



PREPARING YOUR

# MIND *for*

# LIVING FOODS

10

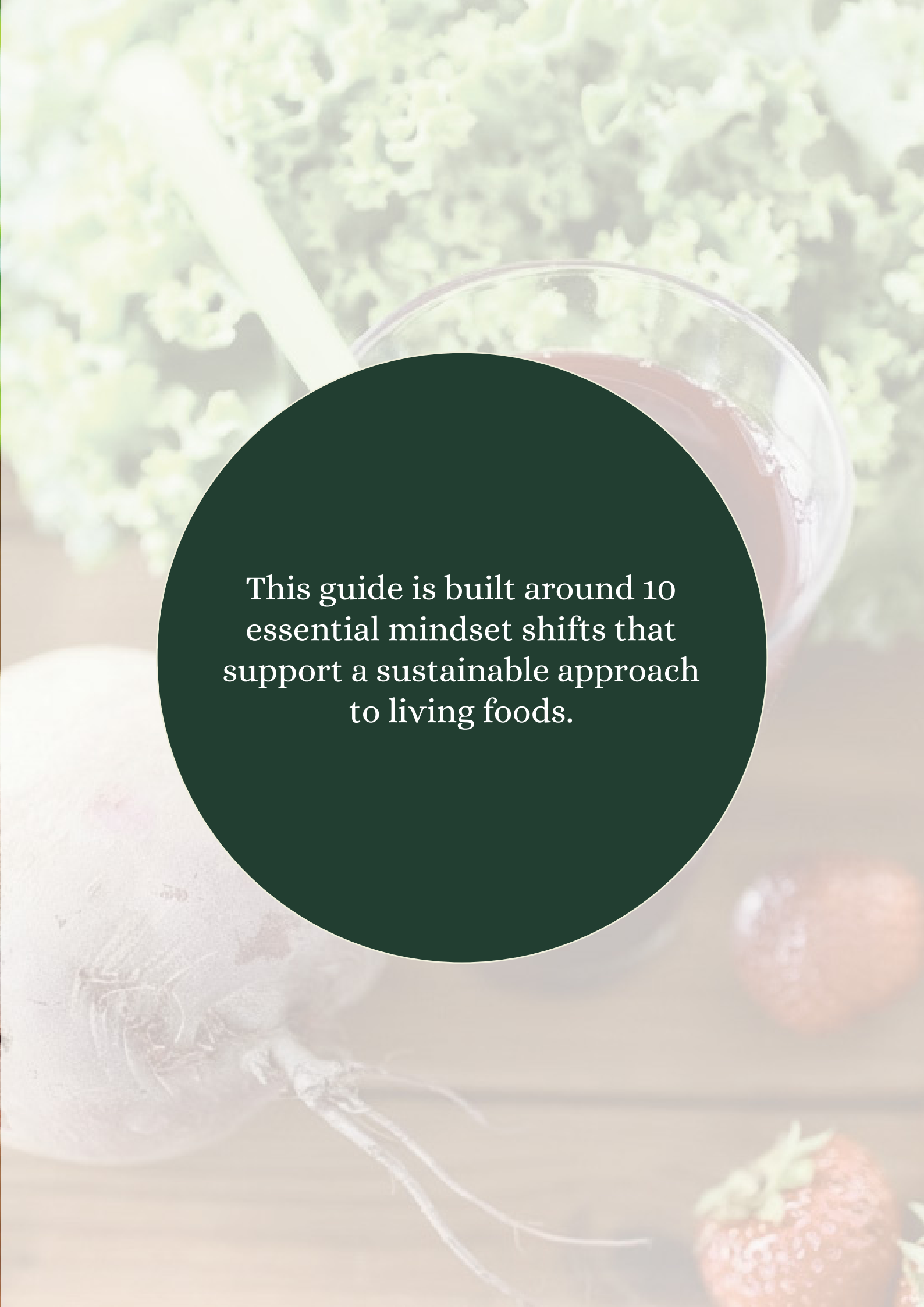
ESSENTIAL MINDSET SHIFTS  
FOR A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH



A simple, grounded starting point  
*before you change anything*



TRACEY OKONKWO

A glass of red juice, possibly beet or pomegranate, sits on a wooden surface. In the background, there are fresh green leafy vegetables and a whole red onion. The scene is softly lit, creating a warm and natural atmosphere.

This guide is built around 10  
essential mindset shifts that  
support a sustainable approach  
to living foods.

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## WHAT ARE RAW LIVING PLANT FOODS?

Raw living plant foods (“living foods”) are whole, plant-based foods that are eaten in their natural, uncooked state or prepared using low temperatures to preserve their vitality. These foods are considered “living” (or “live”) because they retain their naturally occurring enzymes and high concentration of nutrients, which are often diminished through cooking.

Living foods include fresh fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, sprouts, nuts, seeds, and fermented plant foods. They are naturally rich in water, fibre, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients, support better digestion, increase energy, and may help prevent, improve, or completely eradicate chronic health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes.

Many people incorporate living foods, particularly high amounts, into their diet to assist with cell level healing from chronic health conditions, foster body regeneration and cellular renewal, achieve healthy weight management, and enjoy significantly increased energy and vitality. Their motivation is often rooted in a desire for disease prevention and a holistic approach to overall wellness, seeking a deeper connection to their health and well-being.



Perhaps a doctor, nutritionist, or even your own research has encouraged you to increase the amount of living foods in your diet – or maybe you’ve been inspired by someone else’s transformation and want to explore it for yourself. If you’re wondering where to begin, that’s completely normal.

Starting something new can feel overwhelming at first, especially when it asks you to shift away from the cooked foods you’ve known for so long and reimagine how you eat and live with raw living plant foods. This guide is here to help you take those first steps with confidence, clarity, and ease, and it begins with your mind.

## ■ WHO THIS GUIDE IS FOR?

This guide is for anyone who wants to increase the proportion of living foods in their diet and understands that the mind plays a powerful role in making that shift sustainable. Whether you are just beginning to explore living foods, returning after a previous attempt, or looking to deepen an existing practice, this guide is here to help you prepare mentally and emotionally for the journey ahead.

