

LOVEFIT

ISSUE 9 | FEBRUARY 2021 | BODY, LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS

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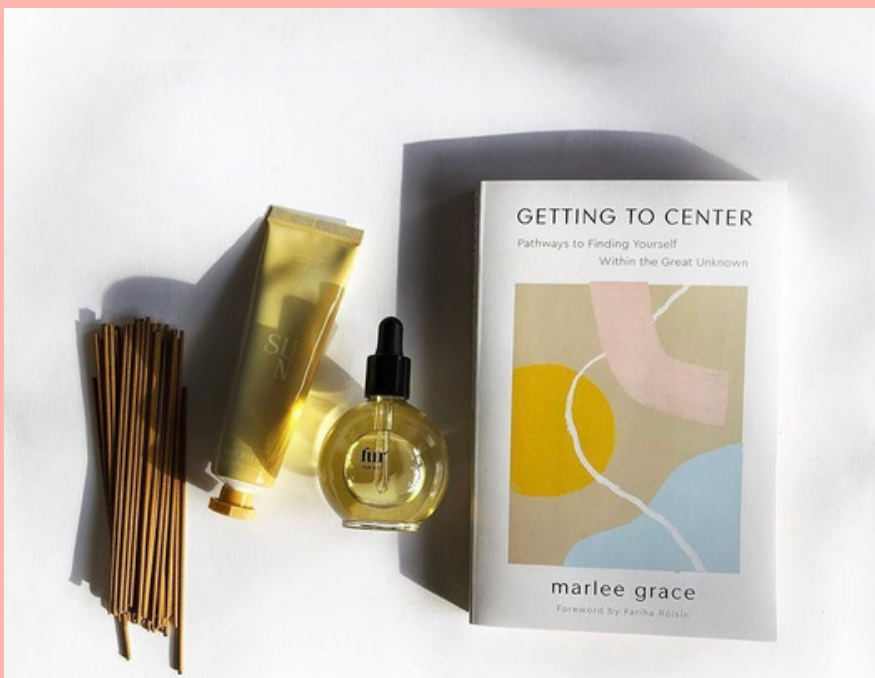
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LETTER FROM KATIE

"Understanding is love. If you can't understand you cannot love. When you understand yourself, you love yourself."

— *Thich Nhat Hanh,
True Love*

The Importance of Cultivating Self-Love

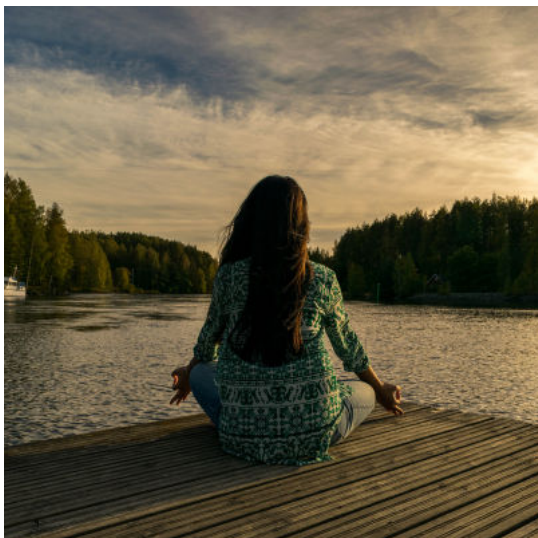
It shows up all the time and begins to sound almost cliché - 'you have to love yourself before you can be loved by others' - but it's repeated, because it's pure TRUTH. It comes from so many traditions, wise teachers, and sources because it's the true essence of loving relationships. If you have compassion for yourself, you have more capacity to show that compassion towards others, therefore improving relationships in all aspects of your life. According to Thich Naht Hanh, through truly loving yourself, you experience freedom.

It seems simple and straightforward enough, so why do so many of us find it difficult to be compassionate toward ourselves? Why do we continue to experience conflict within ourselves and in our relationships?

Because that voice of the inner critic, fueled by our inner child and wounded little bunny within, can be loud. She can be fierce, ridiculing and unrelenting. Our inner critic judges and condemns our emotions, actions, and choices. We tend to freely and openly love others, but then love ourselves with conditions. Only after getting the job we want, losing the weight, dating the perfect guy - then we may feel worthy of loving ourselves, but only for a brief time, before our inner-mean girl and little wounded child show back up.

Continued on next page.





The way to quiet and not adhere to the inner critic is to recognize our shadows, our inner child, and allow our shadow side to walk hand-in-hand with the light. To truly accept and love ourselves unconditionally, the way we do our friends, pets and children. This acceptance and acknowledgment of the shadow side ushers in great self-love, which in turn improves the loving relationships we have in our external world, allowing us to live in harmony with ourselves and others. We're all imperfect on this journey and all learning how to love.

So how do we cultivate self-love?

Self-love can be defined by how capacious we are at actually liking our funny, quirky, silly little inner child. Self-love happens when we know where she/he got hurt, and we remain SUPER gentle with those places (without letting them run the show). The first step toward healing is a full-on love fest with that wounded bunny, inner child, shadow side. This takes exploration to better understand yourself and identify patterns of your inner-critic.

