

Luc De Schepper

How to Dine Like the Devil and Feel Like a Saint

Reading excerpt

[How to Dine Like the Devil and Feel Like a Saint](#)

of [Luc De Schepper](#)

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INTRODUCTION

"The cure of many diseases is unknown to the physicians of Hellas, because they are ignorant of the whole, which ought to be studied also; for the part can never be well unless the whole is well... This is the great error of our day in the treatment of the human body, that the physicians separate the soul from the body."

These words of wisdom come down to us from the Greek philosopher, Plato. Perhaps the most astonishing aspect of its message, delivered in 427 BC., is that it could have been said by any modern day philosopher. Over the intervening millennia, medical practitioners have continued to dissect and treat the human body as if its parts somehow operated independently of one another. As for the emotions and the soul at the core of our humanity, they are relegated to the care of a completely different breed of healer.

During the 1990s the world will face a staggering array of health problems, most of which will defy easy solutions. New illnesses and complications will test the ingenuity of scientists, doctors, and patients alike. Paradoxically, however, there is some cause for hope. Among the population there is growing recognition that many of our most serious maladies are self-inflicted, the result of too much alcohol, too much food, too many drugs, cigarettes, and indiscriminate sex.

Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathic medicine and, in my eyes, a true medical genius, proclaimed in his *Organon of the Healing Art* (1810):

"those diseases are inappropriately named chronic which persons incur who expose themselves continually to avoidable noxious influences, who are in the habit of indulging in injurious liquors, or aliments... These states of health, which persons bring upon themselves disappear spontaneously, under an improved mode of living, and they cannot be called chronic diseases."

Westerners generally regard a person as being well so long as she or he is not declared sick. However, almost always, by the time a disease is detected by a person or a doctor, it has already progressed a long way. At that point, the real causes are usually in

the relatively distant past, where some breach of harmony and state of lowered resistance invited viruses and microbes to gain the upper hand.

Ultimately, we all need to think in terms of promoting well-being and preventing illness, rather than waiting for the onset of disease to mount a defense. For some practitioners this has always been the goal. And, indeed, we have seen a recent renaissance in this viewpoint. Clearly, the attuned physician of the '90s must also serve as a wellness advisor and a lifestyle expert.

Such a position is demanded by the state of conventional modern medicine. For all the technological miracles it is able to perform, many medical experts have become skeptical of the proliferation of expensive high-tech treatments. Many of these modalities seem to be randomly allowed and practiced in different states, and there are frightening implications when the type of therapy one is allowed to receive in one state can be more aggressive than in another.

Even more astonishing than significant differences in treatment patterns is the fact that those who receive less radical therapies often do better than those treated more "aggressively." Two hundred years ago, Hahnemann's ideal treatment was to find the "most gentle treatment, the treatment that would disturb the Vital Energy the least."

Despite all of our technological advances, you might be surprised to learn that most doctors' response to patient disease is based more on intuition than on scientifically-valid test results. Surging health care costs (and, therefore, a lack of health insurance for many patients) is beginning to change all that.

Full of Life

If we were to follow Plato's advise, each person would become an active participant in her or his own health plan. My book *Full of Life* teaches each of us how to discover the time bombs in our bodies and how to deactivate them before they can do their worst damage. Patients have to realize that recognizing the "triggering factors of illness," as they are described in *Full of Life*, is vital to the success of any treatment plan ultimately decided upon.

Full of Life extensively discusses the various groups of triggering factors that you, as a diligent Sherlock Holmes, must uncover as the culprits on your way to solving the mystery of your own well-being. Of all these culprits, the one we have the most control over is our diet. I recently read that Julia Child laments the spreading fear of consuming butter, cream, saturated fats, and cholesterol.

In my opinion, she doesn't know the half of it. There is also plenty of justified anxiety concerning the abundance of hormones, pesticides, coloring substances, toxins, and other additives--all in one dish—that threaten to ruin more than just our appetites.

The Age of the Quick Fix

What is life, and what should be done with our individual piece of it? Do we really behave as if we want to enjoy rewarding, decent lives filled with good humor and good health? Do we understand the connectedness--the holism—of all things? Or do we, too, see the brain as separate from the spine, the heart separate from the soul? Do we take responsibility for ourselves, understanding that we reap what we sow, or do we blame society for not providing the bounties we think should rightfully be ours?

