



# SPRING CONFERENCE

March 8-10, 2019 • Mars Hill University

## **THINKING BIG: Nature's Recipe for Cultural Wellness, Healing, & Resilience**

A somatic exploration that seeks to define thriving cultural wellness & resilience as a diversity of ingredients from ritual to reciprocity to reconnection. Chris draws from her Cuban roots + ecology, permaculture, natural burial, holistic food, & intersectional community.

**Christina Bouza** is a food justice activist, permaculturist, holistic chef, founder (and owner 2010-2016) of Cubana Social, a Brooklyn, NY organic restaurant, leader of mindful social justice retreats, natural burial advocate, artist, musician, lover of wilderness and diversity, and Cuban-American. PDC MesoAmerican Institute, Guatemala; Soul Fire Farm BLFI Alumna

### **OVERVIEW / DEFINITIONS**

#### **Nature's Recipe for Cultural Wellness**

##### **(RE)CONNECTION**

- Land & land based culture
- Ideology/ethics
- Self & community
- Diversity, Race & Intersectionality

##### **RITUAL**

- Definition
- Mayan day calendar
- Ceremony
- Circle Gathering
- Tea Sharing
- Altar, Ancestors
- Natural Burial
- Food

##### **RECIPROCITY**

##### **RESILIENCE**

#### **Apply in Our Lives**

#### **Journal**

#### **Where I am From Poem / Worksheet**

#### **Recipes**

## DEFINITIONS

What is culture?

What is cultural wellness?

Consumer/Media Culture vs. Land based Culture

How does nature inform culture? Or how does culture mimic nature?

Music → bird song

Ritual → sun & moon

Community interdependence → ecosystem

etc.

How can we reconnect to nature and nurture a land based culture?

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## RECONNECTION

### Ideology/Ethics

Permaculture - *aspires to replicate the grace of nature as its means to produce food, medicine and other organic matters*

3 ethics principles of permaculture - Earth care, people care, setting limits yield abundance

<http://itallcomesdowntoearth.com/Setting-Limits-Yields-Abundance>

### Self & Community

LIVING/EMBODYING TRUTH:

"Begins with awareness of self - where do you come from - your ancestors, lineage, traditions, the plants, animals, natural phenomenons, smells, sounds, foods, peoples, and environment of place, circumstances and traumas; how you as individual deeply interconnect to this universe web. Then who you are in this moment - your contributions, layers, desires, affects, dreams, your struggles. Importantly then, acceptance of this past and present whole you. From this place of acceptance, a leap further to embrace full self love to meet open doors for inner listening, to define self authenticity - values, principles, virtues, gifts, uniqueness. While the gentle and fluid listening remains on-going, from here self expression of truth emerges - wild, loud, proud, honest, realized, uniquely individual while interconnected, a contribution, beautiful whatever size, shape, or flavor. Truth is you and you are enough." christina bouza

AN EXAMPLE (adapted from Robin Wall Kimmerer)

A wild strawberry, hails from uncountable years of reciprocity, from soil, microcosmic beings, indigenous sheppards, and interdependence with wild diverse species. Strawberry lives its truth by exclaiming - I'M RED! I'm full and heart shaped. My existence, my expression, my truth is an offering, a small humble gift of sweet delectable nourishment.

LOVE OF SELF, COMMUNITY, RELATIONSHIP ANARCHY

Relationship anarchists reject hierarchies. They reject them in all their social relationships, including their romantic, intimate and platonic relationships. It is the belief that relationships should not be bound by rules aside from what the people involved mutually agree upon

<https://www.bitchmedia.org/article/love-time-political-resistance/transform-valentines-day-lessons-audre-orde-and-octavia>

<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/andie-nordgren-the-short-instructional-manifesto-for-relationship-anarchy>

<https://theestablishment.co/relationship-anarchy-takes-the-judgment-out-of-love-96a9a7af9954>

<https://crimethinc.com/2000/09/11/join-the-resistance-fall-in-love>

## RACE & INTERSECTIONALITY

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intersectionality>

18 books every white ally should read

[www.thechangeagency.org/campaigners-toolkit/links/18-books-every-white-ally-should-read/](http://www.thechangeagency.org/campaigners-toolkit/links/18-books-every-white-ally-should-read/)

Dismantling Racism in the food system <https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/DR1Final.pdf>

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## RITUAL

Google Dictionary result for "ritual" /ˈriːtʃ(ə)l/

noun: **ritual**; plural noun: **rituals**

1. a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order.
2. "the role of ritual in religion" the prescribed order of performing a ceremony, especially one characteristic of a particular religion or church.
3. a series of actions or type of behavior regularly and invariably followed by someone. "her visits to Joy became a ritual"

