



June 30, 2019

Quarterly Letter

Welcome to Nourish's first quarterly letter.

Overall, our first three months in existence have been surprisingly good, and feel good. The warm reception and support we have received from the community — from old friends and from all the people we are just meeting — has been inspiring. The atmosphere in the restaurant and among our patrons has been pretty magical. I am surprised at how many people seemed ready for us and our food from the first day we opened. And while our food, and the ideas behind it, will probably always be new to some, our first three months made it clear that Orange County, and my guess is America in general, is ready for this. People are ready for real food. People are ready to begin to raise their food consciousness. People are ready to believe that plants are food, even the highest quality food. People are ready to start to experience the enormous variety of tastes, textures, shapes, colors, and qualities of plants — without needing to process them into looking and tasting like something else. People are ready to consider the science of the qualities of food and of taste. People are ready to see what it looks like when Ayurveda, and Prakash, bring the science and art of food together. People are ready to think about how their food choices affect the planet and others, and not just themselves. People are ready to think about how food affects their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. People are ready to think about the simple, obvious reality that we are literally building our future selves with the food we eat.

People also seem ready not just for food with more 'prana', or life, but also a community and regular, daily personal interactions with more life. As part of our vision to re-shape not only how and what food is cooked but also how it is delivered, we are pleased to announce that we very recently received recognition from the IRS as a public-benefit 501(c)(3) non-profit. The non-profit is dedicated to:

- serving the local community, by providing an oasis of fresh, nourishing, healing food.
- serving all of humanity, through the example of delicious, properly balanced, healthful and satisfying plant-based eating.
- serving the tens of billions of our fellow sentient creatures with no voice who are enslaved, used and killed for food every year.

We believe the non-profit structure best reflects our intentions and our relationship with the community and the business. We are excited to have this in place as we continue to evolve our vision. Specifically, in the next few months, we will begin to convert into a non-profit co-op structure with a membership option for our regulars and supporters. We are hoping to create a community where cooking and eating are more than just a business transaction, based on convenience and profit. In the long run, I think it could be a really neat way to structure

ourselves and to begin to change our community's relationship with food and how it is delivered. And I don't know a better place than Orange County to try to do this. We are excited to start putting this together and will have more details in the next few months.

History

The genesis of the Nourish concept was very personal for me. Having developed severe digestive and intestinal issues after a year abroad, I had spent over a decade trying to find food I could eat and doctors who could help me. It wasn't until I found Ayurveda, and eventually Prakash and his restaurant in Santa Fe, NM, that I finally found some answers. I believe that Ayurveda's breadth and depth, its venerable age, its doctrine and method, which include practically every aspect of life and death, have no peer here.

However, it does not take special insight to understand the implications of eating food that is prepared by people and places whose primary interest is to maximize profits; or to understand the quality of food produced by people motivated by finding the lowest cost ingredients, the lowest cost labor, and cost-saving and time-saving food practices; or to feel the personal connections lost in such interactions. Thus, several years ago I began to imagine a place I could actually eat at, and would want to eat at.

I imagined a beautiful, peaceful, holy place for people to eat and find refuge. A place:

- that takes up the mantle of humble service, to feed people who may have an abundance of food but who are starving of true Nourishment;
- that understands that "food" is for more than just our physical body;
- where cooking and eating are more than just a business transaction;
- that serves home-quality, plant-based food that we can eat every single day;
- where the food is personally cooked by a master Ayurvedic chef who knows more about food and our health than we do;
- that cooks food with *higher* quality ingredients than we use at home, not much lower;
- that spends almost twice as much for all organic food instead of cheap conventional alternatives;
- that concerns itself not just with how the food looks and tastes, but how it digests, absorbs and is eliminated — that is, how it makes us *feel*;
- that uses only fresh food, not frozen, canned, re-heated or microwaved;
- that goes to the farmers market to find fresh seasonal produce;
- that cooks all of the food in and washes all of the vegetables with purified, mineralized, re-structured water;
- that plays holy mantras and ragas while cooking;
- that stone grinds whole grains fresh each day;
- that uses organic ancient-grain wheat instead of the un-digestible modern wheat;
- that rolls and cooks fresh bread when we order it rather than buying packaged, old bread;
- that has digestive tea on tap;
- that doesn't have ice, simply because it's not good for our digestion;
- that doesn't cook with onions or garlic just because they do not provide mental or spiritual clarity;
- that cooks with only non-reactive stainless steel pots and pans;
- that spends twice as much for compostable cups, bowls, containers and straws;

After several years of imagining and several months of hard work by many talented people, Nourish now exists in the real world — in Costa Mesa, Orange County, California.

Classes and Offerings:

After many requests, we will begin offering cooking classes next month. Prakash is happy to begin to share the wisdom of Ayurvedic cooking and healthy plant-based eating with our community.

We are also hoping to offer this year weekly meal plans and eventually some delivery options to make it easier for customers and Kitchari cleansers to get their food. The results from all of the kitchari cleanses people have been doing have been really great, and sometimes even miraculous. It's very gratifying to be a part of.

We will continue to introduce our customers to a wide array of vegetables as they come into season throughout the year. In fact, just today as I write this letter, Prakash is serving "snake gourd," which I had never heard of before.

Financials:

For starters, we got a great space already permitted, at a good price and a decent lease. Sales have generally been running ahead of plan. With little advertising, from the minute we opened the doors, our first three months have averaged approximately the level of sales we expected for the whole year. And lately we have done this despite swapping our dinner for breakfast. Financially, we lost approximately 1/3 of our sales in the transition to breakfast and so far have replaced less than half of the lost dinner sales with breakfast. However, the transition was a fantastic and necessary change for Prakash, Jenna and I, and my family. And in the long run, we also believe our breakfast is the more unique offering for the community, as Ayurveda has a lot to teach us about putting together a delicious, nourishing, balanced, plant-based breakfast. Plus having our chai in the morning is a must for everyone.

In addition to getting the restaurant open, we have mostly established our food and vendor relationships, we have gotten our website up, our Instagram and Facebook pages going (where we announce our vegetables-of-the-day every morning,) our gift cards working, and our on-line ordering functioning. We will generally continue to work on improving things as we go.

Because of our high organic food costs and high labor expenses we are still running below break even. I estimate that we need business to grow by about 20% to become fully self-sustaining, and based on how things have gone, I am hopeful that could happen in the next six months or so.

Team

We have assembled an all-star team of partners, workers, helpers, supporters and community members. I have no doubt about what we can accomplish together.

Blessing to all,

John Curran