When you figure out why you do what you do, where a pattern may lie, or understand why you go where you go, you find what the Buddhist tradition calls karuna, or compassion. When you begin to have deep compassion for yourself, you begin to ease your own pain and suffering. THAT is self-love, which ripples outward and allows true compassion for others you are in relationship with. When you can be seated in true love with yourself despite flaws and faults, you can begin to see and accept others 'stuff' as well.

Accepting the duality of your light and shadow parts is work. If you can welcome these unintegrated spaces within, combine the Love Witness with the Wounded One, the karuna and love you emanate will create the alchemical fuel needed to burn and rise.



Ways to cultivate self-love

A great way to activate self-compassion and quiet the inner-critic is to imagine how we speak to a friend who experiences failure or disappointment. Begin using this 'friend' voice with yourself. You wouldn't ridicule a friend owning up to mistakes or expressing disappointment, so don't do it to yourself either. Treat yourself with love as you would a friend.

The ability to let ourselves experience joy and pleasure is an act of great compassion. Gently enjoy the aspects of yourself that make you YOU. We have a tendency to give our love, kindness, humor, positive affirmations, etc. freely to others, but how often do we turn that back inward? How often are you enjoying the aspects of your own personality, not only as a gift to other people but as an innate expression of who you are? Allow in the joy and pleasure of your own personality and uniqueness.

Another way to love yourself is through subtle pleasure and joy. Allow pleasure in through your five senses. Truly absorb and pay attention to what surrounds. The enjoyment of touch and tactile sensations. Concentrating on the details, colors, textures, small subtleties of things you see around you, the pleasant smells and sounds. Feel the aliveness and joy through sensory experiences.

Leaving affirmations on notes around our living and workspaces help train our mind consciously and subconsciously, as it forms repetition. Perhaps write a few things you love about your appearance and put it on your mirror. Use affirmations like "I am worthy just as I am" and "I accept my shadows and radiant light" or other quips from your inner-best friend voice, and post them around your space.

A gratitude practice is so helpful for self-compassion. Finding something to be grateful for every day is an essential part of our self-love growth. First thing in the morning, say out loud or journal three things you are thankful for. Or, write one down each day and add it into a jar. When your inner-critic or your wounded inner child arises, read a few from the jar as a reminder. This has been scientifically proven to shift us to a positive perspective as well as impact us physically.

As the Buddha says, "Don't compare your life to others. There's no comparison between the sun, and the moon. They shine when it's their time." This is an important part of self-love and compassion. Comparing ourselves to others is rarely helpful and doesn't change our own situation, and will generally bring strain to our relationship with self and with others. Don't do it to yourself, sis.

Use these mantras from Thich Naht Hanh: Put hand on heart, and say to yourself the mantra 'Dear one, sweet one, or my beloved - I am REALLY here for you' and/or 'Dear one, I know that you are here, and it makes me very happy' and repeat until you can feel your body align with the words. Allow your body to sit in stillness and integrate these words with your feelings of not-enough. Notice the subtle sensations in your body as you repeat these mantras.

So my beloveds, as you navigate relationships, remember that it *all begins within*. Be seated in love with your shit, mistakes, flaws, AND unique amazingness. Allow your shadow side to be accepted and acknowledged, love it without conditions, and you will be able to love outwardly the same way.

Pour that compassion that you so freely show others into yourself so that you can show up with *true love* and watch how it transforms your relationships.

Know that you are DEEPLY LOVED and always, always worthy.





THIS MONTH IN THE PORTAL

Body, Love and Relationships



VIDEO // Yoga Flow for Opening the Heart

This month, Mary McQuate leads a smooth, 40 minute flow class with an emphasis on opening the chest and heart chakra. Add in variations of the upper body and arms as you wish to bring attention to your heart space. This yoga flow will achieve a deep stretch for the whole body, leaving you feeling grounded and your heart channel accessible to the subtle pleasures that surround.

AUDIO // Meditation for True Heart Empowerment

This month we are working with the anahata, or heart, chakra. All humans have the ability to be in compassion for all, and that compassion begins with ourselves. This practice works with the energy of the heart through rooting to the heart of the Earth. Usher in peace, willingness, and love for yourself and others with this soothing heart chakra meditation.

MONTHLY ROADMAP

WEEK ONE



1. Check out the Word of the Month: SOMA. After finishing this month's issue, write out what SOMA means and looks like to you. How will you bring more SOMA into your life? Brainstorm 10 ways you can create more SOMA in your life for each under \$10. Share your list in the FB group to inspire your friends.

2. Are you eating the rainbow? Think about your weekly diet. Is there a color missing? Try adding it in this week!

WEEK TWO



1. February 11, New Moon. Set an intention for this new lunar cycle. What do you want to focus on in the next 30 days? Pin your lunar intention up near your workspace. Share your intention in the Facebook group, it'll give your intention potency and the community can help magnetize your goal.

2. Do this month's heart opening yoga flow. Add in last month's SHREEM mantra during savasana.



WEEK THREE

1. Schedule a time to do Katie's Meditation for True Heart Empowerment. Turn it into a walking meditation - can you do this as you walk the woods or city streets? Stay in your heart <3

2. What are you grateful for? Share it in the FB group.

WEEK FOUR

1. February 27, Full Moon. Course correct now, what's not working now that you've been working with this cycle's intention? Write it down, and then burn it in a glass or ceramic bowl so it burns fully. What IS working? Write it down in your journal and then moon bath in the light of the full moon. Share in the FB group any insights you had today.



