

# Healthy Wednesday Club

## Newsletter Issue 18

June 4th, 2008

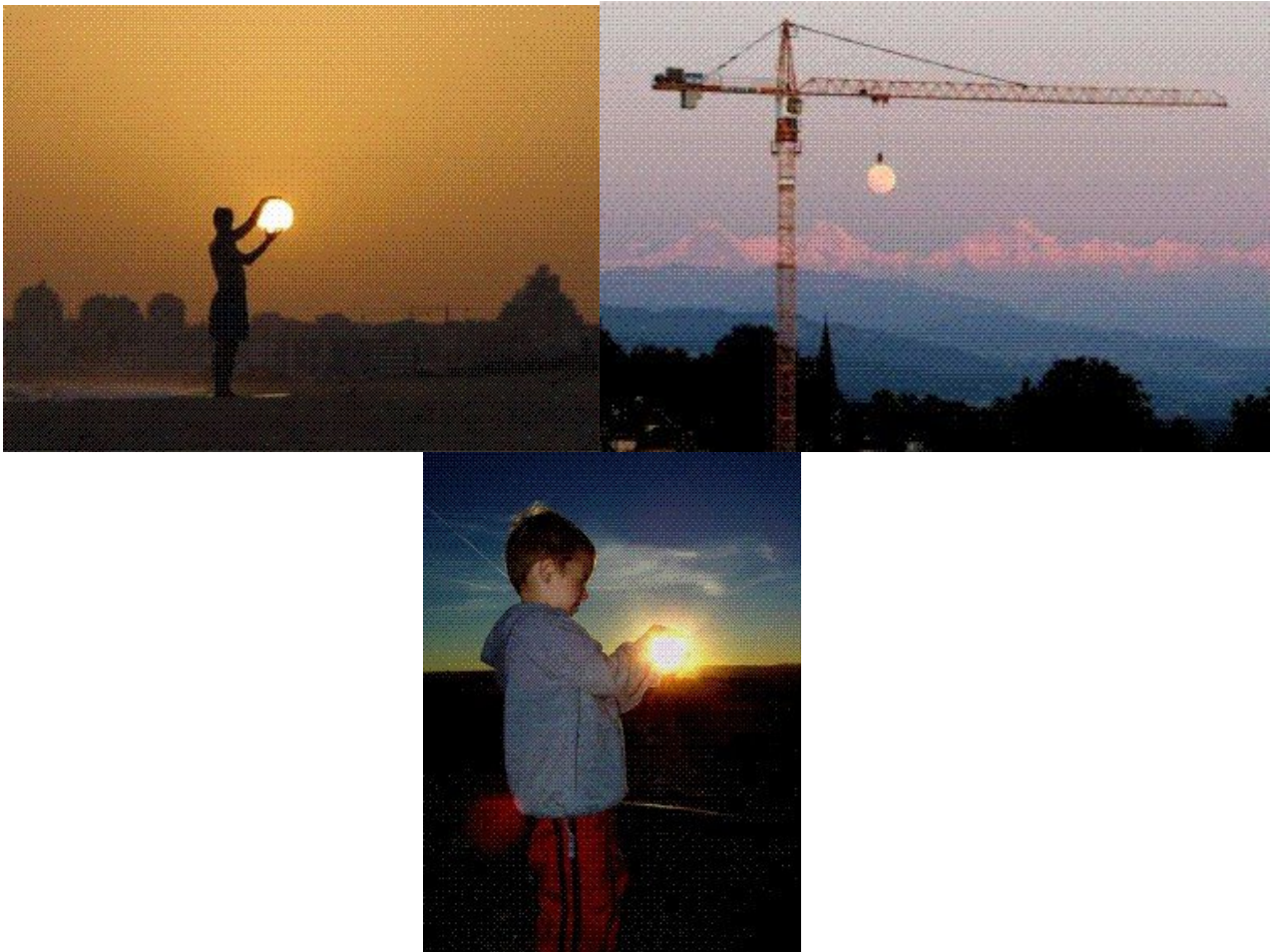


We had a lovely time on the weekend sharing the birthday celebrations of a very good friend who is turning 80! Her speech said a number of things, but you could boil it down to something very simple: always find the funny side. She's right, of course. There is always something to laugh at, to get pleasure from and if you actually expect it then you create a mindset that is 'geared up' to laugh and have a good time. It's as easy as that!

When I came to the office today I noticed a story in Scientific American about office bullies called "The Cubicle Bully". The complete opposite to our happy friend, almost a different universe. That is what the article is about today. Maybe we should think about this a little bit because our happy hearted friend who likes to laugh and see the joy in life is not seen as the 'norm'. We *definitely* need to think about that.

### Catching the Sun

Hope you enjoyed the international sunsets over the last week. If only we could catch the Sun for just a moment or two ...



Many thanks to Diana for this contribution... Please share things you would like to see in the newsletter.

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## FABULOUS LOW GI FOOD

### **Leek and Miso soup**

#### **Ingredients**

2 tbsp olive oil  
1 6 wakame, soaked in 2 cups water  
½ cup leek, finely sliced on diagonal  
½ cup carrot, (daikon, turnip, parsnip may also be used); julienned  
1 cup Chinese cabbage, sliced finely  
4 cups water or stock  
1 tbsp Mugi miso (level)  
pinch sea salt  
parsley as garnish

#### **Wakame -**

A kelp that is similar to kombu and it can be used in many of the same ways. Can be purchased at Health Food Store or Asian Grocer (as can Miso powder. Can be stored in airtight jar for 12 months

#### **Method:**

Heat oil in a medium saucepan and add sliced leek and salt. Cook for 2-3 minutes until soft. Slice wakame into thin strips. When leeks are soft, add water or stock, carrots and wakame. Bring soup to a boil and then reduce heat and simmer for 25 minutes, with the lid on.

