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[The Art of Spring Cleaning: Mind, Body, & Spirit detox](#)



From a holistic health perspective we usually hear spring cleaning and we immediately think DETOX. Sure, that can be a focus. I don't know about you, but sometimes the word detox feels too aggressive for me. My personal spring cleaning usually involves persistent introspection; looking at myself mind, body, and soul. What I mean by that is I really try to investigate all areas, and when I think I have an answer, I ask even more questions. My goal is to get to the root of the matter. As I step into my soon-to-be new role of Nutritionist and aspire to live more of my wildest dreams I want to feel like whatever may be in my way is removed. Here's the thing I realized: you can't clear away what you are unaware of. Again: How can I clear blocks if I think everything is OK?

I want to challenge you this upcoming Spring season to get off autopilot. Are you ignoring a diagnosis because it's too scary to deal with it head on? Have you promised yourself yet again to start on some new healthy habits but can't seem to find the motivation or time? When what we have doesn't line up with what we want, we have to do something to shake things up. Here's a

few ways to do some deep spring cleaning and get closer to living your best life.

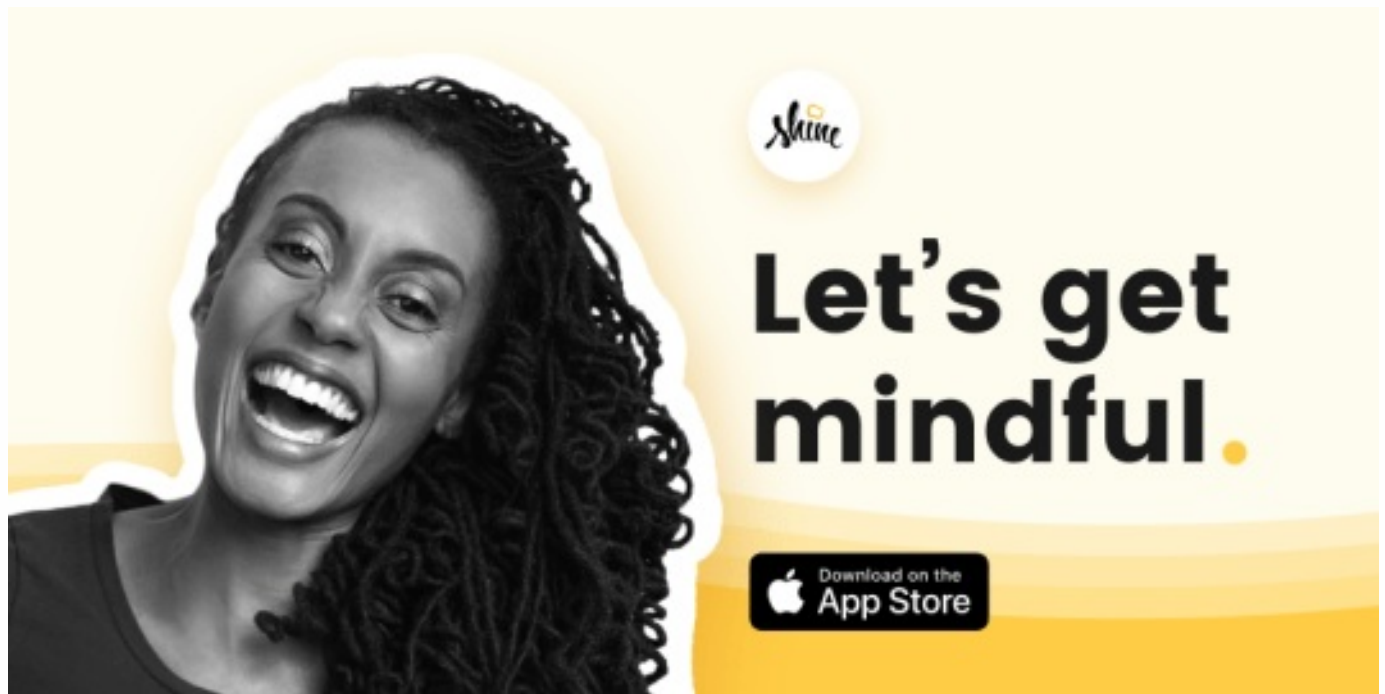
1. **Find a Coach.** Recently I committed to hiring a coach to help me get clearer about my career. It's amazing to how much clarity I received in such a short period of time just by making the commitment. Whether it be for your health, your relationships, or even for your body (physical trainer) – the power of the mastermind is real, and two heads are definitely more impactful than one. One of the greatest benefits of coaching: you usually get that Oprah AHA! Moment and land spot on the beliefs or things you did not know. This is because when we are eyeballs deep in our own drama it can be hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Seeking the aid of a professional can offer ongoing motivation, and help us push through challenges.
2. **Examine Your Limiting Beliefs.** We are taught effort is KING. But is it really? We have to take action towards our goals, for sure, and no we can't expect weight to magically disappear from our midsection, (unfortunately), or our blood pressure to miraculously go down with the power of desire alone. We have to do something. However when we are applying a ton of effort and getting ZERO results; it's a glaring sign that we may need to take a step back and work on the unconscious beliefs we are holding on to that may be hindering our success. Being effective, can take us much further along our path to achieving our goals, that simple being frenetic with action.
3. **Figure out WHO you need to become.** Get in touch with your ideal, who you have to be to live that ideal, and what has to go. When you run the movie in your mind of your so-called fabulous life what are doing, who is with you, what habits do you have that support the dream? Sometimes instead of focusing on what we want: clear skin, more energy, weight loss, a better job, we need to focus instead on who we have to become to have the thing we desire. Once you have a clear picture of what you want, and you know who you need to be, start to examine what you can do now to align your daily actions with the YOU that is living your dreams. Happy Spring cleaning, and as you go through this process remember to relax, relate, and release! -XO



