

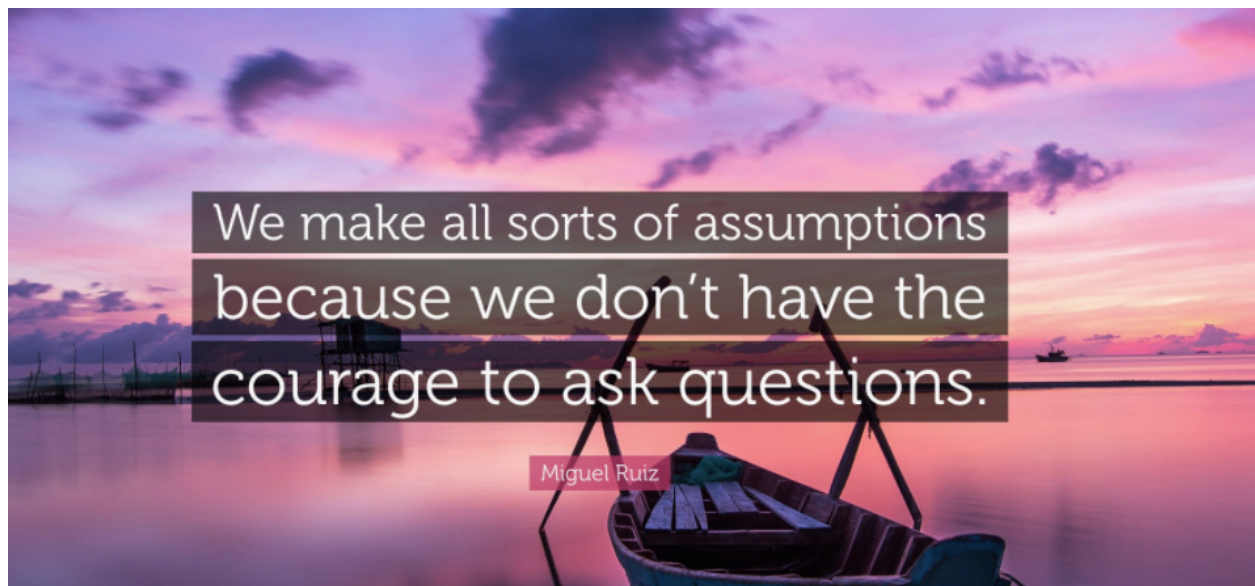
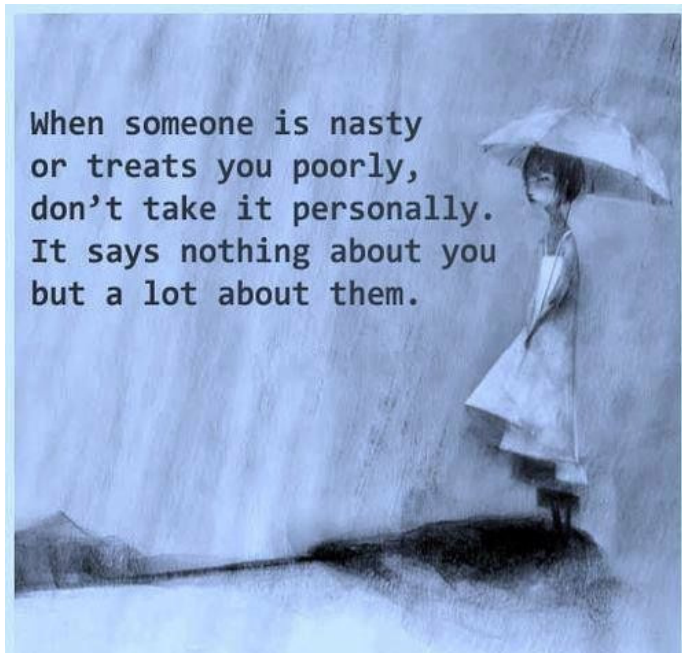
Targeting Wellness Newsletter

Good News for Good Health!

August Special
2021

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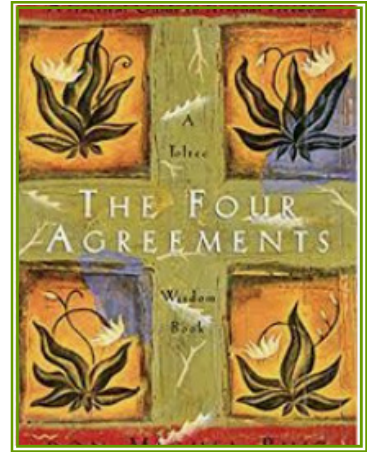
QUOTES FOR THE MONTH



Since August is a month of vacations and getting in those last attempts at summer fun, I thought I'd take a slightly different approach to my monthly newsletter and just focus on one thing...reflecting on The Four Agreements.

