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# Creating Harmony

## Around Your Dinner Table

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Feeding ourselves is a sacred task. This is why I have embraced the Living Foods lifestyle. Everything about it brings nourishment and has been so exciting, yet not without its challenges. My husband comes from a well-meaning Italian family; meat, pasta, bread and cheese dominate every celebration. Being RAW is tricky - you have to learn to plan ahead. I fill my family up with Green Smoothies before the party and bring the salads, fruit platters and raw desserts. Then I let go and enjoy the party! Being flexible and adaptable is a sign of good mental health. 'A little of what you fancy does you good' and being rigid is more stressful than allowing occasional compromises.

### Harmony Is Healthy And Pleasurable

I have learned that an over emphasis on food can mar the entire experience and though I am passionate about nourishing myself and family, there's no need to judge others. Having travelled the world, I was always touched by the loving (not stressful) relationship other cultures had with their food. Be it Asia, South America, Australia or Europe, the focus was never on calories or health per se. The central theme seemed to be about PLEASURE. Everything about food was for enjoyment: from the beautiful way food was displayed in local markets to the way it was artfully prepared and gracefully served. HOW we eat, our state of being, is as important as WHAT we

eat. When we eat on the run, while driving, watching TV or reading the news, while standing up... Where is the sanctity, or nourishment in that?

### What's Eating You?

Sadder still is how everyone here is on a diet - even pre-teens. All the dieting in the world won't guarantee physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health. And no matter how much we binge we still remain hungry and empty on some level. Only when we begin eating mindfully with our senses fully open and awake will we be truly nurtured and fed. When I fully understood the damage of 'shoulding' on my family over foods that I believed they 'should' eat, I determined that I needed to find ways of bringing harmony. Here are some rituals to re-establish a more balanced, peaceful connection with our food:

### Rituals That Bring Sanctuary Around Our Eating

When preparing a meal for yourself or the family, light a little candle just for YOU. think about ways to charge the atmosphere with excitement, connection, calm, or fun. put on some music to enjoy, or sing, chant or pray- this relaxes you and puts your energy and your love into the food- which is the most important nutrient.



Set a beautiful table with fresh flowers, a centerpiece of leaves, pine cones, berries, acorns, sea shells or crystals - something lovely to reflect the season. use the 'good dishes' and simple but cared-for linens. clear away remnants of work, mail, phone, etc. after hands are washed and everyone is assembled, light the dinner candle. Breathe. Smile.

In my home we all enjoy holding hands and singing the blessing together- blessing your food signals the body to relax and receive; gratitude is good for digestion. (I love to take this moment to see the light in my family's eyes). Then the feast begins! I encourage my tigers to take their time and really savor every bite. Whatever I serve it will be of the freshest, most nourishing ingredients prepared with love. I truly believe the woman sets the tone in the home. Loved-up food, enjoyable conversation and having gratitude for the bounty of love offered in the food and people surrounding you is the path to harmony around your table. In-Joy! 🌸

*Shannon 'Shakaya Breeze' Leone is a Mom, Artist, Writer and Raw Foodist who has converted her whole family over to the benefits of Raw Foods 8 years ago. Shannon believes women are the Spiritual Leaders in relationships, and our children and men thrive to the extent that we do!*  
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## Strawberry Shortcake

This health-giving sweet treat can be made in 15 minutes flat so there's no excuse not to splurge!

### Crust

2 C almonds  
1/3 C honey  
1/4 C shredded coconut (unsweetened)  
pinch of Celtic Sea Salt  
1-2 T organic olive oil

**PROCESS** in food processor until finely ground. Press into a pie plate.

### Filling

1 C raw cashews  
1 C raw walnuts  
1/2 C raw honey

1/4 raw Coconut Oil  
1 lemon squeezed  
vanilla extract to taste

**BLEND** in a high powered blender until smooth and creamy.

**POUR** onto crust.

**DECORATE** generously with slices of strawberries. Garnish with a sprig of mint or large strawberry.