Need a coach? Your girl will be a full-fledged nutritionist in August! Right now I'm taking clients via Skype or in-person at Wellness Cooperative in Old Town Alexandria. If you want to know what's holding you back from living your healthiest, best life I can help. My nutrition tune-ups involve assessing your diet and any medical conditions to help you figure out what adjustments you can make to feel amazing and heal. You will complete the session aware of any nutritional deficiencies, and also with an idea of the supplements or lifestyle changes that can help propel you on your healthy living path. To learn more or book your session [click HERE!](#)

Daily On-The-Go Meditations with Shine!

breathe



For years I've been a mediation and mindfulness junkie. It's safe to say that mindfulness techniques have changed my life and allowed me to deal with stress in a more productive manner. So when I was asked to be a part of offering amazing meditations to the world, of course I said "YES!" I'm ecstatic to announce I've been working with the lovely team at [Shine Text](#) to voice mindfulness meditations for their brand new app! [Shine](#) sends you free daily text messages with motivational quotes, positive affirmations and actions you can take every morning. Their text messages reach millions of users and now with their new app, they are offering mindfulness moments and challenges to help us refocus on the present moment and have the best day possible.

You can download their app now, and you'll hear my voice on any of the FREE meditations, or in the "Get Fulfilled Challenge." I also wrote an article for Shine, about my personal struggle with success addiction and the journey to fulfillment which you can read [HERE](#).

-XO Raw Girl

[3 Tips to Maximize Your Nutrition for Intense Training](#)
electrolytes



Anyone out there getting a jumpstart on 2018 fitness goals? Starting last week, I've been up daily at the crack to move my body for Bootcamp at Core Power Yoga. I signed up to get my mind and body focused and ready for the challenges of the forthcoming year. In bootcamp, we are encouraged to complete a second activity each day, so last week I exercised for two and a half hours several days of the week. It sounds like a lot right? If you are tired just reading this, I totally feel you!

The saying "mind over matter," started to ring true on the last day of the first week of bootcamp, when all I wanted to do is curl up with my bff, my pillow, and catch some extra sleep. It wasn't necessarily just because I was tired, or that I was achy and sore in strange places, my mind was literally just saying NO. I ignored it, squirmed out of bed anyway and completed week one! Now that we are on week 2, I'm very aware that showing up is about 99% of the battle.