No prior knowledge is needed – just an openness to exploring how your mindset can become your greatest ally in this journey. Because when the mind is ready, the body follows.

## ■ WHAT THIS GUIDE OFFERS?

This guide will help you prepare your mind for the shift toward eating a higher proportion of living plant foods, because lasting change begins with how you think, feel, and relate to food. It will walk you through 10 practical, compassionate strategies designed to help you navigate the mental and emotional aspects of this journey – from managing social situations and building sustainable habits, to finding flexibility, simplicity, and joy in the process.

Most importantly, it will help you move away from all-or-nothing thinking and toward a gentler, more sustainable approach that honours both your health goals and your humanity. Think of it as a kind and steady companion for the road ahead – one that meets you exactly where you are.



## THE ROLE OF YOUR MIND

Your mindset is perhaps the most powerful tool for gently increasing your intake of living foods. Whether you choose to transition gradually or quickly, more than any diet plan, your mindset will help shape your success.

## RECOGNISING THE BARRIERS

Psychological barriers can make it harder to fully embrace living foods. These barriers may include fear, uncertainty about sustaining change (especially socially), or a feeling of restriction rather than substitution. This matters because our beliefs often create self-fulfilling prophecies. A fixed mindset ('I can't do this') can lead to failure, while a growth mindset ('I'm learning') can open the door to resilience. Mental preparation is essential, and often even more important than physical preparation

## CURIOSITY OVER WILLPOWER

Excitement and curiosity about new tastes can be more supportive than relying on finite will power. The emotional side of dietary change is often overlooked; we all carry some natural resistance to change. Past diet failures can leave emotional baggage, leading to self-criticism. However choosing self compassion and remembering that setbacks are part of growth can be far more sustainable than harsh self-judgment.

## ■ PRACTICAL MENTAL STRATEGIES

To begin with, and to move forward with more ease, gentle mental strategies can help. Try visualisation, imagining yourself thriving on living foods and feeling vibrant and energetic. Begin an identity shift by affirming, “I am someone who nourishes my body with living foods.” And above all, be patient with yourself, recognising that habits take time to form. Building mental resilience helps this become a long-term, empowering lifestyle journey.



## ■ THE FOUNDATION OF LASTING CHANGE

Prioritising mental and emotional preparation can help avoid the disheartening cycle of starting and stopping. A strong, positive mind at the outset can transform the transition from feeling restrictive to something genuinely empowering, laying a solid foundation for lasting health and well-being.

Understanding that the mind has a significant role in your transition is just the beginning. The ten tips ahead are practical, compassionate tools to support your journey - not rigid rules to follow perfectly. Whether you're just starting out or hoping to deepen your commitment to living foods, these tips are here to meet you gently where you are. Let's explore them together.

# 01 | FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN EAT

One of the most common concerns when transitioning to a living foods diet is simply wondering whether there will be enough to enjoy. It can be easy to focus on what you are leaving behind before you have had the chance to fully explore the many foods you can still eat. You may also be aware that few people in your social circle are making the same change, which can make the journey feel a little unfamiliar.

At times, that uncertainty can leave you wondering how easy it will be to keep going, especially while also figuring out what meals will look like from day to day. The gentle shift is to turn that thought around and focus on the many nourishing foods that are available to you. When food choices feel unclear, it can be hard to feel settled and confident.

It is completely natural to feel as though the odds are already stacked against you, and that is a feeling that does not help when you consider how much you have heard about the wonderful things living foods can do for your wellbeing. You are eager to experience those benefits for yourself. But you do not need to have everything figured out at once. Taking it one step at a time, with a clear sense of what you can enjoy, can make the transition feel much more manageable.



## SCARCITY VS. ABUNDANCE MINDSET

Focusing on what you can eat is more than a small change in perspective; it is a gentle reframe that moves you from a scarcity mindset (“I can’t have X; I’m deprived”) to an abundance mindset (“Look at all these amazing, vibrant foods I CAN have!”). When we spend too much time thinking about limits, it can create feelings of frustration or loss. By contrast, centring our attention on what we can enjoy opens up many more possibilities and brings a sense of freedom, ease, and encouragement.

## THE INCREDIBLE VARIETY AWAITING YOU

There is so much abundance to discover in living foods: hundreds of varieties of fruits, vegetables, leafy greens, herbs, nuts, seeds, and sprouts are waiting for you. In many cases, this offers more variety than a standard diet, which often circles around the same 10-15 items. Exploring new flavours, textures, and combinations can feel exciting and inspiring.

When you celebrate these foods, you naturally build positive associations with healthy food and begin to crowd out the desire for foods that no longer serve you. It also helps you stay focused on adding nourishing foods rather than worrying about what to leave behind.

## CREATE YOUR YES LIST

One helpful way to make this shift feel real is to create a simple “yes list” of foods you are excited to include. This can be a place to gather your favourite fruits, vegetables, greens, nuts, seeds, and sprouts, along with any new ingredients you would like to try. Having a list like this gives you something positive to return to whenever you are planning meals or feeling unsure.



Your list might include things like sweet, juicy mangoes, crisp cucumber slices, creamy avocado, a handful of fresh berries, or a simple green salad drizzled with lemon and olive oil. Instead of asking, “What do I have to give up?”, try gently reframing it to: “What delicious, nourishing living foods can I have right now?” And when cravings come up, rather than saying, “I can’t have that,” you could soften it to, “I could have that, but I’m choosing this nourishing option because it makes me feel amazing,” or simply, “I’m choosing not to have that right now.”

This power of language can kindly shift your relationship with food, moving you from a feeling of obligation toward a sense of conscious choice. Having a clear list of go-to foods and simple meal ideas can also ease a lot of the mental load.



## PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 1

Your language shapes your relationship with food – gently swap ‘I can’t have that’ for ‘I’m choosing this because it makes me feel amazing’, and notice how that small shift can change everything.