Wash and chop greens and add to broth 5 minutes before the end of cooking. Place miso into a bowl and add a few tablespoons of the broth. Mix into a paste and add back to the soup.

Allow soup to stand for a few minutes and serve garnished with parsley.

**Serves 6**

## HEALTHY WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

**Body:** One of the big problems with exercise is that it can be such a lonely affair. So far we have given you lots of little things that you can do to increase the ‘activity’ of your sedentary lifestyle, but it is high time to mention a very important thing – be active with other people! See if you can find a ‘healthy’ buddy at work or in the neighbourhood. (Being ‘healthy’ just means someone who realises they don’t want to die younger or live sicker!) Practice some of the exercise activities with them and add a social pleasure to the whole process. If you take the stairs rather than the lift, do it with someone. If you go for a walk around the block as you head to the shops, do it with someone. If you do some breathing exercises as you walk to release the shoulders and ribs, do it with someone. Talk together and even more important, laugh together. This is *great* exercise.

**Mind:** Close your eyes and try to think about a part of your body. See if you can make that part move or some other way of increasing your awareness. Wiggling a toe may be easy, but getting your stomach to do something may be a bit trickier. Maybe you can try to slow your heartbeat or change the way your lungs fill with air. Maybe you can move your epiglottis (in your throat) to open and close the oesophagus. This will exercise your sensory motor cortex and activate other areas like the insula and the thalamus. It could also initiate activity in the visual cortex as you imagine, the temporal lobes as think about faces and sounds and even perhaps your parietal lobes with colours. There’s lots to exercise up there in the ol’ brain matter!

**Soul:** Have you given yourself a quiet, self focussed moment lately. A good idea is to stimulate one of the senses, then pay such close attention to everything that is happening to that sense that everything else seems to fade from notice. You might like to put on some earphones and surround yourself with sound. You might like to have a massage and be totally focussed on body sensation. You could also do this with a bath or better still a whirlpool. You could go somewhere with a lot of aromas, close your eyes and just revel in the smells. You might go to a curiosity shop and become totally engrossed in the many varied and mysterious items that you see. Let your senses have a special moment of their own, one by one, during the week as an opportunity arises. Each of those senses is the connection between you and the universe. All you need to do is take notice.

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## **Bullying in the Workplace**

We mostly talk about bullying in the playground, but we all know that it keeps on going out of school and into the workplace. What's interesting is to know that the effects of workplace bullying can be even more disastrous for the victims than at school.

At school, kids are jockeying for power, but they are also trying to figure themselves out as human beings. Many bullies come to realise the sadness in their own lives that drives them to be so mean. Victims can learn as well, but all too many suffer deep damage.

In later life the whole game is a lot more serious and a lot more about entrenched behaviour than in the schoolyard. Sometimes bullies in later life were victims as children and they are just 'getting their own back'. Others have become serial bullies because of the benefits they got when in school. The worst aspect of workplace bullying is that quite often the problem is not bullying, but just a lack of caring about anyone. This doesn't necessarily come from bad parents or rotten childhoods, but from a world that constantly pressures us to 'look after No1'.

In a competitive, winner-takes-it-all corporate world it can seem vital to make things go your way. The next promotion or opportunity may depend on being on top of the game and the best candidate. Many of the things that we might call bullying can also be just about getting on with the job!

Business researchers Sandy Hershcovis of the University of Manitoba and Julian Barling of Queens University in Ontario analysed 111 studies on workplace social dynamics. They found that bullying created greater stress and more anger than sexual harassment. The Workplace Bullying Institute claims that some 37% of US employees have been bullied whereas only 8-10% have been sexually harassed.

Workplace bullying is the spreading of nasty office gossip, ostracising someone, insults about their work performance or their personal life. The main problem lies in that these sorts of behaviours are often seen as 'just personality conflicts' or 'just what people are like' and nothing can or really should be done about it. It's only when someone quits their job and an employer has to go through the expense of hiring and training someone else that this becomes an issue, or when productivity is affected.

This is where the problem really lies – only when it affects the economics of a company is it a concern. This disengagement from the welfare and wellbeing of human beings in our economically motivated culture is a part of the whole 'winner/loser world' problem I describe in my book, "How the 'real world' Is Driving Us Crazy!"

Just at lunch the other day someone was talking about 'survival of the fittest' in relation to work. Survival of the fittest is an evolutionary process that relates to battles between predators and prey where one species survives over another. When did people start to forget that we are all human? How is it that some people believe that other people are expendable in the struggle for success? These are questions we have to ask.

How is it possible that we not only produce foods that we know will give some people diabetes 2, but that these foods are actively 'bullied' into our lifestyle to the point where if you argue against refined sugar high risk foods then you are just some kind of wimp or wowser or crazy idealist? Anyone see bullying by personal criticism in that kind of behaviour? I do.

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

Take Care, Richard, Susie and The Healthy Wednesday Team



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