During week one, I've been implementing a few things to help me keep my energy high and to ensure I am getting adequate nutrition and get maximum benefits from my workouts. Below's a few tips that can help get you through the good kinda hurt with a little bit more ease. -XO Raw Girl

1. *Replenish Your Electrolytes.* When we exercise our body needs to replenish electrolytes to avoid cramping, and maintain proper function of the digestive, nervous, cardiac, and muscular systems. You can buy drinks or powders to assist with this, or do what I did and make a poor-man's electrolyte drink with what you have at home. All you need to do is add a pinch of salt to your water and squeeze a wedge of lemon or lime. If you can taste the salt in your water you've added too much.
2. *Take Your Vitamins Pre-Workout.* Week one I experimented with taking two packets of Emergen-C in water just before bootcamp, and some days without. I noticed that without fail on the days I got my vitamins in before my workout my energy was more consistent and I was able to sustain it throughout the workout. Grabbing fruit or a pre-workout drink is recommended and taking a multivitamin that includes the daily value for key nutrients along with it may give you an extra boost!
3. *Keep a Food Diary & Track Your Nutrient Intake.* The process of recording everything I eat has been an eye-opener. What keeping a food diary does for me personally, is help me ensure I am getting enough calories and veggie sources of protein daily. There's an awesome site called [Cronometer](#), that I highly recommend you check out for tracking your meals, as it will give you a daily breakdown of your caloric and nutrient intake so you know if you are not getting enough of a particular nutrient.





The Acne-Free Diet on Virginia This Morning!

acne



Look ma, I'm on TV again!

I had such a blast filming another health segment for *Virginia This Morning*. This time our chat was focused on my book [The Acne-Free Diet](#) and how to heal acne from the inside out. The segment aired on Monday. If you missed it no worries, you can watch right here.

It was wonderful to have the opportunity to highlight the new edition of [The Acne-Free Diet](#)! In this latest edition I added in a section on how to diagnose your acne, and what protocols can be helpful depending on the root cause. You also get my personal journey, natural remedies, juice recipes, and more! If you know anyone struggling with breakouts or chronic acne, please gift them this

book for Christmas. You won't regret it. -Xo



Healthy Action of the Week: Watch What the Health
health



Unless you've been living under a rock, you may have heard a few months back about the slew of folks going vegan, or at least vowing to do so, after watching the Netflix documentary: "What the Health." It's an interesting documentary that has received a lot of criticism, but I believe it's worth watching. Your healthy action of the week is to carve out some time to watch the doc. Comment below or find me on [Instagram](#) and let me know what you think! -*Xo Raw Girl*

Why Mindless Eating Begins in the Checkout Line

eating



In *Mindless Eating* Dr. Brian Wansink, discusses a research study published in the *Journal of Market Research* he conducted in which he evaluated the affect of using numbers in in-store promotions at grocery stores on buying by the average consumer. At first he thought that certain kinds of promotions might encourage more spending. He discovered after testing several options, that ANY sign at a grocery store with a number promotion regardless of the combination ie: 10 for \$2 or 5 for \$15, leads consumers to buy 30-100% more than they normally would. Funnily enough after publishing the study he shared that he himself was at a grocery store and was caught up in the same kind of advertising, even though he had knowledge and just published a research study on this topic. Why is this useful information for you to know? Well, you can become more aware of your choices while in the grocery store and avoid potential advertising triggers that cause you to forget all about your budget and add in extra snacks on the way out of the check out line. The other hard truth is that we all know it becomes much harder to not eat certain foods once we've purchased them and gotten ourselves home. So it's always better

to not purchase foods we consider junk or unhealthy so they aren't around to tempt us. I've participated in mindless shopping at times, but it is usually when I do not go to the grocery store equipped with a list. So having a list and a general meal plan can help, keeping an eye out for signs or advertising that can affect your shopping habits, and shopping with an accountability partner who helps to stop the random purchases triggered by advertising.