*Note how the first 2 definitions are more specific than the third which one might find more thorough and useful in its broadness as a main definition. The first two both mention organized religion and as something that occurs by prescribed order of an authority figure rather than something anyone having agency might invent or emerge organically autonomously*

*I call this mainstream culture that we inhabit, a consumer or media culture.*

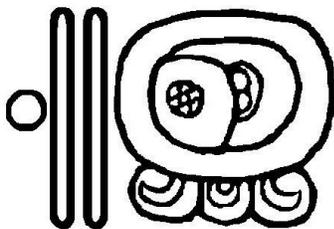
*Here media tells us what a ritual is, presenting a hierarchy of definitions where religion and authority are dominant and connection to nature, ancestors, spirit, self realization, is absent.*

**Here's a 4th definition I propose - a series of actions or type of behavior regularly or variably followed as informed by nature or that emerges organically. "The sun rose every morning and they watched with awe and meditated." christina bouza**

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## MAYA ASTROLOGY - THE ENERGIES OF THE DAYS

11 TOJ (9TH MARCH 2019) [MARK ELMY thefourpillars.net](http://MARK_ELMY.thefourpillars.net)



Balance always has to be restored in life, and in the past few days the energies have been very giving. Today is the day to redress the balance, to make payment for what you have received. After the empowerment of 9 Kej and the abundance of 10 Q'anil, the energy of the day 11 Toj gives us the opportunity to pay our way. Whilst we might make

beautiful, colourful, lengthy ceremonies here, it doesn't have to be like that. Just lighting a little candle and saying thank you can be enough to keep in balance.

It may be that payment goes out in many directions today, in one way or another. There are two ways of approaching it, either you can wait for old debts to find you, or you can take a proactive approach and make an effort to find and resolve them. Today you might find a few more than you bargained for, and some that you had forgotten. Hopefully you received enough abundance on 10 Q'anil to give some back, if not, the energy of 11 **Toj** may bring you a reminder.

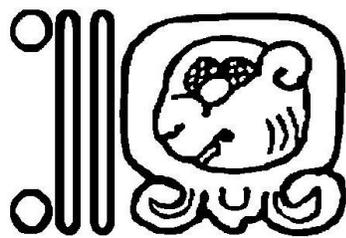
The nawal **Toj** represents offerings and payment. It is part of the name Tojil, a Mayan god who gave fire to the people, although this was not a free gift. Tojil asked in return for sacrifice to be made. This is a day of payment and sacrifice, a day to resolve debts, both in the physical and spiritual realms. **Toj** is the nawal of the sacred fire, and it is to the fire that we make offerings in order to burn away what would commonly be known as karmic debts. In this way we restore balance, we bring our accounts back to zero.

**Toj** carries with it a form of divine protection, which is enhanced through selfless acts. These acts might involve a sacrifice of our time or energy in order to strengthen our community. We can choose to act or we can choose to ignore, but be aware – ignoring an opportunity to make a payment on a **Toj** day might bring a ill fortune, the removal of the protection. Payment should be made with an open heart, thanks might not be quickly forthcoming, and may not come at all. Your sacrifice could be something as simple as picking up litter in your neighbourhood, it doesn't have to be something elaborate.

The number 11 is a high and odd number. This gives it some rather challenging properties, although it can come good in the end. Imagine you visit Ireland and are transfixed by the green of the hills, then you go to Morocco and are awed by the red of the buildings, then you go to the Caribbean and are moved by the turquoise sea. You return home and paint a beautiful picture using those colours. When you were in Ireland you didn't know you were going to paint that masterpiece, you may not have even known why you were there. This is how 11 works. You are sure you need to be doing something, but unsure why. You are collecting experience through many wanderings.

## MAYA ASTROLOGY - THE ENERGIES OF THE DAYS

12 TZ'I (10TH MARCH 2019) [MARK ELMY thefourpillars.net](http://MARK.ELMY.thefourpillars.net)



Life lessons may serve to enhance your sense of faith and loyalty today. This may prove useful as the high power of this day may put something irresistible right in front of you.

There are different properties associated with each number, but there are also some rules of thumb which act as constants. One of these is that the numbers from 9 to 13 are thought of as having a great deal of strength. Here we see a strong number combined with the nawal **Tz'i**, which has some very strong properties, giving this day the possibility to be rather spectacular for either the right or the wrong reasons.

