**  
How to talk to  
kids about  
disabilities

How to include  
**religious  
and cultural  
provisions** in  
my will?



**Traveling  
cuba as a  
vegan**

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# Editors Scribbles



Welcome to the June Issue, well things are becoming cooler very quickly, I hope you have stocked up on your thermals! To get you into the swing and to help keep you warm our June issue focuses on “A Pant Based Lifestyle”

Our feature ingredient this issue is blood pudding or black pudding, sausage however you prefer to call it, and we read of the differences in this ingredient around the world. There are some very

interesting examples, its an eye-opening read. Don't forget to enter the Going Green, Make an Impact competition where you could win some great prizes, enter [here](#).

Please enjoy this edition, any comments or feedback is appreciated, please forward through to [admin@bubblemuffin.com](mailto:admin@bubblemuffin.com)

Keep looking after yourself, your family and friends, eat healthy and exercise daily.

Laugh, Love, Live  
**Kevin Kapusi Starow**

## Contributors



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Orsolya Bartalis is a dynamic travel expert with a solid reputation as an authority on all things Cuba, and along with her Cuban-born partner Yoanis, loves nothing more than sharing her local knowledge and love of the mysterious island Republic with the world.

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# BEAT THE WINTER BLUES AT THE BEACH

**W**hen thinking about taking a beach holiday, swimming in the warm summer sun is usually the first thing that comes to mind; however, it need not be the focal point of a beach holiday. Although wintertime is not typically synonymous with beach holidays, there are so many reasons why having a winter beach getaway or day trip with your children is the perfect way to spend a winter break.

Empty beaches, magnificent views and a relaxing environment provide the perfect backdrop for your family fun without the usual price tag or crowded spaces.

## EXPERIENCE THE COAST FROM A NEW POINT OF VIEW

When the crowds disappear, the beach is pared back to its natural state, enabling local flora and fauna to thrive. Waves crash as winter storms brew and only a scarce amount of people take to the beach to walk their dog, ride the waves or walk along the seashore.

The sudden quiet open space is the perfect setting for families to walk along the shore and view the different seaweed species, collect driftwood and find treasures. The empty winter beach is a stark contrast to how it

looks during the bustling summer days.

## SEE THINGS CLEARLY

Suddenly beach car parks are empty, local lookouts are free of people and wildlife has the space to come out and enjoy the open air. The quiet winter season makes it easy to spot wildlife, enjoy unobstructed views and explore the local environment.

Many migratory birds arrive during the winter and call our most beautiful destinations home. The serene winter environment allows you to stop and see them in their element in a unique way that only the winter season provides. Sea creatures such as shellfish and crabs are more easily spotted, and a plethora of seaweed species wash ashore. Without the crowd, families can easily see and experience all of this easily.

## GET YOUR BODY MOVING

Without the sweltering weather, you can finally comfortably exercise at the beach. Check out local walking and bike tracks and take in the views they offer along the way, chase seafoam across the sand, roll down (small) sand dunes, play ball games, fly a kite and play chasey. Children can burn off some steam and experience the beach in a whole new way rather than swimming.

## MAKE IT A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Seaweed is a vital element of the ocean's health. Children can learn about the different species they spot and strengthen their knowledge of the crucial job seaweed has while away using websites such as [www.seaweed.ie/australia/](http://www.seaweed.ie/australia/)

Continue your search on the beach by looking for treasures, identifying seashells and looking out for scurrying sea creatures. Check with your local council before collecting shells, as some local councils don't allow fishing or flora and fauna to be taken from the environment.

## GET TO KNOW THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Once the winter winddown begins, locals have the opportunity to relax and enjoy their community and surroundings by throwing BBQs, organising nature walks, running community markets and trying local eateries that are usually packed during summer. Visiting a beach town during this quiet season makes it easier for families to enjoy a more authentic experience with locals and gain insider knowledge of the area rather than hitting up

tourist-filled hotspots.

## LEARN ABOUT THE LAND'S HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Get to know your favourite seaside towns in a way you wouldn't usually have the opportunity to by exploring the local arts, culture, and heritage hubs. Head to local galleries and museums, join tour groups and visit local historical sites. The knowledge held within these places will enrich your family's holiday and develop a deeper connection with these coastal towns.

## BREATH IN THE CRISP COAST AIR

It can be near impossible to slow down during summer at the beach. The stress of finding a nice spot amongst the heavy crowds, searching for parking and watching the kids in the sweltering sun can halt your unwinding plans. Instead, take advantage of the calm and quiet the winter offers at the beach, breath in the crisp and salty ocean air and relax while the children search for treasures, play ball and build sand sculptures.

## BECOME EXPLORERS

The expansive landscape of a quiet beach is the perfect place to spur on imagination and exploration. There is so much to discover, with fossils still being found at beaches around the globe. Take the children on a treasure hunt to search for artifacts and fossils. You never know what you may find! scavenger hunt, bird and wildlife watching, beachcombing



## SAVE SOME PENNIES

Winter beach holidays or day trips are a cost-effective alternative to summer beach stays. Accommodation and activity prices are generally reduced across winter and sometimes offer great family deals to entice holidaymakers.

There is no need to hibernate and stay indoors during winter. Throw on your winter woollies and head to a blissful beach holiday. While it seems counter-intuitive to holiday at the beach during winter, this can be one of the most joyful times to do so. Time to schedule that next adventure!

You will feel like the whole beach belongs to you and your family with scarce crowds.

Written by [Cerise Canon](#)



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Reduce pain, improve energy, balance hormones, & reverse heart disease

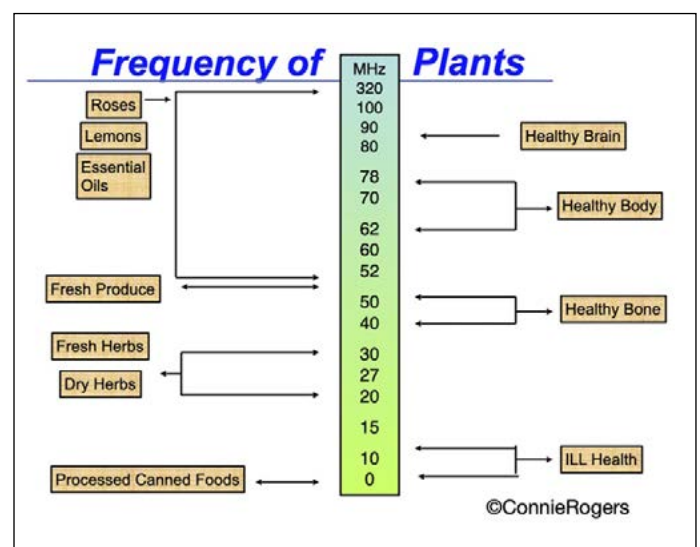
## WITH A PLANT-BASED LIFESTYLE

**W**hat is the meaning of plant based? An organic plant-based lifestyle assures the user of safety practices in foods and products that we ingest or use on our skin. A plant-based clean-living lifestyle improves health and longevity without toxic exposures in our home, clothing, and medicinal choices!

As humans, we are connected to the plant world in several ways. We tend to adapt to season and environments, we both can't live without sun exposure, and plants have electrical impulses while humans are electrical beings. It's when we suffer a breakdown in our electrical signaling that illness appears. Without electricity, our brain and heart would cease to function.

Statistics in 2019 show, the leading cause of death in Australia is heart disease. "In 1983, the heart was reclassified as part of the hormonal system when a new hormone produced and secreted by the atria of the heart was discovered. Nicknamed the balance hormone, it plays an important role in fluid and electrolyte balance, kidneys, adrenal glands, and centers of the brain." <sup>(5)</sup>

The good news is, you can prevent and reverse heart disease with a plant-based diet and help balance hormones! <sup>(6)</sup>



**Plants have a signature resembling parts of the human anatomy.**

Examples include:

- Carrots resemble our eyes.
- Avocado resembles a women's womb.
- Pomegranates resemble a human jawline and teeth.





## Debunking 2 Myths surrounding a plant-based lifestyle.

**Myth 1** - we will be protein deficient if we eat plants. The truth is, a plant-based diet does not put us at risk for protein deficiency!

1. One ounce of organic raw pumpkin seeds contains 9.35 grams of protein.
2. Two cups of cooked spinach has about 10.70 grams of protein.
3. Hemp seeds and chia seeds are complete proteins.
4. Lentils contain 28 grams of protein and are rich in soluble and insoluble fiber. However, it's important to make sure your choice of lentils are organic. Lentils and chickpeas can be heavily sprayed with Glyphosate. The lentils I choose for my family are organic and sprouted. <sup>(7)</sup> In fact, I love to make lentils and kale soup in the winter months to boost immunity. Both are considered to be superfoods. <sup>(8)</sup>

**Myth 2** - we will suffer from iron deficiency eating a plant-based diet.

The truth is plant-based foods are rich in iron. Some examples include kidney beans, black beans, spinach, raisins, cashews, oatmeal, cabbage, and more. Corporations may want to sell you on the idea you need iron-fortified foods, BUT cereals, bread, and pasta, advertised as iron-fortified, are far from healthy. You can't denature foods, force synthetic vitamins in them, and then call them healthy. The type of iron added to these 'wheat fortified options' isn't a nutrient at all, as it's considered a metallic iron. Secondly, you may want to consider ditching wheat altogether. Even though wheat is a plant, it's no longer considered the staff of life and indeed not a healthy source of fiber. Before and after storage, wheat may be sprayed with weed killers, chemicals, and Cycocel, a synthetic hormone. Going gluten-free and eating greens (prebiotics) can improve our gut and brain health.

## Plant-Based Household Cleaners are gaining notoriety.

Plant-based, non-toxic all-purpose cleaners and plant-based glass cleaners are changing the housekeeping industry. These prove to be less of a skin irritant, less irritating to our sinuses and the environment and less toxic to our brain and lungs. You may want to check your cleaning products stored under your sink right now. See if you have cleaning products that contain ammonia. I would highly suggest discarding these toxic products. Ammonia is a neurotoxin factor in Alzheimer's disease. <sup>(9)</sup> One thing I know for sure is, there's always one company that tries to sneak in under the radar with false claims of being natural and non-toxic when they are clearly not. Recently, I found there is a class action lawsuit against 'Method' Plant-Based Products because of their false

## The human body has the innate ability to heal itself by using plants.

Roots such as dandelion root, turmeric, and ginger root can promote gut health and decrease inflammation. Studies show dandelion root is a non-toxic and effective alternative to conventional modes of chemotherapy available today. <sup>(2)</sup>

Peppermint is used for IBS, Shingles, and prostate cancer. <sup>(3)</sup> Organic peppermint essential oil can be beneficial for headaches and to help improve digestion.

Lemons are loaded with more vitamin C than oranges. I drink the juice of a fresh lemon in water twice a day. They help boost immunity and release toxins.

A Resin essential oil such as myrrh contains medicinal healing qualities from the Commiphora myrrh tree. Myrrh can be used in a healing salve for the face, hands, and fingernails during the winter months. <sup>(4)</sup>

### Eat to Alleviate Pain

According to Dr. Mark Stengler, "the pain of osteoarthritis can be alleviated by adding in Sulphur rich foods." These include, Fennel seed - chew or make a tea.

Coltsfoot,  
Eyebright,  
Mullein,  
Meadowsweet,  
Plantain leaves,  
Shepherds purse,  
Stinging nettle,  
Watercress and Garlic.

Connie Rogers

According to Dr. Mark Stengler, sulphur rich foods can be used to alleviate pain in Osteoarthritis.

claims of being non-toxic. <sup>(10)</sup>

### Plants have changed the skincare industry as well!

With my sensitive skin, I use and recommend plant-based organic skincare products from ilike. <sup>(11)</sup> Still, there are other ‘name brands’ in skincare demanding high prices that have jumped into the market but contain questionable ingredients. Products listing Dimethicone, and sodium benzoate, can cause hypersensitivity responses. <sup>(12-14)</sup> You may also see polyisobutene, and cetyl alcohol ingredients, which may cause irritation to the skins barrier or cause contact dermatitis. <sup>(15)</sup> Alcohol Denat is a pro-aging ingredient that dries and disrupts the skins microbiome, and Butylene Glycol is a toxic chemical found in antifreeze. <sup>(16)</sup> The above is just a handful of ingredients in skincare products designed to fool us into making poor choices. <sup>(17)</sup>

### 8 Benefits When Consuming Plants First

**Plants Improved energy levels.** The number one complaint I hear from adults is a lack of energy. The history of low energy has everything to do with what we consume, expose ourselves to, and how we neglect our bodies. Metabolism is all about energy, the energy of our cells, and the energy of our foods. Plant-based foods can give a body more sustainable energy. This in turn, will improve our ability to exercise.

**Plants Improve vision.** Leafy greens, sweet potatoes, and carrots improve eye health. Frequent intake of red meat and chicken was positively associated with early AMD” <sup>(18)</sup> Researchers from Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, claim diet is related to macular degeneration, and those who ate worse-than-normal diets, with low levels of nutrients, actually had a 20 percent increased risk of MD.

**Plants Improved prostate health,** by consuming more nutrient-rich healthy foods and skipping the junk. A healthy lifestyle reduces habits that are linked to cancer. Hundreds of processed foods contain a variety of unhealthy dyes, artificial ingredients, whey, MSG, maltodextrin, vegetable oils, sugars, refined salts, and acrylamide. <sup>(19)</sup>

**Plants Reduce Inflammation.** Anthocyanins, found in red cabbage and fermented sauerkraut, can reduce symptoms of low-grade chronic inflammation. Turmeric and ginger root uses are described as anti-inflammatory, anti-carcinogenic, antioxidant as well as antiviral. Studies show curcumin has the potential to heal pulmonary edema. <sup>(20)</sup> You can add these root vegetables to warmed coconut milk and a dash of cinnamon. Delicious!

**Plants Improve body weight,** and help balance blood pressure levels. In addition, plant-based diets may offer performance advantages. <sup>(21)</sup> Not all calories are created equal. The biggest mistake when choosing health is counting calories instead of eating real foods.

You can’t compare a piece of broccoli or a colorful organic salad to processed meats.

A healthier choice to store-bought bottled and canned juice is making your own. Try juicing organic plants, such as carrots, celery, red beets, ginger root, and lemons at home, which provides you the highest frequency and nutritional value of the plant.

**Diet and lifestyle, particularly plant-based diets, are effective tools for the prevention and management of diabetes.** In the elderly, diabetes increases our risk of institutionalization.

Scientists recommend eating patterns that emphasize legumes, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds and discourage most or all animal products. <sup>(22)</sup> Additionally, plant diets reduce our risk of blood sugar imbalances, neuropathy, and balance of cholesterol levels.

**“A plant-based lifestyle improves gut microbiome, immunity, energy, blood–brain barrier integrity, and regulation of critical functions of the intestine.”** A vegan lifestyle is effective in promoting beneficial bacteria to support our gut and brain health. <sup>(23)</sup>

**Lastly, plants help prevent premature aging** by feeding our skin from within, keeping us younger, longer!

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Written by [Connie Rogers](#)

#### Footnotes

- 2- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22363452/>
- 3- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19308266/>
- 4- <https://realitysandwich.com/the-signatures-of-plants-learning-natures-alphabet/>
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- 23- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6478664/>

# Vegan / Vegetarian / Paleo / Pescatarian / Meatarian / Flexitarian ...

## WHAT ABOUT PLANT-BASED?



It feels like every day there is a new ‘descriptor’ for an eating style. Recently, I’ve had the experience of some people BEING their eating style where they constantly talk about it and try to convince you to come on board their way.

However, I believe that there is no one style that fits ALL people. Yep there are guidelines as to what are good principles to follow, however no down and out rules that fit every one. At Cluzie Clinic, we are big believers in paying attention to what your body tells you as ‘feedback’ as to what you are putting in your mouth.

### LISTENING TO YOUR BODY!

Whatever eating style your body likes, we love the principles behind a plant-based lifestyle and eating plan. There are some great concepts behind this style ... let’s explore.

Firstly, what is a plant-based diet? “Plant-based or plant-forward eating patterns focus on foods primarily from plants. This includes not only fruits and vegetables, but also nuts, seeds, oils, whole grains, legumes, and beans.

It doesn’t mean that you are vegetarian or vegan and never eat meat or dairy. Rather, you are proportionately choosing more of your foods from plant sources.”

### ADVANTAGES OF THIS EATING STYLE

**No Lock Ins:** The style is a guide only and not eliminating food groups based on their source, ie as a vegetarian – you DO NOT eat meat, that is the whole point of that food group. However, with plant-based, you are not restricting a food group like meat, just adjusting the focus on where the majority of daily food comes from.

