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*New York Times Bestselling Authors*

*Packed  
with Tips,  
Tools and  
Recipes*

# Radical Beauty

HOW TO  
TRANSFORM  
YOURSELF  
FROM THE  
INSIDE  
OUT



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# Radical Beauty



DEEPAK CHOPRA, M.D.,  
AND KIMBERLY SNYDER, C.N.

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HOW TO TRANSFORM YOURSELF  
FROM THE INSIDE OUT



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This book is dedicated to you,  
who is reading this right now.

May you fully accept and embrace  
the unique Radical Beauty  
that you already are.



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# Radical Beauty: A Shift in Your Personal Reality

You are a wildflower, a beauty unsurpassed. In each soul is the unique imprint of the grace of God. Nowhere in the world is there another exactly like you. Of that you can justly be proud!

—Paramahansa Yogananda

Here's a scene being repeated thousands of times a day somewhere in America. You may even see yourself in the scene. Two women have stopped by the cosmetics counter of a large department store. They've been lured by a salesperson holding out the latest wonder foundation or skin cream. Or the two women caught a glimpse of themselves in the makeup mirror sitting on the counter.

One woman is twenty-three, in the prime of her youthful looks. But she frowns when she catches a glimpse of herself in the mirror. Her hair doesn't look quite right to her; maybe it's the fault of the new hairstylist she tried. Her skin looks dull, and ever since she started reading weekly tabloids, she's been critical of her thin lashes and a neck that isn't glamorously long and thin. With a sigh the young woman sits down and asks to try the new product. Anyway, the beauty game is still fun for her, and it takes only a few minutes before she's eagerly trying several other trendy products.

The other woman has perched on a stool close by. She's a few years over forty and, looking out of the corner of her eye, she's envious of the young woman. So fresh, so untouched by age. Catching sight of herself in the mirror, this older woman catches every flaw, every wrinkle that's beginning to show, either real or imagined. For her, it's work to keep herself looking acceptable, forget beautiful. She needs all kinds of products just to stop feeling insecure.

This is a scene we want to abolish from your life and from the life of any

woman, of any age, who devotes time, energy, and emotion in search of beauty. We want you never again to feel insecure about your looks. For most women, feeling beautiful is connected to feeling lovable and desirable. We want you to stop being insecure about those two things, too. Beauty, love, and desirability are yours to possess naturally—this we promise. There’s a great journey awaiting you that will restore you to your natural beauty, rekindling the inner light that shines from every child but somehow got dimmed over the years. What has faded isn’t your beauty, because that will always be your birthright. What has faded is your optimism, confidence, and sense of control. This book will show you how to restore them, and then the light of beauty will rekindle itself, naturally and for the rest of your life.

## What Is Beauty?

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The journey to Radical Beauty begins with the most basic question: what is beauty? We feel that a new definition is sorely needed, and society is ready for one. Beauty is no stranger. In many ways we’re obsessed by it.

As you move through your daily life, you inevitably encounter the word *beauty*. If you glance up while shopping at your local pharmacy, you’ll find numerous aisles stocked with products claiming to make you more beautiful. There are countless magazines and websites dedicated to beauty, teaching us different ways to lose weight, choose the perfect lipstick, create smoky celebrity eyes, and copy the latest hairstyle trends. If you stop and look around at our culture, the concept of beauty seems very important. But what exactly is beauty, and when you think of the word, what does it mean to you?

The mainstream media provides an onslaught of images and messages about beauty that are meant to sell products. If you believe these messages, you might be inclined to think that beauty is defined by the external—having “perfectly” formed facial features, an on-trend hairstyle, and a physical shape that matches up with the current idealized expression of beauty (such as being pencil thin but having a perfectly rounded bottom). If you don’t naturally possess these “beautiful” qualities, you’ve been led to believe that the primary way to bolster your own beauty is to fill your drawers with makeup and skin-care products while preening your hair with highlights, blowouts, and chemical straightening treatments. It

may also seem mandatory to spend a sizable portion of your waking hours at the gym, experimenting with the newest workout class to sculpt the perfect figure. We've been taught to believe that when it comes to products, treatments, and workouts, more equals better results and therefore more beauty.