What we have learned in our lives may have shown us where qualities like faith and loyalty get us. Sometimes we misplace them, we trust people who betray us, we give our loyalty to companies who use us. We get a few kicks along the way which are supposed to help us

discern, so that the next time, we know where to place our trust. Sometimes the lessons are really harsh and make us question our faith in our life path, could we really have got it so wrong? Sometimes betrayal is of our own doing, an opportunity presents itself (or herself, or himself) which just seems too right to be wrong. Our loyalty to our commitments disappears from the thought process, then we have to deal with the consequences. Today may be a day where an situation such as this occurs.

However, the other side of this day has great potential. The strength of the energy of this day helps us to call on all of our life experience to bolster our faith in the world. The energy of the nawal **Tz'i** comes to restore our faith through bringing these life lessons into context. This is a day to use these life experiences to bring out your ability to trust in your path, to show your loyalty and most importantly of all, to love unconditionally.

**Tz'i** is possibly the nawal with the most colourful reputation. Some describe it as the nawal of “sex, drugs and rock and roll” and it has the possibility to live up to that label. One of the functions an Aj Q'ij (Mayan spiritual guide) performs is divination, usually using red seeds called Tz'ite. If a question is asked about a relationship and **Tz'i** comes up in the reading, it is seen as a sign of infidelity. **Tz'i** is instinctual, and closes its ears to reason when it gets an idea, particularly when it is hormonally driven. This is the worst possible aspect of **Tz'i** and when it falls down, it does so spectacularly, which is why it tends to be remembered for those events.

However, what is sometimes forgotten is the other side of **Tz'i**, which is the side more frequently displayed. Just as **Tz'i** can represent infidelity, it also represents faith and loyalty, and just as it can be the trouble maker, it also represents law. It is the nawal of police, lawyers and judges. **Tz'i** is unwavering faith, unconditional loyalty. The totem animal of **Tz'i** is the dog, and through the actions of dogs we can understand both the loyalty aspect, and the instinctual. **Tz'i** is also the guide and protector on life's path, ensuring that its charge travels safely. It is a day when your faith or loyalty may be tested, where your instincts are stimulated. The positive traits of this day give rise to some of the greatest displays of friendship, but be aware that your loyalty may be tested by temptation.

The number 12 is the penultimate number. In some ways it can be seen as the last Earthly number, the number 13 representing the spirit world. We travelled through the mortal world with 1 through 6, then the other world with 7 through 12. In this way 12 can be seen as a point of bringing all of the experiences into one bundle for presentation to the spirit world as we step into 13. As such, the number 12 brings a wealth of experience into one place, it is rather like writing an autobiography. It is totality, all that is, brought together.

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## **CONTINUING ON RITUAL:**

### **Robin Wall Kimmerer speaks of ceremony, ritual, and reciprocity with land and food.**

“The ceremonies that persist—birthdays, weddings, funerals— focus only on ourselves, marking rites of personal transition. [...] We know how to carry out this rite for each other and we do it well. But imagine standing by the river, flooded with those same feelings as the Salmon march into the auditorium of their estuary. Rise in their honor, thank them for all the ways they have enriched our lives, sing to honor their hard work and accomplishments against all odds, tell them they are our hope for the future, encourage them to go off into the world to grow, and pray that they will come home. Then the feasting begins. Can we extend our bonds of celebration and support from our own species to the others who need us? Many indigenous traditions still recognize the place of ceremony and often focus their celebrations on other species and events in the cycle of the seasons. In a colonist society the ceremonies that endure are not about land; they're about family and culture, values that are transportable from the old country. Ceremonies for the land no doubt existed there, but it seems they did not survive emigration in any

substantial way. I think there is wisdom in regenerating them here, as a means to form bonds with this land.” — Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*

### **Thich Nacht Han speaks of reconnecting to the universe through a cup of tea -**

“Something as simple and ordinary as drinking a cup of tea can bring us great joy and help us feel our connection to the Earth. The way we drink our tea can transform our lives if we truly devote our attention to it. Sometimes we hurry through our daily tasks, looking forward to the time when we can stop and have a cup of tea. But then when we’re finally sitting with the cup in our hands, our mind is still running off into the future and we can’t enjoy what we’re doing; we lose the pleasure of drinking our tea. We need to keep our awareness alive and value each moment of our daily life. We may think our other tasks are less pleasant than drinking tea. But if we do them with awareness, we may find that they’re actually very enjoyable. Drinking a cup of tea is a pleasure we can give ourselves every day. To enjoy our tea, we have to be fully present and know clearly and deeply that we are drinking tea. When you lift your cup, you may like to breathe in the aroma. Looking deeply into your tea, you see that you are drinking fragrant plants that are the gift of Mother Earth. You see the labor of the tea pickers; you see the luscious tea fields and plantations in Sri Lanka, China, and Vietnam. You know that you are drinking a cloud; you are drinking the rain. The tea contains the whole universe.” — [Thich Nhat Hanh](#), [How to Eat](#)