**Ancestral Style:** of the approximate 300,000 years humans have been on the planet, the majority of the diet would have been vegetable matter with the odd wildebeest thrown in. It is only in very recent years in relationship to existence, that food groups like processed grains and dairy have been introduced; ~10,000 and ~5,000 years respectively.

Thus, keeping inline with how our body’s have been trained to eat → a lot of vegetable with some meat included is perfect.



**Vitamins and Minerals:** By not excluding particular food groups, there is an advantage that most minerals and vitamin requirements are being met. For example, if you are vegan, it is important to supplement the diet with Vitamin B12 in order to meet the body's needs.

### KEY TIPS WHEN FOLLOWING A PLANT BASED LIFESTYLE

**1. Food Processing:** You want to be eating the LEAST processed from all the food groups possible! The more it looks like its natural form, the better it is for your body. When eating meat, choose an animal that is as close to living in its natural habitat as possible. Comparing wild kangaroo to a factory cow is like chalk and cheese. Wild kangaroo is still eating its natural diet of grass and shrubs and is a clean, lean meat. Factory cows have been bred and fed to put on fat as quickly as possible, are injected with multiple antibiotics to protect against disease outbreaks due to mass crowding, get limited movement due to restricted penning and are commonly filled with tumors etc. Thus, when we ingest the meat, we get all those other factors as well.



**2. 'Fakeries':** Beware the 'fakeries' ... an item trying to imitate the real thing, i.e. a wannabe meat patty that is meatless. These processed items usually contain a heap of chemicals in order 'to look like' the real thing with the same texture. These chemicals can cause a lot of harm to the body.

**3. Proportion Sizes:** A key tip for when converting to a plant-based lifestyle is to change the proportion sizes on your plate. Aim for the plant-based proportion of your meal to take up the majority of the plate. Meat becomes more of a garnish compared to centrepiece. Or build a meal around a salad instead of a meat component.

**4. Healthy Oils:** Switch to the healthiest oil options you can: coconut oil and olive oils are great options to cook in. Fill up on avocado and nuts and seeds to feel particularly satiated.

All in all, we come back to the key point: Listen to YOUR body! Really pay attention to what food makes you feel fabulous on the inside out. For me, when I had my own farm and had to kill kangaroo to retain enough pasture for the live-stock, every time I ate the kangaroo (which is super high in protein and a very lean meat), it was like an explosion of good fireworks going off in my belly that so much goodness was going in.

Written by [Claire Dunkley](#)



Credit: Hean Prinsloo (Unsplash)

# Sticking to your healthy habits

**H**ave you ever procrastinated about getting started on that new health and wellbeing goal? Have you waited eagerly for that surge of motivation to hit and fill you with bursts of energy and positivity to get going?

I'm going to suggest you have done both, because I know I have!

I have some bad news, motivation doesn't just show up ☹️ it has to be cultivated and built upon. In other words, motivation comes through action.

That initial burst that gets you started is usually based on willpower, which is sadly flawed and often short-lived. I'm sure everyone has experienced that surge of motivation when you've finally made the decision to start going to that gym class each week, eat cleaner, start food prepping, or walking every morning before work. You might go

out and buy all the new gym gear, new kicks, buy that membership, spend hundreds of dollars on supplements and healthy foods ... only to fall off the wagon within 2 weeks and feel like a total failure. ☹️

That all sounds pretty doom and gloom I know – but there is hope!

There are strategies that can help you get around these annoying human traits and set yourself up for success.

Here are my best tips and tricks for staying on track and smashing those health and wellbeing goals:

## TEMPTATION BUNDLING

Temptation bundling is where you link a positive, fun, or luxurious action with a new positive habit that you want



Credit: Mollie Sivaram (Unsplash)

to implement. The trick is though, that you only do this fun and exciting thing when you are practicing your new habit...

For example, if your goal is to run for 30 minutes on the treadmill or do a workout at the gym, then you could think of something like watching your favourite Netflix series, audiobook or indulgent TV show ONLY when you are working out; so if you want to see the next episode or hear the next chapter, you have to go back to the gym!

It has to be alluring and exciting for you, so think about what things you love to do, or would love to do if you had the spare time, and link it to your health goals.

Studies show that this really works by increasing the appeal of your new habit that you've been avoiding, by

connecting it to the things you love and enjoy. This way your brain gets those lovely dopamine hits that help you to return to an activity again and again.

Here are some more examples to help you find your ideal temptation bundling routine:

- If you really need to reply to a heap of emails or messages - do it whilst having a spa treatment or having your favourite glass of fancy red wine.
- Only listen to your fav podcast or music playlist whilst going on your daily walk.
- Invite a friend over every Sunday afternoon to food prep together.

Start by writing a list of all the things you'd love to do but have been procrastinating about, and then all the things you can think of that you enjoy doing, and see which ones you can link up to create your bundle!

### THE LITTLE THINGS

- Get your gym clothes out the night before
- Schedule it! Whether it's food prep, exercise, work, or drinking more water, pop it in your calendar as a commitment, and use your smartphone to set up reminders
- If you want to start rising earlier to fit in some self-care or exercise, try setting your alarm 15min earlier



Credit: Rodnae Productions (Pexels)



Credit: Bruce Mars (Unsplash)

each day until you get to your desired time

- Only surround yourself with positive, inspiring influences on social media, clear out anyone that makes you feel bad about yourself or drains your energy!
- Focus on why you are trying to bring in these new habits – for example if it is to feel happier and healthier – write down and visualise exactly how this will feel when you get there and revisit this every few days.
- And most importantly, make sure your new goal is actually aligned with your values and personality. E.g. don't join a gym if you loathe the gym, try a different, more aligned form of movement such as a team sport or yoga.

### PREPARATION IS KEY

- Create a meal plan at the beginning of each week to ensure you have healthy food in the house ready to go
- Schedule in food prep time each week e.g. every Sunday afternoon
- Find shops / farmers market that stock the healthy supplies that you need. Make it a family/couple routine to go each week so that it becomes a positive habit
- Have pre-prepared and portioned snack containers ready to grab each morning, e.g. berries, nuts, fruit salad etc.
- Have healthy snacks on hand at all times to avoid sugar crash binge eating, keep some protein bars/balls, nuts and seeds, fruit, or granola in your desk drawer and handbag
- Lock in your exercise/work/relaxation schedule with your partner and family so that everyone knows you are unavailable during these times in advance.

### FIND AN ACCOUNTABILITY BUDDY

You don't have to do it on your own! In fact – it is proven that having an accountability buddy can really help keep you on track and stay focused! This could literally be a friend who comes with you on that walk or run, meets you at the gym, or comes over every Sunday to food prep together.

Having someone with similar health goals that you can bounce off and help keep each other motivated is invaluable. You are much less likely to cancel when you know someone else is depending on you too! When one of you is having an off week, the other can give the push that's needed to keep going. Even if you aren't meeting up in person, you can still check in with each other regularly to report on how you are tracking and inspire each other to keep going.

### REWARD YOURSELF!!!

And finally, remember to reward yourself! Celebrate your wins, no matter how small. Every time you do this you help solidify your new healthy habit. It doesn't have to be expensive or elaborate, but make sure you take the time to give yourself a pat on the back. It could be your favourite take away, glass of wine, Netflix binge, or that dress you've been eyeing off. Whatever you desire!

So there you have it, there is no need to avoid those new habits anymore!

Start small, and remember that things don't happen overnight. The key is starting where you are at and setting small achievable goals that will lead you to your long term bigger goals. If you go too hard too soon, you may end up sabotaging yourself before you begin! We want our habits to be sustainable, and the key to this is building them into our lives using small, achievable and enjoyable steps. Happy habit forming!

Written by [Katie Lowe](#)

# Time to tackle workplace burnout: A case study and a way to nurture mental health

**C**hronic exhaustion, anxiety, an over-active mind that prevents a deep and restful sleep from occurring, and the onset of depression and other mental issues. These symptoms sound pretty common, right? They've almost become the trademark of this working generation. When ignored, these symptoms can lead to serious long term health complications, self-harm and a complete nervous system collapse resulting in bed-bound individuals who have exhausted all of their mental and physical resources. In extreme cases, it can also lead to suicide.

Burnout is no longer a buzzword that gets thrown around. It's officially recognised by the World Health Organisation as a serious diagnosis with its own definition: "Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed."

Burnout doesn't only impact the individuals and their families, it also impacts overall productivity levels in the workplace. We are seeing more and more research that indicates shorter working hours actually result in greater productivity levels. The opportunity to rest, enjoy ample leisure time, and nurture family life actually creates a workplace dynamic that is better focused and more goal-driven.

One of the most effective ways of preventing burnout is to address the "chronic workplace stress" by redesigning the job and changing the organisational culture, which is the primary responsibility under occupational health and safety laws, of the Employer. This is a tremendous responsibility and it's not always easy for employers to step outside of the structures they're comfortable with and facilitate a change that is going to translate into positive results for the enterprise.

This is where an HR firm with a special interest in combating and preventing workplace burnout, is beneficial. The HR firm focuses on optimising productivity levels in order to maintain or improve the revenue generation of the company while transitioning out of a traditional workplace structure that breeds burnout.

## AN INTERESTING EXAMPLE TO DRAW FROM

Naturally, certain industries are more prone to overworking their professionals. In Australia, burnout

is most prevalent among the law and construction fields. The stress levels in these fields are measured by disproportionately high levels of self-harm and mental health issues.

Both industries have a pervasive culture of excessive work hours brought out in different ways. Contributing factors include weekend work, late nights, intense deadlines and financial pressures. These result in excessive stress, self-medication and ultimately burnout and social dysfunction. Case in point: construction workers are six times more likely to die from suicide than an incident at work, and 190 Australian construction workers take their lives every year.

## What is being done to combat the burnout epidemic in the construction field?

Knowing what the industry-leading professionals are doing to combat this problem can demonstrate a way forward for everyone. Each entrepreneur will simply need to adapt the points to suit their business structure, sometimes with the help of an HR facilitator who is experienced in navigating these changes successfully.

A-HA has facilitated an industry roundtable for the construction field for five years. The focus is on culture, mental health and well-being. These roundtable meetings ensure that discussions are held at an industry level so that solutions and ideas are shared. A-HA creates an open forum for transparent discussion on topics that need to be tackled within the industry and sharing strategies and guidance for businesses to implement impactful and positive change.

A major change that has been implemented by one of construction's leading businesses, Roberts Pizzarotti, was making the choice to adopt a 5-day workweek. While the move to this new model wasn't easy to start with, it has proven to be extremely effective, gaining support from employees, contractors and other businesses.

The introduction of a shorter workweek in an industry that is entrenched in long hours and 6 day work weeks has been instrumental in ensuring employees mental health is looked after.

The results were profound. The decrease in work hours has actually resulted in an increase in productivity – by





taking away the focus on presenteeism (people being “present” as mistaken for people actually working) employees work hard when they’re working, get the job done, then go home to rest. Roberts Pizzarotti’s CEO, Alison Mirams, speaks about the industry and urges other companies to re-introduce 5-day workweeks:

*“If you get people who love going to work, they’ll achieve greatness,” she assures. “If you put people in a happy place, they will perform at their best. I get my energy by going out to our sites and seeing how happy our people are and seeing them thrive. I genuinely care about our staff.”*

Burned out people are not effective at improving the company’s revenue generation just by sitting at a desk or standing on-site. The idea that presenteeism equals productivity is a common misperception that continues to pervade many workplaces.

### How the legal industry is utilising HR best practices to improve productivity and reduce burnout

Consider that in this field, it is imperative that professionals have their full cognitive functions engaged in order to be productive and achieve the best possible outcomes for their clients. Burnout, chronic exhaustion and declining mental health will not serve the company. Longer working hours are not in the best interest of the employees or business.

Findings from the Beyondblue National Depression initiative revealed that when compared to other professions, lawyers experienced the highest incidence of depressive symptoms. Respondents from law firms were also the most likely to use alcohol or other drugs to reduce or manage their symptomatology. The Brain and Mind Research Institute reported in 2009 that almost a third of solicitors and one in five barristers surveyed suffered from clinical depression.

Fortunately, there are measures that improve the high levels of stress and burnout in this field. These measures include:

- Consciously curating a positive, inclusive, healthy workplace culture that is lived in what they say and do. Company culture is best established at the conception of the business. You build your company policies, tone and structures around the values you

have set out in your clearly defined company culture. It is never too late to set about defining the company culture for the first time.

- Leading law firms embed their company culture by running regular health and well-being sessions for all employees, facilitated by a well-being coach who takes people through meditation, yoga and nutrition.
- Regular paid social events for all members of staff can also replenish the mental faculties, providing a welcome break from the intensive thinking and planning aspects of the job. Whilst this may seem normal to some companies, it is very unique for law firms, it is not standard practice for the industry, especially for a firm that specialises in the cut-throat world of mergers and acquisitions, financial services and corporate law.
- Remaining goal-focused and efficient often leaves little time for pleasantries in this industry. Thus, enforcing a “check your ego at the door” policy can help employees navigate high-stress situations by focusing on the team deliverables and well-being. This line of work can often foster and create self-centred, and non-team behaviour, exacerbating stress and misery in the workplace. The company culture needs to clearly state that this is not tolerated.

Again, we can combat burnout by looking at the presenteeism mindset. By enforcing a work-hard, but go-home when its quiet policy, employees have a break and return refreshed, sharp and ready to think more innovatively.

### THE SOLUTION: A HUMAN-FIRST APPROACH TO BUSINESS

Burnout, tiredness and success have become synonymous, and this is a tragedy. Many people wear their exhaustion like badges of honour - if you are tired it means you are a productive member of society. It starts in the workplace. Employers that foster the belief that the hardest worker is the most likely to be promoted, create a culture that centres around suffering in order to be financially safe, secure and enjoy opportunities for growth.

When employers encourage time off and begin to value happy, well-rested, balanced employees, the change in culture will slowly drip-feed into society. Employers can make healthy the ‘new cool’, instead of tired.

If the business is viewed as a ship, the entrepreneur believes that by serving the well-being of the company first, it is then possible to serve the needs of the individuals. After all, everyone needs to be afloat, this is the top priority. However, when the needs of the crew are met first, it is easier, faster and cheaper to keep the ship in the best condition possible, making it more likely to survive storms and keep all of its passengers safe, comfortable and happy. When employees battle with burnout, you’ll find yourself constantly plugging holes in the company while the burnout epidemic continues to grow.

Written by [Katrina Tahka](#)

# GETTING BACK TO BASICS AND INTO NATURE:

## The benefits for your mental health

In the hustle and bustle of daily life, most people find it extremely difficult to take any time out for themselves. When I talk to them about the importance of getting back to nature, such as breathing in some fresh air, taking their shoes off and walking barefoot on the grass or adding more fruits and vegetables into their diet, they look at me and say, “that won’t change anything”. These strategies are seen as either too simple or they are seen as luxuries that they do not have time for. “I wish I had the time to go to the beach, to read, to have a hot bath” are said way too often in my therapy room. It makes me wonder, where did we go so wrong? Why are these simple tasks so difficult to make time for? When are we going to stop and realise that if we don’t get back to basics we will burn out and our bodies and mind will shut down. Life is passing us by, and our poor body is not detoxing from all the stress we take in because of our work life, our family life and our relationship life.

To thrive in all areas we need to charge our battery. I often say to clients that we seem to take better care of our phones and computers than we do ourselves. We plug them in at night and allow them time to recharge before we put them to work the following day, and yet we don’t seem to do this for ourselves. If we don’t charge our phone, it will go flat and then will be useless, so why do we expect more from our mind and body? Why do we make assumptions that our mind and body will soldier on and on like an energizer bunny, because I can promise you, it will not!

Burnout occurs when we do not take the time to recharge. Burnout is not optional! Burnout is really a simple concept - when we participate in activities such as work, parenting, and relationships, we release energy from our bodies for these activities. If we do not refill this energy then we will run out of it and our body will shut down, or, like our phone, will go flat. So many of us would have already in our life experienced this feeling of burn out, with symptoms including poor memory, a lack of motivation, inability to make decision and low frustration tolerance. Far too often these symptoms are ignored because it is not understood why they are occurring.

Understanding burnout and the need to recharge ourselves can open the door to a healthy mind state and can make us much more productive human beings. The good news is, burnout prevention and recharging is

very simple and we have all the tools already around us. The lakes, the mountains the parklands, even our own backyards are all open areas filled with nature that can serve as our battery charging ports.