WHAT WE ARE LOVING

Our Staff Favorites This Month



PODCAST: CONVERSATIONS WITH COLEMAN



KATIE'S PICK @KatieSilcox4Real

Right now I am thoroughly enjoying podcasts that focus on people thinking deeply about difficult current events. Conversations with Coleman delivers honest conversations with leading intellectuals on polarised issues in the realm of race, politics and culture in the West. I highly recommend listening to a few episodes to gain possible new understandings of varying beliefs.

PETS: Dogs Naturally

AMAURY'S PICK @AmauryRoseline 

We just got a puppy! I've always had dogs, but when I lost my childhood best friend, Maggie, in 2015, I took a break from pets. I needed space to mourn and I was embarking on a long international endeavor with my fiancé. Last week, we welcomed sweet 6-month old Luna into our lives. Of course I'm all about holistic, natural living, so I began researching natural dog care. I want to offer Luna better quality food and care than I could offer Maggie in my teens and early 20s. I found the Dogs Naturally website filled with thoughtful resources and products for holistic dog care. Check them out at: <https://www.dogsnaturallymagazine.com/>

SKIN: Monastery *Flora* Botanical Cream Serum



MARY'S PICK @MaryMcquate

This stuff is truly amazing. I use it EVERY morning and evening. I love the consistency. It feels like a cream and a serum. My skin feels so hydrated after using it and I can definitely tell a difference in the firmness of my skin now that I've been using it for a few months. It also smells amazing. And, it's sold at Boketto! (This month's promo) **Flora** rejuvenates, firms, brightens and hydrates skin. It reduces the breakdown of collagen and protects from ultraviolet light. It is packed with phytosterols, which reduce trans-epidermal water loss, and help to keep skin moisturized.



SHOP: Pyramid: Appalachian Magick + Remedy

SARAH'S PICK @SarahWaldron417

Close to my hometown, there's an amazing metaphysical shop owned by a wonderful non-binary person committed to honoring the heritage of the land and giving back in ways that benefit human rights and social justice. [Pyramid: Appalachian Magick + Remedy](#) is a beautiful, moody shop that allows you to explore your inner-witch with naturally-sourced, seasonal herbs and a full apothecary. They have the most incredible selection of tools, crystals, accessories, and clean skincare for those who love nature and her gifts and want to source in a sustainable way. They ship so you don't have to be local! Check them out [@pyramidwaynesboro](#)



WORD OF THE MONTH

SOMA

Such qualities of the mind are often compared to Motherlike love and nurturing care—that mothering energy that nurtures us, that guides us to the internal source.

In fact, the tender, gentle, benevolent, kind love and nourishing care of someone who mothers is known as saumyata. The Sanskrit term, **Soma**, is the intoxicating sap that fills the mind with infinite bliss.

Another name for the moon, **Soma** represents a calm, composed, peaceful, and pleasant state of mind. Such a mind is called saumya in Sanskrit, which means “friendly, pleasant, tender, soft, like the radiant rays of the moon; Moon-like.”

In Ayurveda, Ojas is the quintessence of bodily strength, immunity, resilience, and essence of all seven tissues. In turn, Soma is the quintessence of Ojas.

Thus, we can fairly conclude that what Ojas is to the body, Soma is to the mind.

by Indu Arora
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Soma explanation continued on page 19

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SEXY FOOD

FOOD TO TO ENLIVEN YOUR MOOD



CHOCOLATE BLISS TRUFFLES

CHOCOLATE FOR THE AYURVEDA LOVING WOMAN (OR ANYONE)

Chocolate, in its raw cocoa form, can be a powerful superfood. Not only does it contain fiber, magnesium, and is loaded with antioxidants, but it also has a unique ability to release oxytocin when it's consumed. Oxytocin is the feel good hormone/neuropeptide in the body. When oxytocin is released it can lead attraction, bonding, and physical stimulation. It has also been linked to its mood boosting capabilities. ([See Chocolate & Dopamine](#)).

In Ayurveda chocolate is considered a stimulant and is best used sparingly or in a way that marks a celebration or ceremony. After all, as ancient mayan texts would point out, cacao has a divine origin and is truly a gift from the gods ([Ancient Origins of Chocolate](#)).



INGREDIENTS

for the truffles

- 1 cup dark chocolate [Hu Organic Dark Chocolate](#)
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup full-fat coconut milk
- 1 tbsp ghee [Ancient Organics Ghee](#)
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup nut butter of choice: peanut butter, cashew, or almond
- 1 large pinch of himalyan sea salt

Optional Garnishes:

- Crushed freeze-dried raspberries
- Cacao & Cinnamon powder
- Rose Powder or Dried Rose petals
- Unsweetened Coconut Flakes

DIRECTIONS

Add the chocolate, coconut milk, and maple syrup into a metal bowl over a pot with simmering water (like a double-boiler) to melt the chocolate. Stirring until it melts and smooths out evenly. Next, add in the nut butter and salt and whisk until smooth. Refrigerate for two hours or until it has become firm. Use a small ice cream scoop or a soup spoon to form small truffles. Roll between your hands to form into balls.

Add whatever garnishes you choose to bowls and roll the truffles in them to fully coat the outside of the truffles. Store in a jar or airtight container in the refrigerator.