### **Ancestors Prayer:**

“My ancestors, your ancestors, our ancestors, may you rest in peace, may we honor you by respecting each other, trees, birds, soil, all our more than human neighbors with utmost dignity, may we celebrate you by living into your wildest dreams, may we nourish you by nourishing ourselves and our earth, may we heal your traumas by acknowledging them and healing them as our own, may we love you by loving ourselves and each other fully, and may we keep alive your legacy, that is the legacy of our earth, by living our truths.” Christina Bouza

### **Natural Burial**

Natural Burial in Asheville - <https://carolinamemorialsanctuary.org/>

Natural Burial in Florida - <https://www.prairiecreekconservationcemetery.org/>

### **Food**

We all have these bodies we live in right now in this moment - In a way it is our experience that we have been in these bodies our whole lives. In other ways our bodies, complex ecosystems, are constantly changing. Inside us trillions of bacterial cells, fungus, parasites, it’s a whole universe. **And quite literally we are made of what we eat and consume - food, water, air, sunlight, environment, and media.**

In our “modern era” largely we have experienced loss of cultures, of diversity of all kinds, and a grave disconnection from our natural wild environment - where other species, their very being, is a wild expression of self and is a contribution. And where our ancestors for millenia lived, ate, died, and were reborn into this same earth soil that nourishes the plants, foods, and animals we know today.

Many in our time are awaking to realize a sense of loss, a sense of longing to reconnect to something. Indigenous Mayan agroecologist & educator from IMAP, Rony Lec says - “The best way to start to reconnect with nature is through our food. Everyone has to eat. So we can begin there at the table in our house and think about where our food comes from and who is producing it. Agriculture IS culture, this is where our culture was born, this is where we come from.”

Our eldest ancestors watched the rhythm of the night skies. There’s evidence that humans kept track of lunar cycles as early as 25,000 BCE. Ancient cultures developed names for the different lunations that corresponded to the seasons and the natural phenomena that nature replayed in their environment year after year. With the cycles of the moon they planned their crops They lived, worked, and ate with the moon and the stars. That is they ate locally and seasonally, just like all other animate species on our

mother earth. And in doing so they were connected to the wisdom and rhythms of the earth, and they were connected to their ancestors who were buried in the same land they lived and ate from. Everything was connected. Of course this way of living and being isn't only true in the past. It is also true now, as we do not only live a linear history of western civilization, rather multiple realities are true at once. Many indigenous cultures are fighting against global capitalism to continue to live their traditional ways, while others all over the world are coming full circle to this wisdom through the indigenous rooted methods of permaculture, agroecology, and agroforestry.

We may return to this connection with nature through eating local, seasonal, wild, whenever possible, and with intention, mindfulness, gratitude, and in the company of others.

The way we process our food is so important to our health. The word culture itself comes from culture, the cultivation of microorganisms as in a fermentation or of plants for growing in a garden. By process i mean - soaking, sprouting, slow cooking, raw, natural, local- digestibility, healing, cooperative

For many we can trace root traumas with food back to our childhood somewhere, and then we may come to an awareness that trauma was passed down to our parents, through their parents and so on. Healing this relationship with food can both heal our relationship with land and nature, as well as heal our ancestral wounds.

"In Hindu tradition, the first rite of passage occurs when a baby reaches six months old - when he or she eats a mouthful of rice, the first food that is not mother's milk. The rice-eating ceremony is celebrated in the presence of a priest, often in a temple, with a gathering of relatives to witness this important transition in the child's life. Mantras and prayers are said. Such a ceremony reflects a worldview where food is sacred - a blessing and a gift - and being fed is not to be taken for granted. Our [settler colonial/mass media] culture doesn't express this worldview. We look at food as fuel, as something we need to keep going - our Energizer battery. We view food as commodity, something that people need and soa thing that can generate profit. Of course food is fuel and it is a commodity, but that is not all it is. I think many of my teenage struggles with food came as a reaction against the commodification, commercialization and overall undervaluation of food in our culture. If my grandparents had displayed what is often called a Depression-era mentality, maybe I displayed an Excess-era mentality." - Jessica Prentice, Full Moon Feast - Food and the Hunger for Connection

## **RECIPROCITY**

Power in the small, individuals & villages interconnected, interdependent with each other and with neighboring villages, networks, like an ecosystem. Living by asking what can i give? What can i contribute?