### Simple ways you can get back to basics and help your mental health.

- 1. Get close to water** - This can be anything, a river, a lake, the beach or a waterfall. Watching water or feeling water can help get you into a state of relaxation and is very cleansing to many people. Sit near it, watch it, put your feet in it or swim in it.
- 2. Walk on the grass** - Go to a parkland or even out into your own backyard, take off your shoes and walk around or lay on the grass and watch the clouds roll by for a few minutes. This simple act can help you recharge, refocus, and help you find perspective with your thoughts.
- 3. Fruits and Vegetables** - Eat the rainbow. Providing your body with more fresh fruits and vegetables will help you get the vitamins and minerals that you need to recover and regenerate each cell.
- 4. Breathe** - We might do this all day every day, but we often don’t take the time to stop and take some much-needed deep breaths during the day. There are even reminders on our smart devices trying to get us to stop and breathe but most of us skip each time they pop up!! Taking a few minutes each day to really focus on your breathing and feel the oxygen go into your lungs is another simple way to help your body recharge and recover from all the demands placed on it daily.
- 5. Drinking water** - Another simple strategy that we “should” be doing but so many of us are not doing well enough. If we are dehydrated our brain’s ability to function reduces which can cause us stress and frustration in getting our daily tasks successfully completed.

Taking time out for ourselves to refocus and recharge our bodies and our minds, should not be seen as a luxury. It needs to be seen as a necessity and these simple strategies are just a few that can make a huge difference to your mental health. We only get one body so let’s start looking after it better. Charge it up every day and then you will see more of what it can do!

Written by [Donna Cameron](#)



# ELIMINATE CHRONIC ILLNESS AND DISEASE WITH NUTRITION

**C**an a Plant Based Diet Reduce or eliminate chronic illness and disease? Our bodies are not made to consume the blood of other animals. Think about it, our closest descendants are the monkey and monkeys don't eat meat, they eat a plant based diet. So can we can heal the body with a plant based diet?

If you've watched any of the current health documentaries on Netflix, you'll have seen the research and studies that are being done, leading to supporting the benefits of a plant based nutrition eating plan. Extreme, maybe? Worth trying to improve your overall health, absolutely!

#### Benefits to a plant based diet to get you thinking:

- You can save money eating a plant based diet
- You can build muscle on a plant based diet
- Your blood pressure will drop

- Your arteries will clear of plaque build up
- You will lose weight
- Your cholesterol will reduce

*"Monkeys eat a plant based diet".*

Many are not aware that nutrition education is not taught to Medical Doctors, in some cases during the education of the medical doctors they spend a whole 30-60 minutes on nutrition. Also the nutritional information provided to many nutritionists is supported by the producers themselves. So the egg company will tell you eggs are good for you and just the same, the lamb association will tell you lamb has nutritional benefits.

It's time to make your own decisions and choices based on your personal preferences, health objectives and education.



There are multiple reasons to get and go green and it starts with a plant based diet to support ourselves, our world and our environment. By eating a plant based diet we can change the way we will live, reduce and eliminate the dependence on prescription drugs and as a result be healthier, happier, greener and leaner. Who doesn't want some of that? You will actually THRIVE not just SURVIVE.

## THE (NOW) MAINSTREAM ORGANIC FOOD INDUSTRY

Remember when Organic used to be associated with living an alternative lifestyle? If you mentioned you grew your own food, people would look at you like you were a hippie, living out of a van and always on the move with no fixed address. How things have changed. Now more than ever we hot foot it to the local organic markets, produce markets and select organic produce in the supermarkets and green grocers. Also, we are demanding more and more plant based foods in our routine grocery shop each week.

Did you know that the organic industry has grown from a niche market to now servicing the mainstream food and beverage market, with organic products more widely available in major supermarkets, independent retailers, food service venues and convenience stores.

In the US market, organic food is sold in approximately three-quarters of grocery retailers. The Australian organic industry is worth AUD\$2.6 billion and has grown 88% since 2012, according to the Australian Organic Market Report 2019. There has been a 42% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) growth in exports of organic

products since 2012 to AUD\$717 million.

## GROWTH OF ORGANIC AND PLANT BASED FOODS

IBISWorld forecasts organic food to be one of the fastest growing food segments in Australia with around 15 per cent per annum growth for the next five years.

Plant-based foods are one of the fastest growing segments of the food industry. According to Euromonitor, between 2015 and 2020 Australia is projected to continue as the third-fastest-growing vegan market in the world at 9.6% growth. As demand increases rapidly, Australia's packaged vegan food market is expected to reach \$215 million by 2020.3 In the US, plant-based foods sales reached US\$5 billion in 2019 with year-on-year sales growth of 11.4%, which is five times faster than overall retail food sales growth of 2.2% (according to Plant Based Foods Association and The Good Food Institute)

## SO WHAT IS A PLANT BASED NUTRITION PLAN?

Plant based eating patterns focus on foods primarily from plants, so if you consider what grows naturally; vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, oils, grains, legumes and beans. With the plant based nutrition plan, it does not mean you are restricted at all.

Rather you are choosing to fill your nutrition with plant based foods and supplement with other foods. Depriving yourself of any food will lead to a bigger desire for the food you've forbidden and is not suggested.



recipes that work and are simple to create that you can make extra quantities of and enjoy for another meal.

### WHAT IF I DON'T WANT A FULLY PLANT BASED DIET?

Plant based, vegetarian diets come in lots of shapes and sizes, it's best you choose the version that works best for you. Here are some options to trial.

- Flexitarian includes eggs, dairy foods, and occasionally meat, poultry, fish, and seafood. A little of everything and a great way to trial removing some food choices.
- Pescatarian includes eggs, dairy foods, fish, and seafood, but no meat or poultry.
- Vegetarian includes eggs and dairy foods, but no meat, poultry, fish, or seafood.
- Vegan includes no animal foods.

### FEELING LIKE A CHALLENGE?

Here it is, try this for a week. Google some plant based recipes, create your shopping list, seek out your best produce, preprep your food and eat a plant based diet (nutrition plan) for a week and see how you feel. Let me know how you get on!

Not quite so sure about a challenge that's fully plant based. How about you go "flex-atarian", you get to choose how you eat. However, think twice when it comes to choosing meat. Have some fun and get creative with plant food choices and preparation.

*"One Person's Food is Another Person's Poison"*

### LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

When you make changes to your nutrition and lifestyle, it's important to note that you do this at your own pace and your own taste. Seek guidance from a medical practitioner before you make any changes and importantly, "Listen to your body". The body has an inherent ability to communicate to us, we just need to listen.

Written by [Sally McGrath](#)

### Getting You Started with a Plant Based Nutrition Plan

Here's eight suggestions to get you on the way to trying a plant based nutrition plan.

1. **Eat lots of vegetables.** Fill half your plate with vegetables at lunch and dinner. Make sure you include plenty of colors in choosing your vegetables. Enjoy vegetables as a snack with hummus, salsa, or guacamole.
2. **Change the way you think about meat.** Have smaller amounts. Use it as a garnish instead of a centerpiece.
3. **Choose good fats.** Fats in olive oil, olives, nuts and nut butters, seeds, and avocados are particularly healthy choices.
4. **Cook a vegetarian meal at least one night a week.** Build these meals around beans, whole grains, and vegetables.
5. **Include whole grains for breakfast.** Start with oatmeal, quinoa, buckwheat, or barley. Then add some nuts or seeds along with fresh fruit.
6. **Go for greens.** Try a variety of green leafy vegetables such as kale, collards, Swiss chard, spinach, and other greens each day. Steam, grill, braise, or stir-fry to preserve their flavor and nutrients.
7. **Build a meal around a salad.** Fill a bowl with salad greens such as romaine, rocket, spinach, radicchio leafy greens. Add an assortment of other vegetables along with fresh herbs, beans, peas, or tofu.
8. **Eat fruit for dessert.** A ripe, juicy peach, a refreshing slice of watermelon, or a crisp apple will satisfy your craving for a sweet bite after a meal.

Make sure you keep notes of what you like and dislike,

# Is a plant based diet healthier than a mixed food diet?

**W**ith growing concerns about both health and the impact on the environment, more people are concerned or are thinking about moving to a more plant based diet, but is it better for your health? Why is plant based food actually important for your diet?

Plant based food are your body's main source of carbohydrate, your brain's preferred source of fuel and energy. Although carbohydrate has a direct effect on the release of insulin in the body, most carbohydrate derived from real, whole fruits and vegetables, are slow release and causes a steady and prolonged release of carbohydrate and insulin in the body, unlike refined carbohydrates such as bread and sugars.

Carbohydrate is essential to your body for the building of muscle mass, which makes you stronger and is also important for managing your weight (muscle mass has the most direct effect that you can control on your basal metabolic rate and your total energy expenditure).

The reason is two-fold, carbohydrate is used together with protein to enter your cells to build muscle (protein doesn't enter your cells alone, it does it through a gate that requires the 2 elements) and insulin, released with carbohydrate is required for the process of building muscle. In addition, carbohydrate is the preferred source of fuel for your brain.

If carbohydrate is not present, your brain relies on ketones for energy which is not as good, can make you drowsy and causes a slight acidity to your blood, which your body has to later correct by blowing off the acid from your lungs (which can give you bad breath).

Our main source of fibre is also derived from Plant based food. There are two types of fibre, with very different roles. Soluble fibre, contained in fruits such as raspberries, kiwi fruit and oats are important for managing our blood lipid (fat) content. Soluble fibre "grabs" onto cholesterol and pulls it out of your blood stream, improving your blood lipids. Insoluble fibre, such as in celery improves your bowel health by being both the main source of fuel for your bowel and improving movement through your bowel, making you regular and reducing your risk of bowel cancer.

Finally, Plant based food are our main source of other nutrients such as vitamin C, folate (important for health cell replication, especially during pregnancy) and B-carotene for health eyes and potassium for normal heart function.

## WHEN SHOULD I EAT DIFFERENT TYPES OF PLANT BASED FOODS?

The choice of high-energy (High Glycaemic Index/Load) or low-energy (Low Glycemic Index/Load) have the





biggest effect on metabolism and both are important, if selected at the right time.

**Low Energy Carbohydrates**, should be consumed at every meal, for the slow release of energy over time during the day. More specifically, the amount would be:

- 1-2 Cups per meal
- This includes food such as green leafy vegetables such as spinach and Bok choy, carrots, eggplant, Broccoli and legumes
- If in doubt about selection, unprocessed and the more colours the better

**High Energy Carbohydrates**, should be consumed within the first 3 hours after “intense” exercise (heavy weights training or high intensity interval training, not after a gentle stroll) for the purpose of re-plenishing your body’s natural short term energy stores (glycogen) and to aid the process of building muscle. After exercise, the volume should be:

- 1 Cup of high energy carbohydrate together with 1 cup of low-energy carbohydrates
- This includes grains, pasta and bananas

## HOW TO ENSURE PROTEIN NEEDS ARE MET WITH PLANT BASED FOODS

The biggest challenge with a plant based diet is meeting your protein needs for 2 main reasons, firstly no plant based food has a complete profile of all the essential amino acids (building blocks of protein) that you require, so the combination of foods that you eat is very important and the protein content of plant food is much lower than meats, so you have to eat much more.

The problem is that grain based food lack lysine (an essential amino acids, meaning that your body can not make it from other amino acids and it must be consumed) and legumes are low in methionine (another essential amino acid). In addition, all plant proteins are also low in leucine and tryptophan. Your body is constantly breaking down and re-making new proteins not only in muscle but in all the major processes in the body. All proteins require all the essential amino acids to be constructed, however,

if an amino acid is not present in the process, it will not substitute it with another, it will just stop the process and then breakdown your muscle mass (your body’s natural reserve of protein) to get what it needs. This makes it very hard to build muscle mass to manage your weight.

So how do you do it? The answer is that it is very important to eat a combination of different type of plant based food throughout your day. This means you have to eat legumes AND grain based foods during the day (not necessarily at the same meal). It is easier to eat adequate protein if you maintain a lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet (eat dairy and eggs), rather than a strict vegan diet.

In general, most vegetarian do meet their recommended daily intake of protein, but it is significantly lower than that of omnivores or those following a lacto-ovo-vegetarian diet, however, the micronutrient content of these foods is often not enough (most of the major B



group vitamins, zinc, iron and calcium), therefore if you are to follow a plant based diet, regularly see a dietitian or clinical nutritionist to ensure you are meeting your nutritional needs.

## IS A PLANT BASED DIET HEALTHIER?

In general, people following a plant based diet have a lower weight and healthier cholesterol profile than meat eaters. This is due to a combination of lower energy intake (plant based food are lower in energy density than meat based foods) and plant proteins being lower in saturated fats, contain no cholesterol, are higher in fibre and contain more anti-oxidants and phytochemicals, all helping to protect the body. Plant based eaters also generally have lower blood pressure, have reduced risk of type 2 diabetes and reduced risk of ischemic heart disease, so a lower risk of chronic diseases.

So if you are looking to a plant based diet for your health and for the environment, there are some real tangible benefits for your heart, blood pressure and waist line, but you need to plan what you eat to meet your full protein and nutrient needs. Please consult a qualified dietitian or clinical nutritionist to hold your hand through the process to make sure you do this in a healthy way.

Written by [Michael Dermansky](#)

# The benefits and challenges of a plant based lifestyle



The upward trend towards a more plant based lifestyle has, according to research by Global Data, culminated in a whopping 500% increase in the number of vegan consumers since 2014, with 37% of Australians now actively reducing overall meat consumption, and 10% stating they are vegan or vegetarian.\* So what's this plant based lifestyle all about? The reasons why people are making the switch are many, and vary from wanting to be more environmentally kinder to the planet, to being healthier overall and living longer. There are definitely some major health benefits to reducing our overall consumption of animal products. This is because eating meat has been linked to an increase in heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and even cancer, whereas alternative proteins such as beans and other pulses may actually lower the risk of stroke. There have been an innumerable number of studies conducted on the benefits of the Mediterranean style diet which is high in fruits, vegetables, nuts and plant oils such as olives, as opposed to the W.P.D. (Western Pattern Diet) which consists of a high intake of refined sugars, red and processed meats. Research by the Massachusetts General Hospital found that raising the consumption of animal protein in one's diet by 10% led to a 2% higher risk of death.\* Hence if you want to improve your overall health and wellbeing and increase your chances of living to a ripe old age still with a spring in your step – plant based is the way to go!

Personally I love being plant based – I feel amazing on the inside and can see the difference on the outside – glowing, clear and youthful skin as opposed to my pale, bloated and acne riddled skin of old! However, transitioning to being 100% vegan has for me been a real challenge, especially when eating out at restaurants for example. No-one likes being 'that' person who can't eat anything on the menu, or who drives the waiter and chef crazy by completely altering their menu to suit. It's a challenge I'll admit and one I still battle with occasionally. I am trying

to not be so rigid when eating out at a restaurant and tell myself it's not the end of the world if my vegetables were sautéed in butter today!

My best advice when just starting on your plant based journey is to not have unrealistic expectations that you are able to change a lifetime of habits overnight. You would need to have a very strong willpower to instantly transition from a 3 times a day meat consumer into a fully raw vegan. Just start small, such as cooking a plant based meal one night a week (meatless Mondays for example, having smaller portions of animal protein and instead loading up your plate with a generous serving of beautiful, brightly coloured (and nutritious) vegetables. If I was unsure what food was on offer at a family gathering for instance, I would bring a plant based sharing plate to avoid any awkward 'I don't eat that' conversations! When I first started transitioning to a more plant based diet, I researched how to substitute part or all of the meat component of my family's favourite recipes with a vegan alternative. Once I had mastered a couple of new dishes, I added them into my family's weeknight dinner rotation. A major benefit to me as a busy working mother is not having to worry about defrosting an animal protein out of the deep freezer every single night, my weekly grocery bill is much lower and the vegan meals I've prepared have been super quick and easy – perfect for a midweek meal when you are tired and time poor! I've also noticed as the plant based lifestyle gains popularity, more and more of a variety of products are available at my local supermarket, saving me a lot of time and stress trying to source these products elsewhere. The benefits of being plant based in my opinion, far outweigh the challenges, so be kinder to yourself – every small step you make towards a more plant based lifestyle is a positive one, no matter how small!

Written By [Natasha Zervaas N.P](#)

\* PLAY Market Research (PLAY MR)

\* Massachusetts General Hospital



# Simply “VEG OUT” on the journey to a kinder LIFESTYLE!

What constitutes a plant-based lifestyle?



**F**or many people, living a plant-based lifestyle is not just about nourishment, but about all aspects of their life. There are many reasons for a vegan diet. Above all, there is ethical motivation. Experts consider the plant-based diet to be particularly healthy, but ecological responsibility also motivates people to commit themselves to this lifestyle.