They should keep up to 2 weeks, but I doubt they will last that long. :)







THE POWER OF COLOR AND FOOD

HOW INCORPORATING CERTAIN COLORS
CAN MAGNIFY YOUR MEAL

Does color have an effect on what we eat, how we eat, or our mood?

It's highly possible!

Studies have shown that certain colors can have an effect on our mood due to the impact that color has on how your brain sees the world. When your brain recognizes a certain color it is immediately associated with a certain emotion. For example,

Blue - feeling of calm, passivity

Green - concentration, ease

Red and Orange - arousal and excitement

We can also make this connection of color and emotions when looking at the chakra system.

First Chakra, Muladhara, Red Root Chakra, feelings of safety,

fearlessness, stability and security

Second Chakra, Svadhisthana, Orange, below the navel, creativity and sexual energy

Third Chakra, Manipura, Yellow, associated with personal power, located from the navel to the breastbone

The Fourth Chakra, Anahata, Green, source of love and connection, located at the heart

Fifth Chakra, Vishuddha, Blue, source of verbal expression and speaking our highest truth, located at the throat

Sixth Chakra, Ajna, Dark blue, our source of intuition, located at the third eye

Seventh Chakra, Sahasrara, Purple, associated with our spiritual connection to a higher self, located at the Crown

So how can we take this information and transfer it to our bowl?

You might already be thinking it may be a little too out there to start deliberately cooking certain colors based off of your mood, but why not have a little fun with it on special occasions?

If we use the upcoming holiday of Valentine's Day, the day devoted to love, it's easy to see why colors like red and purple are so widely used. Red is associated with activity, with excitement, and closely linked

to orange where we have the seat of sexual energy. In the chakra system Red is also associated with a feeling of safety whereas purple is associated with a connection to our higher self. What a beautiful combination that would make to go into partnership! To be seated in safety and cosmic energy is definitely my Valentine goal.

To invoke some of these feelings of excitement and arousal, why not experiment by adding a few rose petals to your chocolate? Or, try making some beet hummus to go with your evening meal. Getting creative in the kitchen with your partner is a beautiful way to stimulate new connections and make space for more excitement to come later.

The more we learn about the intricacies of the body, the more we can see subtle connections such as this in our everyday lives.

Written by
@MaryMcQuate

Resources:
[BrainBasedBiz](#)
[Color Psychology](#)
[Chopra.com](#)





YOUR MONTH IN VEDIC ASTROLOGY



”

*These days you might feel a shaft of light
Make its way across your face.
And when you do
You'll know how it was meant to be.
See the signs and
Know their meaning.*

~ Natalie Merchant

STARDUST IN FEBRUARY

Dr. Katy Jane @DrKatyJane

As we move into February, a churning begins in the sky above and within us below. Five planets stack the sign of **sidereal Capricorn** forming a stellium, which could be compared with a single shaft of light—your spinal column.

This month you locate your “spine” in all areas of your life. If you find you’ve been lacking “backbone” for a while, you may see this as a time to develop one.

It’s a time to stand upright in your purpose even if you don’t know what it is. Just holding the posture of purpose (like a practicing Zen Buddhist) will entrain your body to recognize it when it shows up.

A stellium is a rare astrological event. It’s powerful in that it brings everything focused on a single point. It brings crystal clarity to all your internal impressions that are buried deep inside.

It will root them out, bring them to the surface, and provide you an inventory of what you’ve been hanging onto (without realizing it) as it leaves you.

Yes, it’s that powerful of a time.

Are there bumps ahead?

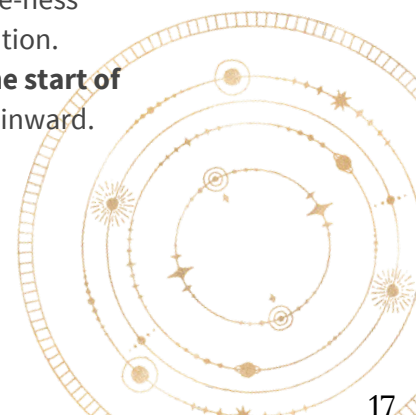
Yes.

But we are not put off guard by anything, because we are one-pointed. This much the pandemic has taught us. This much yoga has taught us.

This is a genuine moment of one-ness within an appearance of separation.

Mercury goes retrograde at the start of the month. He’s forced to look inward.

And so are we.





A DEEPER INSIGHT INTO SOMA

BY INDU ARORA



Do you know that it takes 35 days for the food we take in to transform into Ojas through all seven tissues?

This Ojas can then be churned and transformed into Soma by performing conscious acts of meditation, relaxation, and self-care. Such a transformation is not a given, but rather a consequence of our sadhana, our spiritual practices. It is this Soma that becomes our Shakti—and ascends and descends as Kundalini.

From the Yoga and Tantra point of view, the body is

a temple in which the spirit, atman, kundalini shakti, consciousness, purusha reside. Taking care of this body is not only supportive of—but a prerequisite for—such a realization to occur. Acts of self-care are acts of sadhana—not selfish indulgences. We owe acts of self-care to ourselves.

As caretakers of our bodies, we must shine the spirit of soma in this direction. Will we only attend to the nurturing of our body, mind, and spirit when there is a crisis? Or will we care for It on a daily basis, feeding it with love, awareness, nurturing, and Soma, as we



INDU ARORA

SOMA

100 Heritage Recipes for Self-Care



would a rare orchid or a precious infant dependent on our care to survive and thrive?

