



Environmental Clean-Up

by Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo

This document is derived from the transcript of a talk I did on environmental toxins and how to clean up your environment. It's a great place to start to give you the understanding you need to make permanent changes to minimize your toxic exposures.

Throughout this talk, I plan to focus on educating and informing you about ways of reducing risks and suggest things you can do to minimize toxicity, without taking on a way of communicating that says, "Your environment is dangerous." It's more effective to suggest ways that you can reduce risk without paralyzing you with fear of your environment.

I'm of the mindset that you need to minimize your toxic exposure to both the internal toxins that your body creates and the external toxins that surround you. Still, it's important to realize from the start that **there may be things that you cannot control or may not be willing to control** because of the inconvenience that it may place on your lifestyle.

I like people to make informed decisions. It's kind of like the old serenity prayer: "Grant me the courage to change the things I can change, accept the things I cannot change, and the wisdom to know the difference."

My goal here is give you access to some things that you can change, and I want to impart you with the wisdom to know the difference between what you can change and what you can't change.

A lot of times people will say something like, "Oh, I can't change that because I have to go to this business lunch every week and I have to eat the hamburger because my boss is expecting me to eat the hamburger, and I may get fired if I don't eat the hamburger." Well, **that's something you can change**. That's within your realm of change; it's just a matter of finding the way to communicate from a loving place and explain to people that you're no longer doing things. That's within your realm of change.



If you live in the city (and of course, you'd prefer to live on the mountaintop), and your city puts fluoride in the water, in general, you can make choices not to drink that water, but there are going to be times when you have to drink that water. You may be at a restaurant, feeling thirsty, and you haven't prepared by bringing water with you.

In that situation, the choice between dehydration - not supplying something your body absolutely needs in that moment - and having a little bit of fluoride, chlorine, or whatever else is in the water on that small occasion is an easy one. It's not going to kill you to drink the water. It's important that you realize this in order to consistently make choices that are best for you.

I am going to empower you to avoid exposure to the toxins in the environment as much as you can to protect yourself from the things you can't change, and also have the wisdom to make judicious choices in the moment. Getting freaked out because you may on occasion need to drink tap water, then trying to drink as little as possible, and totally getting into a worked up emotional state is probably creating more toxicity in the system than drinking the darn water.

Life is a matter of perspective and choosing your perspective in every moment makes the difference between a happy experience and a fearful one.

Perhaps you're at the park on a beautiful sunny picking wild greens and playing with your children, and you choose to see the world as a beautiful experience. Every cell of your body is just resonating with the idea that, "Life is a beautiful thing."

On that same day, there might be someone else on the other end of the park reading in a newspaper about accidents, deaths, cancer rates, diabetes, crime. From their perspective "Life is scary".

What you choose to focus your attention on determines how you experience the day. The day didn't change. It's still a beautiful sunny day, and there **are** crimes, deaths and sickness happening all around. **Where you choose to put your attention** determines your feelings, and thus your state of health!



Know that, **for the most part, the enemy is actually within**. It's **how you choose to look at the world that shapes your experience**. I can look at the world as a safe place, because really, it's mostly a safe place. Things that are unsafe are there, they are very real, the same way as murderers and robbers walking down the street and child abusers are real. However, if I focus my attention on those people and give my energy to fear of that, which is what the media tries to elicit in us – constant living in fear – I'll experience less well-being.

If you're going about creating health, embarking on a health enhancing program like this and you infuse it with fear, you're taking away much of the benefit. So, do what you can in making choices about where you put yourself in your environment, what you expose yourself to, and the kinds of things you put in your body, and then bless the rest. **If you can't control it, just bless it.** Assume you're going to extract the good in it, because everything has good in it.

You can focus our attention on what's bad in something, or you can focus your attention on what's good in something. I'm a big believer in educating yourself about what's bad in something so that you can avoid it, but I don't believe in focusing on it.

It's a good idea to look at what foods, herbs, supplements, and nutrients can protect you and it's also important to **start where you have the absolute most control**, which is inside, in your thoughts.

Every nanosecond you create a new thought, whether you're conscious of it or not. Reprogramming those thoughts is an important part of detoxification.

Wouldn't it be lovely to be able to **combine a carefree, "Life's a blast!" attitude with putting wonderful stuff inside of you and on you?** And in the times when you can't, just enjoy life in spite of the fact that you can't do what you think is ideal.