“It’s not possible to treat this way of living just as a mere dietary approach; it is a lifestyle, a way of relating and connecting.” (The ultimate gutfix – by Scott Mathias)

## **THE PLANT-BASED WAY OF LIFE HAS TAKEN ITS PLACE IN SOCIETY!**

While the politicians are still thinking about naming meat alternatives, veggie burgers and veggie sausages are already enjoying great popularity at summer barbecue parties. Alternatives to meat are in greater demand than ever. Thanks to the wide variety of plant-based options to avoid animal products such as meat, milk and eggs, the enjoyment of those is not neglected either. At the same time, people are becoming increasingly aware of the possible positive effects of a plant-based lifestyle. Vegan restaurants and cafes are booming and vegan cookbooks are becoming bestsellers. All of this shows: Veggie products have taken a firm place in the market.

Whether for ethical reasons, to protect the environment and climate or to maintain your own health, there are many reasons to discover the plant-based way of life for yourself. It is becoming increasingly clear that the

consumption of animal products is largely responsible for numerous global problems such as clearing the rainforest for the cultivation of animal feed. Since a plant-based lifestyle can help alleviate all of these problems, the trend towards a diet without animal products has rapidly gained momentum in recent years. A plant-based way of life saves many animals from a shortened life in factory farming, reduces the personal ecological footprint and can contribute to a reduction in world hunger. In addition, a balanced vegan diet can promote your own health. A diet without animal products can be extremely versatile and open up a world full of new culinary delights.

For many people, however, a plant-based lifestyle is not just about their nutrition, but about other aspects of their life. In addition to their diet, many also pay attention to what clothes they wear. For the reason that NO animal should suffer for fashion trends today. The demand for vegan clothing is growing and there are numerous alternatives to wool, leather and the like, such as pineapple leather or cork handbags.

When it comes to body care, too, more and more people are attaching importance to plant-based products. In order to be able to identify vegan products more easily when shopping, cosmetics and body care products as well as detergents and cleaning agents have been licensed with the label “Vegan Australia Certified”.

The plant-based way of life has long had a permanent place in society. Even the fast food chains are adapting to the trend and expanding their vegan menu every



year. In Australia, 2.5 million people are already eating vegetarian. In addition, there are more and more people who consciously reduce their consumption of animal foods for various reasons. As long as the alternatives to animal products remain tasty, varied and competitively priced, there is no end in sight to this development.

## TEN REASONS THAT SPEAK FOR THE VEGAN LIFESTYLE!

There is much to be said for a diet without any animal products: your own health, animal welfare, environmental protection, food justice and the enjoyment of plant-based delicacies. Below I have put together 10 “arguments” that prove that veganism is no longer a fad!

- **YOUR HEALTH**

Vegans are less overweight and have a lower risk of heart disease and diabetes. Even a partially plant-based diet several days a week has a positive effect on your health. (*Book recommendations: “The China Study” – by T.Collin Campbell; “How not to die” – by Micheal Greger*)

- **THE ENVIRONMENT**

Meat requires 200 times the area of arable and pasture land as vegetable food and 150 times the amount of water. This produces nine times more emissions per kilogram of meat. The deforestation of the rainforest for pasture and forage cultivation is only one of the global problems. With only one veggie day per week, you are not only doing something for yourself, but also helping to preserve the earth.

- **THE ANIMALS**

95% of beef, chickens and pigs eaten in Australia are factory farmed. The over consumption of animals has led to the industrialisation of animal production in factory farms. The demand for more and ever-cheaper meat, milk and eggs has created an animal welfare disaster of catastrophic proportions. Therefore, those who want to be careful and respectful of their environment reduce their consumption of animal products or switch entirely to plant-based products. Anyone who does not manage to make the jump 100% should definitely purchase their animal

products with the “certified organic” label.

- **AGAINST WORLD HUNGER**

Plants grown as animal feed are considered staple foods in many countries. Due to the high animal feed prices, however, it is no longer possible for locals to pay for basic food. In addition, most of the forage is grown in monocultures, which destroys the soil in the long term. With a plant-based diet instead of an animal one, 10 times the amount of calories and proteins could be provided for a healthy diet.

- **NOT THAT EXPENSIVE AT ALL**

If you compare the nutrient intake of the same amount of cooked lentils, beans or spinach with that of meat, the results are astounding. With the same quality of organic ingredients, the nutrient density (mg/100Kcal) in plant-based staple foods is significantly higher.

- **PAMPER YOUR TASTE BUDS**

By switching to a plant-based diet, your sense of taste will be refined. Many people discover the vegan way of life for reasons of taste. Experiment with simple to unusual spices and let your enjoyment run free. Try different recipes and taste the variety.

- **TO TRY SOMETHING NEW**

The vegan way of life brings new experiences in terms of already known or even different foods. Fantastic sensations can be prepared in no time from lentils, beet and potatoes. The opportunity to take time again for your meal and to prepare it yourself makes many hearts beat faster.

- **ESTABLISH CONTACTS**

Vegan connects! Vegans often share a similar worldview and therefore easily connect with each other. The change in diet provides an opportunity to make new contacts.

- **VEGAN MADE EASY**

Whether on the organic market shelf, in the supermarket or in the pharmacy, the counters lure with vegan labels. Now you can even get vegan food at the petrol station. Try the plant-based lifestyle for a week and you will quickly see that we imagine it to be much more difficult than it actually is.

- **CELEBRITIES SET AN EXAMPLE FOR US**

Role models can now be found among the popular starlets and athletes en masse. Alec Baldwin, Bill Clinton, Brendan Brazier, Mike Tyson, Chris Hemworth, Brad Pitt and many more. These people show how easy vegan can be and call for people to follow the hip lifestyle for a more sustainable world.

Awareness and sustainability are more than “buzz” terms these days. They are for many people their new way of life!

Written by [Adrianna Krueger](#)

# WHAT IS A WHOLE FOOD PLANT-BASED DIET?



There are many reasons for the plant-based lifestyle's rise in popularity. As a result, the motivation behind the ethos plays a role in what a plant-based diet looks like. It's not a set diet or lifestyle, in fact, for some it's a diet and for others, it's a lifestyle. Living in accordance with plant-based principles can be as basic or as in-depth as you want it to be. The most common differences lie in the difference between a plant-based diet and a vegan diet.

## VEGAN OR PLANT-BASED?

Vegan versus plant-based, is there a difference? The difference lies in the ethos behind the lifestyle choice. Both are rewarding, positive, and beneficial in their own ways. Choosing the one that is right for you is completely individual. Vegan diets are motivated by animal welfare beliefs, these individuals avoid all animals products. This can include dietary products and foods, like dairy, eggs, and meat but it can also include lifestyle items, like leather. For other people following a vegan lifestyle, the motivation lies in wanting to reduce greenhouse gases and return to a sustainable way of living.

Plant-based and whole foods diets are motivated by health benefits. This, like veganism, attracts heated debates and remains a controversial topic. However, there are more doctors and researchers pointing to the health benefits they have discovered in the research when a plant-based diet is followed. These diets restrict processed foods and any plant-based products that are not in their whole form, like oil, which should only be consumed as part of the plant/nut/seed it comes from. This means no vegan products, like meat substitutes, vegan cheese, or fast foods.

## THE BENEFITS OF PLANT-BASED EATING

Following a plant-based lifestyle also invites more opportunity to eat foods that are raw. There are many benefits to raw foods; their micronutrients are intact

and unharmed by the heat, enabling the delicate (but essential) microorganisms that enable easier digestion and nutrition absorption, to do their job.

- Research also indicates that plant-based diets are incredibly beneficial to kidney disease patients, often improving GFR function.
- Plant-based diets, even when applied with fruit and other wholefood carbohydrates, have a positive effect on insulin resistance, proving to be incredibly beneficial to diabetes patients.
- Eating a diet of plants makes it easier to have a conscious relationship with your food. You can (if you choose) grow it yourself, source it sustainably, prepare it yourself, and give it your full attention when you eat it. This act of conscious eating promotes a meditative state of being and can actually rewire the brain to have a positive relationship with food, rather than seeing it as something to limit, avoid, or measure.
- Plant-based diets are dense nutrients and fibre but low in calories, meaning you can eat far larger portions and never worry about counting calories.

## HOW TO GET STARTED

The best way to start on a plant-based diet is to increase your intake of natural, whole, delicious plants. Choose fruits and vegetables that you genuinely enjoy. The key to a successful new journey lies in not just doing it because it's good for you, do it because you're expanding your palette and because fruits and vegetables are magnificent.

A great way to aid digestion and improve the nutrient uptake of your entire meal is by starting your meal with leafy greens, like a salad, or any plant-based foods that are unprocessed. If you don't enjoy leafy greens, create something you do enjoy. Personalise it so that it appeals to your taste buds. Start your day with a portion of nutritious whole food, even before you have coffee. By the time you have your first cup of mocha, your body is already on the receiving end of good nourishment.

There are great ways to improve your knowledge on plant-based living, transitioning to a plant-based approach to diet and thriving on it. With so many incredible professionals who have spent their lives researching nutrition and plant-based living, leverage that knowledge for your own purpose.

Written by [Yoko Inoue](#)

# I'm a vegan... I hope my teeth will be OK

**A**s dentists we speak to our patients a lot about what you should and shouldn't be eating to maintain healthy teeth. Tooth decay in Australia is still a huge problem and we are diagnosing rampant tooth decay in patients every day. Toothbrushing, flossing and fluoride in the water are not solving this scourge of our modern society. Don't get me wrong, these measures are extremely important to maintain healthy teeth and gums but they are not the total solution. We all know that sugars in our diet create an environment in the mouth that allow the bacteria in plaque to produce acids that then eat away at tooth enamel to form tooth decay.

There are the obvious foods that we shouldn't be consuming – lollies, chocolates, fizzy drinks for example, will destroy your enamel slowly but surely. Unfortunately for us, early tooth decay does not cause any discomfort so unless you see your dentist regularly you'll have no idea that your teeth are rotting away.

On the other hand, there are those foods that make your teeth stronger and whiter or at the very least cause no harm and are generally healthy for us anyway. Even when we were younger as kids, we were taught that drinking milk and eating cheese would contribute to strong and healthy teeth. A number of years ago researchers at the University of Melbourne discovered the protein in milk which allows calcium to be transported to the enamel of teeth to make it stronger. It is now available from dentists to use as a topical ointment to help prevent tooth decay. Research has also shown that foods that are typically known for being better for teeth are usually those that are full of minerals like calcium and phosphorus, and these foods tend to fall into the dairy and meat categories. So the big question is: what does that mean for people who choose a vegan diet?

## THE VEGAN DIET

People who are considering making the switch to a plant-based diet usually do so because they want to incorporate this diet into a healthier lifestyle. They rarely think that it can have a negative impact on their teeth but it doesn't have to. The reality is that many vegans make immediate and drastic changes to their diets by completely eliminating two of the biggest food groups—meat (protein) and dairy and these two food groups are primary contributors for the calcium and phosphorus that are essential for healthy teeth and bones. A balanced diet for overall health, according to general consensus by dieticians, includes fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy.

## DENTAL PROBLEMS WHICH CAN ARISE

Those who follow a vegan diet will need to be careful of what substitutions they make to source the proteins and minerals which would otherwise be derived from meat and dairy products. Since they completely eliminate meat or dairy products as part of their diet, vegans can inadvertently create dental problems as a result of substituting meat and dairy with grains and sugar products. Those who eliminate meat and animal products for a long period of time may also have deficiencies in vitamins and minerals that are essential to their oral health and indeed their overall health.

As a result of these deficiencies, vegans and vegetarians alike discover that they have a higher risk of plaque build-up, tooth decay and gum inflammation— not just because of the lack of vitamins and nutrients, but because of the substitutions, being increased sugar intake, which they are making. For example, dental erosion of tooth enamel and cavities in vegans might be the result of a higher intake of acidic foods and sugary substitutes. As an alternative

to foods that contain meat or dairy products, vegans may also be consuming more fruits that are high in natural sugar and acidic—resulting in an increased risk of tooth decay. People who rinse their mouths and throats with apple cider vinegar are particularly prone to these issues.

In addition to that, many people who follow a plant-based diet tend to snack or graze on sugary foods between meals, which can result in a higher risk of plaque. Because of this, you must be conscious of the foods you eat and maintain good oral habits by brushing and flossing regularly to prevent these issues, especially if you adopt a vegan diet.

## ESSENTIAL VITAMINS & NUTRIENTS

Some of the essential vitamins and nutrients that are key to healthy teeth and bones are calcium, phosphorus, Vitamin B12, Vitamin D, and iron. It's important to incorporate these into a vegan-friendly diet. But fortunately, there are some alternative ingredients or foods that you can include in your meals to get these essential vitamins and nutrients.

### CALCIUM

A deficiency in calcium can result in a higher risk of gum disease and tooth decay. While most calcium-products are dairy, there are some vegan-friendly alternatives that you can include in your diet.

Get some calcium into your diet by drinking non-dairy beverages that are fortified with calcium, such as soymilk, or almond milk. Other options are tofu, beans (especially, edamame), and green, leafy greens – like kale, spinach, and bok choy. Taking calcium tablets may also be helpful but overdosing on these may lead to atherosclerosis or hardening of the arteries.

### PHOSPHORUS

This is one of the main minerals that your body needs, as it supports calcium uptake. Although this mineral is abundant in primarily meat and dairy products, phosphorus is so abundant in foods that it is likely that you are getting enough of it. There are some vegan options which are high in phosphorus. Plant-based alternatives are soybeans, nuts and nut butters, whole grains, lentils, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds.

### VITAMIN B12

Vegans are commonly deficiently in Vitamin B12. It is important for the health of nerves, blood cells and to produce DNA. It is primarily found in non-vegan foods. Vitamin B12 is essential to your overall health, and coming up short on it could be detrimental to your whole body – not just your teeth.

Some sources of B12 that are vegan-friendly are fortified plant milk such as soy milk, tempeh, algae, seaweed and mushrooms. Other options to get that daily requirement

are fortified milk-alternatives, some cereals with added vitamin B12, and supplements of this essential vitamin.

### IRON

When patients start to feel tongue inflammation or see redness of the tongue or sores in the mouth, they will often come to their dentist to determine the cause of the issue. This can be caused by an iron deficiency. This is easily diagnosed with a simple blood test. It's common for a plant-based diet to be lower in iron, but it is still very important that you get this essential nutrient.

Some vegan foods that you can incorporate into your meals for more iron are dark leafy greens such as spinach and kale, broccoli, legumes, peas, nuts and seeds, and some dried fruits such as dried apricots and cereals with added iron.

### VITAMIN D

This vitamin is essential to helping your body absorb calcium for the health and strength of your bones and teeth. Many people in our society are deficient in Vitamin D even though it is naturally produced with exposure to sunlight. It is generally recommended to be eating foods that are rich in this vitamin.

The common foods that are rich in Vitamin D are usually dairy or milk products. A naturally occurring option is mushrooms. Most other options are foods including plant-based milks that are fortified with Vitamin D, such as fortified tofu, soy or almond milk, and plant-based supplements including vitamin D capsules which are available without a doctor's prescription.

## MAINTAINING THE BEST OF ORAL HEALTH WHILE ON A VEGAN DIET

It is still possible to follow a strict vegan diet while also taking care of your teeth and overall health. Staying in good health while on a plant-based diet or any diet for that matter, is all about eating a well-balanced diet with all of the vitamins and nutrients that your body needs, avoiding acidic and sugary foods, especially in between meals, and keeping up with your home hygiene such as regular, twice daily brushing and daily flossing routine. Lastly, and most importantly, visit your dentist for regular check ups. Of-course that goes for everyone!

When you choose to adopt any kind of diet, it's important to initially consult your dentist, doctor, and nutritionist or dietician who can help you make the right decisions for your body. With the help of these health professionals, you can make sure that you get the right amounts of calcium, vitamin D, and phosphorus without meat and dairy. Then see your doctor and dentist on a regular basis to ensure that your diet and lifestyle is progressing well for the long term.