## 02 | CHOOSE SIMPLICITY, NOT CULINARY PERFECTION

Choosing a lifestyle centred on living foods doesn't mean you need to become a gourmet raw food chef. At its heart, this approach is really about ease, nourishment, and letting things stay beautifully simple, rather than aiming for perfect or elaborate meals.

### WHY THIS MATTERS MENTALLY

It can feel reassuring to know that you do not need advanced culinary skills or complicated recipes to succeed here. When we assume we must do everything perfectly, it can quickly lead to overwhelm and make consistency feel harder than it needs to be. Letting go of that expectation can bring real relief, easing the stress and self-doubt that sometimes surround meal preparation.

### THE PRACTICAL REALITY: NATURE DOES THE WORK

One of the nicest parts of eating more living foods is realising how much nature already provides for you. Fresh whole plant foods come with their own bright colours, lovely textures, and rich flavours, along with the enzymes and nutrients your body can use. Your role is simply to enjoy them as they are. Think quick, easy, and satisfying rather than fancy or elaborate. Simple meal ideas might include a green smoothie, a hearty salad with greens and vegetables, or a plate of fresh fruit or veggie sticks with a homemade dip.

### SIMPLE DOESN'T MEAN BORING: NATURAL FLAVOURS SHINE

When you step away from heavy sauces and lots of cooking, the natural flavour of food can really come forward. You may start to notice the sweetness of berries, the crisp freshness of a cucumber, or the gentle earthiness of dark leafy greens. This can help you reconnect with your food in a more intuitive and appreciative way.

## THE MENTAL & EMOTIONAL PAYOFF

Keeping things simple can make a big difference in how food feels day to day. It can reduce decision fatigue, ease preparation stress, and lighten the mental load of planning meals. There is also something comforting about repeating simple meals you genuinely enjoy. In this way, you can care for yourself without the pressure to be perfect, and without getting caught in the cycle of trying complicated recipes, feeling overwhelmed, and giving up.

## YOUR STARTING POINT

You do not need to know a hundred recipes right away. Variety can grow naturally over time. A gentle place to begin is by enjoying familiar foods in their raw form, then slowly building from there. Start with simple options like fresh fruit, smoothies, and salads, and expand your choices as you feel ready. Helpful communities and online resources can offer inspiration and support along the way.



## **SIMPLICITY AS A STRATEGY**

Many nourishing and satisfying living food meals can come together in just a few minutes, often with far less effort than traditional cooked dishes. There is no need for long cooking times, complicated meat preparation, or removing animal fat. Your main tools may simply be a blender, a food processor, and perhaps a spiralizer, which often makes this style of eating very quick and convenient.

## **BUILDING SUSTAINABLE ROUTINES**

When simplicity becomes your ally, it becomes much easier to repeat meals you genuinely like and that help you feel good. You may find it helpful to notice which combinations leave you feeling steady, satisfied, and supported, and let those become part of your rhythm.

Just as importantly, it can help to listen to your body and honour your energy levels as they change. If a prep session feels like too much, it is completely okay to do less, focus on the simplest tasks, or ask for help when possible. This journey is meant to support your wellbeing, not add to your burden.

## **THE LIBERATION OF SIMPLICITY**

A sustainable routine is one that supports your healing gently and consistently, without leading to burnout or exhaustion. Releasing the idea that you have to be a “raw living foods chef” can be one of the most freeing shifts of all. It can gently free you from a mental barrier that keeps many people from bringing more living foods into their daily routine.

There is something deeply reassuring about knowing that healthy eating can feel welcoming and achievable rather than intimidating or overwhelming. As you begin to see that it does not have to be complicated, you may find your confidence growing along with a sense of calm.

## **PROTECTING YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING**

When eating well feels simple, you are more likely to keep it up, and over time that consistency can support better energy, improved digestion, and overall health. There is also a quiet

emotional comfort in knowing you are caring for yourself in a sustainable, low-stress way without needing everything to be perfect.

So it may help to remember this: most living foods meals are simply lovely combinations of fresh produce, not elaborate, multi-step recipes. That kind of simplicity can turn anxiety into confidence and help you feel more at ease knowing what you will eat and having nourishing foods ready when you need them.



Instead of short bursts of enthusiasm followed by burnout, this steadier approach supports habits that can last, making healthy eating a more natural part of your day. Real health comes from consistency and ease, not from culinary acrobatics.

### PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 2

When eating feels simple and enjoyable, it becomes something you naturally want to keep doing – let ease be your greatest ally, not a sign that you’re not trying hard enough.

## 03 | RESPECT CLIMATE: EMBRACING FLEXIBILITY FOR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

When transitioning to a diet rich in raw living plant foods, it helps to remember that the climate you live in matters. In cold, damp, or intensely chilly weather, choosing foods that are slightly cool or room temperature may not always feel right, and that is okay. Your body may simply be asking for a little more warmth and comfort.

### THE CHALLENGE OF RIGIDITY

Trying to stay strictly cold all the time can create tension and make eating living foods feel harder than it needs to be. When everything feels like a test, it is easy to slip into all-or-nothing thinking and lose momentum. A gentler path is to notice what supports you and allow your choices to adapt with the weather and your needs

### FLEXIBILITY AS SELF-COMPASSION

A flexible approach can help you stay connected to your goals without feeling pressured to be perfect. Be where you are today. This is where self-trust and intuitive eating can become valuable guides: listening to your body, noticing what feels nourishing, and choosing foods that help you feel steady and cared for. That kind of trust can make eating living foods feel more natural and sustainable.