Unfortunately, this definition of beauty is all about image. There's nothing new about defining beauty externally. It's the equivalent of empty calories: they seem appealing at first, and then you end up with an unsatisfied feeling. The specifics of what is considered beautiful may shift as one fad fades in favor of another, but one thing remains constant: our fascination with beauty. People have appreciated beauty and grasped for it for centuries, beginning with the earliest human civilizations. Ancient Egyptians and Babylonians used primitive forms of kohl eyeliners to dramatize their eyes. In ancient Greece women applied rouge made from crushed mulberries to brighten their cheeks. Images of porcelain-skinned, sleek-haired women have been discovered painted onto centuries-old Asian rice-paper scrolls.

While the shape and size of idealized features vary between cultures, there tend to be a few commonly held beliefs about beauty. First, there is the idea that beauty is a limited and fleeting commodity, as if being beautiful is reserved only for the young and a small, genetically gifted portion of the population. Another widely held conviction in many cultures is that beauty is a relative phenomenon, meaning that it is measured by comparison against others. One woman's hair or eyes are beautiful only if they are more beautiful than another woman's. This idea perpetuates the unfortunate and unnecessary rivalry that is still far too common among women.

## A New Approach: Radical Beauty

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In the twenty-first century we all need a new concept of what real beauty is. For both authors, it's something we like to call Radical Beauty. What does that mean? Radical Beauty has nothing to do with trendy makeup, fleeting fads, or insecure comparisons with other women. Radical Beauty extends beyond the physical, encompassing all parts of your inner and outer being. It is something that exists universally, and, at the same time, it is completely unique to you. It nurtures and highlights your magnetism and confidence, vitality, and overall

health, from your bodily tissues to the outer, visible parts of yourself. You achieve Radical Beauty when you reach the highest and most authentic potential of your natural true beauty. This means that Radical Beauty is a birthright for each and every one of us.

Certain makeup and hair and skin products are fantastic for temporarily defining your eyes or smoothing out your skin, but there is so much more you can do to augment your inherent natural beauty. That is what Radical Beauty is all about. Instead of being shallow or limited to external body parts, Radical Beauty goes deep below the surface.

For some women, it will be a brand-new concept to think of beauty as more than the shape of their face, the size of their body, and the color of their hair and skin, but look around in nature. What do you see? Beauty and harmony are universal forces that manifest everywhere. A graceful willow tree and a mighty oak are both beautiful in their own way. Nature is infinitely generous with the variety of beauty that exists, and this holds true for human beings, too. In the natural scheme, every creature has its own pure and unique beauty. Hold a single rose petal in your hand and you will realize that beauty isn't relegated to spectacular waterfalls and dramatic sunsets. You can discover a marvelous harmony in the most common things: cutting open a grapefruit, looking at the mottled pattern on a rock, or examining the interconnected, vein-like inner structure of a houseplant's leaves. Beauty truly exists in every single expression of nature once we allow ourselves to see it.

*You are part of nature, so you have  
the right to claim your natural beauty's  
highest potential—your Radical Beauty.*

You were born to claim your share of universal beauty. Unlocking your highest potential of beauty, including your greatest possible levels of energy, vitality, and health, will help put you at one with the universe. The very nature of the universe is to express profound beauty. The ocean waves ebb and flow effortlessly. The rain simply falls, and the shells along the beach just lie in the sand, embody-

ing their lovely colors and shapes. As your Radical Beauty unfolds, you, too, will become an increasingly more authentic expression of your own beauty.

Your uniqueness makes it totally unnecessary to compare yourself with anyone else. For too many people, beauty involves feeling inferior by comparison. This always creates a gap, a duality between what is now and what is the ideal. When it comes to Radical Beauty, there is absolutely no space for comparison or competition. Each of us is here to express our highest beauty, which no one else's beauty can diminish. But you can add to another person's beauty—your mother's, your daughter's, your friend's—by making this an aspect of your own beauty. You are free to fully celebrate others' beauty while feeling confident in your own. What a change that would be!

"You are the mirror of divine beauty. Nothing is more beautiful than naturalness. Not trying to be something you are not, but being the most authentic, uncovered expression of yourself. We all look to images of actors and models who are supposed to be the ideal in society. In reality, many of these people are likely to be extremely insecure about their desirability, since their value is subject to the constant fluctuations of a public that they have not met, that is a moving target. Aspiring to be exactly like these images of those in the media is aspiring to be something you are not. When you are trying to be something other than yourself, you cannot be beautiful, which by nature is the truest aspect of you and you alone."