Written by [Dr Jeffrey Kestenberg](#)

## 10

## Easy hacks to start living your ideal life



1. **Let go of your past.** The past is dry cement. We cannot change it, however the choices we make today can change our future. So, next time your thoughts drift back, and we start to self-judge. Be like Elsa from the movie Frozen and start singing “Let it Go!”.
  2. **Do something.** “An inch of action will always get you further than miles of your best intentions”. We do not have to do a marathon immediately, just put your shoes on and go for a walk. If you want more financial security, start saving a little. If you want better relationships and business, we can start by making one phone call a day to some one important. Remember motion begets motion.
  3. **Get out of your head and go for a walk.** Sitting all day at your desk is not only unhealthy it arches our back, slopes our shoulders, and shortens our breath. If we want to feel better, think more clearly, problem solve better and be more creative, then go for a walk with our head up and our shoulders back.
  4. **Write it down.** “If it’s in your head, it’s dead”. Fact, ninety two percent of people do not achieve their goals. The eight percent who do achieve their goals, all have their goals written down and their goals are specific, motivational, aspirational, realistic and time bound AKA SMART goals.
  5. **Decide.** Do it. Drop it. Delay it or Delegate it. Deciding to do something or not, helps us prioritise and act. It also gives our brain more capacity to process our “Do it now” tasks that we have chosen to focus on. Deciding increases our chance of success along with less distracting thoughts.
  6. **Be accountable to someone.** Ever hit the snooze button on your alarm clock after telling yourself you were going to go for that run? Now imagine if you had a friend who had also gotten up super early to exercise with you. Would you have more motivation to get out of bed or hit that snooze button? Accountability works, so draw on its power, to creating your ideal life.
  7. **Declutter everything.** If it does not serve you or spark your inner joy, it is holding you back. This includes relationships, your career, your lifestyle, finances and whatever else that may be hurting you or hindering you from being true yourself and supporting you to live your ideal life.
  8. **Live by your own expectations.** Not the Jones’s, not your parents, your boss, your friends or even your partner. Loose the temptation to compare yourself to others. Be true to yourself and discover your own joy. Authenticity attracts as much as it is liberating at the same time.
  9. **Make it your thing.** “Choose an occupation you love, and you’ll never have to work a day in your life”. Chances are if you can make your passion financially viable; you will be more successful, be given more opportunities and inspire a greater number of people who have a similar passion.
  10. **Live with gratitude.** Although difficult, have gratitude for others and ourselves for our hurt and pains. It is from this pain that we have grown to become who we are today. If we can start to notice the good things, appreciate them and express our gratitude more frequently then we will start to find joy of more things in our lives and experience greater peace.
- If you are stuck in a rut or need some clarity to help you move forward and make better choices and live your ideal life sooner I look forward to your reply.

Written by [Peter Horsfield](#)



# How to include religious and cultural provisions in my will?

**S**uccession law is more than the transmission of wealth, but also your values, cultural beliefs, and religion. Considering these elements is not only vital for future preparation, but for protecting your wishes and upholding your family's traditions.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, nearly two thirds of Australians affiliate with a religion. Christianity was the most common religion reported in 2016 (52%). Islam (2.6%) and Buddhism (2.4%) were the next most common religions reported.<sup>1</sup> Many of these religions have strong customs around funerals, medical procedures and Estate distribution. If you wish to include instructions to maintain your beliefs in the event something was to happen to you, there are a number of provisions and legal documents you can include in your Estate Planning to safeguard your values.

## FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

A Will is a good place to outline your funeral wishes, however it is important to detail them in a separate document and speak about it with your loved ones, especially any religious rites or body handling requests you would like to include. For example, under Jewish law,

autopsies and embalming are generally prohibited.

Funeral arrangements can include the following wishes:

- Whether you want a funeral or memorial service
- Where the service should be held
- Whether you want to be cremated or buried
- Where you would like your ashes stored or disposed of or where you want to be buried
- If you have money set aside to pay for your funeral expenses

## ADVANCE HEALTH DIRECTIVES

An Advanced Health Directive (AHD) is a legal document where you can give instructions about your future health care while you are living. An AHD comes into effect when you lose the capacity to make your own decisions which can occur for a range of different reasons including a brain injury or a disease such as Dementia.

Various religions have specific views on common medical procedures and it is important to notify future carers as to how you would like to handle these procedures. Examples of such considerations are as follows:



## PREGNANCY

Pregnant women should specify the issues of pregnancy since considerations of the mother versus the foetus vary greatly between different religions. If something was to go wrong, particular religions have a preference to choose to save the life of the mother over the baby or vice versa. Furthermore, religions such as Jehovah's Witnesses are known to decline blood transfusion which may be required after child birth.

## PAIN RELIEF

In some religions, the act of suffering can be an experience providing for purification, redemption, and salvation and may call for no pain relief in the final days if someone is terminally ill. It is important to state your preference regarding pain relief for medical practitioners to respect your wishes.

## DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Many religions have guidelines on what is appropriate to eat in order to demonstrate faith including have a strictly plant-based diet. As a part of your AHD, you can put in a request to continue a certain diet if you are incapacitated.

## FAMILY PROVISIONS

Various religions have different interpretations of distributing wealth and assets amongst family members. For example, if you have removed yourself from a particular faith like Christian Orthodox, yet your family continues to practice the faith, they may leave you out of a Will.

In the case of *Omari and Omari v Omari* 2012, an elderly Muslim woman by the name of Mariem Omari drafted a Will in accordance with her Islamic tradition. She divided her Estate by nominating full shares to her three sons and only half shares to her five daughters. One of her daughters contested the Will successfully establishing that Mariem did not have testamentary capacity to prepare a Will at the time due to suffering from Dementia. Despite the Will being deemed as invalid by the Court, the

judge did accept some of the evidence in relation to the expectations within the Muslim faith as to how an Estate will be divided where the Will maker has children.<sup>2</sup>

This case raises a number of questions in particular to Family Provisions. What if Mariem had testamentary capacity? Would the Court have allowed the allocated distribution of the Estate?

The freedom to make a Will on whatever terms one wishes is limited by the overriding consideration that a person must consider his or her moral responsibility to provide for one's spouse, children or others. The Court has the power to order financial provisions to be made out of the Estate of a deceased person for the 'proper maintenance and support' of a person 'for whom he or she had responsibility to make provision'.

It important to keep the Family Provisions in mind when preparing a Will to ensure your children are adequately provided for in addition to other family members. Different legislation applies in different states so it is important to review these with a succession lawyer to ensure you have included everything.

The court considers various factors to determine whether the deceased had a responsibility to make provision for a person and whether the proposed distribution of the Estate, as contemplated under the deceased's Will or rules of intestacy, makes adequate provision for the proper maintenance and support of that person/persons.

Getting your Will done goes beyond just distributing your assets. It is fundamentally about protecting your wishes when you lose capacity or leave this Earth which includes your values and beliefs.

For specific legal advice in relation to your personal situation or religion, contacting a succession lawyer is advised.

Written by [Brooke Reardon](#)

<sup>1</sup> 2016 Census Data, Australian Bureau of Statistics, abs.gov.au

<sup>2</sup> *Omari and Omari v Omari* [2012] ACTSC 33 (9 March 2012)



# FINANCIAL HEALTH: How to raise kids that are money-savvy and happy

**R**arely, does money solve a money problem. Money problems are solved by improving financial literacy. You need to have the skill to assess your financial situation and find the source of the problem. More often than not, it's not a shortage of income (although it's incredibly common to believe that more money will ease the financial stress), more commonly, it's a cash management problem. As parents, we are committed to our children's education, believing that will lead to a good job and financial security. Without understanding how to manage cash wisely, decent salaries will fail to sustain a family.

## THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the primary issues that everyday people face is a limiting belief system. It is common to hear people say phrases like "I am no good with money", or "managing money is not my thing". We're also seeing pop culture make light of over-spenders and retail therapy, which can normalise a lack of financial literacy.

When there's a fundamental lack of information, it's only natural that there will be a lack of knowledge. We are not seeing a lack of understanding about money, we are seeing a lack of insight into money. Financial literacy is not taught in schools and children who fail to excel in maths often assume that they're not skilled at working with numbers. With poor grades, the message that instils the self-limiting belief is continued at home as the parents affirm to the children that they're not good at maths either.

## THE EFFECTS OF LARGE-SCALE FINANCIAL ILLITERACY ON SOCIETY

When this happens on a large scale and for generation after generation, it becomes a societal problem and we see the effects of it without understanding it correctly. As a result, we see imbalances of power in households. One member of the family handles the finances while the other spouse has no idea what the bank account looks like. This makes it difficult for families to enjoy balanced accountability and power. It's often the woman that leaves the finances to the man, making her powerless should she ever decide to walk away. In another scenario, both the man and the woman are uninformed on how to handle money. Debt is introduced and introduces yet another



variable, making it increasingly difficult to ascertain what "living within your means" actually looks like.

For many that are good at maths in a classroom, implementing that theoretical knowledge that is only taught on paper, into a real-world setting, can be difficult. Maths and finance are not taught in a practical sense at school, learning how to handle your taxes and manage your income and expenses is a real-world skill that children need.

The alternative, the reality that many young adults face as they enter the working world, leaves them living from paycheque to paycheque.

## WHAT CAN WE DO DIFFERENTLY?

- Parents can start teaching financial literacy at home by giving children "pocket money" and expecting them to manage a certain number of their own expenses, teaching them to budget.
- Children can be encouraged to "earn" their pocket money. By assigning value to certain chores around the house, children can understand the value of the money they hold in their hands.
- Teach children how to budget. Involve them in managing the family shopping budget, understanding food prices and the value of each item you purchase.
- Stop the negative talk around children regarding maths and finances. Use words of encouragement instead.

*Written by Sonia Gibson*

# Through the eyes of a child: How to talk to kids about DISABILITIES

The innocence of children can be both charming and a little unnerving at the same time, especially if you're the parent. While many people prefer their children not blurt out phrases like "mummy, why is that lady in a wheelchair?" when you're in a public place, there's a very good chance that it's going to happen.

So how do you handle it? In a broader sense of the topic, how do you broach the topic of disabilities with children? Also, what role does your discomfort play in a child's understanding of disability and how do you have an open dialogue about it with kids?

## WHY WE SHOULD BE HAVING THESE CONVERSATIONS

Not all visibilities can be seen. Your child's lifelong best friend might have Asperger's, or the little boy next door may have an invisible chronic illness. Alternatively, maybe your child's friend or a relative acquires a disability later in life. Having conversations about people who have different challenges from our own is important. Not only for the people with disabilities your child might interact with but also for your child.

Just like the talk about the birds and the bees, not talking about disabilities (because you, as the adult, feels uncomfortable) doesn't make it a non-issue. People with disabilities are part of the world we all share. When we avoid any of these topics, we send the message to our children that there's a negative emotion attached to this situation, whether it's shame or pity or even fear. The children pick up on that trepidation and subconsciously adopt it.

Children learn through real-world experiences and interactions. As parents, a proactive approach to normalising and de-stigmatising disabilities starts by giving your children the opportunity to engage with people that have disabilities. Don't leave their learning to the media as it unfortunately perpetuates disability stereotypes which are generally very skewed.

Furthermore, your discomfort about disability can be



replicated by children across several other personal differences, such as gender, skin colour or body size. While this might not seem relevant to a three year old, it may complicate their own sense of self as they mature and have the mindset that differences are something to be ashamed of.

Children accept the world as it presented to them. If we present them with the reality of living with disabilities, we remove the stigma. Lisa Cox has uses a wheelchair to navigate the world and talks about her experience with children.

"My niece doesn't raise an eyebrow about my disabilities and that's partly because I'm visible in her life all the time and just doing ordinary things like her mum. Imagine if



we could make that little example a global movement whereby seeing or hearing about disability in our mainstream popular culture was just a normal thing.”

### WHAT IT'S LIKE HAVING A DISABILITY AND ANSWERING CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS

Lisa Cox loves to answer questions in a child-appropriate way so that children have a clear understanding of her disabilities, without it becoming the distinguishing feature. “I, personally, don’t mind curious questions from kids. They want to know about everything! I was once that kid (before disabilities) who had a lot of silly questions and I’m grateful to the disabled people in my life that gave me judgement-free answers.”

It’s not like this for everyone. Questions, although seemingly innocent, may be offensive or triggering for some people. As an adult, you can use your common sense to know how uncomfortable a disabled person looks by being asked questions. If appropriate, you may even wish to ask that person if they mind the questions.

Above all, please don’t ‘shush’ your child and quickly drag them away. This only instills fear and reinforces the idea that disability is something to be ashamed of or embarrassed by.

While questions from curious youngsters are not a problem, Lisa stresses that the same rules don’t apply to adults. “Adults have far more self-awareness and are capable of knowing that personal questions (for anyone - with or without a disability) can be intrusive if they aren’t in context and being asked by a doctor, for example”..

### HOW TO HAVE THIS CONVERSATION WITH A CHILD

Conversations about disability can happen at any time. Perhaps it will be after meeting someone with disabilities or perhaps it will be before that interaction if you know your child is going to meet someone with disabilities. Here are some suggestions for how to have conversations about disability.

- Talk about universal differences between people; hair colour, skin colour, height
- Have this conversation and reference people in your child’s life, noting the differences between people
- Keep your tone neutral and informative so that the conversation can be educational and open
- Tell children that not all disabilities can be seen.
- If you know someone with a disability, research the disability together to better understand it
- Make the focal point the person, not the disability. Discuss what the person is good at, what they enjoy, and other aspects so that the disability doesn’t become the defining characteristic
- Finish the conversation off by telling your child that questions are always welcome, if you can’t answer their questions, you can always research it together.

Written by [Lisa Cox](#)



# SENSUALITY HACKS

I have got a confession to make, and it is time to reveal my little secret ... I AM A SENSUAL GODDESS! I unashamedly know it ... and I own it. A far cry from the ill-informed teenager that did not know what a French letter was (a condom) and still has not had the 'sex' talk from Mum! I used to hide my goddess for fear of judgement and the whispers, playing it safe just in case others around me might feel uncomfortable. Now, I am so damn proud of my sensuality that I am almost dangerous, but in a good way!

I am curious however, at how you reacted to my declaration? Were you happy for me? Or did a little feeling of judgement slip in?

Before you swipe me off, allow me to explain. This is not a brag-fest, I simply have global FOMO for any woman's desires that are not being met or if her sensual drive is lost. In sharing my story, I aspire to keep this conversation at the front of your mind in the hope that it might reset your sensual bar, remind you that you deserve pleasure, and proclaim this as the highest feminine law of the land. I realised that hiding my love story was to be selfish and hypocritical if I were to invite you to explore your intimate side when I was not being vulnerable myself.

It was vital to risk my delicate ego being deflated, even have my ideas being 'explained' away to disrupt the

pattern of intimacy from being just one more thing to you, the super woman, the purveyor of your honourably busy day, to a place where intimacy can be your celebration.

In a perfect world we would be the Hollywood version of a sensual goddess all the time, arising from our luxurious beds in our mansions looking like we are ready for a photo shoot. In the real world it can often be a more of a mishmash of smeared mascara and drool. As a newly emerged sensual goddess, I would argue that the beauty and fire within is being totally comfortable with the latter, a mindset that could spark some sensual wildfire.

Sensually positive mindset or not however, there can be times where we are just too exhausted, or the effort to get into an aroused space is just a bridge too far. Alas, it is ok to feel this way, but you do not have to stay stuck in absolutes. There IS a way to change the game in your favour for when there IS a flicker of your sensual energy that with some 'tweaking' could be summoned and transformed into a desire fire! This is not a short cut, more of self-guide that is your emergency purse pack of ideas and suggestions that might just help flick the desire switch. They are called Sensuality Hacks, and yes, of course they are tried and tested!

And here they are beautiful ladies, to try now, or keep as a reference library for later ...



### SENSUALITY HACK #1 - START WITH THE HAPPY ENDING IN MIND

Yes, I am talking orgasm ladies! You do not usually jump in the car without knowing where you are going, do you? Simply set your sensual intent and relax into the journey. Accept that you do not have to know exactly which path you will take, just enjoy the ride. Ah hem! Then welcome that happy ending, your body will remember what to do.

### SENSUALITY HACK #2 - MOTIVATE YOUR MIND

Your mind is the biggest sex tool and has the power to turn you on ... or off. It can turn unaligned desire language around by clever use of imagination and fantasy. And it is ok to find a movie reel in your mind, play your deepest desires and allow them to permeate your body. Once your mind locks onto an arousal trigger, that is when it is time to just go with it.



### SENSUALITY HACK #3 - RIG YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Ooh I like this one where you get to have a bit of fun and find what makes you feel sexy and feel good. Dress up,

organise a date night with a difference and set yourself little challenges to promiscuously reveal to your date throughout the evening. For example, flash your skin cheeky and discreetly as you stroll around. Up to you which skin you elect to show ...

### SENSUALITY HACK #4 - CHANGE THE VENUE

Sometimes the bedroom represents your place of exhaustion and if that is the case, then that is ok! I am not here to judge, just encourage and guide. I invite you to consider the plethora of other household and natural locations that can enhance the excitement. It is possible to transform the humble couch, the shiveringly cool bench top, the outdoor banana lounge or even the car into erotic venue. Warning: Best to make sure the coast is clear first ... unless?!



### SENSUALITY HACK #5 - GIZMO'S AND GADGETS

Ha Ha! I bet I made you think about vibrators or any other device that tickles your fancy, but there are other stimulating media that can raise your sensual intelligence apart from the obvious. Other activities such as reading raunchy short stories or even watching sexy, tasteful female focussed movie reels can enhance an encounter of the erotic kind. By the way, IT IS ok to watch tasteful adult movies if you both feel excited by it. If this happens to blast past your old conditioning on this subject, then check out [www.o-metime.com](http://www.o-metime.com) for intimate stories of real women, or [www.sssh.com](http://www.sssh.com) for some elegant visual stimulation to find out if you can let go of past self-judgement. Who knows? This might be the one hack you have been seeking!