### PRACTICAL ADJUSTMENTS

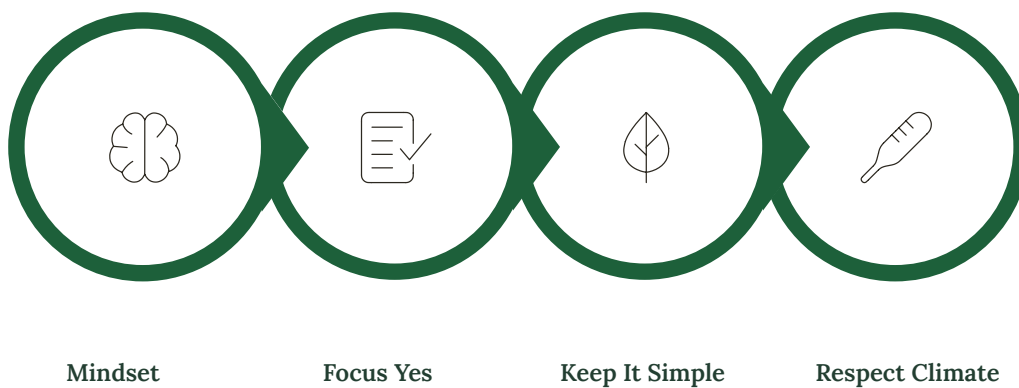
There are a few gentle ways to make living foods feel warmer and more comfortable while still keeping them raw, and these are as follows:

- Keep foods below 118°F to preserve their raw integrity.
- Let bowls of salad or fruit rest in a sunny spot for a short time to take the chill off.
- Use low-temperature dehydration to create crackers or breads with a pleasantly warm, crisp texture.
- Bring foods to room temperature before eating so meals feel more comforting and easier to enjoy.
- Add warming spices such as cayenne pepper for a gentle circulatory lift, cinnamon for

soft warmth, turmeric for earthy heat and anti-inflammatory support, and black pepper to deepen flavour and support digestion.

- Try a gently warmed soup made from blended raw vegetables, herbs, and spices, heated carefully to under 118°F.
- Blend room-temperature smoothies with warming ingredients like cinnamon or ginger for a more satisfying feel.

These simple choices can help you adapt raw eating to your needs in a calm, supportive way when in a cool climate.



## WHEN COOKED FOOD IS WHAT YOU NEED

On a cold day, if your body is asking for something hot, like a bowl of soup, it is perfectly okay to honour that need. There is no guilt in choosing warmth when warmth is what feels caring and right in the moment. One warm meal does not undo your commitment. It's what you do most days that counts. Raw living plant foods do preserve their nutrients in a way cooked foods cannot, yet that does not mean a healthy cooked soup has nothing to offer.

A nourishing bowl of minestrone can still give your body meaningful support, especially when it is made with care. If forcing a cool salad leaves you feeling tense, resentful, or uncomfortable, that matters too; your body responds not only to what you eat, but also to how you feel while you eat.

Eating with joy and gratitude, even when the meal is cooked, can be far more nourishing than eating raw food with frustration or resistance. This is a lifestyle, not a test, and kindness toward yourself is part of the practice.

## CREATIVELY STAYING MOSTLY RAW

A gentle approach can make this way of eating feel more supportive day to day, especially when the weather shifts. Rather than chasing perfection, focus on what helps you feel nourished, steady, and at ease.

Simple, nourishing meals and thoughtful combinations can keep the lifestyle feeling spacious and satisfying while you build new habits. With that kind of care, staying mostly raw living plant foods can feel more natural, sustainable, and easy to continue.

An example of mostly living foods on a cold day

### Breakfast

- A smoothie bowl with cinnamon and ginger, topped with fresh banana and a sprinkle of hemp seeds

Or

- A bowl of soaked oats with raw honey and a dusting of cinnamon – soft, grounding, and nourishing
- A cup of herbal tea

### Lunch

- Raw tomato and red pepper soup blended with herbs and olive oil, gently warmed to just under 118°F
- Served with flaxseed crackers or crisp raw veggie sticks

### Dinner

- A baked sweet potato – comforting, warming, and easy
- Served with a fresh green salad or raw coleslaw on the side for a living foods balance.



### PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 3

Flexibility isn't a compromise – it's a kindness you offer yourself, and on a cold day, a gently warmed bowl of nourishment is just as loving as a raw one.

## 04 | UNDERSTAND THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF DOING WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU

Adopting a lifestyle that is high in living foods, or “high live” (70–100% of your diet), can bring social challenges as well as practical ones. When you are dining out or attending gatherings, you may sometimes feel isolated, misunderstood, or self-conscious simply because your way of eating is so different from what most people know.

### COMMON EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

It is common to find yourself explaining your food choices to family and friends who are curious, concerned, or sceptical. Questions about protein, balance, or sustainability can feel tiring when you are already trying to stay steady in your own path. What you are doing may be healthy for you, even if it is unfamiliar to others.

### FOOD, CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Food also carries deep cultural meaning. It is often woven into tradition, heritage, family connection, and shared identity. So when you step away from familiar dishes for the sake of your health and wellbeing, it can feel tender and emotionally charged.

Loved ones may even take it personally at first, as though your choices are a rejection of them or of the love expressed through food. In truth, you are not turning away from your culture or your family; you are caring for your body in the way it needs right now.

### WHEN OTHERS FEEL CHALLENGED

Sometimes your commitment can quietly stir things in other people. Your steadiness may hold up a mirror to their own habits, and that reflection can bring up guilt, discomfort, or a sense of inadequacy for them. If that happens, you may find it helpful to remember that their reaction is about their own inner experience, not about anything you have done wrong. It is natural to feel a little different or out of place when the foods that once connected you to others are changing, especially when you are also trying to explain that this is required for your health.



## NAVIGATING SOCIAL SITUATIONS WITH GRACE

These moments can be uncomfortable, but they do not mean you are doing anything wrong. A gentle, compassionate mindset can make the journey feel lighter, and even a small amount of self-criticism or resentment can make it harder to stay at ease. When questions or pushback come up, you do not need to explain yourself at length; a brief, kind response is often enough.

You might say, “I understand this is new, and I appreciate your care, but this is what my body needs right now.” You could also reassure loved ones that your choices are not a judgment of theirs, or suggest a simple way to share food, such as a potluck where everyone brings something they enjoy. If it feels right, invite supportive family members to try new recipes or join you in health-focused activities so the conversation stays connected rather than tense. Through it all, keep meeting yourself with warmth. Your quiet consistency is a meaningful act of care, and it can be inspiring even when that is not spoken aloud.

### PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 4

You don't need anyone's understanding to honour what your body needs – a warm, brief response is enough, and your quiet steadiness will say more than any explanation ever could.