Dr. Wansink also discusses his work with French research Pierre Chandon, on the average person's ability to assess the amount of food they are eating. Apparently people eat more when they eat from large containers. They found that the smaller the meal, the more accurately people were able to guess the number of calories. However with larger meals people were off by 20-40%. When taking this study into the real world at fast food restaurants they determined that the more people eat, the less accurate they become at guessing the number of calories in their meals. If you are someone who chronically overeats, having a food journal and keeping an accurate assessment of the number of calories in your meals could help you be more mindful and may shock you! Plate size and portion size awareness is key as well; since we usually eat according the size of our plate it's best to use smaller plates or take a smaller portion and seeing if that satisfies your hunger enough to stop eating. Moral of this long story is mindful eating doesn't just start when we get home. It begins in the checkout line. So the next time you take a trip to the grocery store, take moment to prepare a list or get specific on your dietary needs before you go in so you stay focused on the healthy track. *—Xo Raw Girl*

Recipe! Vegan Pecan Cookies

health



Pecan Cookies

Adapted from *Nourishing Traditions*, by Sally Fallon and Mary Enig

Ingredients (Makes 18 cookies)

- 1 ½ cups crispy pecans
- 6 tablespoon softened butter or 6 tablespoons coconut oil
- ½ cup succanat or maple sugar
- 1 cup arrowroot power
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon sea salt

- Egg Replacer: equivalent of 1 egg white
- 18 crispy pecan halves

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 300°F.

Place the pecans in a food processor and process until finely ground. Add the remaining ingredients (except pecan halves) and process several minutes until smooth. Transfer to a bowl and stir in the egg replacer. Use two spoons to drop the cookies onto a parchment-covered cookie sheet. Press a pecan half onto each cookie. Bake at 300 degrees for about 20 minutes or until the bottoms are golden. Let cool completely before removing to an airtight container. Store in the refrigerator.

For crispy almond cookies, make them the same way, substituting 1 ½ cups almonds for the pecans and ½ cup coconut oil or softened butter for the fat measurement. Add 1 teaspoon almond extract to the ingredients as well. Press an almond into each cookie.





How Your Diet Affects Your Sleep health



via Huff Post UK

In Thomas Cogan's book *The Haven of Health*, he discusses the connection between foods ingested and quality of sleep in his 1584 book, and makes claims that digestive "vapors" from meat, milk, and wine create good sleep. I read about this and was literally like WTF? Meat vapors will make people sleep better? Only because this was written in 1584 AD I'll give Mr. Cogan a pass. However, the amazing nonsense that is out there sometimes is baffling. Anyone who has tried a raw vegan diet knows that actually, the cleaner your diet gets, the more your energy skyrockets and you may find yourself needing less sleep to feel refreshed. When I go on fully raw binders for a few days I find myself jolting up at 5:30 or 6 am and running on full throttle throughout the day. So the meat vapor thing sounds cray cray to me and luckily there's some science to back it up. Although the term "good" sleep needs further interpretation, current research does support that diet does indeed have a direct effect on sleep patterns.

In a study conducted at the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine, findings published in 2013, researchers identified different associations between sleep time and the types of nutrients the participants ate. The study found that very short sleepers consumed less tap water, total carbohydrates, and a compound found in red and orange foods, compared with the others. Long sleepers consumed less of a compound found in tea and

chocolate, in addition to choline, which is found in eggs and some meat. Long sleepers also consumed more alcohol. In Russell Foster's TED Talk entitled "Why do we sleep?" he sums up why alcohol shouldn't be relied upon long term to fall asleep: "alcohol doesn't provide a biological mimic for sleep it sedates you; so it actually harms some of the neurological processing going on during memory consolidation and memory recall." The American Academy of Sleep Medicine conducted a study in 2016, and found that eating LESS fiber, more saturated fat and more sugar is associated with lighter, less restorative, and more disrupted sleep. Typically a good whole food plant-based diet is full of fiber, low in saturated fats, and low in refined sugar, which will make for good sleep.

