Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Souping for Health

Elisa Leonelli · Wednesday, February 17th, 2016

Last week I read an article in the New York Times, *Souping is the New Juicing*, and was intrigued. Serendipitously the following evening I attended a class by "soup guru" Elina Fuhrman at Unplug Meditation. She was introduced by Unplug founder Suze Yalof Schwartz, who guided the eating meditation, which included the mindful tasting of two delicious vegan soups. We heard Elina tell her story of being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2009. As a CNN journalist she was able to consult various doctors and health practitioners, she learned about Ayurveda, the ancient Indian "Science of Life," and Traditional Chinese Medicine. She changed her lifestyle completely, stopped eating animal products and sugar, started making plant-based soups. After only two years she was cancer-free.

Suze Yalof Schwartz (c) Unplug Meditation

I bought the book, *Soupelina's Soup Cleanse: Plant-Based Soups and Broths to Heal Your Body, Calm Your Mind, and Transform Your Life,* to learn how to cook Elina's soups, and I ordered 4 of them, with amusing names like "Lentil Me Entertain You" and "Kale-ifornia Dreaming", so I

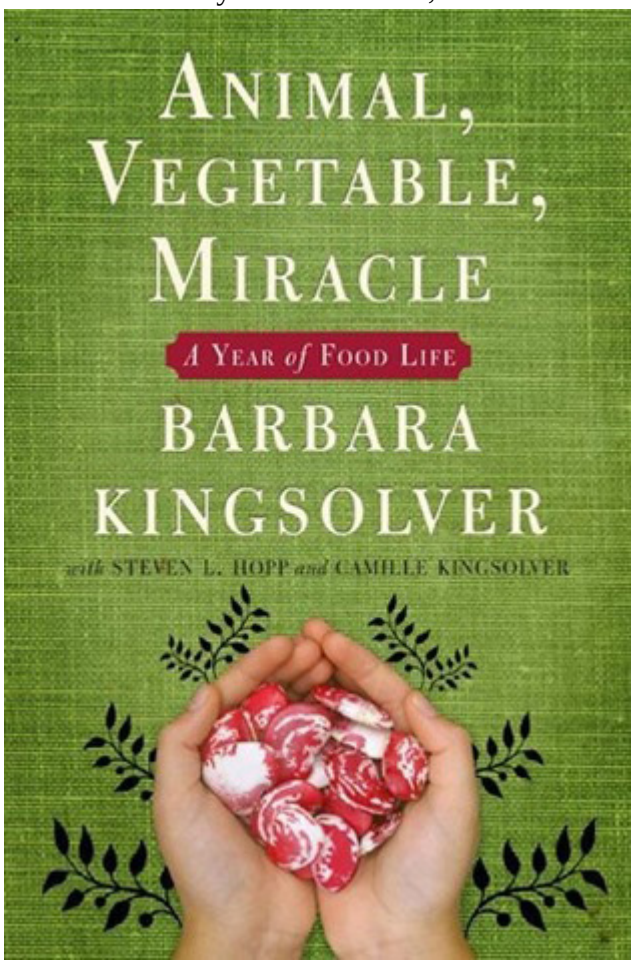
would know how they are supposed to taste. I liked the idea of doing a healing cleanse with comforting hot soups, because I had been making my own blended vegetarian soups for years; with broccoli, cauliflower, butternut squash, fennel, carrots, potatoes, lentils and beans.

Elina Furhman (c) Soupelina

A couple of years ago I had tried a cold pressed juice cleanse, designed to rid your body of toxins, and I have since incorporated fruit and vegetable juices in my regular diet. Last spring I did a 7-day cleanse under the guidance of Holistic Health Coach Sirena Pellarolo, which included not only juices with the fiber removed, but vegan cooked food, fruit and vegetable smoothies, salads and raw soups. Sirena's logo is "Recover Your Juiciness!"