—*The Path to Love*, by Deepak Chopra

## The Six Pillars of Radical Beauty

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We've begun with an inspiring vision. Next come the practicalities, the how-to that makes any vision come to life. You can achieve Radical Beauty by following the six Radical Beauty Pillars, which make up the firm foundation of powerful life-

style teachings that support your highest expression of beauty. A series of practical guidelines, rhythms, and routines not only will benefit you but also will promote beauty and health for the whole planet.

In Ayurveda, the traditional medical system of India, there's a saying about how everything in nature works together in harmony: "As is the macrocosm, so is the microcosm. As is the great, so is the small." A healthy body is meant to be part of a healthy planet. What's truly good for one is naturally good for the other. Our pillars restore this natural harmony. Just as pollution, chemical tampering, and toxic dumping disrupt harmonies in nature, your beauty becomes diminished from congestion and toxicity buildup in your digestive system when you eat the wrong foods, use toxic beauty products, and inhabit improper sleep and lifestyle routines.

As you read through each of the six pillars, start applying the specific tools and lifestyle changes that make the most sense to you. You can dip your toe in slowly or dive in as completely as you want. Whatever pace you choose will be the right one, because it is your own. More and more, you will be able to unlock your highest beauty potential to serve you wherever you are. Here is a quick overview of the Radical Beauty Pillars and the benefits you can expect to receive from each one.

## PILLAR 1: INTERNAL NOURISHMENT

Beauty has to emerge from the inside out, so your dietary choices and digestion are a primary influence. The way that you eat is a critical factor in determining the vitality of your beauty. Everything you put into your body is used to create the foundation upon which your body, hair, and skin are built.

In this pillar you'll learn dietary shifts that will optimize your digestion, create nutritional balance, and bolster your nutrient absorption. This will result in a clearer, smoother, and more radiant complexion, a flatter midsection, more natural muscle tone throughout your body, higher sustained energy, and—over time—healthier and more lustrous hair.

## PILLAR 2: EXTERNAL NOURISHMENT

This pillar will identify the most effective ingredients to apply directly to your skin, as well as the most beneficial Radical Beauty skin-care routines. These will

ensure that you nourish your skin in the best way possible, while avoiding toxins that can tax your skin and migrate to your inner body, polluting your bloodstream and liver and contributing to toxic congestion.

When done properly, simple daily routines, such as *abhyanga* oil massage (which you will find out how to do in Pillar 2, page 121), can soothe your nervous system and create powerfully rejuvenating effects, including a reduction in the pent-up stress that contributes to wrinkles. Such routines can help your organs actually grow younger and help restore the vitality and glow to your skin. The powerful shifts in this pillar also promote detoxification by manually supporting your lymphatic system from the outside in.

### PILLAR 3: PEAK BEAUTY SLEEP

Your sleep rhythms are an essential component of Radical Beauty, and this pillar will outline numerous tips and tools to enhance this important part of your life.

Proper sleep enables your blood to flow more efficiently to your skin, which is important for supporting your skin to heal itself daily. It also helps reduce dark under-eye circles and stress. Reduced stress can help improve eating habits and digestion, which in turn can lead to even clearer skin with fewer breakouts. You will also learn optimal sleep methods to enhance your body's creation of growth hormone, which boosts your collagen production and is critical for keeping your skin firm and resilient.

### PILLAR 4: PRIMAL BEAUTY

This pillar focuses on how to live closer and more in tune with nature, which is a powerful way to bring out your natural beauty. You will learn how to align your energy with the larger natural rhythms of nature by shifting your daily patterns in accordance with the solar and lunar cycles and the seasons. This alignment with the macrocosm will help you harness the force to support your overall energy and vitality.

You will also learn how to reduce the toxic chemicals, electromagnetic radiation, and pollution in your personal space, which will reduce their negative impacts on your hormones and biorhythms. This pillar also teaches the benefits of simple practices like “earthing,” or physically touching the earth's surface, which

have been shown to help balance your body with negative ions and help neutralize aging free radicals.

## PILLAR 5: BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT

This pillar will delve into the best ways to move your body to promote natural grace, tone, and beauty, as well as which forms of movement are aging and should be avoided. You can actually overdo certain types of workouts—excessive levels of physical exertion can create oxidative stress in your body. When it comes to movement, balance—not total hours spent at the gym—is the key to getting the most tangible, visible results for a toned, fit body.

You'll learn powerful breathing techniques that can make a tremendous difference to your beauty, as well as specific yoga poses, appropriate for all levels, to promote vitality and detoxification. Such movements can promote inner healing and rejuvenate everything from your digestion and circulation to your skin and hair health.