## 05 | RESPOND CAREFULLY TO CURIOSITY

As you enjoy the benefits of a high living foods diet, people may naturally become curious and ask what you're eating or how you're feeling, in your place of work for example. These questions can come from genuine interest, and you are under no pressure to explain yourself at length. A brief, gracious response is often enough, such as, "I'm focusing on nourishing my body with raw plant foods, and it's making a big difference."

### LEARNING TO READ THE ROOM CAN BE A GENTLE SKILL.

Notice people's body language and tone: do they seem open and sincerely interested, or a little guarded and uncertain? When the interest feels genuine, you might share a simple tip or a positive experience, like "I've been feeling so energized lately eating this way."



If a conversation feels less comfortable, you can gently keep your response simple and warm. Something like, "This way of eating works best for my well-being," is often enough. If you'd like to change the subject, you might say, "Thanks for asking, but I'd love to hear what you've been up to!" It is always okay to protect your energy and stay close to what feels supportive. When someone is truly open and curious, you can share more; and when a conversation does not feel like the right fit, you can kindly let it stay light.

### **PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 5**

Read the room gently, share what feels right, and remember - your choices belong to you, and they don't need anyone else's approval to be valid.

## 06 | UNDERSTAND HOW THE MIND SUPPORTS ENERGY CONSERVATION

When you are burned out, overweight or underweight, or healing from chronic illness, energy can feel like a gentle, limited resource that deserves to be honoured and protected. Even the energy used for everyday tasks, whether physical or mental, can influence how well our bodies are able to focus on important recovery work, such as cellular repair, immune system regulation, and nervous system regeneration.

When energy is low and nothing has been prepared ahead of time, even simple choices like what to eat can feel overwhelming. This can sometimes bring feelings of disappointment that weigh on your sense of progress.



Planning your meals in advance is not just a convenience; it can be a loving act of self-care that helps support both your mind and your energy. It means having nourishing, healing foods ready when you need them, so you are less likely to find yourself reaching for cooked foods simply because no living foods were prepared ahead of time. This kind of foresight can feel reassuring and steady.



In tip number 7 we will look at how you can begin to plan your living food meals.

### **PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 6**

A little preparation is one of the most loving things you can do for yourself - when nourishing food is already waiting, the easiest choice becomes the healthiest one.

## 07 | EMBRACE SIMPLE BATCH PREPARATION AND STORAGE

To support your energy and lighten your mental load, it can be helpful to set aside a quiet block of time when you feel at your best perhaps once or twice a week, such as a Sunday afternoon or Wednesday evening, for thoughtful batch preparation.

This is about more than saving time; it can also be a caring way to look after your mind and create a gentler week ahead. Rather than planning rigid meals, try focusing on versatile ingredients that can be used in different ways over several days, giving you both flexibility and ease.

Examples of batch preparation include washing an array of vegetables such as leafy greens (spinach, kale, romaine), bell peppers (various colours), cucumbers, celery, and herbs (rosemary, parsley), and storing them in clearly labelled, airtight draining containers ready to be used. It can help to peel carrots but not chopping them, leaving them whole.

Living food practitioners often choose to store vegetables whole and intact, as cutting them can expose their inner tissues to air, light, and bacteria, which may speed up nutrient loss and reduce their overall freshness and vitality.

You can prepare a large batch of a creamy, raw living food soup (like a zucchini-avocado bisque) or a nutrient-dense nut milk (almond, cashew, hemp), which can be enjoyed as a quick energy drink or serve as a base for smoothies or light meals. Soak and sprout larger quantities of legumes (lentils, chickpeas) or seeds (sunflower, pumpkin) to add fresh, live protein and enzymes to your meals.

Most raw living plant food items, including raw soups, nut milks, and hummus, will usually keep well for 2-4 days in the refrigerator. Sprouted seeds and grains are best enjoyed within 2-3 days for optimal vitality.

### MENTAL BENEFITS OF PREPARATION

Batch preparation can feel calming and supportive, because you are making life a little easier for your future self. Opening the fridge to see organised, ready-to-use food can bring a sense of order and comfort, instead of feeling faced with emptiness or last-minute decisions. This

kind of preparation can gently reduce worries about what to eat when you are tired, and it may help you avoid the stress and discouragement that can come from feeling unprepared. Over time, it can also build confidence and make it feel more natural to stay aligned with your healthy habits.



## STORAGE STRATEGIES

Choosing good storage containers can help keep raw foods fresh, vibrant, and pleasant to eat. Glass containers with airtight seals are a lovely option, as they help preserve food well and avoid the concerns that can come with plastic. If you do use plastic, BPA-free options are gentler alternatives. Those that contain drainage racks are a great option, otherwise a clean

paper towel inside a container can help absorb extra moisture and keep vegetables from wilting too quickly. When it comes to storing different fruits and vegetables, the following can help:

- Delicate leafy greens such as spinach and mixed greens are often best stored separately, with a lightly damp paper towel to help them stay fresh.
- For berries and other fragile fruits, it is usually best to wash them just before eating, or rinse and dry them well before storing them in breathable containers.
- Avocados can be kept whole at room temperature until ripe, then moved to the fridge; cut avocados can be brushed with lemon juice and stored in an airtight container for a day.

Labelling containers with the preparation date can also make it easier to keep track of freshness, removing the small but real mental guesswork of wondering how long something has been in the fridge.

When you open the fridge and see clearly organised, labelled containers of ready-to-use food, it sends a gentle signal to your brain that you are prepared and cared for. This visual order can make the choice to nourish yourself with living foods feel like the easiest and most natural choice, rather than something that requires effort or willpower. It can also create a quiet sense of pride and accomplishment - a reminder that you have already done the work to look after yourself.

### PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 7

An organised fridge filled with ready-to-use ingredients is a quiet gift to your future self - one that makes choosing nourishment feel effortless rather than effortful.

## 08 | PERCENTAGES: CONSISTENCY OVER PERFECTION

Many people who eat a high percentage of living foods attach a percentage to the amount they eat, and while that's great for goal-setting, this journey isn't necessarily about striving to eat 100% raw living foods, especially if that feels overwhelming or unsustainable.