Who in your life brought out the feeling of Soma for you? Maybe it was your mother or father, someone who mothered you, or perhaps a sibling, neighbor, friend, mentor, or relative. Is it only peak moments you recall or do your memories wander back to the simple everyday experiences? Who and what is mothering you now?

What brings Soma to you in your life at present?

Do we only read about it or will we finally realize that every moment is auspicious because there is a sacred transition happening from one moment to another? Sandhi. This conjunction is a portal to consciousness, to realization of all that we are. It is a time to witness, but because we may be consumed with looking for (or in the case of health, responding to) something bigger, we can miss these small, but sacred, auspicious moments. How will you choose to use your energy right now, in this moment? In every moment? Little moments of Soma, like little mothers, await your glance. Take a moment of pause and gaze back at the mother divine expressing itself as passing moments. Do not let them slip away like sand.

We cannot give from an empty vessel. It's essential that we realize what true self-care is. It is not a once-a-year spa vacation, it is that which we do on an everyday basis. It is an act of responsibility. We are charged with the care and maintenance of our bodies for a lifetime (as many as 125 years according to yoga's sister science, Ayurveda).

You can begin to welcome Soma to your life with awareness and small habits.

Here are my 3 top tips:

Vedic Meditation: When you awaken in the morning, take a moment to observe if it is touch, sound, thought, emotion, fragrance, or light that catches your attention. Bring the awareness to the heart center. Let this experience guide your day. [Recipe No.1*]

Digestive Care: Chew your liquids and drink your food. This requires single-minded focus. Stay present to the food, its taste, and the process. This supports digestion, reduces belching, and brings satisfaction. [Recipe No. 8*]

Sleep like a baby: Make a fist with the thumb inserted between the index and middle fingers. Practice this mudra with one or both hands before bed in shavasana or in a seated position to invite easy, deep sleep. [Recipe No. 31*]



It takes time, courage, sincerity, work, reflection, and prioritization to churn and blend our physical, mental, and emotional energies.

When we give that time, reflection, prioritization and are able to sort our own mind and emotions, we are able to discern where and how to use our physical energy. At that point, our body's energy, our pranic and mental energy, is able to bring forth the essence—like a drop of nectar—called soma. Soma is the return to that drop of nectar that we are. At that moment, the mind becomes saumya and our state becomes Soma. We have come to the state of realization.

**Read more in [SOMA 100 Heritage Recipes for Self-Care \(eBook\)](#) by Indu Arora available on all major eBook purchase platforms internationally.*

*She is like a poetry
Deep, true, quiet*

*She is like an ocean
Deep currents and perfectly still outside*

She says so much and speaks nothing at all

*Seems like an untold story
Ever successful never complete*

*A quiet storm
The fullness of moon*

*A wave that swept me
That is you An anchor that has stilled me
That is you*

*Gentleness itself
That is who you are
SOMA*

by Indu Arora

recipe for self care

BY INDU ARORA



Food for Skin—My Secret in 3 Steps

Recipe for Self-Care: No. 13.

Excerpt from **SOMA: 100 Heritage Recipes for Self-Care** by Indu Arora

Many have asked the most existential question about the skin care – What is the best skin care routine for a healthy glow? I offer this 3-step perfect skin care routine to you today as a tribute to my grandmother and her grandmother and the cosmic mother who nourishes us all.

I remember as a child, when my grandmother would walk toward me with a bowl of this nourishing mixture and apply it on my face with her soft motherly hands and say, “You will glow like the Moon.”

My secret to a healthy glow: 3 Simple Steps

Tools: Yogis Glow powder, face towel, water, olive oil and carrier* based on your skin type.

Step 1: WASH Mix a dime-sized amount of Yogis Glow powder with 1-2 teaspoons of water in your palm and rub it on your face luxuriously. Massage and then rinse with room temperature water. You may use it to remove facial makeup. Use once upon waking up and once before bed.

Step 2: SCRUB Mix ½ teaspoon Yogis Glow powder with virgin olive oil or almond oil. Massage gently and rinse with room temperature water. Apply once a week.

Step 3: MASK Mix 1-1½ teaspoons powder with enough “carrier”* to make a thin paste. Apply a thin layer on the entire face and neck avoiding the eyelids and lip area. Let it dry naturally. Dab a cotton pad in almond milk/coconut milk/cow’s milk to moisten the face. Rub

the face using the fingers to loosen the grip of powder from the skin and then rinse using room temperature water. Follow with your favorite moisturizer. Apply once a week.

May you glow like the Moon and radiate like the Sun, the beauty of health, goodness and consciousness. May the realized beings shine through you! Made to honor the absolute beauty—Tripura Sundari.

* A good carrier used in a face mask makes all the difference. Here is an easy user guide for you:

- Rose water in case of irritated skin, rashes, red patches or rosacea
- Egg white in case of wrinkles or early signs of skin aging
- Whole milk or plain yogurt for acne, blemishes, scars, problematic skin
- Honey in case of very dry, dehydrated skin

*Read more in SOMA 100 Heritage Recipes for Self-Care (eBook).