Now you are armed with five sensuality hacks to get you started and I can get to work on letting go of worrying about FOMO for you. By FOMO I mean Fear of Missing Orgasms ... just in case you were misled earlier! Pleasure is a gift worth desiring, and there is no limit to how much you deserve. Use the hacks and go for it!

Written by [Naomi Radke](#)

# HOW TO SAVE ENERGY AT HOME

## – Part 2



In April issue, we discussed how to save energy in the heating, cooling and refrigeration appliances and in this issue, we will discuss how to save energy in the laundry, dishwashing machine and in the cooking appliances:

### LAUNDRY

- Make sure you have a reasonable amount of laundry to run the washing machine at full load. The washing machine uses the same amount of energy regardless it has full load or few items.
- Always Try to wash the clothes by cold water.
- Always try to dry the clothes by the sun using the clothesline instead of electric or gas dryer.
- Check your energy bill to see if you're on a time-of-use energy tariff. If you are, set your washing machine to run during Off-Peak or shoulder times (usually night time), and not during Peak times during the day (unless you have a solar PV system).

### DISHWASHING MACHINE

- Clean your dirty dishes in the same time. It is more efficient to run the dishwashing machine with full load rather than with few dishes.
- Clean the filter of the dishwashing machine regularly.
- Check your energy bill to see if you're on a time-of-use energy tariff. If you are, set your dishwasher machine to run during Off-Peak or shoulder times (usually night time), and not during Peak times during the day

(unless you have a solar PV system)

### COOKING

- Thaw the frozen food in the fridge that you are planning to cook during the day and not in the microwave. This will reduce the cooking time and avoid microwave energy consumption.
- Use pots and pans that have tight lids and flat bases that cover the entire hotplate to minimize energy losses.
- Clean your range hood filters regularly. Dirty filters will increase the energy consumption of the kitchen exhaust fan.
- Use the microwave instead of the traditional electric oven. The microwave consumes less energy than the electric oven.
- Check the seal of the oven and make sure it is tight to prevent heat escape from the oven. You can check for bad seals by placing a \$5 note in the oven frame and if it slips, this means that the seal is not effective and needs to be replaced.

### ELECTRIC KETTLE

- Boil only the needed water volume. If you put more than required water in the kettle, it will take more time to boil it and consume more energy. Also, the left over boiled water in the kettle will cool down over time and you will need to boil it again when needed, which will consume double the electricity.

Written By [Ahmad Fraji](#)

# How to reduce your carbon footprint through diet

When we think about how best to minimise our individual impact on this Earth, usually the big (carbon) ticket items are considered first, like reducing the number of long-haul flights we take a year. But agriculture contributes nearly one quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions, so we can't have a serious conversation about reducing our personal emissions without considering what's on our plates too. Below are some of the most impactful diet changes you can make to reduce your carbon footprint, for everyone from meat eaters and pescatarians, to vegetarians and vegans.

## MEAT EATERS & PESCATARIANS

More than half of food emissions come from animal products, both directly through the release of methane and indirectly from the massive amounts of land cleared to farm animals and their feed. Per gram of protein, beef produces 280g of CO<sub>2</sub>. Other meat products, like lamb and pork, also have very large carbon footprints (180g/CO<sub>2</sub> and 60g/CO<sub>2</sub> respectively). Plant-foods on the other hand, sit somewhere around 10g/CO<sub>2</sub> per gram of protein. This is an enormous difference. Clearly, the most impactful change you can make if you're in this diet group is to eat less meat.

There's a lot of different ways you can reduce the amount of meat you consume. It can be as simple as having one less meal with it a week, or taking a whole day off a la 'Meatless Monday'. Start here and see how you go - if you're finding that you hardly notice the difference, increase the frequency. Another easy way to cut back on your meat intake is to bulk out your dishes with high-protein plant foods (like adding kidney beans to mince).

If your carnivorous tendencies are just too strong to subdue and you have to have some sort of meat on your plate, consider trading high-carbon choices (like beef or lamb) for low-carbon alternatives (chicken and pork). Even better yet? Fish! These farmed aquatic animals have a significantly smaller footprint than their land-based counterparts. Shrimp and prawns have the largest 'fin'-print (80g/CO<sub>2</sub> per gram of protein), while the farmed varieties (salmon, carp, and tilapia) more closely resemble low-impact plant foods (20g/CO<sub>2</sub>).

## VEGETARIANS

If we're speaking just in terms of carbon, while vegetarianism is a marked improvement on steak and burgers, the inclusion of dairy in this diet group bumps up its emissions quite a bit. Therefore the most impactful



change a vegetarian can make is to cut back on their intake of dairy and eggs, and the easiest way to do that is with dairy alternatives. There are so many similar tasting substitutes, like plant milk instead of cows, or olive oil spread rather than butter - sometimes you can hardly taste the difference!

## VEGANS

While a vegan diet typically has the lowest environmental footprint (for lack of high-carbon foods like meat and dairy), there's always room for improvement. If you're in this diet group, one way to reduce your impact is to compare the carbon footprint of different varieties of a food product, i.e. plant milk. A 2018 study showed that, of the plant milk varieties available, rice milk produces the most emissions (1 litre = 1.2kg CO<sub>2</sub>), while soy, oat and almond had less of an impact (1.0kg, 0.9kg and 0.7kg of CO<sub>2</sub> respectively). This comparison can be done with any other food product, like different bean or nut varieties.

At the end of the day, whether you're a meat eater or a vegan, we all have ways that we can improve and reduce our carbon footprint. In terms of diet, meat and dairy are the biggest contributors to emission levels, so it's just about being conscious of that and trying to reduce our intake where possible. Remember, change doesn't happen when a small group of people do things 'perfectly', rather when a lot of people 'imperfectly try'.

If you enjoyed this read check out some more quick reads about how to live more sustainably [here](#).

Written by [Joanna Auburn](#)

# Which messaging platform do I use?

So, we're now in the roaring twenties, with technology in every aspect of our life; some helps us and some hinders us. And I can't think of an area where this causes more confusion and uncertainty than, which damn messaging platform do I use?

## FROM SMS TO MESSAGING

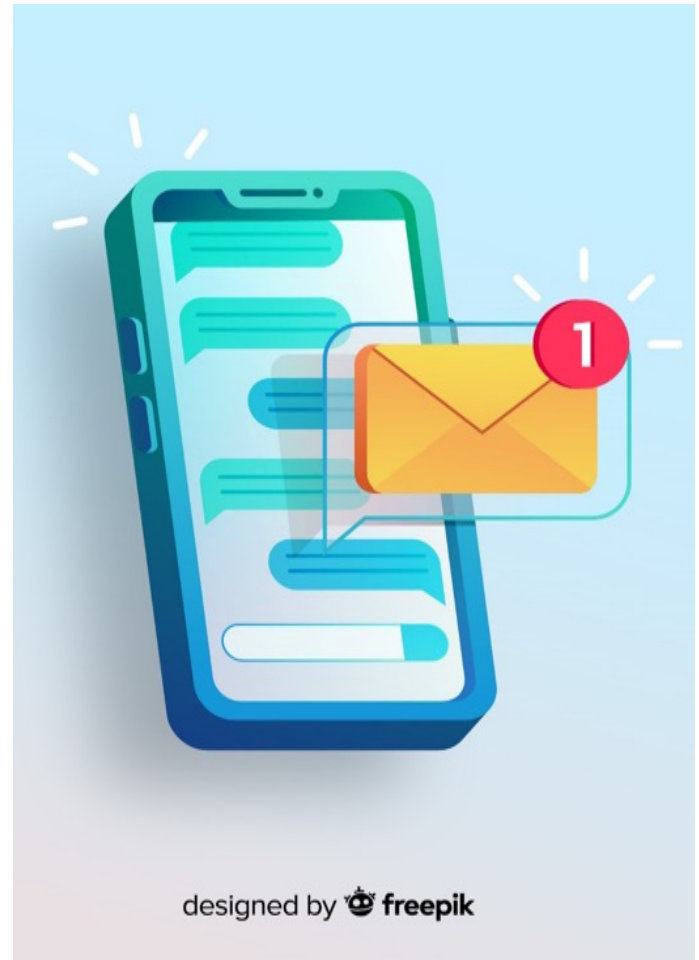
"In the olden days", we used to just use SMS for our messaging, but then came all the IP-based messaging platforms. So, without listing them all, we probably all have a WhatsApp account, are likely to use Facebook's Messenger, if we're an Apple products user then iMessage (which may often feel like plain ol' texting) is likely to be a favourite and now with privacy concerns, people have signed up to Signal, Telegraph and a whole host of others. Of course there's Insta and Twitter and if you work in a corporate environment, chances are you'll be familiar with Teams (if your employer is a Microsoft customer), or Slack (now part of Salesforce). So, with such a variety of platforms on offer, and people using ALL of them (not to mention all the ones I haven't mentioned), how on earth do we manage our digital communications (notice how I haven't thrown email into the mix – that's a whole other communications nightmare!)?

## THERE'S TOO MANY OPTIONS

Only today I ended up having messaging conversations on WhatsApp, Messenger, Signal, text, iMessage and Teams. In a few cases the same conversation was occurring on multiple platforms, and I had to cut and paste content to create a bridge – umph!

The fact is, many companies have tried solving this problem and just like "The Streaming Wars", their answer is "forget about the rest, just use ours!". So, it kind of requires us to take a side and after much thought, I have chosen one. And before I tell you which one it is, here are my reasons:

1. It's not tied to a phone number (like WhatsApp, Signal, etc)
2. It's not tied to an operating environment, such as iOS + Mac OS (think iMessage)
3. It has direct connections to (a couple of) other messaging platforms
4. It supports groups on multiple platforms and devices
5. It has an encrypted mode



6. It has a modern and exceptionally easy/intuitive user interface
7. It can run on multiple platforms and multiple devices simultaneously (I run it on about 14 devices no less)

## ISN'T APPLE THE BEST?

So, I know many Apple users would say, iMessage works on all my devices simultaneously and I can do group messaging; the problem is, that all breaks down the second you include someone who doesn't use an Apple device, which is about 3/4 of the world!

## TRUST AND BIG TECH

The problem with my choice, is that it's owned by a company who don't have the best reputation when

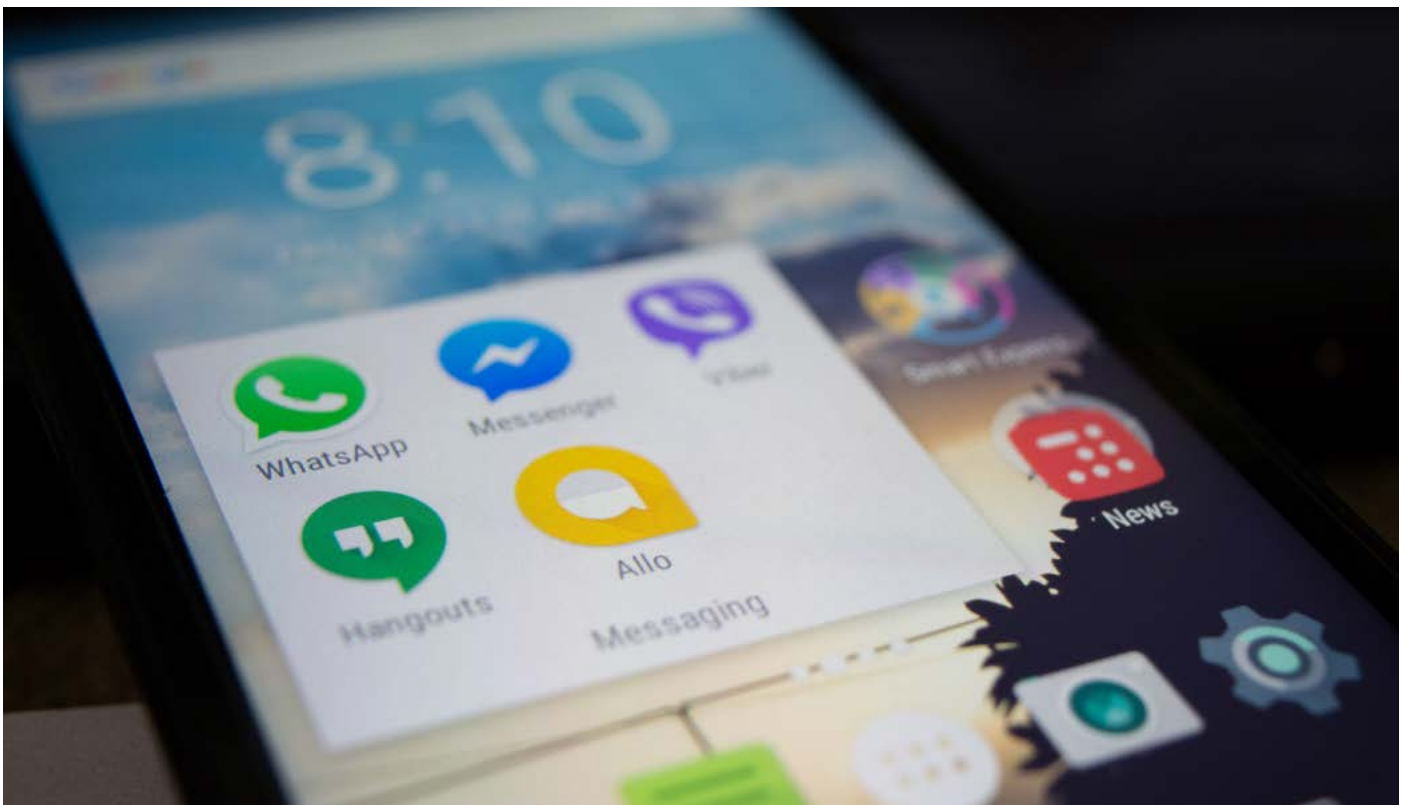
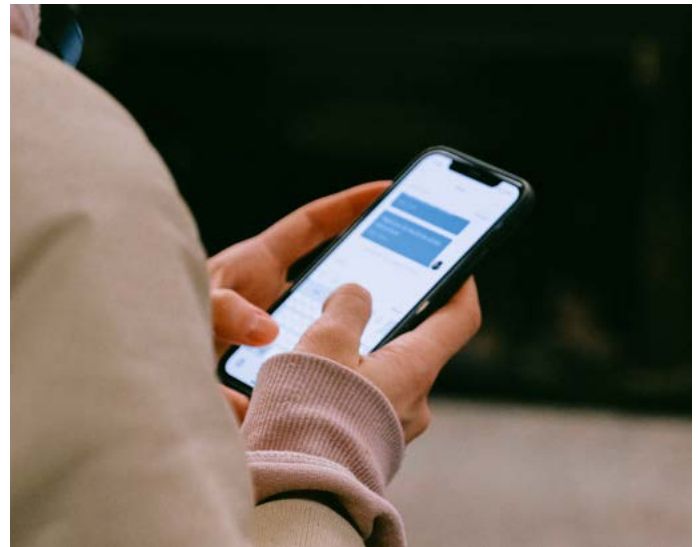


it comes to handling my personal data. In fact, the whole area of trusting Big Tech is blowing up at the moment, increasingly there are less choices that make us comfortable, over time.

The other problem is, because many people do not trust the maker of this product, it's often overlooked by them, and in some age groups that's not an insignificant amount of people. But well thought out tech is always worth using if we are prepared to pay the price, even if that price appears to be free (but that's for another time).

### AND THE WINNER IS.....

You guessed it, it's the dreaded Facebook. I have noticed that while most Millennials have some relationship with the FB platform, Gen Xers seem to really stay away from it



(including Messenger!). Instead, they often use WhatsApp (which, ironically, is owned by Facebook) but take great pride in saying “I’m not on Facebook”.

Well, what I want to tell the world is you don't have to be “on Facebook” to use the wonderful product that is Messenger. Install the Messenger app and simply just not install the Facebook app.

There are versions of the Messenger apps for just about every platform, so you can use Messenger in complete isolation to Facebook. In doing so you make yourself much more contactable and you will likely have a better messaging experience.

And if you're worried about privacy and encryption, but you are happily using WhatsApp, just remember that

Messenger is no less secure than WhatsApp, especially when you use “Secret Mode”.

### WE JUST HAVE TO MAKE THE CHOICE

Ultimately, we just have to make a choice. Unfortunately, there is no perfect messaging solution; I wish there was. In fact, I've given this topic some thought, and I've landed on the concept of an open-source version of Messenger. If only Facebook would follow Microsoft's lead (when they made their development tools open-source) and hand it over to the open-source community, we would then have the best option on the market that would not be controlled by either a single corporation or a government. Imagine how much better messaging would be...