It's not uncommon for people who have improved their diets to report that they feel energized during the day and sleep better at night. According to the study at Perelman the very short and long sleepers consumed a less varietal diet than those who were considered normal sleepers. Although there is more research needed to ascertain how changing one's diet can change sleep patterns, according to the research study entitled, "Insufficient Sleep Undermines Dietary Efforts to Reduce Adiposity," it is clear that not getting enough sleep can decrease the proportion of weight loss as fat by at least 55%, and can promote unhealthy dietary cravings. Thomas Cogan's original claims that meat, milk, and alcohol contribute to "good" sleep could be reinterpreted behind the lens of current research to say that in some people those substances cause longer sleep, which doesn't necessarily equate to the highest quality of restoration. Instead it points to the fact that their bodies' most likely need a longer period of time to restore, process, and cleanse given the kind of food they are consuming. *-Xo Raw Girl*

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Have you checked out my new online classes yet? In my new course, *Staying Ageless 30+* you will learn about Diet Basics, Lifestyle Factors, and elements of Longevity that promote an ageless way of life. Over the course of three modules you learn what to eliminate from your diet to stay ageless, how to ensure your body is receiving adequate nutrition, powerful detox rituals you can incorporate to increase your longevity, beauty remedies that will leave you glowing, and how to exercise effectively and get results. In addition you will learn health lessons directly from renowned longevity and health experts that will equip you to transform your lifestyle. You can still enroll! Check out the class [HERE](#) to preview the curriculum our save your seat! -Xo

Healthy Action of the Week: Check Your Body Fat Percentage

diet



I hate the gym y'all. No really, I do. Lately I have preferred pilates and yoga to being in a gym environment. But beginning in August, I added a weight training gym routine back into my routine. Why? I started to feel like my body needed it, and boy was I right. A couple years ago, I wrote about how a check up with a trainer shocked the heck out of me! In that session I found out that my body fat percentage was literally that of an obese person even though I am tall and lean. My percentage was above the healthy range, and at the time all I was doing for exercise was a whole lot of yoga. Learning this prompted me to get serious about adding weight training to my routine. When your body fat percentage is above the normal range it can put you at risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and host of other not so pleasant conditions.

Fast forward to August of this year, I popped into the gym the first week for a check up and this time, my body fat percentage was in the healthy range

(YAY!) but at the high end of the healthy range (Meh.) It had lowered 3-4% points. I was happy it was normal, but determined again to see it drop further. These visits caused me to do a little more digging—it seems that our body fat percentage can give us a little more information than even BMI about how our health is doing and potential risk for disease. This weeks healthy action is for you to find a body fat percentage scale at your local gym and find out where you stand on the spectrum. If you are high, at least you'll be aware and able to start changing up your workout routine now to get back in the healthy range. It's November now and I wanted to give myself three months of consistent training before my next check up. I'll report back soon with my latest results. -*Xo Raw Girl*

Too Many Reasons to Love Fennel

Living la Vida Raw



_So I have to admit...I was completely sleeping on the awesomeness of fennel. Fennel, scientifically known as *Foeniculum Vulgare Miller*, is one of those root vegetables that you will likely pass in the veggie aisle and not even give a second look. Fennel, thought to have originated in Southern Europe and Mediterranean regions. is a root vegetable

related to carrots, parsley, dill, and celery. It's an excellent source of vitamin C (17% of the daily value), fiber, iron, B vitamins, potassium, folate, and more. Fennel can provide relief from anemia (thanks to its iron content), and is also useful for boosting immunity, curing constipation or flatulence, respiratory disorder, menstrual disorders, and improving eyesight. Dope part is every part of the vegetable can be used including the root bulb, seeds, and the wispy leaves. For centuries, Ancient Chinese medicine incorporated fennel to treat

congestions, stimulate appetite, and even increase the flow of breast milk. Essential oil extracted from fennel can offer relief from an upset stomach, and fennel tea can soothe a sore throat. Not to mention it's sweet licorice like flavor has made it great to freshen the breath, so it's often found in natural toothpastes. Need I say more? I fell in love with fennel again when I added it to my [Ultimate Beauty Salad](#). Hope that now you know more about fennel's awesome nutritional profile and uses for ailments, you might need to consider doing a double take the next time you spot fennel in the veggie aisle. -Xo Raw Girl

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