Yogis Glow Skin Care

*https://www.yogsadhna.com/shop/details/yogis_glow

Use coupon code Shakti20 for 20% off Yogi Glow through March 31



Ancient wisdom for modern women.

THE DELICIOUS HERBAL GATEWAY TO SELF HEALING

RISE, SHINE, REST, REPEAT.
AYURVEDA FOR MODERN WOMEN

BY CARLY BANKS

I have a confession.

I am a (recovering) supplement junkie.

In my kitchen there's a dark cupboard where hundreds (maybe thousands) of dollars of supplements have gone to die.



Through my twenties and early thirties I hopped on every supplementation bandwagon that came rolling by. St. John's wort, Siberian ginseng, flax oil, fish oil, milk thistle, 5-HTP, echinacea, ... **all powerful, ... all sitting in my cabinet, expired.**

I visited Naturopaths, Chinese Medicine Doctors, Herbalists who handed me plastic bottles containing the support I so longed for... and in they went, to the dark cupboard.

Having attended Shakti School in 2019 I fell deeply in love with all things Ayurveda, including the list of ancient healing herbs backed by thousands of years of observation of their efficacy. **I promptly stocked my household with Ayurvedic herbs,... And commenced to not taking them.**

Can you relate? We all want to take the herbs that will bring balanced well-being.

We all want to exercise. We all want to choose healthy foods, and do our healthy meal prep.

But we run out of time to meal prep, and we run out of motivation to exercise, and in the chaos that is sometimes our lives we forget to take our vitamins.

As an Ayurvedic Wellness Coach my job is to not only teach the wisdom of Ayurveda to my clients, but to do so in a way that is accessible in their everyday modern lives. **We work together to create strategies for overcoming the feelings of zero time, zero motivation, and forgetfulness.**

I strive to help women create daily routines for moving their bodies and fueling themselves with healthy food choices and taking healing herbs, **all in ways that complement their current lifestyle, and feel like a beautiful addition to their day, rather than just another thing on their list of to-dos.**

So in my online course community at The Habit we started having zen space challenges; taking time to create spaces in our homes that brought ease to our nerves and peace to our minds (February is declutter month in our group and I am SO ready to release all that does not serve me).



We simplified our meal prep with workshops on living soups and quick stewed apples and sun teas. **We found 2-minute versions of everyday self care and exercise and it changed our lives, every day, for the better.**

I had created a structure where women with three kids and two jobs and no spouse were finally finding the time and energy to exercise and cook and meditate. But we still couldn't crack the code on consistency with supplements, and I was feeling bad for sending them to the store to spend money on yet another little plastic bottle for their cabinet.

I had seen and swooned over a number of trendy herbal products in pretty jars on the market today. I just couldn't justify the cost; my stock of Ayurvedic herbs had come in bulk packaging, **I knew that the ashwagandha in that \$22 bottle could be purchased for about \$1.60.**

Plus, I wanted to be witchy and hand craft my own herbal blends, for my own needs as well as my clients and loved ones.

Continued on page 28





Which brought me to the creation of my Home Apothecary.

Simple, clean packaging worthy of a space on my countertop, filled with ready to use herbs and spices for my specific needs.

I ordered some 4 & 6oz french square glass jars online. I made some standard labels, and some blanks for blends I create, and anything else I wish to display in this apothic fashion. **A jar of vanilla, a jar of coffee, a jar that now holds my iron supplements so I remember to take them every day.**

The jars are on display where I make my morning coffee. Some days you'll see me sprinkling shatavari and rose petals into my milk frother to add to my matcha, bringing calm to my nervous system and increasing the love with which I approach my day. Other days, ashwagandha, raw cacao, and cardamom is added to my coffee, for supportive energy that doesn't burn me out the way coffee alone can do.

It's become a ritual; an intuitive practice in checking in on myself and my needs, and honoring myself with plant medicine.

Taking supplements has become my favorite part of the day.

A FEW OF CARLY'S FAVORITE RECIPES:

Shatavari Love & roses truffles

In a saucepan, melt

1/2 cup coconut oil

1/4 cup raw cacao powder

1/8 cup maple syrup

2 tbsp almond butter

1 tbsp shatavari powder

1 tsp vanilla

1 tsp powdered rose petals

pinch of salt



Continued on page 30



Photo Credit @Habitat Ayurveda



Stir until well melted and simmering (don't boil). Pour into silicone moulds (I use a mini muffin tray), and top with a rose petal and a sprinkle of coarse salt.

Translated as “She with the strength for 100 husbands”, Shatavari is a rejuvenative tonic for the female reproductive system. This support is not only for the young woman, but also for women in their middle and elder years, to help them gracefully **transition through the natural phases of life, including menopause.**

Immune Boosting Golden Milk Latte

*1 cup hot water
½ tsp turmeric powder
¼ tsp astragalus
⅓ tsp cinnamon powder
⅓ tsp ginger powder
Pinch black pepper
Pinch cayenne pepper*

** for added nourishment and a creamy finish, add 1/2 - 1 tsp ghee or coconut oil*

** for added fancy, add steamed non-dairy milk*

Turmeric is referred to as “He of the golden body”, “The nectar of sunlight” and **“He who makes the yogi golden”**. This classic anti-inflammatory is a prized spice in Ayurvedic tradition, and is now commonly used in the west for its multiple healing benefits, including relief of stiffness & inflammation, and support to the joints and the digestive tract.