It's like a recipe: Take 2 doses of joy and bliss, and 1 dose of abandon, and 1 dose of self-assurance, and combine that with fantastic water and wonderful food and clean products and an environment free of EMFs. That's a prescription for health.

Start with the things you can control. One of those is the way you view the world. Look at the glass half full, not half empty. Constantly, **in every situation, look for what's good. Don't look for what's missing.**



Look for what's good in the person that's standing there yelling at you at the supermarket because you cut in line, even if you didn't even realize you had cut in line.

Say to yourself, "Wow! He's in a really big hurry. Maybe he has a sick kid at home. Maybe his wife's dying of cancer and he just ran out to buy some groceries for the family." Then say, "Wow! Sir, it seems like you're in a hurry. Would you like to get in front of me? Go for it." Do that, instead of thinking, "Oh, what a pain in the butt. Why is he making my life miserable?"

If your life is miserable, you're making it miserable. I don't mean to say that disrespectfully.

Yes, everyone has their life situation, and some situations are genuinely really hard. However, I know people who, no matter how good things seem externally, they are always finding fault with their situation. There are other people who have practically nothing and are saying things like, "Wow. I'm going to give half of what I have to somebody who's less fortunate than I."

Let's be the kind of people who look for the good in every situation. It may take training, but that's going to be your best, best protection against the multitude of environmental toxins in our world.

Let's go through some of the environmental toxins now. I've divided them up into categories, including what's in your **air, water, and home environment; what you put on your body** (where you have the most choice and control); and then the **EMFs in the environment** (the electromagnetic waves).

I want to go through how you can minimize your exposure, and when you can't minimize your exposure, how you can protect yourself. As I get into this, I may be talking about foods, herbs, and products that you can use to help detoxify your system, but remember that the basis and the heart of creating an experience of well-being comes from feeling safe, feeling good, and finding the good in each situation.

For every single person putting something bad out into the world, there's got to be one morsel of good that they were trying to accomplish. They probably aren't consciously thinking, "Hey, I want to make the world an unsafe place. I want to take all the money away from everybody and keep it for myself, and I don't care what happens."



There are people like that; but they are sociopaths. That's not the norm. People do the best they can, most of the time. So, if you give people that kind of perspective of kindness and understanding, you're going to reap it back.

OK. I'll get off the soap box now and into some specifics. There are lists of toxins on the member page. This information is not meant to scare you, but there are toxins all around you. You cannot avoid them 100% unless you pick yourself up and go live on the top of a mountain and don't have any of the modern conveniences.

If you live in a house, you're surrounded by toxins, like the particle board, the paint, the formaldehyde in the carpet, the out gassing of the various fabrics, and things like that. If you have a shower curtain in your bathroom, for example, there are all kinds of preservatives in there. I can name them all if you want me to, but a couple of the most important ones are formaldehyde and the dioxins in some of the plastics.

I don't know about you, but I've had this experience: I need to get a new shower curtain, I bring it home, take it out of the package, and I'm overwhelmed by this smell. I think, "What the heck is that?" This hasn't just happened to me once. If I buy a new shower curtain, I know that's going to happen, unless I go to try and find one that's organic or pure.

So, now, I just throw it outside or lay it over a picnic table or something and just leave it out for a few days when I first buy it. I let it out gas outside before bringing it into the house. That's one way you can protect yourself from some of these toxins: **When you buy new products that contain toxic ingredients, don't bring them in the house right away. Let them air out first outside.**

So, **plastics are a type of toxin in the environment.** There was this whole to-do about getting away from plastic disposable drinking water bottles and using these Nalgene bottles or whatever these other bottles were made of. We heard, "These Nalgene bottles are safe. They don't leak any of the toxins from the plastic into the water." Then we found out that one after another of the bottles we thought were safe really weren't.

Now, we seem to be into more of these stainless steel containers. We'll find something wrong with the stainless steel as well, I'm sure. So, then we can go back to glass. Well, glass is great. You can carry around glass bottles, and I've started to do that a little bit more.



You can sometimes find bottled water in a glass container. I'll get that if I can, then refill it from my own filtered water source.

However, you have to be careful with glass. Going on a hike with a glass bottle is probably not a great idea. It adds a lot of extra weight. It's easy for you to trip and fall, and then you have this glass mess to deal with. Which is worse: Having water in a plastic container for a few hours and keeping your body intact, or having a bloody body and a bunch of glass you have to carry out of the wilderness?