## PILLAR 6: SPIRITUAL BEAUTY

This pillar is all about how self-love, heart-based living, and a peaceful mind foster natural beauty from the inside out and increase your natural glow and magnetic presence. Chronic anger, worry, and fear are as acidic and inflammatory to your body as refined junk food. To avoid toxicity from negative emotions, the practice of meditation is perhaps the most powerful step you can take. When you meditate, you reach the prime source of beauty. We can call it spirit, the soul, or the true self; the exact word isn't important.

What's important is to have the inner experience of being connected to your source, and then integrating meditation into your life. Spiritual beauty brings another dimension to who you are and what your purpose is. Nothing is more beautiful than being able to live as a whole person, someone who shines with an inner light. Then the true union of body, mind, and soul is complete.

All of the pillars work together to round out the Radical Beauty lifestyle that will allow you to express your highest and most authentic beauty. We are thrilled

for you to embark on your own personal journey, and to see the many transformations marking your onward path.

You can get excited about the many improvements that are on their way to you: higher energy, a sense of calm, and a vital connection to yourself, not to mention more beautifully smooth and radiant skin, healthy hair, bright eyes, and—perhaps best of all—more confidence and the ability to tap into and be in touch with the true beauty that is already within you. The experience of feeling and seeing results will inspire you to keep going. And the further along your journey to discover your own natural beauty, the more you will convey your own expression of Radical Beauty, which is reflected uniquely by you.

With great love.

Deepak and Kimberly



# Internal Nourishment

Knowledge is power, and in this pillar you'll gain the power to choose the best foods to fuel your Radical Beauty. As you learn an entirely new way of looking at food, the choices you begin to make will result in radiant skin, high energy, and healthy hair. The Radical Beauty approach stops looking at food in terms of vigilantly watched calories or thinking about eating as an anxious, tightly controlled activity. Beauty and enjoyment are connected, and the greatest enjoyment comes from fulfillment, which begins within. The Radical Beauty approach is something we call Internal Nourishment, a program of strategies to incorporate into your daily dietary rhythm, along with natural, powerful beauty secrets based on enhancing your natural beauty.

You won't achieve Radical Beauty with one particular measurement like tallying up daily grams of carbs and fats. There is not one set of definitive guidelines that work for everyone. Instead of dictating that we all must eat an exact percentage of carbohydrates, fats, and proteins, the latest wisdom is that each body processes these basic food components individually. Your unique response determines the benefits and drawbacks of consuming certain foods. Individual balance is the key, looking at your total diet and how each part works together. This is known as synergy, a dynamic process that takes place in every cell.

We want everyone to wean themselves off fad diets and nutritional trends that are overly simplistic. So many of them falsely demonize one ingredient or even a single macronutrient, whether it is sugar, salt, fat, carbs, or some other culprit. On the other side of the coin are the false promises made on behalf of a "miracle" food that supposedly makes you thin and beautiful, healthy and totally immune to disease and aging. Demonized foods and miracle foods are both fantasies—to mention that they constantly keep changing.

In contrast, we are going to dive much deeper into creating long-term shifts in your personal attitudes, coupled with practical tips to support your highest level

of authentic, natural beauty. Nourishing yourself with food should be a source of joy, not a source of anxiety.

Shifts, even seemingly slight ones, can powerfully help to raise your consciousness and expand the reality of what's possible. If the *Titanic* had only shifted its course by a few degrees, a great disaster would have been avoided. A few degrees turn into a huge change over the course of a hundred or thousand miles.

In your life, a small shift can bring huge benefits over the course of months and years, so the time to start is now. Why deprive yourself of Radical Beauty when your entire well-being can improve so easily? As you start to take baby steps, you will feel empowered to go forward as it feels right for you, so it won't feel jarring or like a big struggle. You can do it! You can create the life and beauty you want, starting with smaller shifts and building up naturally.

# Let Go of Your Preconceived Notions About Food

## The Four Common Reasons We Choose Foods

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If you're like most people, you choose what to eat for one of four primary reasons, or a combination of them. Everyone has their own individual priorities based on their background, how they perceive foods, and their personal goals.