Ayurvedic Mocha

*1 cup hot water
1 rounded tsp organic instant coffee or one shot espresso
1 heaping tsp raw cacao powder
1/2 tsp ashwagandha powder
1/2 tsp organic cane sugar or maple syrup
1/4 tsp ground cinnamon*

“

Turmeric is referred to as “He of the golden body”, “The nectar of sunlight” and “He who makes the yogi golden



* for added nourishment and a creamy finish,
add 1/2 - 1 tsp ghee or coconut oil
* for added fancy, add steamed non-dairy milk

Ashwagandha is one of the most important herbs in Ayurveda, and is the most commonly used and extensively researched adaptogen herb in the world. It has been used for over 3,000 years to relieve stress, increase energy levels and improve concentration. As a result of modern scientific study, it's valued for its thyroid-modulating, neuroprotective, anti-anxiety, antidepressant and anti-inflammatory properties. **Long story short this ish is powerful.**

This self loving cup has brought me so much joy. It's honestly become a ritual. It's the kind of bevy that deserves to be enjoyed slowly, while pondering the wonders of life, gratitude journaling, tarot card reading. **Take caution y'all, this just might be the gateway drug to self care.**

** There's always a way to make Ayurvedic living feel simple. And it's okay to make it modern and stylish, and delicious too ;). Check out the recipes above, adorn your kitchen with beautiful vessels of plant medicine, and find new ways to add healing herbs to your everyday routine.*

Written by
Carly Banks, Ayurvedic Health Counselor, The Habit Ayurveda



This month all LOVEFIT subscribers can get \$5 off **The Habit Ayurveda's At-Home Apothecary toolkit**. The toolkit includes a guide to the top ten Ayurvedic herbs for ten of the top complaints of today's busy, stressed, overwhelmed & exhausted human. You'll learn how to craft the perfect blends for your Ayurvedic dosha, that bring balance to your everyday life. The kit also includes printable labels for your very own beautiful at-home apothecary, and recipes for combating common ailments. Learn more at thehabit.net/at-home-apothecary and use the code **lovefit5** for \$5 off.



GAB WITH THE GODDESS

What's the best way to tend to vata-related bloating in the body?

-Vata Belly

Dear Vata Belly,

I am so sorry that you are experiencing some uncomfortable vata-induced symptoms. Bloating is such a common symptom these days and can be caused by a variety of different reasons. It is even more common to experience an excess of bloating during the vata season of fall into winter. So, depending on where you are living, this could also be at play. In addition to the season, we are also living in a world that is very vata in nature (always on the go and in need of distraction).

Vata is associated with the element of air and ether. It governs all movement both inside the body and in our external world. It's qualities are dry, rough, cold, and subtle. When vata is in balance it has the ability to enhance creativity, flexibility, and enlivens the spirit. However, when vata is out of balance it can create fear, anxiety, and a lot of unwanted symptoms in the body like bloating, gas, dry skin, insomnia, constipation, or even a sense of tightness and gripping (when the nervous system has gone into fight or flight).

Certain habits or practices that can aggravate vata are:

- Caffeine*
- Alcohol*
- Cold exposure*
- Going to bed too late*
- Overeating or eating too many raw foods*
- Excess stimulation*

Luckily, the science of Ayurveda is so incredible that you are very likely to experience relief by adding in just a few of these daily practices.

Vata loves routine. Create a routine for your days that you can easily follow. Eating, movement practices, working, and sleeping should all be done

around the same time every day.

Add warming spices to your meals. Spices like ginger, cumin, fennel, cinnamon, cardamom, and black pepper.

Stay warm. Keep your body warm by dressing for the season. And, be sure to cook your foods thoroughly. Vata does not like raw foods, especially in the cooler months. Drink warm liquids throughout the day. Especially teas spiced with ginger.

Ghee. Cook with a moderate amount of ghee to lubricate the internal organs and help to maintain easeful digestion.

Slowing down. Try to move through the day with more presence and awareness by adding in a daily meditation practice. And, you can also bring this awareness practice into the kitchen by being present while eating your food. This is extremely helpful in decreasing bloating in the stomach.

Warm oil massage and baths. Try to incorporate a daily oil massage before a warm bath or shower. If your belly is particularly bloated you can gently massage the abdomen with warm oil in circular clockwise motions.

So, if you can commit to adding in a few of these simple habits and practices into your daily routine, I am sure you will begin to find the relief you need in the unwanted belly bloat. And, as always, be gentle with yourself. Healing is a process and it can take time to shift your behavior and incorporate new habits and practices into the daily flow of your life.

Also, consider checking out some of our favorite vata-reducing supplements at **Banyan Botanicals**. Use code **KATIE15** at checkout for 15% off your purchase.



Photo Credit @BokettoWellness

MONTHLY COUPON

THE SHAKTI SCHOOL SUBSCRIPTION

February Promo with BOKETTO Wellness

This month, all LOVEFIT subscribers receive 20% off all products using code **LOVEFIT20**.

(minimum purchase of \$50 to use the code, limit one use.)