We are all so different and we live in different climates. Instead, the focus here is on a wholehearted commitment to your health, along with plenty of compassion for yourself and a gentle intention to create peace, joy, and sustainability.



### PROGRESS OVER PERFECTION

Healing is often a non-linear process. It doesn't unfold in a straight or predictable way, and it usually includes both forward movement and the occasional setback. If there are days when things don't go as planned, or you move away from your ideal goal, whatever that may be, please don't judge yourself harshly. These moments are not failures, but kind opportunities to learn what supports you best. Gently ease yourself back in, knowing that each choice is a fresh chance to nourish your body and mind, and a valuable learning opportunity.

### HOW PERCENTAGES WORK

Think about what "most days" truly looks like for you - perhaps it's choosing raw living plant foods for 70-80% of your meals, or beginning each day with a vibrant green smoothie. And on colder days or more challenging ones, a warm cooked meal here and there is simply part of a flexible, sustainable approach - not something to count against yourself. These small, steady choices can add up beautifully over time and create meaningful change in your well-being. Lasting change often grows from many gentle, persistent efforts, and self-compassion belongs right alongside them.

Your body is designed to regenerate and heal itself, and your steady, loving attention can be one of the most supportive gifts you give it.



## BUILDING SUSTAINABLE HABITS

Sustainable habits are usually simple enough to fit into your real life, not just your ideal one. They often grow quietly over time, so gently that you may not notice the shift until one day reaching for a piece of fruit or blending a smoothie feels completely natural. It can help to anchor new habits to things you already do, like preparing your morning smoothie while the kettle boils or washing your greens as soon as you get home from shopping. The best habits feel supportive rather than strict, becoming part of your rhythm with ease. And if some days feel lighter than others, that is completely normal—the goal is not perfection, but a gentle direction of nourishment and care.



### PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 8

It's not the perfect days that shape your health - it's the gentle, consistent ones, and every small, loving choice you make is quietly adding up.

## 09 | COMBINE DIET WITH A GENTLE EXERCISE REGIME

Pairing a raw living plant foods diet with gentle movement can be a nurturing way to support your whole self. Movement is about more than physical fitness; it is a kind way of caring for your body and mind together. Gentle exercise can help encourage healthy blood flow, bringing vital nutrients and oxygen to your cells, while also supporting the lymphatic system and your body's natural cleansing processes. Many people have found exercise to be a meaningful part of their healing journey. This gentle activity can also help enliven digestion and support circulation throughout the body, which can be especially helpful if you are feeling bloated or sluggish.

### THE MIND-EXERCISE CONNECTION



This kind of self-care can help you feel more empowered and supported as you move through your dietary transition. When eating patterns begin to shift, emotions can sometimes come up for gentle attention, and movement offers a steady, constructive outlet. Movement can also provide a comforting rhythm that supports you in staying connected to your intentions as your body and mind adjust to new nourishment. With time, this can become an important part of what helps your new habits feel natural and sustainable. For those recovering from burnout, chronic illness, or simply feeling overwhelmed, the key is to choose gentle movement that restores rather than drains. There is no need to push yourself to exhaustion.

## TYPES OF GENTLE EXERCISE

Consider restorative practices such as:

- **Mindful walking:** A 20-minute gentle walk, especially in nature, can help ease stress, clear your mind, and gently engage your muscles. It is an accessible way to begin and can feel especially supportive if you are feeling bloated, heavy, or worn out.
- **Gentle stretching:** Focus on poses that encourage flexibility, relaxation, and deep breathing. These practices can help release tension, improve posture, and soothe the nervous system.
- **Swimming or water aerobics:** The buoyancy of water reduces impact on the joints, making this a lovely option for gentle, full body movement without strain.

These forms of movement can help you feel more in tune with your body, while also supporting your energy as you continue to nourish yourself with living foods.

## STARTING YOUR PRACTICE

As your body adapts, your strength and vitality may grow naturally over time. Listen to your body's wisdom, and let each day guide you toward what feels most supportive. Some days a longer walk may feel right, while on others a few gentle stretches may be enough. Move with patience, kindness, and care, allowing this practice to fit softly into your life.

### PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 9

Movement doesn't need to be intense to be meaningful - even a gentle walk or a few quiet stretches can beautifully support the nourishment you're already giving your body.

# 10 | INVEST IN GOOD QUALITY KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

Having good quality kitchen equipment isn't just about convenience; it can be a gentle investment in your physical and mental well-being. It is a cornerstone for making your living foods journey enjoyable and sustainable, especially when you are navigating burnout or healing from an illness. Again, protecting your energy is so important, and the right tools can meaningfully reduce preparation time and physical effort, helping you nourish yourself with greater ease. Good tools can also simplify meal prep and keep things feeling more manageable, even on harder days, while helping you feel more at ease and confident in the kitchen.

## ESSENTIAL TOOLS

Here are some key pieces of equipment and the ways they can support you, with guidance on building your collection thoughtfully:

- **High-speed blender:** This is often considered the most essential tool. It transforms fruits, leafy greens, and nuts into incredibly smooth, creamy smoothies, vibrant raw soups, silky sauces, and homemade nut milks. Its power means less work for you, and a consistently delicious result that's easy to digest.
- **Food processor:** Perfect for chopping vegetables for salads, creating "rice" from cauliflower or broccoli, shredding, and making rich raw dips, pâtés, and nut butter. It's a versatile workhorse that saves your hands and your time.
- **Quality knives & cutting board:** A few sharp, well-maintained knives and a sturdy cutting board are fundamental. They ensure efficient, safe, and enjoyable preparation, turning chopping into a meditative task rather than a chore.
- **Spiralizer:** For a fun and creative twist, a spiralizer can turn vegetables like zucchini, carrots, or sweet potatoes into beautiful, satisfying "noodles" a lovely alternative to traditional pasta that's both delicious and nutrient-dense.
- **Airtight storage containers (preferably glass):** Essential for efficient meal prep and maintaining freshness. High-quality containers keep your salads, prepared sauces, and general leftovers vibrant and nutrient-rich for longer, simplifying your daily routine.
- **Dehydrator (for later consideration):** While not an immediate necessity, a dehydrator can be a wonderful addition for making raw crackers, delicious dried fruits, veggie chips,

or warming raw breads. This is often an “investment for when you’re deeply committed” and wish to explore more advanced living food preparations.