You have to make choices, and **every moment you have to make a choice between a toxic thing and a less toxic thing**. Nothing's completely toxin-free; everything has toxins in it. So, **you just make the best choice you can**. In this case, if I'm driving in the car and I'm taking a water bottle, I'll just use the glass or stainless steel. If I'm going on a hike, I may opt to use the plastic.

If I'm out at a class and I have to buy water because I need to drink, I ask myself which is worse: Drinking the chlorinated water from the tap or buying the water in a plastic bottle? Quite frankly, I don't really know for sure. Based on what I know now, it's better to buy the pure water in a plastic bottle than to drink tap water. I may change my mind in six months if evidence presents itself that disputes that.

So, we're constantly surrounded by plastics. What is the danger in that? Well, **there are some chemicals in these plastics that are actually estrogen mimics**. They are called "xenoestrogens," and they can really be disruptive to the hormone system. They're especially not good for young children, because **they can disrupt the natural onset of puberty** and cause puberty-like symptoms to occur early. They can also **retard growth**. They can **contribute to cancer forming in the body**.

It's a good idea, as much as possible, to **avoid the kinds of plastics that contain dioxins**. Dioxins represent a family of 75 different kinds of chemicals that are in certain plastic products. **The leakage of dioxins into the food or drink in the plastic container is especially bad when the plastics heated**. So, if you're going to leave some water in your car, don't store it in plastic. It's almost to the point where, no matter what kind of plastic you're using, it's probably not a great idea to keep it in the car when it's 90 degrees outside. So, **if you're going to keep water in the car in the heat, keep it in glass or something that's inert**. That's one way to protect yourself.



Other potential environmental toxins we can control include cleaning fluids and fabric softeners, and all the different things that you may use to keep your body, your clothing, and your house clean. **One of the keys to figuring out if a product is too toxic is to check how it smells.** If you go to the grocery store and you buy some commercial counter cleaner or laundry soap and you open it up, you will be hit with a very strong smell. My nose is very sensitive, and my eyes will start to water, and if that happens, I know that's not a good cleaning solution for me to be using.

So, **what do you use to clean instead?** There are lots of different options for cleaning. There's a really good **book by Debra Lynn Dadd, *Home Safe Home***, with recipes for making cleaning solutions. You can even use Borax in your laundry instead of soap. Or, you can use a Seventh Generation or one of those environmentally friendly laundry soaps instead of the commercial laundry soap.

For cleaning your home, **vinegar and water make up an excellent cleaning solution.** It really gets out even greasy kinds of stains on your countertops. There's no need to use soap. You can use those kinds of things. There are recipes in a lot of these books. Even if you go online and type in "homemade cleaning solutions," you'll find that there are many ideas available. Plus, it's much cheaper to make that on your own.

We use vinegar and water as counter spray, or just water. There are these cloths called microcloths, and they do a really good job of cleaning surfaces without the use of soap. With those, you spray some water on the counter and you just use the cloth. It takes a little bit of elbow grease, so you get a little exercise at the same time. Voila. You don't need the soap. Those are the kind of things you can get rid of.

Let's mention **fabric softeners**. Oh my God. **Fabric softeners have so many chemicals in them.** Those little clinging sheets that you put in the dryer have all kinds of chemicals in them. **Stay away from them.** You don't need fabric softener. You just need your clothes to be clean. They don't need to smell like what is supposedly a spring day, but is really a chemical factory. Those can be avoided.

Chlorine is a toxin. You can avoid that by just not keeping it in the house, because the fumes when you open the bottle are very disruptive to your endocrine system. **Chlorine antagonizes iodine, and iodine is very important for your thyroid gland.**



Things like chlorine, bromine, and fluoride are all in that same family of chemicals called the halogens. All of those external halogens interfere with the halogens that we really need, like iodine.

I believe that, in part, that's why we have such an epidemic of thyroid problems in our society. Years ago, back in the 50s, if you read the medical textbook that was written back then called *Robbins Pathology*, it says, "Hypothyroidism is very rarely seen in medical practice." Now, I would say it accounts for probably 25% of the visits, maybe even more, to primary care medical doctors.