At times our childish mentality can spawn unrealistic expectations of life and the world around us. Specifically, we are increasingly addicted to the quick, the painless, and the convenient.

Perhaps the best example of our appetite for quick solutions can be seen in our response to the weight crisis. Today, a record-breaking 30 million Americans are at least 20 percent overweight, this according to the American Medical Association. At any given moment 40 percent of all American adults are involved in some type of weight-loss plan. According to the best estimates, however, barely five percent of these dieters will be able to maintain their weight loss permanently.

Losing weight is a big business, and growing. Yet the \$33,000,000,000 (that's billions) Americans spend annually to shed pounds bring poor and sometimes life-threatening results. For example, there is a worrisome trend away from exercise and toward so-called "fast" diets, which ignore nutritional safety. Liquid diets have become a crash course for millions. "Slim" companies are hawked and endorsed by high-profile celebrities whose weight losses mean big gains for the shake-makers. In fact, in just one year, 20 million Americans spend almost \$1 billion on medically-supervised and over-the-counter liquid-diet products. And still, we don't really know if this self-induced liquid-formula starvation is safe; curiously, there is a paucity of governmental regulation to reduce the users' risk. Moreover, users often go on binges, relying on the "miracle" liquid to repair the damage. As a result, liquid dieters haven't really done anything to improve their eating habits and, unless they drink the powder for the rest of their lives, will inevitably regain the weight.

The craze for miracle diets is supported and demonstrated on the magazine racks at the check-out lanes of your local market. You can't miss those wonderful promises on the covers: "Lose 30 pounds in 30 days!" I have always suspected that a good chunk of those 30 pounds must come from brain cell attrition. Otherwise, how could people be so gullible as to believe that miracle diets work? After all, there is a new one hitting the bookstores every month, but the problem hasn't gone away, has it?

So, give up the quest for your "miracle diet." **There isn't one!**

Losing weight requires commitment and a willingness to be responsible, make changes, and take risks. Only a long-term maintenance weight-loss program (often designed by the patient herself) will make a lasting difference. On the other hand, the yo-yo dieters, are caught up in the gain-lose-gain pattern because they view their succession of diets as harsh, restrictive, and dull. It's no wonder they go back to overeating!

A Word on Motivation

Why did I write this book?

As a physician trained in traditional Western medicine as well as Eastern and alternative medicines (acupuncture, homeopathy, and supplement therapy), I am in a good position to compare the efficacy of different approaches. Western medicine views our health problems as an ongoing war against disease. It uses toxic chemicals and a surgical knife to win the battle. It is a barbaric form of medicine that has been refined and enhanced through technology, but its essential philosophy (man versus nature) remains unchanged.

As a vitalist and an holistic practitioner, I prefer to promote health and wellness, not disease. True, radiation and chemotherapies kill cancer cells, but they also simultaneously decrease the patient's vital energy; this is expressed through hairless, chronic diarrhea, opportunistic infections, and so on.

As a Western doctor, I am familiar with the attitude that we can control the body, that as physicians we are ordained to be commanders over your body. But as an holistic doctor, I ask: how much more sense does it make for me to become the teacher of my patients? This is the better way, I know. If I try to command you, or even if you try to command yourself, we will only generate resistance. We will, in the end, only strengthen that which we set out to weaken. Only a true understanding of the interrelationships of all things can bring about permanent change.

I want to educate you because I believe that health does not come necessarily from the treatment itself, but from the healing abilities within you. An effective remedy is one that supports and strengthens the patient's own healing abilities. We need to become more aware of the factors that preserve health, not only with the agents of disease. When we understand the factors that work synergistic with the preservation of our Vital Energy, we come to understand our ultimate responsibility for our own health.

When this happens, we become our own health-care professional; we're in the business of preventive medicine.

This is where my diet book comes in. I am offering you, the reader, a valuable tool, one that will serve as a starting point on your path to become full of life. This cookbook is not about improving strength and fitness, per se; it's designed for anyone who wants to prevent the breach of balance that leads one down the path to illness. This is a healing book, too, in the sense that it provides you, the reader, with a clear pathway to positive action and lasting results.