Ongoing LOVEFIT promos:

LakaLiving use **Shakti10** at checkout, PAAVANI Ayurveda use **SHAKTIPOWER** for 10% off



Why we freakin' love BOKETTO Wellness

BOH-KEH-TOH

'THE ART OF DOING NOTHING'

Based out of Richmond, Virginia **Boketto Wellness** was founded by licensed acupuncturist and advocate for optimal self care, Jelena Nikolajevic. Boketto's brick & mortar and full online store is filled with a carefully selected curation of handcrafted products for pantry, body, and home. It is the ultimate apothecary for healing and thriving.

My favorite thing about Boketto is the community it has attracted and created in and around wellness. It is a fully female-run business that inspires others to lead a life in as close relationship to nature as possible.



Boketto supports alternative modalities of healing like Ayurveda and Chinese Medicine and is always my go-to spot for everything self care, skin health, and healthy home treasures.

Shop online today or be sure to visit their brick and mortar shop if you are ever in the area. It's such a sweet place with even sweeter people inside. <https://bokettowellness.com/>



Photo Credit @BokettoWellness

LOVEFIT VAULT

MORE FROM THE VAULT

For more on how we experience pleasure, listen to the most recent episode of The Ghee Spot, [Pleasure Pathways + Erotic Embodiment with Chris Muse](#)

Explore ways to tune into your subtle pleasure power with [The Power of SUBTLE Pleasure](#) from The Ghee Spot

More pleasure and what it has to do with the teachings of Tantra in the [Pleasure Activism - Do It Now!](#) podcast episode

In the LOVEFIT archives, check out the months of [December 2018: Body Love and Weight Balancing](#), [February 2019: Polarity and Relationship Bubbles](#) and August 2019: [Pleasure](#) for more practices and content

Download and keep the [Womb Heart Meditation](#) - listen with headphones to get the most out of the binaural beats

To learn about how to avoid disconnection in relationships, whether with lover, family, or friends check out the [What's Love Got To Do With It](#) blog post

[The Pelvic Floor & Pleasure](#) is a great article on how to optimize pleasure and pelvic floor health

Add some sweetness to your month with the [Aphrodisiac Sweet Potato Sex Bomb Brownie Bites](#) recipe

For more on true acceptance for your inner child and channeling self-love, check out the blog post [Self-Love? How About We Start With Self-Like](#)

UP NEXT IN OUR MARCH
ISSUE:

Cleansing
and Detoxification



Don't forget to follow us on Instagram for more recipes and Divine Feminine wisdom [@katiesilcox_shaktischool](#)

Special Thanks



Jelena Nikolajevic LAc of **BOKETTO WELLNESS** is a licensed acupuncturist, advocate for optimal self care, and the founder of Boketto Wellness. Jelena is dedicated to the intention for Boketto to be a space that provides exceptional services and thoughtful apothecary items that support a vibrant life.

Operating as an online and brick and mortar business in Richmond, Virginia with a handful of modern wellness goods—that continues to rapidly expand. With a carefully selected curation of handcrafted products for pantry, body, and home. Boketto also carries a wide selection of local brands and are always looking for ways to collaborate with artists, makers, teachers and designers to develop meaningful products and experiences for our customers.

Visit bokettowellness.com to shop online or consider popping in to 106 North Vine Street in Richmond, VA.



Indu Arora is a scholar and therapist of Ayurveda and Yoga. She considers herself a student for a lifetime. Indu has been sharing about Yoga philosophy, Yoga Therapy, Meditation, and Ayurveda since 1999. She believes that living in harmony with our inner nature and the Nature beyond is the key to health. Health is not an objective but a holistic approach where body and mind are integrated with the inner Self. Indu is also a part of the Shakti School faculty.

To learn more about Indu and SOMA visit:
www.yogsadhna.com/content/indu_arora
www.yogsadhna.com/shop/details/yogis_glow
Use Code **Shaktizo** for 20% off **Yogis Glow** face powder



Carly Banks is a certified Ayurvedic Wellness Coach and Yoga Health Coach and the creator of The Habit Ayurveda, a collection of online courses and products for the Ayurvedic lifestyle. Carly teaches simple daily routines that support our mental, physical, and emotional well-being. As a working mother of two young children, Carly is no stranger to feeling “busy”, and knows the importance of creating healthy habits that feel easy to implement. Certified through the Shakti School, Carly promotes self-care techniques backed by thousands of years of exploration. No new gimmicks. No equipment. Just simple actions for being well.

To learn more visit www.thehabit.net or follow [@thehabitayurveda](https://www.instagram.com/thehabitayurveda) on Instagram and on Pinterest



Dr. Katy Jane is a spiritual guide, teacher and author. Her expertise is to guide you on a journey toward deeper self-awareness, greater inner peace, and wiser choices aligned with your most authentic life purpose—especially when you're at a crucial turning point in your life, practice and teaching.

She is the author of *Awakening with Sanskrit* and *Sanskrit for Yogis: An Introduction to Nada, the Yoga of Sacred Sound*. As a scholar in Sanskrit, the Vedas and classical yoga she helps others access the wisdom teachings at the core of their own practice. And, she also specializes in helping seekers at crucial transitions develop successful life strategies with the guiding light of Jyotisha Astrology. She currently lives between India and the USA where she teaches Sanskrit courses, Jyotisha (Vedic astrology) coaching, and leads spiritual retreats to the holy Himalayas.

To learn more about Katy visit www.drkatyjane.com

Designed and Edited with LOVE by The Shakti School Team

For more visit TheShaktiSchool.com