

## FOOD is THY MEDICINE

*by Robin Roberts*

Diabetes has afflicted my 57 year life physically, emotionally and spiritually for the last 23 years. My wife and daughter have been victimized by a moody lethargic husband and father because of my battle to maintain correct and stable blood sugar. Diagnosed as a Type 2 diabetic, it became increasingly more difficult to control my blood sugar even through a low carbohydrate, high protein diet and daily injecting 15 units of Regular and 10 units of Lantus insulin.

As the years went by, my dire situation became a personal battle to find the right solutions. I knew the quality of my life would decrease with the lack of happiness of enjoying a family life in Tennessee. I researched and tried natural supplements that promised to help but nothing had any lasting positive effect on my abnormal blood sugar. As a caregiver, my income was very low and trying expensive supplements always added to my financial hardship and increased tensions with my wife.

Seven years ago I vented my frustrations at a forum for diabetics. A response came back from a doctor in Singapore. He introduced me to a Chinese herbal formula called Combetic, designed for Type 2 diabetics. After three days on Combetic, my blood sugar was easier to manage and I gained some hope for lasting recovery. After a month, I lost 15 pounds and I did not have the same effective blood sugar normalization of other Type 2 diabetics taking Combetic. Although we became distributors of Combetic, it was bittersweet success for me personally. Many of our customers were getting relief from their abnormal blood sugar but I had to stop taking Combetic because of the excessive weight loss and lack of effectiveness. This decision put me back into my prison and a renewed path searching for the right answers.

Five years ago, I sought the advice from a new doctor. He gave me a C-peptide blood test to measure the amount of insulin my pancreas produced. On a scale of 1 to 5, my test result was .05. My doctor diagnosed me as an adult onset type 1 diabetic. It was then I finally knew I had the worst form of diabetes and was being treated by a medical profession that knew of no definite causes or cures.

Three years ago, a friend recommended me to a Naturopathic doctor in Florida that had success with alleviating Type 1 diabetes. As we talked over the phone, we became friends and he assured me he could find out what caused the disease, how he could treat it and cure me. Skeptical, but with a glimmer of hope, he began treating me by alleviating parasites that attacked my pancreas and recommended healthier eating habits to aid in pancreas recovery. After eight months, I was still unable to decrease the insulin usage although it was easier to manage my blood sugar.

Over decades of struggle and heartache, my family, friends and my faith in God faded. In my professional life, it became my therapy to help the disabled because they had physical and emotional problems that made my problems seem very small. My work as a caregiver helped me to rebuild a more positive attitude but I was still crying on the inside because of my disease.

My seemingly impossible solutions for two of my life's primary problems, a better paying position and the recovery of my health became overwhelming. Then my daughter graduated from high school and moved out, my mother gave me a small inheritance, a client gave me money to pay it forward and I sold my old truck, all to pay for my trek to search for a lasting solution.

The opportunity to find the answers that always eluded me had begun and I took off from Tennessee and headed to Baja.

I always loved networking over the internet because of my interest in connecting to people involved in sustainable food production, water and shelter projects. In my soul, I knew that natural solutions were the right way to effect healthy changes in my life and in protecting the environment. In early 2012, I connected with Erik Cutter, a like-minded entrepreneur in California who started a company called EnviroIngenuity to promote more sustainable living practices.

Erik was focusing his energy on locally-grown, high-yield hydroponic vertical food production and he sent me pictures of his projects employing the Verti-Gro system, a proven hydroponic vertical farm process in use in Florida and featured at the Epcot Center. Erik is a consummate marketer and is quite stubborn and headstrong, but he is a "do-er" with a track record of building successful companies. Erik invited me to visit and I took him up on his offer on my way back from Baja.

I was immediately intrigued with his Alegría Fresh Farm growing thousands of hydroponic greens and vegetables in an energy efficient, automated way. I never knew such a system existed. Blue Kale, Red and Green Romaine, Spinach, Swiss Chard, Arugula and Amaranth to name a few, were growing vertically and thriving. The scene depicted a wonderland for me and showed me how we all could have access to fresh, natural food. I enthusiastically offered to get involved and soon I was planting seeds, watering and learning anything Erik was willing to teach me. Up at sunrise and down at sunset, Erik became my friend and mentor. Having a huge work load each day, he appreciated my help developing the first commercial hydroponic vertical farm on the West Coast.

I wanted to earn more, so Erik offered me room and board and a small income if I could handle the demanding 10-12 hour days, 7 days a week to help with the start-up. Erik and his partner Jessica were also accomplished chefs and were pioneering a new raw diet, with an emphasis on using the produce they were growing and preparing it so that it tasted out of this world. I never knew raw food could taste so good! I was very keen to find out how this new diet might help me with my diabetes.

As a fledgling farmer, the long days went by fast and I was quickly challenged by Erik and Jessica to change my eating habits, and improve my stamina and outlook by incorporating less and preferably no animal fats in my diet and focus on consuming raw foods prepared from everything grown on the Alegría Farm. I was soon enjoying the amazing food and was being held accountable to stay the course on a strict raw diet in an attempt to reduce the insulin I was taking and if possible, allow my pancreas to start the healing process. At the farm and at home, Erik was an unrelenting and often intimidating mentor making sure I did not retreat back to my bad eating habits. He also demanded I learn to become an effective, efficient farmer if I was to stay on his team. I found myself a captive student required to consistently perform well giving 110% effort in everything I thought, said and did. Excuses were not met with any sympathy. Erik is tough, but it's because he really cares and he does not ask anyone to do anything he does not do or cannot learn to do.

His drive and passion positively affects everything he does and everyone around him. I figured if I could survive this boot camp, I knew my life could be transformed by learning a new cutting-edge model of healthy food production. I then learned Erik had a background in biochemistry and oncology and came from a family that practiced healthy eating and maintaining balance his entire life.

The miracle I always dreamed and prayed about finally happened!

Within 10 days of being on my fresh nutrient-rich raw power diet, I noticed my blood sugar was stable and I did not need as much regular insulin. Being held accountable to eat raw produce and consume lots of small portions often, plus the increased physical work, I was

able to stop injecting regular insulin by day 12. I now eat 4-6 times a day in smaller quantities in order to help maintain stable blood sugar levels without the roller-coaster effect.

By the 3<sup>rd</sup> week it became clear that freshly consumed food is thy medicine! Now my pancreas has the powerful nutrients it needs to begin recovery. I am in awe of this dramatic rescue and I have found a renewed mission to help others grow their own food for health restoration. This is now a paramount priority. I thank my Heavenly Father for his guidance and I am grateful and honored to be on the Alegría team with Erik and Jessica to promote the "farmacology" aspects of the Alegría Fresh Farm.

I've learned to never give up on your health or any of life's challenges. We were all created to love others and we all possess the tools to effect change, growth and to accomplish what we once thought was impossible.

For more info on the Alegría Farm, go to [www.AlegriaFresh.com](http://www.AlegriaFresh.com).

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