No matter the state of your health, this cookbook will help you reach your next level of energy. Reading it and working with its principles and menus, you will soon realize that this approach is different than anything else out there. In addition to a very well-balanced, day-by-day recipe plan for a six-week period, this book describes the daily bodily changes each person will undergo. These body changes, sometimes perceived as very uncomfortable, can be mitigated with a variety of supplements and homeopathic remedies. These are outlined for each step of the diet. This book also teaches the reader to recognize objective symptoms, thus enabling the patient to recognize the unfolding of the process.

Above all, this is an extremely positive book. I am not interested in reciting a litany of horror stories. In fact, I believe that eating is one of life's greatest pleasures. But to keep the pleasure from leading us toward some future nightmare, we must learn to eat well and eat wisely. And remember: food is not the only hazard in our lives that we have control over; we also can limit the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drug consumption, unsafe working conditions, and lack of exercise.

We just have to understand how it all fits together: **Life, Joy, Love.**

Start Here, Start Now

We all know the different types of eaters. There are the so-called Health Nuts, who limit their intake of animal fats, eating only "organically-grown" foods, plenty of vegetables, grains, and fruits while avoiding all sugar and additives. At the opposite extreme is the meat-and-potato consumer, whose idea of a good meal includes sizable portions of sausage, bacon, ham, hot dogs, and a range of high-cholesterol foods at every opportunity.

Vegan or beef-lover, there are further categories of eaters, such as the "meal skippers," who will skip breakfast and sometimes lunch to keep last night's late snacking from increasing their waist size. Then, there are the "hurried eaters," who are inclined to

eat frozen prepared meals, snack foods, soft drinks, and the road delicate cuisine of our modern fast-food restaurants.

No matter what type of eater you are, by following the guidelines in this book you will enjoy healthier dining and make some significant improvement in your life. Because, who doesn't want to be full of life, from the morning on?

The Full of Life program is divided into three phases. I have provided each of these stages with an ample smorgasbord of delicious recipes.

1) Cleansing Phase: Lasting four weeks, this crucial period is out-lined along with a treasure trove of information on how to get yourself through the most uncomfortable symptoms. However, you will never, in fact, feel "deprived" since the recipes are delicious and easy to prepare.

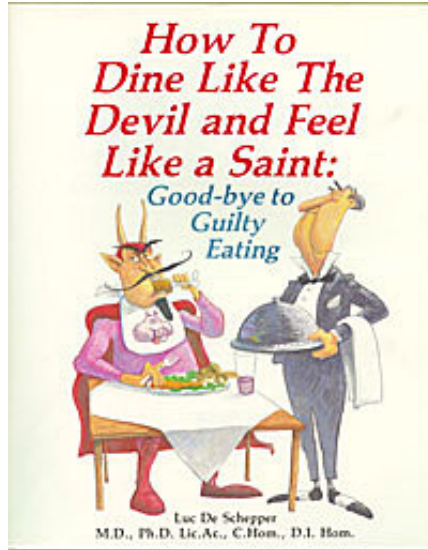
2) Stabilization Phase: During the next two weeks, helpful supplements and homeopathic remedies support your body in its changes and make the ongoing transition easier.

3) Full-of-Life Phase: The goal and the reward all in one, I have outlined how you will feel at this point, what supplements you will need to maintain this energetic stage, and how to be alert for symptoms of decreased health and possible return to previous stages.

In this book, I have also taken into account our different lifestyles. Perhaps you have business-dinner obligations or you have trouble handling family members who are "food pushers." The chapter, "*Life on the Road*," tells you how to navigate your ship of health through these minefields without either weakening or becoming overly frustrated.

Modern times have indeed created a real need for fast, healthy prepared meals. After a hard days' work, you may well not have the energy nor the desire to spend another two hours in your kitchen. The chapter, "*Cooking in the Fast Lane*," offers valuable, proven tips and recipes that will carry you through those hard times while still eliciting admiring looks and appreciative words from family and friends.

And don't worry. I have not forgotten those special times of the year. Holidays, birthdays, and special occasions demand a more fanciful and elaborate menu. The chapter, "*It's Parry Time*," offers a range of wonderful ideas for entertaining family and guests without threat of being accused of preparing something that is too dull.



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Goodbye to Guilty Eating

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