

Getting Started

Through macrobiotics you can take daily steps to transform your life into a celebration and an adventure, doing what you want to do, on a stable foundation of physical health and mental clarity. For the one who really wants an adventurous life, macrobiotics awaits you.

There are five steps we want to suggest as follows:

1. Study macrobiotic principles to see if they make sense to you and if they are something you want to use freely and creatively in your own life.
2. Supply your kitchen with macrobiotic food.
3. Prepare macrobiotic meals daily.
4. Eat your macrobiotic meals with appreciation while also practicing good chewing.
5. Live the life you want creatively, adventurously, with gusto and without hesitation, using macrobiotic principles as your guide.

The above five are the foundation of a macrobiotic practice. Following is detailed information on ways to implement them. If you have the willingness to learn, to be patient and to invest of your time and attention in your own health and well being, the macrobiotic door to healing and a new view of life can open for you. On the other hand if you are looking for "hurry-up health" or for someone else to heal you or someone or some teaching to blindly follow, you won't get too far with macrobiotics. Yes, you can find expert guidance from experienced macrobiotic teachers, but it is you who has to make the decisions and the effort to practice macrobiotics.

Macrobiotics is not only for people who have health problems. It is for anyone who wants to create a healthier and happier life. But no matter what the reason for starting macrobiotics, it takes personal investment of time and attention. What you put into it will determine what you receive from it.

Macrobiotics is more than a diet or another health plan. It is also a way of viewing life and being in the world. The macrobiotic diet has its roots in this view, and the macrobiotic diet's purpose is to support our being in the world in a healthy and happy way.

Contrary to popular misunderstanding, food is not the focus of a macrobiotic practice, but it is the primary means by which we create a stable biological foundation on which to build a conscious life adventure. When we put our physical health in order, then all of the energy and attention that once had to be focused on illness, symptoms, aches, pains, worry, etc., becomes freed up and available for living an adventurous and passionate life. The focus on the body and physical health is not the goal of macrobiotics, but to put to support the body so that it provides a stable foundation on which to build a happy life is an essential part of macrobiotic practice.

Self-Education

Learning for oneself about macrobiotic principles, foods, cooking methods and self-healing skills is essential in a macrobiotic practice. Although there are teachers and counselors from whom you can learn, it is up to you to educate yourself and to develop your own understanding. Self-education can come from books, ideas from friends, online research, and in-person classes and consultations, but mostly from a strong desire to think freely for yourself about the meaning and purpose of your life, including your health.

Self-Responsibility

"There is no one and nothing to blame for any illness or problems I have now or may have in the future." This is the way macrobiotics encourages us to think. We are raised in a modern atmosphere that encourages blaming our parents, spouses, the opposite sex, our boss, fellow workers, friends, germs, viruses, genes, pollutants, allergens, etc., for any health problems, unhappiness and personal troubles we are having or have had.

For a successful macrobiotic practice, macrobiotic principles encourage us to transform the above negative view and attitude to one that is far more positive as follows: "Although others may have been factors in my past difficulties, and though some may cause problems for me in the days ahead, it is my choice as to how I behave on daily basis from now on. And even if the environment is stressful and polluted, it is I who make the main choices that lead to my health or illnesses. If others have caused me difficulties or environmental factors have affected me, it is still up to me to remove any restrictions on my life and health brought about by those difficulties and make choices for my own health and well being from now on."

In the macrobiotic way, a person has to get up on his or her own two feet and make choices freely. There is no sitting around waiting for someone or something else to come with answers, no sense in blaming the past or what could have been or should have been.

If a person is ill and unable to cook and care for himself, then help and assistance must be found for the healing process, but even in this situation there needs to be a developing sense of personal involvement in the recovery process.

Health Recovery Through Macrobiotic Self-Healing Principles

In order to start and sustain a macrobiotic health recovery process, a person is encouraged to ask the following questions and find his or her own answers to them:

- A. What is the origin and mechanism of my illness or personal problem according to the macrobiotic view?
- B. What choices have I made that have contributed to the origin and mechanism?
- C. What choices do I need to make now to create the possibility of changing the illness or personal problem?
- D. Do I have unshakeable faith and confidence that I can heal myself?
- E. What is my "song" in life? What is it that makes me want to get up each morning and go out and live my day with enthusiasm and enjoyment?

Understanding the Basic Macrobiotic View

In the modern view, health is seen as the anxious waiting period between two illnesses, sustained by pills and injections and/or good luck. In the macrobiotic view, health is the natural state to be enjoyed as a normal way of life. Healthy is the way we are meant to be. Illness is a sign that we need to re-think our way of living, including our way of eating, so that we can return to a natural state of health.

A macrobiotic person is encouraged to think as follows: "I am inseparable from the natural environment. Just like everything else, I am within the natural order and my health and well-being are best maintained when I live within the boundaries of the natural order in a creative and free way guided by macrobiotic principles. When I go outside of these natural boundaries and eat and live any old way I want, I must also deal with all the results of my choices, even if they show up as physical illness, mental disorder and/or spiritual doubt and drifting.

"The food and drink I take daily will either support me in maintaining my health and well-being, or if I eat without awareness and care of the natural order, food will change my blood and energy qualities to the point that illness and mental confusion may arise."

Macrobiotic View of Food

Macrobiotic food selection and preparation are based on a variety of interesting factors. In macrobiotics, food is seen as far more than protein, fat, vitamins, minerals, enzymes, etc. The macrobiotic view of food includes the following factors:

- A. The macrobiotic view of what is the best food for human beings in general. This is based on natural biological order of life and the concept that human beings can secure healthy human qualities physically and evolve their unique human mentality and spirituality, most positively when they nourish themselves with human food day to day. Just because a food is available to us doesn't mean that it will serve as a good food for developing and sustaining our human qualities. Through macrobiotic principles we learn to discriminate between food which is truly human food and food which is not.
- B. Food selection and preparation that allows us to be in harmony with the natural environment and season in which we live.
- C. Food selection and preparation which supports the most optimal circulation of natural energy in the human body. We live in a much larger environment of universal forces and cosmic energies from which we are inseparable. To the extent that these natural forces and energies circulate in us unobstructed, we are healthy and mentally clear. When they become blocked, deficient or excessive, all sorts of physical, mental and spiritual troubles can arise. By eating in a macrobiotic way that supports optimal circulation of these natural energies, we are better able to maintain our health and a courageous life adventure.
- D. Food selection and preparation which takes into consideration and supports the natural physiology of the human body. For example, we must maintain alkaline blood in order to maintain our health. When our blood develops a slightly acid state, many symptoms of illness begin to take root. The macrobiotic way of eating shows us how to maintain naturally alkaline blood which supports the physiology of the body.
- E. Food selection and preparation which supports the individual in creating and maintaining his or her own person health and enjoyment of life.
- F. Farming, food production, and manufacturing that contributes the least chemical contamination of food, the least pollution, minimal processing, and takes into careful consideration the best use of the earth's natural resources as well as being respectful of economic and sociological factors.

The Basic Macrobiotic Diet

For an outline of the basic macrobiotic diet, please see **The Basic Macrobiotic Food Categories** on a document by that title in the Getting Started section of the Macrobiotics America web site.

Daily Doing

Macrobiotics requires more than a belief in its view and principles. To really benefit from macrobiotics, one needs to live it daily. This requires a willingness to adjust one's daily life in order to make the time for shopping, preparing macrobiotic meals and eating them in a regular and peaceful way. There is no fast food, microwaving or quick fixes. One can learn short cuts and time-saving methods for macrobiotic cooking and meal planning, but there will still be the need to take time each day to prepare meals.

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