A major source of chlorine is tap water. Tap water contains chlorine because the chlorine is put in there to disinfect the water and protect you from microbes. Well, sometimes the microbes are a little bit better than the chlorine, unless the microbe is something really, really contagious. Your body can deal with small amounts of microbes. We have an immune system, and when the immune system is strong, we can deal with that.

Ammonia is another common household toxin. Ammonia is an ingredient in a lot of products. You can tell when you open it up and you get that whiff. It can be dangerous.

Antibacterial soaps - oh boy. We're such a germ-phobic society that everything is antibacterial. Actually, antibacterials contain something called Triclosan, which is harmful to the immune system, and it can create problems with your endocrine system. It's also a contributor to cancer.

When my sister was in the hospital with lymphoma, she was in the cancer ward, and there was antibacterial soap all over the place. Well, this is cancer causing, and they have it in a cancer ward. In addition, they were using it every day to clean her room. I had to leave because I was overwhelmed with the smell. She was dying of cancer, and they were adding more toxins to the environment. So, hospitals are very dangerous places to be. You would want to get in and out quickly if you have to go there.

In the event that you have an injury or situation that requires hospitalization, there are things you can do to protect yourself. You can bring your own cleaning solutions in and say, "Please don't clean my room with that stuff. Here. Just use this."



The other thing people use a lot is **deodorants and antiperspirants**. Antiperspirants are especially dangerous, because they have aluminum in them, and aluminum can get into the system and actually disrupt areas of the brain and lead to toxic dementia and Alzheimer's. So, **you want to stay away from antiperspirants**.

The other practical reason for staying away from antiperspirants is to think about what they do. What is an antiperspirant? It's something that prevents you from perspiring. **Your sweat is actually one of your main detoxification pathways**. So, when you create all these toxins and your body wants to get rid of them, sweat is a main way to do that. If you stop your sweating from happening, those toxins just go back inside, and they have to find another route to get out, which puts a strain on your liver and your kidneys, and then the toxins recycle and can cause harm.

Some of the commercial deodorants have chemicals in them that are less than desirable. You can switch. **There are mineral sticks that you can use**. There are also brands like **Tom's of Maine and Burt's Bees** that have some deodorants that are better. The other thing is that **you can just use essential oils**. You can just take a little bit of any essential oil that you like, dilute it with a little bit of water, and dab that under your arms. That will work as a deodorant as well.

Mosquito sprays are another example of a common toxic product. If the aim is to kill a bug like a mosquito, or a bug that's on your food, the chemicals that are used to do that are nervous system disruptors. They are neurotoxins. So, great: You don't get bitten by the mosquitoes, but now you've exposed yourself to neurotoxins that can damage your nerves.

There are alternatives you can try, like using essential oils like camphor and lavender. They may not work quite as well as things like DEET, which is in all the commercial mosquito repellants and one of the most harmful chemicals you can expose yourself to, but they're going to be safer than putting neurotoxins onto your skin. You can just go online and type "natural mosquito repellants" and you'll find tons of them. Some work better than others.

We talked about **formaldehyde** already, but in addition to being **one of the preservatives in carpets, it's also in various particle boards, adhesives, cushions on couches**, and things like that. **It can cause eye and upper respiratory irritation**. According to the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency, formaldehyde can cause cancer.



So, it's a great idea, if you can afford it, to tear out all your carpets and put something natural on your floors like a natural wood, bamboo, or something like that. We did that several years ago. It was a major expense. It was also a major disruption, but it's worth it looking back. Now we have just natural bamboo on our floors.

My son used to wake up with a little post nasal drip every morning, and it was caused by all the stuff that was breeding in the carpets, like the molds, in addition to the preservatives and the formaldehyde and all that. Once we got rid of the carpet, he stopped waking up with that post nasal drip in his throat. So, that's really, really good.

Radon gas can seep in if you have gas heating or are using it for cooking. It can seep into your environment through cracks in the basement. There are ways that you can test that, **and if you're suspicious of that, I would go and look up how to detect radon in your environment.** It's kind of like some of those carbon monoxide detectors.

Carbon monoxide is another toxin. If you don't keep on top of your furnace, there is some risk of the carbon monoxide building up instead of just the gas that is supposed to be coming out. Another thing that we should mention is **arsenic**. Many pesticides contain arsenic.