## **RESILIENCE**

"A resilient community is one in which diversifies, cultivates and preserves it's love resources. By love resources, I mean present connections to ourselves, our internal ecosystems, our families, village, region, universe and back again. These are ritual, celebration of joy, cooking and eating together, spiritual and intimate relationships with nature, music, dance, gratitude, deep respect and love for mothers and women, and intergenerational connection. It's this that creates solidarity and out of solidarity, a community can invent it's way through any circumstance, whether natural disaster or social construct like racism, authority, gender norms, aesthetics.

It is within healthy love rooted cultures, where resilience is most exemplified.

On the contrary, peoples that do not value these nature derived social traditions, as that which upholds the wellness of a community, one may observe are perpetuating oppressive extractive systems and driving mass extinction of diversity on all levels. i.e European colonization of Americas, mass genocide of indigenous peoples, slavery of African people, modern day wage slavery, media consumer culture, ongoing exploitation, murder, forced diaspora.

Consumer/Media culture forces poverty of people of color everywhere who don't participate in the unethical strategies of competition and hoarding of resources as their means of resilience."

Christina Bouza

## **APPLY IN OUR LIVES**

**So what can we do from here...** living in a culture that didn't practice such ceremony, sacredness, ritual, and direct reciprocity with food, plants, animals, community and land. I believe we can embrace our moment in time without judgement, be kind and loving to ourselves. Gently learn to value our bodies and the legacy we have inherited from our ancestors. We can learn, little by little, tools to integrate in our lives towards reconnection, to honor and love ourselves and our ancestors.

Some of these tools might be:

- Practicing, cultivating love
- Living ones truth
- Earth Care, People Care, Setting Limits Yields Abundance
- Incorporate mindfulness when we eat; invite others to enjoy an intentional meal with us;
- eat a meal 3 to 4 times per day at the same times each day so that your body learns to trust it will receive consistent nourishment;
- Begin to perceive food as a gift from the earth and consider all those who contributed energy so that you could eat it;
- Seek out local farmers markets and local farms- develop relationships with them, learn from them, eat the gifts of the earth from the place in which you live to feel connected and in harmony with your environment;
- Recognize that your body is alive and eat as many living foods as you can - fresh, local, organic, sprouted, cultured, fermented;
- Shift your perception to see food and plants as medicine - everytime you eat is an opportunity to heal and nourish your whole self...
- Incorporate nature based rituals into your life
- Build an altar to honor and connect with your ancestors
- Embrace diversity
- Build relationships with others towards interdependence
- Decrease participation and dependence on products & services aka consumer/media culture
- Consider natural burial

## **WORKSHEET #1: JOURNAL**

What other tools can you think of to make shifts towards land based culture?

What are some rituals or practices your ancestors passed on to you?

What feels important to you about culture in your life?

What feels challenging?

What are some short term goals to deepen living a land based culture?

What are some long term goals?

## WORKSHEET #2 WHERE ARE YOU FROM

Adapted from **Skill in Action: Radicalizing Your Yoga Practice to Create a Just World**

**Book by Michelle Cassandra Johnson**

Where Are You From is based on George Ella Lyon's poem "Where I'm From." It has been used as a template in many settings, and I offer it here as a structure for you to consider how you would define where you come from, how you came to be, taking people, place, nature, and culture into consideration. You may use the template or not It is here as a guide for you.

### **George Ella Lyon - Where I'm From**

I am from clothespins, from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.

I am from the dirt under the back porch. (Black, glistening, it tasted like beets.)

I am from the forsythia bush the Dutch elm whose long-gone limbs I remember as if they were my own.

I'm from fidge and eyeglasses, from Imogene and Alafair.

I'm from the know-it-alls and the pass-it-ons, from Perk Up! And Pipe down!

I'm from He restoreth my soul with a cotton ball mab and ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch, fried corn and strong coffee.

From the finger my grandfather lost to the auger, the eye my father shit to keep his sight.

Under my bed wa a dress box spilling old pictures, a sift of lost faces to drift beneath my dreams.

I am from those moments--snapped before I budded --leaf-fall from the family tree.

### **TEMPLATE: Where I Am From Poem**

Use this template to draft your poem, and then write a final draft to share on blank paper.