You don’t need to acquire everything at once. Start with the essentials that fit your budget and current needs, like a good blender, a quality knife, and some quality mixing bowls. As you explore new recipes and build your kitchen over time, each thoughtful addition can make preparing nourishing meals feel a little easier, a little smoother, and a little more joyful. These tools aren’t just gadgets; they can feel like quiet allies in supporting a lifestyle of vibrant health and sustained well-being.

### PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY FOR TIP 10

You don’t need a fully equipped kitchen to begin – start with one good blender and a sharp knife, and let your tools grow alongside your journey.

## MY STORY: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

Many people already enjoy basic raw living plant foods every day – an apple here, a banana there, a salad for lunch. They may simply not recognise them as raw living plant foods. The gentle shift comes in choosing to make them a large part or the entirety of your diet due to their wonderful health benefits.

### THE TURNING POINT

For me, that choice became deeply personal when I suffered from acute abdominal pain. I had tried different medicines in search of relief, visited different doctors, and along the way made healthy lifestyle changes. I incorporated regular exercise, found a nutritionist, switched to brown rice instead of white, for example, and chose other options like gluten-free pasta. These shifts were positive, but they still didn't take me to the deeper place my body truly needed to reach. What I needed was a more profound level of nourishment – one that could help heal, regenerate, and restore from within. It was the living foods that provided that support; they felt like nutritional love given to the body, and once introduced I began to incorporate them immediately.

### DOING LESS TO FOOD

Essentially, at the heart of my choice to embrace living foods was something beautifully simple: eating more raw fruits and vegetables. No lengthy cooking times, no complicated preparation – just food in its most natural, nourishing state. Alongside that, I at times sought out and connected with others who embraced a similar lifestyle, and that sense of community made a quiet but meaningful difference.

There is something deeply encouraging about being around people who understand your choices, share their experiences openly, and remind you that this path – however unconventional it may seem to others – is one that many have walked before you, and found their way through. I came to realise that preparing living foods is often much simpler than it first appears. There is no boiling, roasting, or precise timing to worry about – just a gentle working with food in its most natural state.

That means less effort and less interference, and yet somehow the nourishment is greater. There is something quietly beautiful about that: the less you do to the food, the more it is able to give back to you. And once you begin to embrace that simplicity, meal preparation can feel less like a task and more like a calm, nourishing ritual. I found that in letting go of complexity,

I gained so much more - in energy, clarity, and overall wellbeing, and in the simple joy of feeding myself well

## PERCENTAGE ANXIETY

As I got to know those who were deeply committed to living foods, I noticed what I call “percentage anxiety” among many living food enthusiasts, often asking, “Are you 100%?”, or stating, “I’m 100%”. While there’s no doubt that a high proportion of raw living plant foods - anywhere from 70 to 100% - can do truly remarkable things for the body in terms of healing, regeneration, and restoration in ways that can feel extraordinary, I found myself quietly aware of an unspoken expectation that could, for some, make the journey feel heavier than it needed to.

In cases where someone is navigating chronic or serious illness, a living foods practitioner would typically recommend quickly transitioning to a 100% living foods diet - and that makes sense, given the profound nourishing power these foods carry. The body has an incredible capacity to respond to this level of nourishment, and many people have experienced life-changing shifts simply by transitioning to such a high proportion of living foods.

However for many people, increasing their consumption of living foods at their own pace is what they’re looking for. The pressure of feeling like you cannot sustain such a high percentage of living foods can weigh heavily, especially at the beginning of your journey, and that sense of falling short can end up working against the wellbeing you are hoping to nurture.

This journey is meant to feel supportive and life-giving, not like a standard you are constantly failing to meet. The most lasting benefits often come from finding your own sustainable percentage - one that feels nourishing, joyful, and very quickly helps to get your health to the place you want it to be.

## PATIENCE & LEARNING

I undertook courses and found myself stepping into a whole new world of recipes and food preparation techniques, which felt like a learning curve, but an exciting one too. Little by little, I adjusted my expectations and realised that I didn’t need to get it right every single day; progress mattered far more than perfection. When a living foods tutor once told me, “Always remember, it’s what you do most days that counts,” it felt incredibly liberating, because it lifted the pressure of trying to be perfect all the time. I also had to learn to be patient and kind with myself, and I came to see that self-compassion is not a weakness at all, but an essential part of the journey. In time, that patience became its own kind of nourishment.

## FOOD, CULTURE & TRADITION

I also learned how deeply food is tied to love, care, and identity. When someone prepares a meal for you, they are often offering a piece of themselves, and declining that food – even with the best intentions – can sometimes feel like a rejection. Family and friends can take offence when you don't eat what they've prepared for you, and that brought some tension for me. But it was also an opportunity to grow in understanding and grace.

I had to learn to navigate those moments with sensitivity and care, especially with family and close friends, where the tension could feel more personal. Over time, I found that approaching these situations with warmth, gratitude, and openness – rather than explanation or defence – made all the difference. It became a lesson not just in food, but in relationships, empathy, and the quiet strength it takes to stay true to yourself while remaining loving toward others.



## WHEN MY DISCIPLINE SHOWED

When your choices start to visibly improve your health, energy, and appearance, they can hold up a mirror to other people – not because you have said or done anything, but simply because your results speak for themselves. I found that some people may respond with curiosity and admiration, while others may feel a quiet sense of discomfort or even resentment, and both

responses are completely understandable. That discomfort is rarely about you; it is often tied to their own inner conversation about discipline, health, and what they feel they are or are not capable of. People are disciplined about different things, and that's something I've come to appreciate. I found I had to try not to take their discomfort personally, and keep showing up with warmth and without judgement – our journey is ours, and theirs is theirs. Over time, the very people who seemed resistant may quietly become inspired by what they see in us.