So, **one thing you can do to cut down on these products, is go into your garage and take a look around.** Do you have various pesticides, insecticides, and things you've used for your lawns that you can get rid of? If so, get rid of them. **Learn natural ways to approach gardening.** There are tons of organic gardening courses. You can learn online. You can go to a local club. Almost every city will have a group that's a permaculture type group; a group that's dedicated to naturally preserving your environment.

If you can't keep your lawn nice, pretty, and green without the use of pesticides and insecticides and all that kind of stuff, don't have the lawn. Throw some wildflower seeds out instead. Get some dandelion seeds and some sorrel and some lamb's quarters and other kinds of things and just throw those out in your yard. **Instead of having a lawn that's green and pretty and not very much else, you can have an edible lawn.** You can save money on your food bills. Plus, it looks beautiful.

We have this image that we have to create golf course like lawns in our back yards. Really, where did that come from? Probably some great entrepreneur at some point decided, "Wow! This would be really cool. What if we could get everybody to have these lawns?"



Wouldn't they look pretty? We could sell people all this sod, and then they would have to be able to manage to keep it that way."

Remember, your kids and your dogs play on the lawn. Maybe you even play on the lawn. I do. I like to roll around with the kids on the lawn. I don't want those pesticides and chemicals in my lawn. I want my lawn to be pure. So, those are ways you can get around some of that.

Do you ever get into a new car and experience that really strong smell, what people call the "**new car smell?**" That's actually **vinyl chloride**. **It can cause liver damage** with large exposures. It also can cause your fingertips to balloon up. So, **if you have a new car, air it out**. If you can leave it out with the windows open as much as you can at the beginning, you'll start to air out that smell – and avoid unnecessary exposure to yet another toxic chemical.

If you close up the windows and keep it in the garage, every time you get into it, maybe for a whole year, you're still going to have that smell, which means you're breathing in vinyl chloride fumes. **If you do have a new car, keep the windows cracked even if you have your air conditioning on**. Open the window a few inches to let some air in to circulate, to start to pull some of those fumes out.

If you use any **household rust removers**, be aware there's something called **hydrofluoric acid that can cause pain and damage to the tissue and even down to the bones**. Be careful about this if you're going around trying to remove rust from things.

VOCs: I'm sure you've heard that term. It stands for **volatile organic compounds**. VOCs are present in **paints, varnishes**, and lots of other things that we use around the house. **They're great solvents**, and that's why they're used in these products. They're **also found in disinfectants and pesticides**.

How do you eliminate the exposure? Well, **the good news is that after time, they evaporate**. So, if your house hasn't been painted for three or more years, probably all the VOCs have evaporated and you're not really being exposed to them anymore. However, if you do need to paint or stain anything within your house, I'd recommend that you either go online or go locally and **find a store that has low VOC or no VOC paints**.



Even some of the major paint manufacturers have that option available now, so **it's really possible to paint your house in nontoxic stuff**. It is a little bit more expensive, but saving money on doctor bills down the road and keeping yourself fit, trim, and healthy is more important than the few dollars you have to pay extra to get these things.

There are all kinds of solvents people use. If you're involved with any kind of crafts that require solvents, like painting or art, **be aware of the solvents you're using**. Also, **be aware of your mouthwashes, perfumes, antiseptics, glue, and air fresheners and** all the things that are supposed to make our environment smell prettier. Air fresheners, like the ones you hang in the car, are filled with chemicals that are dangerous to you. There are **phenols**, which are not good for you, and there are lots of others in the fragrances and the perfumes.

Personally, if I'm exposed to somebody who's wearing lots of perfume, I get a really bad headache pretty quickly. I know lots of people do. It's because my body is reacting, and telling me, "Hey. This stuff isn't good. Get out of the environment." So, certainly, you can avoid that in your own world and your own environment. **You can choose not to wear commercial perfumes. If you want to have a nice smell, get some nice essential oils that are pure and use those.**

For mouthwashes, if you want a fresh mouth, **you can use a little bit of mint oil on your tongue**. It's a wonderful mouthwash and disinfectant. Put a drop of mint oil in a little bit of water and swish that around in your mouth. It's natural. It's less expensive, better for the environment, and better for you.

The last thing I have on my list of major toxins is the **pesticides** that are put on foods. To avoid them, **you can buy organic as much as possible**. That will definitely protect you, and that's the best way to go.