I am from \_\_\_\_\_ (specific ordinary item)

From \_\_\_\_\_ and

\_\_\_\_\_ (product name) (product name)

I am from the \_\_\_\_\_ (home description) \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ (adjective) (adjective) (sensory detail)

I am from \_\_\_\_\_, (plant, flower, natural item)

\_\_\_\_\_ (description of above item)

I'm from \_\_\_\_\_ and

\_\_\_\_\_ (family tradition) (family trait)

From \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (name of family member) (another family name) I'm from the \_\_\_\_\_ and

\_\_\_\_\_ description of family tendency) (another one)

From \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (something you were told as a child) (another) I'm from \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ (representation of religion or lack of), (further description)

I'm from \_\_\_\_\_ (place of birth and family ancestry)

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ ( a food item that represents your family) (another one)

From the \_\_\_\_\_ (specific family storey about a specific person and detail )

## REFERENCES:

My teachers: My Cuban Ancestors Abuela Asuncion Bouza & Papi Geo Bouza, my Mom, my queer community, my co-madres, birds, the ficus tree in my backyard growing up, mangroves, Cuba.

AND:

**Soul Fire Farm is a BIPOC-centered community farm committed to ending racism and injustice in the food system.** “We raise and distribute life-giving food as a means to end food apartheid. With deep reverence for the land and wisdom of our ancestors, we work to reclaim our collective right to belong to the earth and to have agency in the food system. We bring diverse communities together on this healing land to share skills on sustainable agriculture, natural building, spiritual activism, health, and environmental justice. We are training the next generation of activist-farmers and strengthening the movements for food sovereignty and community self-determination.” <http://www.soulfirefarm.org/>

**IMAP** The Mesoamerican Permaculture Institute (*Instituto Mesoamericano de Permacultura* – IMAP) is a non-profit organization based in Guatemala. It was founded in 2000 by a group of local people concerned by the serious environmental, social and cultural problems affecting the nation. They established an ecological education center to promote permaculture techniques, local biodiversity conservation, production of organic food, and a seed bank that strives to reconstruct the Mayan seed heritage. <http://imapermaculture.org>

**Atitlan Organics** is a productive Permaculture farm in the village of Tzununa, on the shore of Lake Atitlan, Guatemala. [www.atitlanorganics.com/](http://www.atitlanorganics.com/)

## BOOKS/Readings:

- Braiding the Sweet Grass - Kimmerer (Indigenous wisdom/botany/story/northeast U.S)
- How to Eat - Thich Nhat Hanh (meditation/wellness)
- Full Mean Feast Food & the Hunger for Connection - Jessica Prentice
- 18 books every white ally should read  
[www.thechangeagency.org/campaigners-toolkit/links/18-books-every-white-ally-should-read/](http://www.thechangeagency.org/campaigners-toolkit/links/18-books-every-white-ally-should-read/)
- One Straw Revolution - Masanobu Fukuoka (natural farming/japan/philosophy/dao)
- Healing with Whole Foods - Pitchford (holistic/macrobiotic eastern eating/healing)
- To Change Everything - <https://crimethinc.com/tce> (politics/anarchy)
- Essential Readings [https://www.resistancemanual.org/Essential\\_Readings#Race](https://www.resistancemanual.org/Essential_Readings#Race)
- Dance is a Radical Act -  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-body-knows/201111/dance-is-radical-act>
- Earth at Risk: Building a Resistance Movement to Save the Planet - Jensen
- Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire (theory/radical/activism/philosophy/politics)
- [www.resistancemanual.org/Essential\\_Readings](http://www.resistancemanual.org/Essential_Readings) (large list of social justice readings)
- Dismantling Racism in the food system  
<https://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/DR1Final.pdf>
- Cuba in a Caribbean Perspective: historical review of the position & role of Afro-Cubans in the process of social change <http://www.afrocubaweb.com/eugenegodfried/cubacaribbean.htm>
- Cuba's Food Revolution  
[http://www.foodcomm.org.uk/articles/cubas\\_food\\_production\\_revolution/](http://www.foodcomm.org.uk/articles/cubas_food_production_revolution/)
- Sustainability in Cuba:  
<https://www.treehugger.com/environmental-policy/why-cuba-sustainability-not-accident.html>
- Cuba's newspaper, check it out, see what's in the news there now: <http://www.granma.cu>
- A new book by Margaret Randall, poet & activist on the Cuban revolution's global impact (radical/feminist/left)  
<http://www.margaretrandall.org/EXPORTING-REVOLUTION-CUBA-S-GLOBAL-SOLIDARITY>

## RECIPES

I make my own **homemade milk from seeds!** It's easy to make, affordable, & super healthy! My 1st step was making the transformative health decision 10 yrs ago to eliminate animal milk from my diet. Tough at first, dairy's been proven to be highly addictive, but once out of my system, I felt free from it's grasp! But why tho?! Well, most folks see enormous improvements making this change (I know i did!) like decreased allergies, better digestion, clearer skin, more energy, less congestion, less frequent "colds," weight loss, better hormone/thyroid/immune function, and the list goes on!