Written by [Kareem Tawansi](#)

# Adopting a plant-based life

## The 99% vegetarian

I grew up observing kosher dietary rules, including ones that prohibited meals that combined meat with dairy and had rules about the length of time you needed to wait after eating meat until you could consume dairy (and vice versa). Beyond that, I could only eat certain types of meat and seafood (e.g. no piggy for me — those 3 little bros would be fine building their houses near me!) This meant that from a young age, I thought about meat as merely a potential part of a meal, but not the defining element of a meal. As an adult, I continue to observe certain kosher dietary rules, but over time I've moved away from eating meat. My diet is now 99% plant-based and occasionally includes meat substitutes like Beyond Meat.

My transition away from eating any meat happened over time and was driven by my desire to keep meals simple, eat healthy and interesting food, save money grocery shopping, and improve the planet.

### SIMPLIFYING MEALS

As someone who keeps kosher, the prohibition on mixing meat and dairy can make meal preparation more complicated. For example, we can't use butter in any recipe that calls for meat, can't have cheeseburgers, and can't eat meat sauces that contain any cream. Beyond that, my partner and I have taken to eating a scoop of ice cream almost every night (if you don't have an ice cream maker, I'd highly recommend it — it's not too expensive and it's been one of our best ever appliance purchases), which we couldn't do if we ate meat. By cutting meat out of our diets, I've been able to simplify decisions around meal time... without sacrificing my beloved ice cream tradition ☺

### HEALTHY & INTERESTING FOOD

In addition to a love for daily ice cream, I'm passionate about food generally. I love to cook, I love to eat, and I love to try new restaurants. With that said, I've found meals centered around meat less interesting to eat and prepare. Some of this might be because it's easy to mess up cooking meat and, frequently, meals are passed off as interesting because of the quantity or quality of meat they contain (ooohhh... but this burger has 2lbs of prime meat!!!).

By contrast, the number of vegetables, fruits, grains, and other produce available to cook is endless and lends itself to countless different types of preparations and styles. Getting eggplant prepared in different ways with different spices or a different type of daal for every day of the week is priceless.

### SAVE MONEY

Meat is expensive. Living in New York City as a college student and then as a new grad, I saved money anywhere I could: I used the library and didn't buy books, I started making cocktails at home rather than paying a premium at a bar, and I closely tracked my spending on groceries. Replacing meat with grains, vegetables, and beans saves a lot of money.

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

The final nail in the coffin of my meat consumption was my growing understanding of the meat industry's environmental impact. For me, cutting meat out of my diet is one way that I can help our planet. While it may be hard for some people to cut meat out of their lives entirely, even cutting one meat meal out of your weekly routine can have a significant, positive environmental impact. Meat replacements, like Beyond Meat or Impossible Meat, are a great way to replace the flavor or texture of meat if you decide to go occasional or full vegetarian. If you aren't interested in meat substitutes, there are also plenty of ways you can get creative with different vegetarian options. For example, tofu or leftover broccoli stalks can be crisped up and used as a nice taco filling or, diced up, a great textured topping for a pasta.

### SO WHAT'S THE 1%?

Ok, so what's the 1% of meat I consume, you ask? It's the meat in my grandmother's cooking. Beyond the fact that I don't want to hurt her feelings by turning down her food during our typical annual visits (she lives in a different country)... her food is incredible and brings back amazing memories of summers spent visiting family. I've made some of her recipes using veggie or meat substitutes and enjoy those, but being able to bond with my grandmother over her cooking has been rewarding for me and is definitely worth the margin of error between being 99% and 100% vegetarian ☺

### TRANSITIONING INTO A PLANT-BASED LIFESTYLE

Transitioning into a plant-based lifestyle has been a process for me and my motivations have changed over time. My experience may not mirror others' experiences and it's important for people to commit to lifestyle choices that are appropriate for them given their circumstances, but I believe it's important for each one of us to examine our diet decisions and consider how we can make healthier, more sustainable choices for ourselves and our planet.

Written by [Taly Matiteyahu](#)



# Setting yourself up for success with new habits

**M**aking a big change is never easy. We usually need many repetitions before something becomes automatic, with research suggesting it takes an average of 66 days to form a new habit.

The good news is, this is 24 days less than the 90 days previously suggested. The bad news is, it is still more than two months of consistency before you can assume you have successfully implemented your new habit.

In the book “The Power of Habit”, Charles Duhigg describes the basic process by which a habit is formed. He calls it “the habit loop”, the components of which include:

- a cue (the prompt that tells you to do the thing you want to become your habit);
- the routine (the habit); and
- the reward (something you value that comes as a result of the habit).

According to this model, if you pair the cue, routine and reward often enough, the routine will become automatic. This habit loop is simple but astonishingly effective for creating and maintaining new habits. Understanding this loop is also helpful in undoing many addictive behaviour patterns. To change your habit, you choose a different routine to be triggered by the cue and accompanied by the reward.

Understanding how to use the habit loop to increase your

success with positive habits and undo patterns that are no longer serving you is a powerful tool in your psychological toolkit. However, it is not enough.

For a habit to become truly automatic, you need to accompany the behaviours with a belief. This belief should relate to the plausibility of your habit becoming your new normal.

To add even more oomph to your behaviour change, you can add a big, “why” into the equation. When you pair the belief that you can (and want to!) make the change, with a compelling reason why it is important to you, and then create your habit loop, you lay the foundation for a powerful habit-forming process.

So, if, for example, you are interested in adopting a plant-based diet, but it feels like a big and overwhelming task, here are a few tips for giving yourself the best possible chance of establishing a sustainable habit.

## GET REALLY CLEAR ABOUT WHY YOU WANT TO MAKE THIS CHANGE

The first step is to be sure about why this change is important to you.

- Is it for your health?
- Is it for the planet?

- Is it because of your beliefs about animal rights?
- Is it something else? If so, what is it?

Whatever your reason, make sure you know what it is and how important it is to you. That clarity will be crucial when the novelty has worn off and you may feel tempted to go back to eating the way you always have.

## DESIGN YOUR HABIT LOOP

When you know why you want to convert to a plant-based diet, the next step is to design your habit loop. The easiest way to do this when it comes to changing your eating habits is to plan ahead and make sure you have plenty of appealing options available for when the inevitable trigger (hunger!) occurs.

If you have to stop and think about what you are going to eat every time you get hungry, you will revert to what is familiar and easy. So, save yourself the struggle by creating a menu plan, pre-preparing as much as you can ahead of time, and having easily accessible snacks that align with your plant-based aspirations.

Adding in a reward will also help to reinforce your new way of eating, so creating a way of celebrating each plant-based choice is a great idea.

It may be a simple acknowledgement of your choice by pausing before you eat your meal to appreciate what you have chosen, or it could be something more visual or tangible. For example, tracking your food in the way of a diary can be a great way of reminding yourself of the tremendous progress you have made.

The caveat around this is that it is vital that you set yourself realistic goals and don't use your tracking as a form of judgement. It is important to remember that habits take time to form, and that the pareto principle of 80/20 applies in all aspects of life.

## BE REALISTIC, PATIENT, AND COMPASSIONATE

This third element is the one that is most likely to be overlooked, but holds the key to your ultimate success. Our brains are wired to keep us safe, which means we feel most comfortable with the familiar. If we try to introduce too much change too quickly, we will find creative ways to sabotage ourselves.

As such, creating a new habit requires us to recognise that these things take time, and are best done incrementally. For example, choosing one meal per day to be plant-based may be enough to get you started; or you could choose one day per week to go meat-free, and see how you go.

However you choose to make your change, it is essential that you are patient and compassionate with yourself. Change can be hard and scary, and acknowledging the efforts you have put in is a vital ingredient in that will give you the impetus to persist, even when it feels hard.

Aim for progress, not perfection, and commit to the process.

Happy habit forming!

Written by [Kate Witteveen](#)



# The importance of fostering a positive and collaborative workplace



**W**hen I'm engaged by a client to recruit for their team, one of the main points that surfaces in an initial meeting is the importance of finding the right "cultural fit". This prompts further questions from my side around what their team is like, how they onboard their staff and what they deem would be the right cultural fit.

More often than not, when we're recruiting for an organisation, clients will be in one of three situations: the first being that they already have a great culture and team which they are trying to grow, the second, they are trying to rebuild a team culture after a few bad hires or a structure or leadership change, and the third, they are starting with a small team which they have the desire to grow.

Established or mature companies typically have a set of 'moral codes' and values that show through their work. These impact how staff interact with one another and how they respond in certain situations. Therefore, it is important that when hiring, companies attract like-minded individuals to maintain these written or unwritten "rules".

## POSITIVITY AND COLLABORATION IN MY WORDS

I'll provide my insight into what positivity and collaboration means to me and why these approaches are important when building, growing and fostering workplace culture.

Positivity, to some, is seen as something that is cheery or bubbly, and those who are seen to be positive can sometimes receive feedback that their positivity is ignorant.

As a positive person myself, I describe my outlook as "finding a solution with an optimistic mindset". If we approach things with a negative mindset we can view everything in that light and this has the potential to spread to those around us.

Collaboration - another important element in any organisation's culture - involves seeking input and advice from everyone in the team to strengthen the knowledge and capability of those at all levels.



It also means that we take on the ownership and responsibility of looking after each other, being accountable for our actions and making sure we do things authentically and with passion.

## WORKING FROM HOME – IT NEEDS TO BE STRUCTURED

When we transitioned to working from home during the COVID enforced shutdowns in 2020, we automated our HR platform into a tool (CoHealth Workforce Management) with the intention of looking after our employees' health and wellbeing.

During this process, we researched both national and international companies and found that, overall, people felt disengaged when working in solo roles, at home, or in remote positions. This not only impacted the standard of their work but also, more importantly, their mindset, life, and overall outlook.

In order to minimise this, we interacted with our staff via zoom calls in the mornings and afternoons. Although they may have felt like it was a “Big Brother” approach; strategically, it was done to help them feel prepared for the day ahead as well as to facilitate engagement in the afternoon. After being alone (essentially) for eight hours in between, this collaborative approach had the aim of bringing our team together in times where we were apart.

The topic of mental health and the lack of engagement for those working from home, or in autonomous roles, is very important and there needs to be more thought put into how we support those in these arrangements.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

In theory, it should be easy to maintain a positive mindset and be a collaborative team player. However, as humans we are complex and we all have our own personal stresses, self-pressure and attitudes shaped by our experiences which impact how we interact and react in particular environments.

So with this in mind, we need to consider how we build and maintain a good culture. Whilst my role is the CEO, it would be exhausting to carry and push a positive mindset all by myself. In our company, I maintain that it is everyone's responsibility to be a ‘culture leader’ and to foster and protect the “wolfpack” (our employees) as individuals and as a team.

It is everyone's responsibility to check-in, support and look out for each other, in both the good times and during the challenging ones.

You shouldn't expect your team to always be smiling or jumping up and down with joy every day – that is unrealistic – but you should give and ask for transparency and open communication as much as possible. Without this, as managers, we don't know where the stresses lie, making it difficult to support our employees or build mutual trust to foster a strong working relationship.

Employees cannot expect a workplace that provides a good career path, flexible working hours, or a “fun” environment when they have a terrible attitude. And employers cannot expect staff to be motivated, collaborative and have a good work ethic if they are not responsive, open, and transparent (where possible).

## BUSINESS OWNERS – SET THE TONE

When you are starting a business, you set the tone and the work environment, and your attitude and outlook should work to attract the same type of people who will want to join your team.

Be engaging, present and respectful, and know that in times of stress, you will have people who will be there in solidarity with you and offer the same in return.

To reach both personal and business goals, it is imperative for the company and team to value each other's opinions and experience, and have genuine trust and respect for individual contribution.

By fostering a positive and collaborative workplace, you can expect great things from your team as they will feel appreciated and supported. They will also recognise the responsibility they have to contribute to the overall success and culture of the team - making them feel part of something truly important.

Written by [Tanya Abbey](#)

# Australian MADE IN JUNE



**M**eet June Wilton (Noni Hazlehurst from *Ladies in Black*, *The Sullivans*, *Playschool*) – mother, grandmother, successful businesswoman, wife, family matriarch and nursing home resident following a series of strokes five years early that left her with rapid dementia.

Make no mistake, *June Again* tackles some discomfoting themes such as dementia, aging and when to put your loved ones into nursing care. As well as family dynamics, identity, first love, the power of memory and nostalgia. However, it is a heart-warming comedy with authentic Australian characters set in Australian suburbia.

Much to everyone’s amazement, June’s pre-stroke memory returns overnight and despite Doctor’s orders to stay put, she quickly escapes the nursing home and re-enters the lives of her adult children – Ginny (Claudia Karvan of *True History of the Kelly Gang*, *Star Wars Episode II and III*) and Devon (Stephen Curry – *Hounds of Love*, *The Castle*).

However, much has changed and the lives she planned for them is not going according to plan! With limited time before her dementia returns, she sets about putting everything and everyone back on track, including the retrieval of some beloved furniture her children sold after they put her in the nursing home. So begins a road trip with some surprising twists and turns. Rated M (it contains some swearing), it is written and directed by JJ Winlove and runs about 99 minutes. The film was shot over 20 days in Sydney’s North Shore – mostly Roseville, Willoughby and Terrey Hills.



The Wellington (NZ) born JJ may also be known for *12:12*, an anthology of twelve films made over twelve months, or the award winning very very short film about a news-reading leaf called *The Falling*. Expect 8.5/10 or higher from IMDb reviewers once they go live.

The film also stars Uli Latukefu (*Alien*, *Covenant*, *Young Rock*, *Doctor Doctor*), Nash Edgerton (stunts in for *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*), Darren Gilshenan (*Never Too Late*, *How to Stay Married*), Pip Edwards (*Home and Away*) and an almost scene stealing Paisley Motum as Olive.

Spoiler alert, pocket a hankie as *June Again* leaves you with happy tears and a warm happy feeling. And, should you be inspired to redecorate, look up Publisher Textiles ([www.publishertextiles.com.au](http://www.publishertextiles.com.au)), whose stunning wallpaper factory is featured in the film. #JuneAgainMovie @Encore\_2017

Written by [Ana Jones](#)



## Ingredient Feature

# Blood Sausage

**I**t might sound disturbing to those uninitiated, though to millions of people around the world this type of sausage is a staple in their diet, Blood Sausage. It is the ultimate in sustainability as it utilises a part of an animal that is otherwise wasted, the blood.

There are variation of this sausage through out the world from south and central Americas through Asia to the European continent. Though Pigs blood is predominantly used other animals such as chicken, cow, donkey, duck, goat, and sheep are also used, dependant upon the region and the available resources.

Though it is called blood sausage, this is not the only ingredient, it is only a part of the sausage. A filler, or fillers are used such as rice, oats, barley, cornmeal, onions, bread, chestnuts, suet and fat. Again this is all dependant upon the region and the available resources.

### HISTORY

Blood sausage has been in existence for thousands of years, when and where it was first invented is up for much debate. Honestly though how you could ever determine these facts would be bordering on the impossible, given the prevalence of the dish throughout the world and the ages.

It is a dish borne out of necessity, people need to eat, and when resources are tight you need to utilise everything available to you. So, why waste blood when you can make something out of it. Then hey presto, before you know it someone has invented a cost-effective meal that utilised an ingredient till then, discarded, animal blood.

### FOR COOKING

Lets take a look at the variants of blood sausage found



around the world in this section, as I think it is interesting.

## EUROPE

Throughout central and eastern Europe in Hungary, Slovenia, Poland, Bulgaria is usually made with pigs blood, and filled with bread, barley, corn, animal intestines and sometimes herbs. Each country has its own slight variation, and of course name for the sausage. Though it is traditionally eaten during winter, as a hot dish with sides of potato, and pickled cabbage.

In Denmark they have a sweet variant of blood sausage which is eaten either cold or hot and served together with syrup, cinnamon and stewed apples.

In Finland they make a blood pancake with a recipe similar to the black pudding found in the UK. They use pigs blood, rye flour or oatmeal minced onions together with herbs and spices to make a batter. Then it is fried off in the pan similar to flapjacks, and eaten as part of a meal.

In Sweden it is known as a blood pudding with a batter being prepared then poured into a mould and baked in a water bath. The exact ingredients vary from region to region, though they include pigs' blood, milk, rye or barley flour, diced lard, beer, treacle, onion, spices and herbs. Once cooked it is cooled, unmoulded, then fried prior to service.

In England and Ireland, it is known as Black pudding and is a breakfast staple for a good breakfast fry up. Though instead of onions they traditionally use a high percentage of oatmeal, making the sausage more stodgy. Though here there is the black, white and red pudding varieties. Another way they enjoy this staple is to have it battered and fried up with their fish n chips.

