

## The Gift of Health – Quality of Life

“I have quality of life.” This is usually one of the last sentences in a conversation I have with my dear friend Ida. There is a wonderful line in the poem “Growing younger towards death,” by one of my favourite poets, David Whyte. It is a line that describes Ida. Every time I see her she looks younger and more vibrant. Walking behind her, you’d think she is a young woman. “I am strong,” Ida proclaims. “I have more energy than when I was 18.” She phones me with exciting news: “I slept 11 hours last night.” One of the last hurdles in her life: getting enough sleep.

I got to know Ida 10 years ago through an error of mine that turned out to become a treasured friendship. Ida had signed up for one of my workshops that I had to cancel because of a snow-storm. I had called everyone except Ida. The dear women had taken public transit, and then walked up the long and steep driveway to our Centre. Need I say how badly I felt?

At the age of 13, Ida had a mild case of pleurisy and was hospitalized. A young intern, who decided to drain the fluid, punctured her lung. Infection set in and she faced surgery, since there were no antibiotics at that time. This severely compromised her immune system after a month-long stay at the hospital and a year of recuperation. After that, her life was plagued with sleepless nights, fatigue and severe food allergies. Although Ida worked with a Naturopath, her health problems did not end. One day she saw one of my ads in a Toronto Magazine: “IS YOUR BODY TOXIC?” “At age 74, I instinctively knew this was meant for me,” Ida says. She attended my workshop, and learned about living foods. “At that time, I was not about to change my lifestyle, with the high cost of organic food and all, but I decided to try just one recipe and was amazed to find how well I digested it. Soon I was completely raw and organic.” “Now,” she says, “I say that my designer clothes are on the inside. Living Foods have given me boundless energy, and a digestive system that works properly and easily.”

At age 65, Ida joined a yoga centre and at age 76 became a yoga instructor, for seniors. Ida will be 85 years of age next February. “I have quality of life. The living food lifestyle has completely transformed my life.” I call Ida THE GREEN AMBASSADOR. Her sharing enthusiasm is infectious. There isn’t a week that goes by without Ida having invited a person to lunch to find out how delicious recipes prepared with fresh, unprocessed and raw foods can be.

Ida is an incredible inspiration and living proof that we can all have quality of life and opportunity. Her story illustrates that we can all change our lifestyle from the SAD (North American Diet) to one that is life and health giving, no matter what our age.

- Erika Wolff