The Four Agreements

Several years ago I read the book *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz and although it was profoundly true and insightful, I quickly forgot the lessons and went back to my familiar habits. This book recently resurfaced in my life, allowing me to once again find the power in the authors words. I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of that with you.



We all deal with difficult people and challenging situations that can play havoc on our confidence, temperament, and level of stress. But if we can keep these four agreements in our daily practice, we can create a life for ourselves that has bigger meaning and fulfillment. There is one catch....It can only happen through *conscious intention, commitment to self and practice!*

Although the book holds MANY tidbits of wonderful connections to life, I'll just focus on the Four Agreements for now. If you haven't yet read the book, I would highly recommend it.

The First Agreement: **BE IMPECCABLE WITH YOUR WORDS**

We have all felt the power of the spoken word. Whether it is used to express our love for someone or to criticize for a mistake, the words we choose can touch the very core. As stated in the book, "what you dream, what you feel, and what you really are, will all be manifested through the word". (page 26)

The meaning of "impeccable" is to be faultless and flawless. Therefore, when we are *impeccable with your words* we stay conscious to the impact they will have not only on others but to ourselves. Judging others, gossiping, and complaining all spread toxic vibrations that generate more toxicity. If you judge yourself, if you beat yourself up for mistakes or short-comings you are going against this agreement and preventing yourself from truly enjoying life.

What if you look at the situation in a different way? What if you looked at every challenge or mistake as a "gift" or opportunity to grow and learn?

What knowledge can I learn from this situation that can help me for the next time?

What knowledge can I gain that will help me deal in a more productive way next time?

What mental "power" can I work on that will allow me to succeed going forward?

- ◆ Do I need to be more empathic with myself or others?
- ◆ Can I explore new approaches to this situation for the next time?
- ◆ What would my older, wiser self tell me? Perhaps it's don't sweat the small stuff, it won't matter in a week or two.
- ◆ Can this inspire you to think of other possibilities you'd like to focus on instead?
- ◆ You have a choice: you can ACCEPT IT as it is or you can CONVERT IT and make it what you want always coming from a place of kindness and compassion (for self and others).



The Four Agreements

The Second Agreement: DON'T TAKE ANYTHING PERSONALLY

Wow, how hard is that, right? When someone comes to your window in the municipality screaming in your face, how challenging is it to prevent those defense mechanisms from kicking in to protect yourself? It's a natural fight - or-flight survival response. However, if we take this agreement to heart and practice it, you quickly come to the realization that this is NOT directed towards YOU, you are just a sounding board for the emotions (possibly fear based) being experienced by this individual at this very moment. "Nothing other people do is because of you., even if others insult you directly, it has nothing to do with you." (Ruiz) Their words are coming from the programming they have inside of their own mind, based on the agreements they have formed in life for themselves.

Consider trying this: The next time you encounter an irate "customer", take a few deep breaths or focus on a picture of your child on your desk. See the person in from of you with empathy. See them as a child, frightened or angry (remember this isn't about YOU), and try to just listen and acknowledge. Many times people just want to be heard. You may find your patience and understanding may be just what is needed to bring back ease and flow.

A profound concept Ruiz points out in the book is that we should avoid taking even the opinions and comments we say to ourselves in our minds, personally. We have developed thoughts in childhood that were created for our survival. However, these self-limiting and sabotaging thoughts followed us through adulthood and have now become such a part of our daily thought-patterns we are not even aware of their existence. Nor do we realize that the thoughts we tell ourselves are NOT TRUE. Becoming aware of these thoughts when they occur is the first step in weaken their hold. How do you know when these sabotaging thoughts arise? Whenever you feel stress, anger, fear, shame, guilt, embarrassment, know it's coming from your *survival* brain not your *rational* brain.

The Third Agreement: DON'T MAKE ASSUMPTIONS

This is another hard one to stop doing. We tend to make assumptions about what others are thinking or doing. Have you ever walked past someone, you were smiling and said hi but they looked down and ignored you. We first reaction might be to think "how rude" or assume they don't like you. But what if that person just received some bad news and was deep in contemplation? What if they did not hear your greeting or see your smiling face? Assuming sets us up for suffering. Ruiz encourages us to "find the courage to ask questions and express what you really want". Don't assume someone should just KNOW. Unfortunately, couples do this all the time. With this one agreement, to communicate, to ask questions and get clarity, we can save ourselves a lot of misunderstandings, sadness and drama.