## BEING READY FOR QUESTIONS

I found that people were consistently curious about what I was eating. The ingredients themselves weren't unusual – lots of people eat chickpeas, for example. What made my food different was what I chose to do with chickpeas. Most people cook them, while many times I chose to sprout them. Again, many people eat spinach leaves; I just chose to juice them and add them to smoothies.

So when you're choosing to eat fruit, vegetables, nuts and seeds in a different way and substitute a lot of traditional recipes with them, this can definitely draw attention. The best way I learned to handle it was simply to respond with warmth and openness. A brief, genuine answer – shared without defensiveness or over explanation – was usually enough to satisfy curiosity and keep the conversation light. And sometimes, it even sparked a beautiful conversation.

What I know now, more than anything, is that this journey is not about getting it right – it is about showing up for yourself, again and again, with a little more kindness each time. Living plant foods have given me back something I didn't know I had lost: a quiet trust in my body, and a deep sense of gratitude for the simple, extraordinary things it can do when we nourish it well.

There have been days when everything I've eaten is raw and living, and others when it hasn't been – but I always strive to eat a diet high in raw living foods wherever I can, allowing my body to direct me, and I have witnessed a profound improvement in my health and well being. I hope this guide prepares you to find a little of that same trust as you find your own way.

## SUMMARY

Before you go, here is a gentle reminder of the ten practical takeaways from this guide – one for each tip. Think of this as a quiet reference to return to whenever you need a little encouragement or a nudge in the right direction. You have already done the reading; now let these simple reminders support you as you begin to move forward.

### **1. Focus on what you can eat**

Create your own YES list of living foods you enjoy or want to try, and return to it whenever you feel unsure. Gently reframe cravings with the reminder that you are choosing foods that help you feel amazing.

### **2. Choose simplicity, not culinary perfection**

Start with what you already love in its natural form, such as fresh fruit, a green smoothie, or a colourful salad. Let simplicity support you, and trust that variety will grow naturally over time.

### **3. Respect climate**

On colder days, make your living foods more comfortable by bringing them to room temperature, adding warming spices, or enjoying a raw soup warmed gently under 118°F. If your body truly needs something cooked, honour that with kindness – what you do most days matters most.

### **4. Understand the social aspect**

A brief, warm response is usually enough when others question your choices. Stay grounded in your reasons, treat yourself kindly, and trust that your quiet consistency speaks for itself.

### **5. Respond carefully to curiosity**

You do not owe anyone a long explanation. A simple, warm reply is enough, and it is always okay to keep things light and gently move the conversation on.

### **6. Understand the role of the mind in energy conservation**

Plan ahead as an act of self-care so nourishing foods are ready when your energy is low. Be gentle with yourself on harder days, and make the healthy choice the easy one when you can.

### **7. Embrace efficient batch preparation and storage**

Set aside time once or twice a week to prepare versatile ingredients like washed greens, soaked seeds, or blended soups and nut milks. Label containers and let an organised fridge remind you that you have already cared for yourself.

### **8. Consistency over perfection**

Aim for what feels sustainable and kind, such as 70–80% living foods most days. When a day does not go as planned, ease back in gently and trust the steady effort over time.

### **9. Combine diet with a gentle exercise regime**

Begin with movement that feels manageable, like a 20-minute walk, a few stretches, or a swim. Let exercise feel enjoyable, and notice how it supports the nourishment you are giving your body.

### **10. Invest in good quality kitchen equipment**

Start with essentials like a good blender, a quality knife, and airtight glass containers. Add to your kitchen gradually and thoughtfully, seeing each piece as a gentle investment in your wellbeing.

## A GENTLE STARTING POINT

Many people find it helpful to begin by simply adding more living foods into their day — perhaps a piece of fresh fruit, a simple salad, or something that feels easy and enjoyable. Keeping things simple at the start can make the process feel more manageable and sustainable. There is no perfect way to begin — only a way that works for your life.

## NURTURING A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

As you begin, it's helpful to approach this journey with patience and flexibility. Progress comes from noticing and building on what works for you. Small shifts — whether in how you feel, what you enjoy, or how you approach your choices — are all part of meaningful change.

Listening to your body can guide you more effectively than any rigid set of rules. Some days may feel easier than others, and that's a natural part of the process. Remember, this is not about getting everything right, but about finding a way of eating that feels supportive, balanced, and sustainable in your life. Your journey is your own — and it can unfold at a pace that feels right for you.

## A FINAL WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Remember, most people are already eating some living foods every single day — a piece of fruit, a handful of salad leaves, a slice of tomato — often without even realising it. What you are preparing to do is simply eat more of them, and use simple ways to enhance their usefulness to the body: less cooking, less processing, less interference, so they can offer their fullest nourishment. That is not a radical or impossible thing. It is a gentle, loving shift in the direction of greater health. You do not need to be perfect, you do not need to have it all figured out. You are already on your way by reading this guide. Every living food you choose is a quiet act of nutritional love toward yourself — and that, more than anything, is what this journey is about. Be patient, be kind, and trust the process. Your body can then respond.

When you feel ready, you may find it helpful to take a simple next step.

## NEXT STEPS

You can take your time with this guide, and explore the next step when it feels right.

You don't need to do everything at once.

What matters most is taking a simple step forward — in a way that feels manageable, realistic, and sustainable for you.

You might begin by incorporating one or two living foods into your day, or by repeating a few simple meals that you enjoy — in a way that works for your life.

If you would find it helpful to have a little more structure as you begin, the **Living Foods Kickstarter** will be available soon as a practical companion to this guide. It offers a simple way to start applying these ideas day to day, with flexible meal suggestions and an approach that supports consistency.

You can move at your own pace, adapt as needed, and build a way of eating that feels both supportive and sustainable.

Remember, ultimately you're simply choosing to add more raw living foods to your diet, whether you choose to make them some, the majority or the entirety of your diet.

Whatever you choose, you've got this.

To your health!

—Tracey

## STAY CONNECTED

If you have any questions or would like to stay in touch, you can reach me here:

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