There are many alternative milk options: hemp, coconut, macadamia, cashew, etc but my favorite as used in this recipe is **sunflower milk**. Homemade, it retains all of its living nutrients, rather than subject to commercial processing, resulting in nutrient loss and increased acidity. Sunflower seeds happen to be the most affordable, as low as \$3/lb for raw organic!

What's more, sunflower seeds are non allergenic & are extremely rich in essential vitamins and minerals like magnesium, zinc, A, B, selenium, protein, amino acids, & healthy fats. Sunflower seeds milk is especially beneficial for weaning babies, children, pregnant/peri/post menopausal, diabetics, allergies, leaky gut, inflammation, adrenal fatigue, pms, autoimmune disease, nutrient deficiency, thyroid disease, & more.

### SUNFLOWER SEED MILK

#### You'll need:

- Blender or Food Processor
- "Nut Milk Bag" - get at health food store or order online. Large Bowl
- Sealable 32oz jar (or two 16oz)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup - dry raw sunflower seeds (or pumpkin seeds)
- 4 cups – filtered dechlorinated, or mineral water (3 cups for pumpkin)
- Optional:
  - 2 dates, 1 tsp vanilla extract, ½ tsp salt, pinch of cinnamon
  - 1 tsp raw sauerkraut brine or raw apple cider vinegar

#### Process:

1. Rinse well 1 cup sunflower seeds in a small holed strainer
2. Soak the rinsed seeds in filtered water, filling about 1 inch over the top leaving room for expansion for 8 hours. (*optional: add 1 tsp of sauerkraut brine or ACV to the soaking water. The enzymes aid in the soaking process*)
3. After the 8 hours, rinse the seeds again
4. Assuming you have a standard sized blender or food processor, take the rinsed seeds and divide them into 2 equal portions.
5. Put 1 of the portions into the blender and slowly add 2 cups of filtered or mineral water. Blend on high until white and creamy.
6. Place your nut milk bag, opened, in a large bowl (*Line the edges of the bowl securely if possible.*)
7. Pour your mix into the nut milk bag, being careful not to spill any outside of the bag. (*You may need to do this slowly as the liquid might not all fit into the bag, depending on the size of yours.*)
8. Twist the opening of your full bag closed so that no liquid can escape. Now begin to squeeze and massage the milk out of the pores of the bag, straining the "milk" from the pulp.
9. Repeat steps 5-8 with the second portion.
10. Once you've squeezed out every drop from your bag, you've got delicious creamy sunflower milk! The leftover nutrient extracted pulp can be discarded, ideally into your compost.
11. Pour the milk into a sealable jar, drink and save for up to 4 days.
12. Optional – To add some extra flavor, add 1 date, ½ tsp vanilla extract, ½ tsp salt, 2 cups fresh sunflower milk back into your blender. Make sure to rinse any leftover pulp first! Try also adding cinnamon to taste. Start with ½ tsp. Add more if you like. I like a lot of cinnamon. It's helpful for its warming properties in Eastern natural healing.

## KITCHARI

*Ayurvedic/Indian grain porridge. Highly digestible & nutritious. It's a staple for Buddhist monks, hippie health gurus & MGRC volunteers alike! It filled our bellies every morning of camp. Delicious for any meal of the day, topped with homemade seed milk, berries, or veggies, made sweet or savory!*

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of grains (*brown rice, quinoa, or a blend*)
- 1/3 cup legumes (*mung, adzuki, or lentil*)
- 5 cups filtered water
- 2 inch strip of Kombu seaweed (*enriches with minerals*)
- 2 tsp sea, himalayan, or kosher salt
- 1-2 tbs of dry spices (*cinnamon, turmeric, cumin, curry, garam masala, ginger, etc, any combo*)
- Recipe requires a crockpot (*find at any thrift store, craigslist, or your neighbor's house*)

### Process:

1. Measure grains & legumes, mix them together & rinse well in a fine mesh strainer
2. Soak the rinsed mix in filtered water, filling about 1 inch over the top leaving room for expansion for 8 hours. (*optional: add 1 tsp of sauerkraut brine or ACV to the soaking water. The enzymes aid in the soaking process*)
3. After the 8 hours, rinse the mix again, & drain
4. Combine in your crockpot all the ingredients & set to cook on low for approx 8 hours
5. Serve in a bowl & add your favorite toppings!