### REASON #1: TASTE

The number one reason we eat the way we do is because of how food tastes. This one is obvious. After years of dietary habits, we are all naturally wired to reach for whatever we find tasty. The alarming trend toward obesity in America is blamed on consuming too much fat, sugar, and too many overall calories. One could just as easily blame our addiction on the taste of salt and sugar, which permeate fast food and junk food. Advertising has programmed us to salivate at the mere thought of more and more saltiness, sugariness, and other tastes that zing the tongue, like the spicy, sour tang found in everything from buffalo wings to the “special sauce” on a Big Mac. Of course, personal tastes vary according to factors such as how we were raised. Many of us continue to choose the same foods we ate as children because we find their tastes familiar and comforting.

Unfortunately, many of the most obvious “bad for you” foods, such as the hamburgers and milk shakes peddled by chain restaurants, taste delicious to a large percentage of Americans, who persist in leading with a few strong, habit-forming tastes in their default food choices. For them, taste rules despite

ever-mounting evidence against eating salty, sugary, fatty foods in large amounts. The fact that you are reading this book right now says that you're interested in looking deeper into the nourishment food can provide.

It may be hard right now to imagine your life without eating your favorite treat every day, but rest assured that you won't feel this way forever. First of all, you don't have to be "perfect" all the time. Don't be afraid that you can't ever have your treats again. Also remember that your tastes can (and will) change over time. You may gravitate toward processed, sugary foods now, but after making several small dietary shifts, biochemistry changes will cause you to crave different foods. Your body will be able to more thoroughly cleanse itself, and you'll experience more vitality that will make you look more alive and energetic. These shifts will cause the intense cravings you may have had in the past to diminish naturally.

## REASON #2: WEIGHT

The second thing most people think about when choosing what to eat is how it will impact their weight. After a quick mental rundown based on the nutritional philosophy you currently subscribe to, you may reduce any and all foods down to one overarching characteristic: "fattening" or "not fattening." Depending on how diet focused you have been over the years, you might also do a quick scan of the nutritional information on the food's label, assessing the number of calories, grams of carbs, amounts of sugar and protein, and so on. Some of us perform these mental calculations continuously, day in and day out. It's exhausting.

The idea that the key to weight loss lies in a simple formula—"calories in minus calories out"—is so pervasive that it is considered a fact in the mainstream belief system. The truth is that this formula is far too one-dimensional. Our bodies digest different foods in different ways, and everything we eat affects our cellular structure. The Radical Beauty shifts will allow you to effectively lose or maintain weight with a much simpler formula that will make calorie counting obsolete.

## CHEMICALS IN PROCESSED FOOD CAN MAKE YOU FAT

New research is highlighting the fact that tracking calories or other numbers isn't the best way to control your weight. A study from the journal *Nature* found that chemicals added to processed and junk foods can alter gut bacteria, which can cause intestinal inflammation. This may in turn lead to various bowel issues and weight gain.<sup>1</sup> Instead of becoming a label-reading junkie, use nature as your truest beauty food guide. The closer a food is to its natural state the better, and the more processed a food is, the more you should avoid it.

### REASON #3: HEALTHINESS

The third major reason people eat what they do is how “healthful” they consider a food to be. Here the choices are not necessarily related to weight loss but are based on the belief that a certain food will promote good health. A good example of this is when someone chooses to drink a glass of milk because he or she thinks it's a great source of calcium. (This is actually not a good idea for everyone, by the way, but more on that later.) Your health is certainly a major reason to choose a particular food over another, but unfortunately there is a lot of confusion and misinformation circulating about what's truly healthful and what isn't. We will clarify this confusion throughout this pillar.

But the bottom line is that natural, organically raised food *is* healthful. Over millions of years, the human digestive system has been interacting with the environment. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors left us an incredible legacy—the ability to digest and gain nourishment from the widest possible range of foods. We are the planet's most successful omnivores. The key to this ability is twofold: our genes and the thousands of kinds of bacteria that reside in our digestive tract. No other creature, so far as science knows, has diversified its diet the way *Homo sapiens* has.

The upside is that you are equipped to choose almost any dietary plan, with a balance of food groups and nutrients, that suits your climate, body type, and personal preferences. The downside is that there is wide latitude for abusing the body. Pandas cannot survive if their single food source, bamboo leaves, isn't

available, and koalas can't survive without eucalyptus leaves. Humans, on the other hand, can adapt to unhealthy diets and survive for decades on them—but not without a cost. Healthful eating comes down to using our ancestral gift as wisely as possible while avoiding the abuses we're tempted into by the forces behind junk food, fast food, and all the processing and artificial ingredients that go into so much packaged food on grocery shelves.