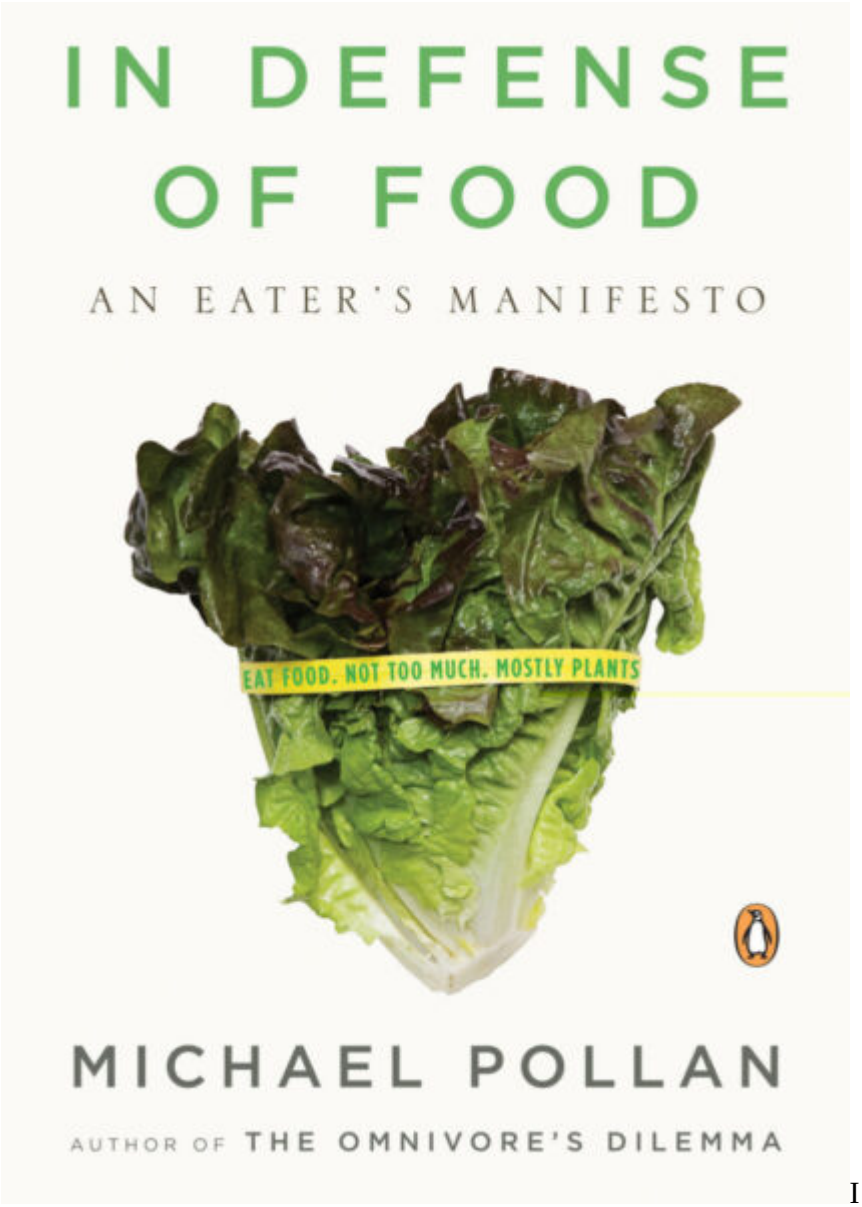
In February 2015 I attended an informative talk and healthy luncheon at the Wilshire Ebell Club by Pam Brown, who wrote *The Ultimate Anti-Cancer Cookbook*. After being diagnosed with fallopian-tube cancer in 2004, she changed her diet and survived through nutrition. Her recommendations: "Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, legumes, whole grains, limit consumption of red meats and processed foods."

I was already familiar with the healing properties of a vegan diet and the damage that our American commercial food-production system has caused to our health and to our environment, from watching the scary 2006 documentary by Richard Linklater *Fast Food Nation*, then reading the 2001 book by Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the all-American Meal*.



In 2007 I read the amazing book by novelist Barbara Kingsolver *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life*, about the one-year experiment she conducted with her husband and two daughters: eating only fruits and vegetables they grew themselves, and animals they raised, in their farm in rural Appalachia. I already knew about buying organic fruit and vegetables, locally grown

by farmers without pesticides, but I started following Barbara's advice about eating meat: make sure you know how the animals were raised, grass-fed beef without hormones, cage-free chickens, and so on.



I really liked Michael Pollan's *In Defense of Food. An Eater's Manifesto*, 2009, and its opening line: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants." He advocates eating real unprocessed food that our grandmothers would recognize. Elina wrote in her book: "This is my gift to friends and like-minded people. I'm proud to be a voice in the wellness revolution." Her passion and generosity are expressed in the environmentally-friendly cardboard packing of her soups, which are accompanied by wooden spoons with the hand-written words "madewithlove."

Watch this video of Elina making fennel soup and you might be inspired to try souping too.

This entry was posted on Wednesday, February 17th, 2016 at 9:02 pm and is filed under Food, Lifestyle
You can follow any responses to this entry through the Comments (RSS) feed. You can leave a response, or trackback from your own site.