## ASIA

In Tibet a sausage is made using either the sheep or Yak's blood, being mixed together with rice or roasted barley flour. In Chinese cuisine coagulated pigs' blood is either fried or steamed as a snack, or accompaniment to a dish. In Korea pigs' blood is used more as a dessert than for savory options, being served as a Korean sundaes wrapped in pigs' intestines and served with sweet potato noodle.

## AMERICAS

In the Caribbean black pudding or blood pudding is made with pigs' blood, sweet potatoes, onions, and spices, then filled into animal intestines. Served traditionally on special occasions accompanied by pickled pigs' trotters.

In Puerto Rico the sausage is made with pigs' blood, cilantro, garlic, paprika, and chilis, and is popular during the Christmas period.

In Mexico the sausage is made with pig's blood and deep-fried served in a taco with pickled onions, cilantro, spices,



and fresh Habanero chilis.

Blood sausage is popular throughout South America from Colombia through Brazil to Argentina, known as morcilla, chourico, or morcela. In Chile they have a blood sausage called "prieta". It generally has a tough skin and can include ingredients, other than the pigs blood, that include. Cabbage, onions, peppers, watercress, rice, dried fruits, nuts and meat, as well as fat.

## CONCLUSION

Blood sausage is a tradition throughout the world, it has been a big part in my life coming from European ancestors. I can honestly admit that I have a liking for the blood sausage, though I can understand that there are many out there, not familiar with it who may be repulsed by the thought of consuming, let alone enjoying a blood sausage.

Whatever your personal views are, just remember life is to be experienced, we may not like everything we encounter but we should certainly enjoy the experience of being able to sample them.

Written by [Kevin Kapusi Starow](#)

# TRAVELING CUBA AS A VEGAN

Cuba, a beautiful island nation with turbulent history and a 60-year embargo that has turned the amazing place into somewhat of a time capsule. It feels charming to see the beautiful old cars from 1950's, 1960's (and even not so beautiful ones from 1970's), and the picture perfect pastel coloured buildings for your post card, yet these weren't created to win your heart. They developed out of necessity with the ingenuity of the Cuban people to make the best use of what they got. Their resourcefulness, flexibility and adaptability doesn't stop there, it also arches out to food.

## THE CUBAN STAPLES

I've got to be honest with you, traveling as a vegan may have its challenges in Cuba. Their traditional diet consists of pork, seafood, rice, beans, and seasonal vegetables, whilst a typical tourist breakfast in Cuba includes only bread (Cuban bread is usually vegan), butter, eggs, cheese, fruit, and sometimes ham. Until this year, Cuban families were provided rations of staples, like rice, chicken, eggs, and beans. With food shortages being a regular occurrence, they are not fussy eaters, so do not be offended if they don't understand your choice to be vegan. Veganism just isn't a thing in Cuba yet.

Whilst restaurants in tourist areas are picking up on this new 'trend', their vegan menu options are still in their infancy. Things like Hummus is only just making it onto the menu, and if you are somewhere fancy, you may even find a veggie burger. Top tip, do not eat at the tourist restaurants!

## WHERE TO STAY

Best thing you can do when you are traveling Cuba as a vegan is to stay in a casa particular. Casas are private homes that are rented either fully or partially by their owners. It's one of the only private business opportunities Cubans have currently, so your stay will support many people in the community from the casa owner, their family as well as the local grocer (remember the resourcefulness?).

Most casas will offer you breakfast – choices for vegans



for breakfast includes a variety of seasonal fruits, from deliciously sweet pineapple to oranges, guavas, bananas, coconut, mango, and papaya. You can have these cut up or juiced. Of course, there's the delicious Cuban coffee, as well as bread.

Things like almond milk, oat milk, rice milk are not readily available and even coconut milk will be scarce to find, so if you don't like your coffee black, you may wish to bring your own 'milk' powder supply. Same goes for spreads, whilst you may find jam, peanut butter is scarce. Other breakfast foods that aren't typically available in Cuba but are easy to pack include oats, nuts, trail mix and protein bars.

Some casa owners will also be happy to make you meals for lunch and dinner, if you explain to them your dietary needs there are several options, they can cook for you depending on availability. What's even better, you could accompany them to the market to purchase supplies for your meals. That is a whole new experience, trust me, best done with a local!

Grocery shopping in Cuba requires creativity, patience, knowing the suppliers and a lot of time. One-stop shop

supermarkets don't exist, and the markets that do exist will seem lacking. Your typical store may only have a few items available. Which means that the locals will go around to not just the markets, but other suppliers to ensure they get what they need to prepare a meal.

You'll also likely to meet a produce cart or random vendors selling basics like bananas, papaya, guava, plantains, yucca, onions, garlic, and tomatoes. Depending on what they have available at the time. Markets and suppliers run out early, so it's best to go shopping in the morning.

Shopping for your own produce can mean cheaper meals during extended visits, but given the challenge required to find veggies in Cuba and the low price of home cooked meals, eating at the casa is often a far better option.

## VEGAN MEAL OPTIONS

Your host be able to cook you up things like vegetable soup, but since vegetarianism and veganism are so unfamiliar in Cuba, you may have to insist on no meat or bones to be added to the stock.

Beans and rice are a staple so that will be an easy option, can even have it accompanied with a 'salad' but don't be surprised if that only means cucumber or tomato on it's own, or occasionally including some cabbage. Dressings are generally limited to lemon juice and olive oil.

And to go on about the beans... Cubans are the greatest experts at cooking them. Black beans, white beans, kidney beans, all the various lentils and chickpea dishes you can enjoy out there - the bean possibilities really are endless.



They're super cheap, delicious and a great source of protein. Although you may want to check that they were not cooked in a bone broth. Fried plantains are a staple of the Cuban diet, and they're delicious!

You may also find sweet potatoes, eggplants, avocados – which are huge! So, you will certainly not go hungry. But may want to pick the season that's abundant with fruit and vegetable options.

## CUBAN HOSPITALITY

One thing to be aware of is that Cubans are very hospitable. You may find that by the time your taxi driver has driven you to your casa from the airport, he's also invited you to the next family BBQ. So be aware of their cultural norms. Being vegetarian/vegan is uncommon, not entirely understood, and since 'food is love' and refusing a meal is unheard of, they can get offended if you do so. Whilst joining a fiesta is an amazing cultural experience, be prepared to walk this fine line if you do. It may help to learn some Spanish phrases before you go.

Things like:  
 aguacate (avocado)  
 arroz (rice)  
 ensalada (salad)  
 frijoles or abichuela (beans)  
 fruta (fruit)  
 pan (bread)  
 papas (potatoes)  
 tostones (fried green plantains)  
 tomate (tomato)  
 pepino (cucumber)  
 garbanzos (chickpea)  
 verdure (vegetable)  
 along with some phrases like,  
 Yo soy vegano/a – I am vegan

No como ningún producto de origen animal – I don't eat any animal products

¿Este plato contiene carne/ lácteos/ huevo/ pescado? – Does this dish contain meat/ dairy/ egg/ fish?  
 ¿Puedo pedir esto sin...?- Can I order this without...?

¿Usted me puede cocinar...? - Could you please cook...?

Let's face it, travelling anywhere as a vegan can be challenging. Even in a country where you speak the language it can be hard to gauge what's vegan and what's hiding a sprinkling of cheese, spoonful of honey or some egg bind. In Cuba, it can be a whole new level with the choice options and needing to speak Spanish. Traveling with a small group, your tour guide will be able to help you with your food choices whilst you are out and about and in putting you with the most fitting casa owner. What will also help you on your Cuban holiday is pack some mixed nuts, protein bars as fallback options.

Written by [Orsolya Bartalis](#)



# How to get started with a plant-based lifestyle (H1)

**W**e have been hearing more and more about living a plant-based lifestyle, but does that mean, and how can we achieve it? Let's break down what it means to be plant-based, why this is important, and what simple steps you can take to move toward your goals.

## WHY PLANT-BASED? (H2)

A plant-based (also referred to as vegan) lifestyle is one that is built around food and products that are derived from plants. This lifestyle excludes anything that comes from an animal such as meat, dairy, eggs, and items like leather and fur. Avoiding anything that would exploit animals such as zoos, aquariums, or animal breeders also falls in line with living a vegan lifestyle.

I believe there are several significant reasons one should live a plant-based life, for the animals, for the environment, and for our health, along with many others.

The most obvious and most talked about reason to make this change is for the animals. By choosing to avoid foods, products, and activities that exclude animals, we

are avoiding contributing to the suffering of animals. There are a bunch of documentaries on Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube, that you can watch and learn more about how eating animal products affects animals.

Another great reason to make these changes in for the environment. When animals are raised as livestock, they need a place to live, need large quantities of food and water, and create a great amount of waste. All of these things contribute to deforestation, pollution, and create a great demand for water. By opting into plant-based choices, you'll be more eco-friendly and will help contribute to the conservation of land, helping control and conserve the world's water supply, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Eating a plant-based diet can be really beneficial for our health. I love this article (link) <https://www.everydayhealth.com/diet-nutrition/scientific-benefits-following-plant-based-diet/> which is really helpful in explaining some of the specific advantages to eating a vegan diet. It includes benefits such as lowering blood pressure, better overall heart health, the prevention of





chronic diseases, and even a decreased risk of cancer.

There are so many great reasons to make this lifestyle change, what is yours be?

## EATING A VEGAN DIET (H2)

One of the most impactful ways to incorporate a plant-based lifestyle is by choosing to eat a vegan diet. We eat multiple times a day and every single meal, snack, or dessert, is an opportunity to make a difference.

We are so fortunate to live in a time where you can go almost anywhere and find vegan options. Our grocery stores are suddenly offering more and more plant-based options, restaurants are adding vegan items to their menus, and plant-based recipes are found in many cookbooks, websites, and all across social media.

The best advice I can offer you when making any lifestyle change is to go at your own pace. Some people are ready to dive right into a vegan diet and some people need to go a little slower, either way is completely fine. If this feels overwhelming, I recommend trying a couple new vegan recipes per week. Slowly make the transition by trading one animal-based meal for a vegan meal.

Find your support system and lean on them for encouragement. Everyone's support system might look a little bit different and that's completely fine. Yours might be a singular person such as a family member, a friend, or a work colleague. It could also be an entire community like a club, or an online platform like a Facebook group.

Having a group of people to look to for encouragement and support along the way will make any type of lifestyle change easier.

Finally, look for inspiration to keep you motivated! There are so many vegan cookbooks, Instagram accounts, Facebook groups, and websites where you can find plant-based recipes and ideas. I have tons of free plant-based recipes on my website to help you get started.

One of my favorite go-to recipes is my Sweet Potato Power Bowl. (link) <https://plantedinthekitchen.com/sweet-potato-power-bowl-with-tahini-dressing/> Finding inspiration for new recipes and ways to live a plant-based lifestyle can be easy, fun, and delicious!

## LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Every day we have the opportunity to make hundreds of choices. We are so fortunate to live in a time where information is so easily accessible and we have the opportunity and freedom to make choices that we feel are the best for us and our families.

I encourage you to continue educating yourself and others about the benefits of living a plant-based lifestyle. Cook a plant-based meal, opt out of products like leather, watch a documentary with a family member or friend. It's easy to feel like the choices we make are small, but when we make these choices together, we can make a big difference!

Written by [Kelsey Riley](#)



# Sweet Potato Power Bowl



**Prep time:** 10 minutes  
**Cook time:** 20 minutes  
**Total time:** 30 minutes

## Equipment needed:

- Chef's knife
- Cutting board
- Baking sheet

This power bowl is so easy to make and filled with delicious, nourishing, plant-based ingredients. It is perfect for quick lunch or dinner and a great recipe for meal prepping. The power bowl is complimented by the addition of a creamy vegan tahini dressing.

## Ingredients

|        |                                |
|--------|--------------------------------|
| 4 cups | kale                           |
| 1 cup  | sweet potato diced and roasted |
| ½ cup  | quinoa cooked                  |
| ¼ cup  | radishes thinly sliced         |
| ¼ cup  | red cabbage shredded           |
| ¼ cup  | avocado diced                  |
| 2 tbsp | tahini dressing                |

## Tahini Dressing Ingredients

|        |                     |
|--------|---------------------|
| ¼ cup  | tahini              |
| 2 tbsp | Dijon mustard       |
| 1 tbsp | olive oil           |
| 1 tsp  | apple cider vinegar |
| 2 tsp  | cool water          |



## Method

1. Start by washing, dicing, and roasting the sweet potatoes. Season however you prefer (I kept things simple and used a bit of olive oil, salt, and pepper) roast in the oven at 425 degrees for about 20 minutes, tossing every 10 minutes. Allow to cool slightly before adding to your power bowl.
2. Mix together all ingredients for the tahini dressing and set aside.
3. Wash your produce and allow to dry. Chop the kale and massage with a little olive oil or lemon juice. Prepare the other produce according to the ingredient list.
4. Assemble your sweet potato power bowl starting with the kale, followed by your veggies, and a drizzle of the tahini dressing. Mix together and serve immediately!



Written by [Kelsey Riley](#)

# Vegan Spinach Ravioli

Written by [Midhun Vasan](#)

**Prep Time:** 40 minutes

**Cook Time:** 15 minutes

**Rest Time:** 30 minutes

**Total Time:** 1 hour 25 minutes

## Equipment List

3 inch diameter cookie cutter or bowl – Used for cutting the rolled out dough, Spider strainer ladle, Deep pot or saucepan, Rolling pin, Fork, Medium sized bowl, Knife

Most pasta doughs have eggs in them and more often than not, the cheese used is not vegan. So how about making the pasta from scratch and using vegan cream cheese? Voila! Vegan spinach ravioli served with mushrooms. This is an ideal option for someone who misses having a cheesy ravioli pasta but has allergy to dairy, eggs and nuts.

## Ingredients

### Ravioli

|        |                        |
|--------|------------------------|
| 1¼ Cup | All Purpose Flour 150g |
| 1¼ Cup | Semolina Flour 150g    |
| ½ Tsp  | Salt                   |
| ¾ Cup  | Water 150mL            |
| 2 Tsp  | Olive Oil              |

### Spinach Filling

|        |                               |
|--------|-------------------------------|
| 7 oz   | Frozen Spinach 200g           |
| 3.5 oz | Plant Based Cream Cheese 100g |
| 5 Tbsp | Vegan Parmesan 50g            |
|        | Salt, Pepper to taste         |
| 2      | Garlic Cloves                 |
| 1 Tbsp | Olive Oil                     |
| 10 oz  | Mushrooms 300g                |
| 1 Tbsp | Soy Sauce                     |



## Method

### Pasta Dough

- In a large bowl, mix the flour, semolina and salt.
- Add in the olive oil and water and knead till you get a smooth dough. If the dough seems a bit dry, add water little bit more till the dough gets to the right texture for kneading.
- Shape it into a smooth round ball and wrap it with any plastic cling wrap.
- Keep it in the refrigerator and let it rest for at least 30 minutes.

### Spinach Filling

- Thaw the spinach, squeeze out as much water as you can. If it's not chopped, then chop very finely and move in a medium sized bowl.
- Add the vegan cream cheese and parmesan to the spinach. Add salt and pepper to taste. Mix well.

### Ravioli

- Take the dough out of the refrigerator and unwrap it. Place it on a lightly floured surface big enough to roll it out on.
- Roll out the dough to around 1/8th inch thickness. If it's too thin, then there is a chance the ravioli might break.
- Use a cookie cutter or a small lid or bowl with a 3 inch mouth to cut the dough.

- Place 1 tbsp of the spinach filling in the center of the 3 inch dough. Lightly rub water along the edges of the dough with your fingers. Gently fold the dough over the filling and seal it with your fingers. The shape should be a semi-circle. Press down the edges with a fork. This will be final seal and plus it gives it a nice-looking contour along the seal.
- Take a large deep pot and add salted water into it. Bring it to a boil.
- Carefully slide the raviolis into it and let it simmer. When you start seeing the raviolis floating to the surface, remove them using a spider strainer or a foam ladle. It would usually take about 4 minutes for the raviolis to rise to the surface. Move the cooked raviolis to a plate but make sure you do not let it touch each other else you might end up with some raviolis stuck to each other.

### Fried Mushrooms

- In a large pan, heat up the oil on medium heat.
- Add in the sliced mushrooms, salt & pepper (to taste) and garlic cloves. If you are crazy about garlic, like I am, you can add more!
- Sautee for about 7 to 8 minutes or until the mushroom it cooked. This would depend on the type of mushrooms, the stove top and various other factors but you will once the size of the mushrooms are reduced and its cooked.
- Add in the ravioli. You can add more cooked spinach on top but its optional.

### Notes

Vegan cream cheese can be substituted with cashew ricotta.  
Semolina flour can be substituted with all-purpose flour.

Partners with



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