When you can't buy organic because organic isn't around, then go to the list of the 12 foods that if you can't get them organic, don't bother to eat them. This list can be found online by Googling Dirty Dozen fruits and vegetables, or download the list here:

<http://www.foodnews.org/>

Other than those foods, if it's not organic, just eat it and hope for the best, because there are usually lower pesticide residue levels on foods that aren't one of the "dirty dozen."



Protect yourself as much as you can by buying organic and not using pesticides around your house on your own crops, and on your lawn. Get them out. A lot of people have garages that are just a big, toxic mess. If you have one, go out there and just look through. Do you have old cans of paint? Do you have old bottles of pesticide and lawn fertilizers, ant killers, et cetera? Just get rid of them. Get them out of there, because the danger of caps coming off and you having a toxic spill is high. You can control that.

By now you may be feeling a little overwhelmed by all this information.

Relax. Take a deep breath. **Approach it one item at a time.**

For example, this week, you can pick one thing, say your toothpaste. Read the ingredient list, and ask, "Is this toothpaste the best I can choose? Well, maybe not. Okay." Then make the decision: You're either going to finish out the tube and then buy something better on your next tube, or you're going to say, "You know what? I spent three bucks on this tube of toothpaste. I'm going to throw it away and go get something better."

Next, go to your hair care products and read through those labels. Use the list provided in the members area, and if you find any of the listed chemicals in the products you're using, make a decision. Ask yourself, "Can I comfortably live without this?"

For some people, a big thing is the hair stuff. They say, "I really love this shampoo, and it's the one I found that leaves my hair this way." I would say to change that product last, if that's the case. Don't approach that one first. Maybe you never will. Maybe you're going to clean up the whole rest of your environment, so the little bit that you're exposed to in that one hair care product that you use, especially if you use small amounts of it or dilute it a little bit, isn't so bad.

There are lots of ways to reduce the risk, and you may make the decision that, "You know what? This is a little bit of exposure. I'm doing all the rest of this stuff. It's no big deal." It's the cumulative effect of all of the toxic exposure that's the problem.

It may not be the best decision if you get rid of everything all at once without first having a plan! If you do, you'll find yourself overwhelmed and confused, and wondering what to use in place of what you got rid of. Instead, go slowly. Do it gradually.



When you change things gradually, you're more likely to stick with it, because you do one thing and give yourself time to get used to it. Then, you can do the next thing, and get used to that. Then, do the next thing.

If you just throw yourself into it, you're going to get frustrated. Author Victoria Boutenko of rawfamily.com describes really well how overwhelming just jumping in can be. When she decided her family was going to adopt a raw food diet, she smashed the microwave and threw it out by the side of the street. She emptied the cupboards and threw everything away. She covered up the stove and threw all the pots and pans away. She cut it all off, and it was a *big* adjustment period. Her family was upset and no one knew what to eat! They eventually adjusted, but it was a painful transition.

When you hit somebody with a sledge hammer, generally it knocks them out pretty good for a while. Then, they've got the side effects of that, and they're not necessarily going to be feeling really good about life afterwards. So, go slowly with it. Go one product at a time. Go with the ones you're less emotionally attached to, and then move to the ones you may have an emotional attachment to.

Experiment. Keep some of your current favorite products and buy some new ones to replace them. Try them out and compare, gradually wean off the old and on to the new. See how you like the new products, and how they compare to the traditional ones. Try several things, and find what you really like. The things that people find easiest to change are the plastic stuff, embracing ideas like airing things out, and getting rid of air fresheners. That's easy. There are lovely citrus air fresheners that are just citric oil and water that you can just give a little spray in your house and then it smells like lemon or orange. Those are nice, natural alternatives to what you're used to.

Put your attention on the things that nourish you rather than avoiding the things that are toxic. It's always more pleasant moving towards something you desire than away from something you fear.

The resources that we have, the opportunities, the quality of the products, and the natural products that are available now are so much better than ever before, and there are a lot more choices as manufacturers rise to the demand for safe products. If you look at the things that you want to affect you in a positive way, rather than avoiding things, the experience will be a joy rather than a chore.



As my boys have become teenagers, creating a non-toxic home has taken on a new slant. I've always been very focused on getting very clean, pure, and natural products in our home. Everything that we use is as pure and natural as possible. Once my boys started high school, and became aware of other products through their friends, they began to rebel. It's interesting that they chose body care products to rebel against, rather than food!

SO as teenagers, they each decided they wanted to choose their own shampoo, deodorant and even hair gel, saying "I don't want that stupid natural stuff. It doesn't work very well. I want what my friends are using."