#### REASON #4: CONVENIENCE

The fourth reason we choose what to eat is convenience. Life is busy, and food seems like an easy place to cut corners and save time. Whether it's fast food, takeout, grabbing something premade from the local deli or the prepared section at the grocery store, or stocking the freezer with a variety of microwavable meals like family-sized pizzas and burritos, convenience looms as a very big reason that many people and families choose what to eat.

Even though awareness of natural, organically raised food is growing—for instance, the largest retailer of organic food in America is Walmart—for countless Americans convenience is paramount. Around one out of every ten meals in this country is eaten at a single fast-food chain: McDonald's. We can't expect to turn back the clock. Unlike a traditional village in India, Tuscany, or South America, our lifestyle doesn't include extended families in which typically a woman, either the wife, mother, or grandmother, is expected to make a daily round of the baker, vegetable monger, fruit seller, and possibly butcher, bringing home the ingredients and cooking every meal of the day. Social roles have changed too much for this way of life to be more than a romantic fantasy (or a daily grind, if you are the designated cook for everyone). The real question is how to balance convenience with freshly cooked meals in such a way that everyone is satisfied, no one is overly stressed, and the resulting meals are truly nourishing and delicious.

## A New Reason to Choose Food

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So much for the reasons that shape our eating right now. There needs to be a better way. With this book, we hope you will consider an entirely new reason to choose certain foods, and that is to build your dynamic, authentic beauty. The

foods you choose to eat have a profound effect not only on your level of health but also on your tissue quality and therefore your outer expression of beauty. Achieving Radical Beauty also means you will achieve superior health.

Waking up to this awareness is, in itself, liberating and very empowering. You have a choice. Each day with every meal you eat, you can choose to apply this knowledge and eat in a specific way that enhances and supports your natural beauty. What's on your fork, the foods you reach for at the grocery store, and even the way you prepare and eat those foods are all vehicles for great change. You can employ any and all of these strategies to claim your Radical Beauty.

There is so much confusion about the connection between food and beauty. Despite all of the information circulating out there (including Kimberly's Beauty Detox books), many people struggle to apply these concepts. They use artificial sweeteners to quell cravings and try to avoid white sugar despite the fact that artificial sweeteners are even more detrimental to their beauty. People are scared to eat bananas because of their natural carbs and sugar, yet they nosh on packaged bars filled with fragmented, processed ingredients such as soya or whey protein isolates, fractionated palm kernel oil, and invert evaporated cane syrup.

*You are not what you eat but what you assimilate and digest.*

Perhaps you, too, are confused. We don't blame you! When bombarded by snippets of information from casual conversations, a fitness app on your phone, or the latest diet circulated in the media that guarantees fast results, many people react by growing afraid of real food. They choose "safer" items that have their nutritional information neatly printed out on the label. Over time, they ignore their constant bloat, the din of a rumbling belly, or the increasing rate of acid reflux, and are too embarrassed to bring up the fact that they don't go to the bathroom every day. Then they wonder why they have deepening bags under their eyes, breakouts and patchiness, and increasingly brittle and lackluster hair.

Here's the truth: it's all connected. What we eat and the whole basis of integrating these foods and our bodies—*digestion*—must be approached properly to support our inner glow and our outer beauty. Digestion is truly a key to un-

leashing your Radical Beauty. Referred to as *agni* in Ayurveda (the oldest known medical system, founded in India about 5,000 years ago), digestion is at the center of our health and our beauty. You are not what you eat, but what you assimilate, or absorb and utilize as nourishment in your body, and digest. Numbers alone will never give you an accurate sense of that picture.

## Chronic Diseases and Premature Aging: Not Natural or Necessary

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Numbers-based dietary assessments have no place in traditional wellness systems such as Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Both have become popular in the West over the past few decades, as people have become heavier and more prone to illness and aging because of damaging lifestyle choices, especially in the typical American diet. Some negative trends, given our aging population, are advancing upon us faster than ever before. Until around World War II, the leading causes of death were infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, influenza, and pneumonia, which are airborne, along with waterborne diseases like cholera.<sup>2</sup> Degenerative diseases, which involve the deterioration of the structure or function of tissue, such as type 2 diabetes, were actually quite rare. At the turn of the twentieth century, it was considered highly unusual for a physician in a general practice to see a patient complaining of angina, the typical chest pain due to heart disease. With improvements in sanitation and medical care since then, we've fortunately seen an immense reduction in infectious diseases.