## WHAT'S WITH ALL THE SOAKING?

Beans, seeds, grains, & nuts are the means by which a plant continues to propagate itself, continue its life cycle, make more plants! Seeds well designed by mama earth for 1. self protection from weather & predators (like us) 2. to enrich the future new plant with nutrients from the soil by pulling in resources from it's external environment. This environment could be the soil... or it could be our stomachs. A raw quinoa or almond possesses what are called anti nutrients- properties that protect itself when they go into your belly, making it difficult for us to digest. They can even strip your gut of nutrients! Since they are destined to become plants, they possess survival tricks to give them the best chance at growing from seed to plant. If we want to survive, even better, thrive, we need tricks of our own too. Many cultures employ tricks, passed down for generations, to naturally process their foods, like soaking, sprouting, and fermentation. When we soak seeds they release/reduce some of the antinutrients, and loosen their shells/skins so they can be removed. Further we can sprout them. Once the seeds have sprouted they have fulfilled the initial stage of their mission to become plants, at which point, those antinutrients have been mostly used up.

**Here's two more simple nutritious easy recipes** that I enjoy eating together & are examples of how I love to mix Caribbean comforts, ingredients, & traditions with Eastern ayurvedic, macrobiotic, & holistic practices.

## SMOKY MISO COLLARD GREENS

*Collards are dark leafy greens primarily grown in warm climates, popular in Southern USA & the Caribbean. They're one of the healthiest of the greens, super rich in all the vitamins & minerals. A great idea to incorporate into your weekly routine!*

### Ingredients

- 1 bunch collard greens (*get em local, get em organic!*)
- 1 tbs raw apple cider vinegar (*ahh the glorious overwhelming health benefits of ACV!*)
- 2 tsp brags liquid aminos (*or low sodium gluten free tamari*)
- 1 tsp organic miso paste (*that sweet fermented umami goodness + b12 & more*)
- ½ tsp garlic powder (*i love me some fresh garlic, but this does the trick well in this recipe*)
- 1 pinch of smoked paprika (*that smokey bacon vibe without the you know*)

- 1 pinch of black pepper (*just a touch for its kick & ayurvedic warming properties*)
- 1 tbs water (*for extra steamy-ness*)
- Note that there is no oil in this dish. It's not necessary & many cooked oils can be toxic, yikes! Avoid it whenever possible.

### Process

1. Wash greens & remove stems (*save for veg stock or mineral broth*)
2. Roughly chop greens into smallish pieces (*no need to be precise, be wild & free!*)
3. Mix all ingredients except greens in a bowl (*into a sultry saucy-ness*)
4. Add greens to wok or large pan, add all the saucy-ness
5. Massage the sauce with both hands into the verdant greens (*this is where the sultry comes in*)
6. Cook on low/medium until they are a darker shade of green, totally wilted, & have fully absorbed the saucy-ness!
7. Enjoy by themselves, as taco filling, on top of kitchari, or with boniato recipe below!

### GARAM MASALA ROASTED BONIATO

*Boniato is a variety of sweet potato grown in tropical warm climates also known as Batata, Korean Sweet Potato, Caribbean Sweet Potato. They're rich in vitamins, antioxidants, & fiber!*

### Ingredients

- 2 Large Boniato
- 2 tsp Garam masala spice blend or if you dont have combine cinnamon, cumin, black pepper. (*these are ayurvedic warming spices*)
- 1 tsp sea, himalayan, or kosher salt
- 2 tbs organic virgin unrefined coconut oil (*only oil i cook with, its better able to withstand high temps than other oils, creating much less toxic carcinogenic effects*)
- 4 tbs water (*keeps em moist & from sticking*)

### Process

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Wash & peel boniatos
3. Cut into small roughly 1 inch cubes (*no need to be precise, be wild & free!*)
4. Add boniato pieces to baking pan
5. Sprinkle with salt & spices & drizzle with coconut oil
6. Mix with hands or spoon to coat all the cubes (*with love*)
7. Add water to just coat bottom of the pan
8. Cook approximately 25 -30 mins (*when you smell the sweet aroma, check on them with a fork, if they're a little golden & pillowy soft, they're ready!*)

### TAKE BACK YOUR HEALTH

Since industrialization, the “convenience of package foods,” fast for-profit restaurants, modern hustling folks with very little time at home, we've replaced many of these healthy tricks that maximize nutrient availability with mechanical and chemical refinement, pasteurization, and heat processing that both dramatically decrease nutrients and cause health damaging side effects. These “convenient” food products are making us and our world sick. Making your own food is a way to take power away from corporations, save money & resources, dramatically improve your health & quality of life, enjoy and share with others, and contribute to the sustainable well being of your environment.