At first, when my older son was about 15, I fought him on it. It started with deodorant, and the comment, "I don't want that deodorant. It doesn't work. I want something like my friends are using." Then he would go out and spend his allowance and buy a deodorant called Axe. It's got to be the most toxic thing in the whole, wide world. When he put that stuff on, I couldn't come near him. I said, "You can't use that in my house. I'm sorry. If you want to use it on your body, it's your choice, but please don't bring it in my house." I said that because every time he wore it, I got a headache.

I got to the point, though, where I asked myself, "Okay, do I fight with my son? Do I risk the relationship with my son by insisting on this?" I asked myself if saying "Absolutely not. You can't do anything except the things that we're doing," and risking alienating him and hurting the relationship was worth it. It wasn't worth it overall.

I chose to say, "Look. If you want these things, you can get them, but you need to spend your own allowance to get them, and I'm perfectly fine with that. I'm not using my dollars to support those industries or to support that level of toxicity. I don't want you exposed to it, and here's why, but if you make that choice, that's fine. Just, please, do not wear that deodorant when you come near me, because it gives me a headache."

We were able to come to a respectful agreement. He's using products on his body that I don't want him using, and his younger brother is now doing the same. I just need to keep reminding myself that the kids have had a lifetime of being vegan, and eating only whole fresh, mostly organic foods. They eat broccoli all the time. So if they eat good food, drink pure water and live in a relatively low toxicity home, their bodies are likely to be ok detoxifying a little bit of Axe!



I can choose to worry about it as a parent and say to myself, "Oh my God. They are going to get cancer from using that stuff" or can I say, "Look what they are doing right. Look at the good choices I've taught them to make and that they continue to make. All the good things are most likely going to protect them from that little bit of bad stuff." You can't be perfect. You just can't be perfect.

It's important to keep these ideas of toxicity in balance, because obsessing, worrying, and arguing about them and making issues about them is in itself a form of toxicity.

We are on the forefront of a movement to clean the environment and clean our insides, and maintain kind of a homeostasis that is really powerful, and it's basically going backwards. It's going back to what animals out in the wild still have and what we used to have.

It's a movement to try and find that balance between embracing and holding onto the advances we've made while at the same time going back to living in a more pristine environment. It's a juggling act to try to do that.

For example. I love my computer and I'm not giving up my cell phone, but I recognize the danger. I love swimming in my swimming pool. I'd love to have a pond or an ocean to swim in nearby instead of my swimming pool, so I wouldn't have to chlorinate it, but I need to put chlorine in that. There are alternatives, and we're looking into that, but it's a big expense with rebuilds and all that stuff. The fact of the matter is, I'm not giving up swimming because there's chlorine in there. I'm not going to drink it, and I'm going to shower after to reduce my chlorine exposure, but I'm still going to swim.

I'm doing all these other things to protect myself, but I've got a couple of vices. Now, for you, the issue may not be swimming. You may be really clear that you don't want to get into a chlorinated swimming pool, but you're not willing to give up your glass of wine once a week. Whatever it is, **if you create an amazing balance overall, and there's something you know isn't the best choice that you're just not willing to let go of, it just might be an ok compromise.**

I'm not willing to let go of my cell phone. When I use it, I either put it on speaker or use a special headset has a hollow tube for the last 6 inches before going into my ears. T



hey used to be called blue tube headsets, because the first ones were blue. They are now really easy to find. Take a look at the resource list on the members' site for sources.

Nevertheless, because of all the computers and electronic equipment in my environment, I am bombarded with EMFs. It's beyond me all the invisible waves that I'm not seeing that's passing through my body and around my body right now.

I recently bought some Earthing equipment. The idea is to ground yourself to the earth's energy to reduce the negative effects of EMFs. You can read about it yourself. Do a Google search or start with the resource list.

There are definite dangers to our modern conveniences. However, I'm looking at it this way: As much as I'd love to go live on a mountaintop, my mission in this world is to bring the message of health and healing to thousands, even millions of people. I cannot do that from a mountain top. I can only do that if I'm using these modern tools for communication.

So, when I look at the risk of using these modern tools, I work on the belief that my choices, when it comes to the all things I **can** control, are overpowering that risk. Also, the benefit that I get from using the computer and the cell phone, and the masses of people I can reach with my message, far outweighs the small amount of danger that I'm putting myself in.

