

Healthy Wednesday Club

Newsletter Issue 13

April 30, 2008



Here's some fascinating health news from New Scientist magazine. Cuba suffered severe economic difficulties in the early 1990's. Food consumption was reduced to around 1800 calories and petrol was so difficult to obtain that most people walked or rode bicycles.

Most of the population of Cuba lost at least 5-10 kilos. In the latter part of the 1990's the medical authorities found that diabetes 2 reduced by 51%, cardio vascular disease by 34% and a variety of other health benefits. This created huge savings in health care expenditure!

This 'forced' reduction in calorie intake and increase in exercise was not done well, though. Much of the available food wasn't of the best quality and there was a lot of stress in dealing with the social difficulties, but those set backs were outweighed (pardon the pun) by the health benefits of losing weight. We have the opportunity to cut down our calories and increase the nutrient value of what we do eat. Do we really need to be economically vanquished in order to resist the temptation of sugar and live a healthier lifestyle?

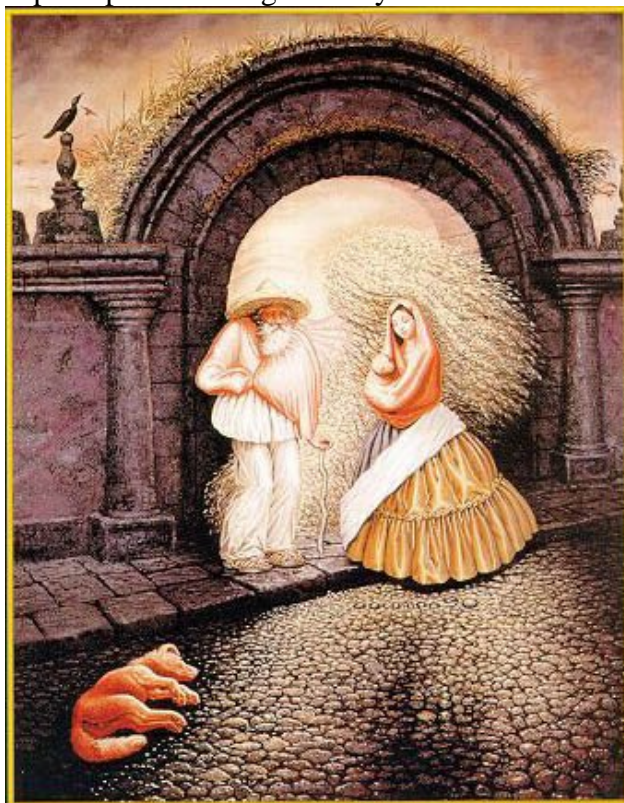
Saturday May 3rd 4.45pm – 6.30pm
24-28 John Street, Lidcombe

to confirm or make enquiries call Helen on 0419 446 960

Brain Teaser

How many human faces do you see in this image? It is interesting to note that many people find more faces than the artist intended. Sometimes we see what is only real for our own mind!

Answer: 9 Some people reported seeing as many as 27. I found 10 if you include the baby



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FABULOUS LOW GI FOOD

Tomato, Tuna, Spinach and Pinenut Pasta

Ingredients:

1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion diced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tbsp basil, fresh, chopped
1 bunch spinach
6 tomatoes
1 tbsp tomato paste
2 tbsp pine nuts, dry roasted
pinch salt to taste
pinch black pepper to taste

400 grams wholemeal pasta spirals

4 tuna fillets

Preparation:

Cut tomatoes in half, roast for 30 minutes cut side up on a lightly greased oven tray. Remove skins and process the tomatoes.

Dry roast pine nuts under a griller until lightly browned.

Remove spinach leaves and wash thoroughly.

Cook lightly in a saucepan for 2-3 minutes.

When cooled, squeeze out the extra fluid and chop.

Method:

Brush the tuna with olive oil and set aside. Bring a saucepan $\frac{3}{4}$ full of salted water to the boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente.

In a saucepan, fry the onion, garlic and herbs in the olive oil until onion is transparent. Add chopped tomatoes and tomato paste. Add spinach, pine nuts, salt and pepper. Cook on low for about 5 minutes.

Sear the tuna for approx 2 minutes each side then serve on a plate with the pasta spirals and tomato and spinach sauce.

Serves 4.

HEALTHY WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

Body: The weather has cooled down quite a bit and this may be a disincentive for the energetic walk you were taking during the warmer weather. It is, however, great to get out in the cooler air. The temptation might be to add warmer clothing, but the best advice is to keep on wearing light clothing while you are exercising. This encourages your system to push blood out to the extremities. This gets your metabolism really going which helps to break down fats for extra energy. Be sure you don't get cold when you stop exercising. Take a warm top with you if you expect to stop or slow down, but there is no need to dress warmly when you start. Use your body to warm up!

Mind: There are 3 principal ways that we stay in touch with our inner and outer environment. Proprioception is the awareness we sense from our bones and joints. It helps us realise how we are standing and what forces are acting on us. Nociception is how our nervous sensitivity picks up pressure on our skin and also noxious substances under our skin. Neuroception is the brain scanning the environment for threats and dangers. Try standing still and getting a conscious sense of these different body perceptions. Close your eyes and see if you can feel your joints and how they are able to tell you if you are swaying or leaning backwards or forwards. Now shift your attention to more subtle sensations like the air against your skin or your clothes. See if you can find where there is a feeling that something is not right under the skin. Check that place out for cuts or bruises or some mild infection like a pimple or something of the sort. Neuroception is when you look around and feel safe or not. Think about whether how you are feeling then look around and see what it is that is prompting that feeling. No doubt you will notice all kinds of things that you weren't noticing before. The magic of the body is that it is maintaining all those awarenesses for you whether you are conscious or not. It's nice sometimes to take a moment to appreciate your non-conscious care systems.

Soul: As you get a sense of these non-conscious processes you might get a sense of the invisible hand that guides and protects you residing unobtrusively within the fabric of your body and mind.

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What We Eat

I don't know whether you have seen these images in the viral email clutter, but they're actually quite interesting. They simply show happy families sitting around a display of the food they eat each week. The last picture is a little doctoring I have done in photoshop. I think a picture may well paint a thousand words.



Here we see the weekly grocery shopping of a middle class family from the USA.

Now let's we see what an African village family might eat.

I wondered what would be left if I took out all the food from the US family that was high in GI, low in nutritional value, manufactured or just a plain waste of time and space.

Let's have a look at what the US family is really eating. Remember that all the erased food is food that is contributing to insulin resistance, obesity and inflammatory disease.

Almost half the food is erased and there are some dubious things left, but they have some nutrient value.



Wow! Even more interesting is that the food left in the American kitchen is more nutritious than the African family, but all that junk food shuts the body down from receiving the benefits of the good food. On the whole it's difficult to say which family is the better nourished.

Looking forward to sharing more thoughts, suggestions, news and making a very Healthy Wednesday connection with you!

Take Care,
The Healthy Wednesday Team



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