The Fourth Agreement: ALWAYS DO YOUR BEST

Your best is going to change from day to day. Your best will be different when you are healthy verses when you are sick; when you wake well rested and refreshed verses after tossing and turning all night. But if in every situation you always do your best, you will have no need for self-judgment, self-abuse or regret. To do your best you have to accept yourself. You have to look as mistakes not as a failure but, as I mentioned before, a gift or opportunity to learn and improve. Doing your best allows you to enjoy the task because you won't be focused on the outcome. You will just do your best. That is all any of us can do!

"CREATE THE HIGHEST,
GRANDEST VISION
POSSIBLE FOR YOUR LIFE,
BECAUSE YOU BECOME
WHAT YOU BELIEVE."

OPRAH WINFREY





Crispy Zucchini and Corn Casserole

Enjoy zucchini season and corn season with this Crispy Zucchini and Corn Casserole! Featuring layers of zucchini and summer squash along with charred corn mixed in a fragrant basil sauce, and layered with marinara, cheese and crispy bread crumbs!

INGREDIENTS

Casserole:

- ◆ 1 ½ tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more for finishing
- ◆ 3 cups of thinly sliced zucchini (about 3 small-medium)*
- ◆ 2 medium-large ears of corn (about 1 ½ cups corn kernels)
- ◆ 2 small jalapeños, finely chopped (omit seeds for a very mild version)
- ◆ Basil Sauce (recipe to right)
- ◆ 2 cups (228g) shredded non-dairy cheese (or Tofu-Ricotta recipe)*
- ◆ 1 cup (240-250g) of your favorite marinara sauce
- ◆ 1 heaping cup (65-70g) panko bread crumbs
- ◆ Flaky sea salt and black pepper for serving
- ◆ Thinly sliced basil, for serving

Basil Sauce:

- ◆ 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1 large shallot, thinly sliced
- ◆ 4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- ◆ 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- ◆ 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- ◆ 2 cups tightly packed (32g) basil leaves
- ◆ 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ◆ 1/2 (120 mL) cup water

* use regular cheese if you prefer

Casserole Directions: Preheat your oven to 375°F/190°C.

1. Make the Basil Sauce (recipe below).
2. Prep the vegetables. Slice the zucchini and/or squash into rounds, but don't slice too paper thin, or they'll get soggy in the oven. Using a sharp knife, shave the kernels of each ear of corn.
3. Char the corn. Heat a large cast iron skillet over medium-high heat and add 1 ½ tablespoons of the extra virgin olive oil. Add the corn kernels. Cook the corn for 3-5 minutes until charred in spots, tossing just once or twice to get a nice char on them.
4. In a large bowl, toss the zucchini and squash slices, charred corn, and jalapeños with the Basil Sauce. Mix well.
5. Assemble the casserole. Pour the marinara sauce on to the bottom of a 13x9-inch (33x22 cm) baking pan. Spread out half of the zucchini/squash slices on top in a single layer (slight overlapping is okay). Then spoon some more of the corn/jalapeño mixture on top. Sprinkle the zucchini with half of the shredded vegan cheese on top (or dollop with blobs of the Tofu Ricotta, if using). Repeat the layers one more time, zucchini slices and corn first, then cheese.
6. Sprinkle the top with the panko bread crumbs, a light sprinkle of flaky sea salt, some freshly cracked black pepper, and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil (the olive oil aids in browning, so don't skip it). Bake for 25 minutes, rotating the pan 180° halfway through to ensure even browning on the top, or until the top is crispy and golden brown.
7. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 20 minutes. Top with sliced basil.

Basil Directions:

1. In a small skillet, heat the extra virgin olive oil over medium heat. Add the shallot and garlic cook for 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until garlic just starts to turn golden.
2. Add the thyme and salt. Cook for 30 seconds, tossing frequently to combine and to prevent burning. Remove from the heat.
3. Transfer the shallot mixture and oil to a food processor. Add the basil, lemon juice, and water. Blend until the mixture is relatively smooth, adding a bit more water if needed to bring the sauce together. Taste for seasonings and add more salt or lemon juice as needed.



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As a Certified Health and Wellness Coach (NBC-HWC), I can help you tackle these lifestyle challenges keeping you from living the life you want. Working as your advocate to help keep you accountable to yourself, you will see that making those changes most important to you are within your reach. It's about tapping into your inner wisdom; sometimes it takes a little guidance to help you see that. Reach out to me via email or phone to discuss if coaching might be a option for you. (Group or one-on-one coaching options available. Great for team building too!)