By participating in this program, you are in the forefront of creating a healthy world. This is really important, and at times involves difficult choices. It's easy to conform to what is perceived as normal. It's safer, in some ways, both emotionally and socially, to fall back and do what the group is doing, but **great change has only taken place when someone had the courage to step outside of the box.** We thought for a long time that the earth was flat, and a few brave minds decided to protest this idea, and other ideas along the way.

While I feel that it's really important that you take a stand, it's also important to do it in the spirit of acceptance and love. **It's important to open the lines of communication, rather than closing them.** If you're talking with someone who is entrenched in ways of living, thinking, and believing certain things about their food and environment, effective communication can't happen if you take an antagonistic approach.



When you can see the world through their eyes, and then find a gentle path to make change and encourage change or simply be that change, that's when you start to make things better. If you just try to go from a standard American lifestyle to an EMF-free, green-vegan lifestyle in one step, the gradient may be too steep, and you'll slip back to old ways..

Try to just go with as much of it as you can. You're going to be so blessed with the results. If you just try to do it 100% for a day or two, and then think, "I can't! I can't! It's too much!" and you abandon it, then you've thrown the baby out with the bathwater, as the expression goes.

Start with what feels good, and then do a little bit more and a little bit more each day. Give yourself credit for each step you take and build on it at a pace you can sustain for the long haul.

Sometimes, it helps to give yourself some limits to when you can have toxic things – and gradually shorten those windows. This works especially well with getting rid of food toxins.

For example if you have a diet coke addiction, allow yourself to only have it between certain hours, say between noon and 3, or limit the number of exposures, say to maximum 2 cups of coffee a day. Start where you are, and go with the gradient that works best for you.

For personal care products you can limit toxic exposure by only wearing makeup when you go out, or using your regular make up for work and the new stuff on weekends, and gradually getting more and more comfortable with the non-toxic stuff and using it more. Or you may have one or two items for which you just can't find a really great alternative – change everything else and come back to it!

Fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome are among the health conditions that can result from toxin overload and are poorly managed by western medicine. **While the medical approach is to** offer medications to temporarily control symptoms, they are commonly listed as condition with "unknown causes," if you ever look them up medically. Nobody's really sure what the causes of these things are, but the typical western medicine approach is to give you muscle relaxants, tranquilizers, and sleep aids to help the symptoms.

Fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue are both **toxin overload diseases**. If you have one of these, your **mitochondria have been poisoned**, and they cannot produce energy for you.



What poisons your mitochondria? All of those things we've been discussing. What are the mitochondria? Those are the little powerhouses of every cell in your body. They start with glucose, which is the end result of the digestion of your food. Glucose gets into your cells, and the mitochondria convert it to ATP, which is energy. Many of the toxins we've been discussing are disruptive to the mitochondria.

Chemical sensitivity is another toxic overload condition. There are people who are sensitive to everything. Car exhaust, cigarette smoke, shopping malls, cleaning solution exposure all incapacitate them. That's a sign of toxic overload. It usually happens when your liver just can't handle all the toxins in your system. Liver detoxification phase one is efficient and effective, but phase two is sluggish and can't keep up.

Let me just take a minute or two to talk about **the liver detoxification process**. First of all, it's expected that you will be exposed to toxins, because we have a detoxification mechanism built into our bodies. We didn't have to go buy this extra component and add it to our bodies because we suddenly found ourselves in the 21st century. That was built in, so it must have been part of the grand scheme that we were going to be exposed to toxins.

So, when we're exposed to toxins, they eventually make their way to the liver, and the liver is the hero who takes those toxins, neutralizes them, and gets them out of the body. It's all well and good, except that it sometimes gets overloaded, because there are more toxins than we bargained for.

Let's look at the way we were designed. If you design a computer system and you have 10 employees, and you design the computer system to work and support those 10 employees, and then all of a sudden you find yourself with 25 employees, you're going to overtax that computer system and it's not going to work anymore. You're going to have to upgrade it.

Well, we can't upgrade our liver in terms of getting a new model or adding hardware onto it, but we can upgrade the software. Upgrading the software is what we're doing here and now, with this program.

We have a section dedicated to the process of liver detoxification and how you can enhance it through your daily choices. Until then, start with the gradual replacement of the toxins in your environment and work the program to enhance your ability to get rid of the ones you can't avoid.