People are still dying from diseases, but today it's the *type* of diseases that has dramatically shifted. In modern America noncommunicable, chronic, or degenerative disorders are the leading cause of death. Some rates are falling dramatically, such as deaths from stroke, while others, like most forms of cancer, budge very slowly. But even more important is the discovery that if we look at the most common lifestyle disorders, such as heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and various forms of preventable cancers, their outset can be traced back years before the first symptoms appear.

It's been known for a long time that skin cancer, for example, is related to how much sun exposure without sunblock occurred early in life, even though the cancer doesn't appear until adulthood in most cases. Similarly, diet and ex-

ercise at an early age make a major difference in someone's risk of osteoporosis later in life. Now it seems more than probable that most chronic disorders follow this pattern, and in some cases, such as autism, schizophrenia, and Alzheimer's disease, the time for prevention and early treatment may actually be in the first few years or even months of life.

Today, we are becoming more and more aware that lifestyle affects our overall health. According to the World Health Organization, in 2012 noncommunicable diseases, namely cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes, and chronic lung disease, were responsible for 68 percent of all deaths globally.<sup>3</sup> As Dr. James Pacala from the University of Minnesota states, "Some people can have a family history of heart diseases, but it's actually a history of smoking, overeating, and [an inactive] lifestyle. And if you adopt that lifestyle, you're going to run into the same problems your parents did."<sup>4</sup>

Most degenerative diseases and lifestyle disorders can't be cast off as "natural." If that were the case, they would have occurred in similar percentages throughout history. But they haven't, because when underlying factors change, such as sanitation, clean air and water, and diet, disease changes with them. Over the last fifty years in particular, there has been an explosion of "unnatural" diseases as various populations ignore best advice about the basics of well-being: healthy diet, physical activity, and reduced stress. On average we live longer today than we did in the past, but the quality of life for many is greatly diminished, and damaging lifestyle choices are sustained through a multitude of medications and treatments that have a host of side effects.

Just as chronic diseases aren't natural, neither is premature, accelerated aging in the many forms it takes, such as dull skin, cloudy eyes, or chronic fatigue. Though these symptoms of aging are pervasive, they aren't inevitable. Of course, skin may naturally wrinkle or fold over decades, but this does not have to happen prematurely. There are women in their twenties with chronic dark circles under their eyes, crow's feet, and thinning hair, while some women well into their fifties and beyond maintain vital energy, shining eyes, and healthy, more elastic skin and muscle tone. While genes can play a factor, to a great extent the rate at which you age can be determined by your lifestyle. Following dietary fads, eating processed foods, and consuming chemicals, additives, and preservatives leads to compromised digestion and skin that can repair itself less and less.

Premature aging, including hair and skin issues, can be seen as the weak-

ening and suppression of your body's natural healing response. By approaching your diet strategically, you have more control over your immunity, natural healing response, and therefore beauty. It's as simple as that. Your food choices can help you retain the glow of health and authentic beauty at any stage.

Each of the shifts in this pillar represents broader and simpler ways to modify your eating habits. Incorporating these shifts is far easier to understand and follow than obsessing over the minutiae of complicated programs, trying to source the exact food listed out in a meal plan, or trying to calculate the exact numbers of calories or carbs in any given meal. Embracing these overarching shifts in your daily rhythms will help you to achieve the Radical Beauty that is your birthright.

## SHIFT 2:

# Regain Control over Your Body's Natural Processes

The next shift is about accepting your body's natural ability to renew itself. Life *is* renewal, and therefore so is beauty. Although you can't see it, a renewal process is constantly taking place inside your body. Some cells, such as the villus cells in your intestinal tract (which help you absorb nutrients) and the taste buds in your mouth, might be replaced in a few days, while other body parts, such as bones, take much longer to renew. Yet even the most solid-looking parts of your body are exchanging molecules that move in and out of each cell. Some experts believe that the average age of all the cells in an adult's body is seven to ten years.<sup>1</sup> This doesn't mean that you have to wait that long to see results. Rather, everything in your body is relatively new, even the bones that seem so permanent and fixed. You are actually renewing all the time. This is exciting news, for it means that you can start fostering exceptionally healthy new cells today.

Your red blood cells, which carry oxygen to your skin and provide a glow, course through almost 1,000 miles of arteries, veins, and capillaries; red blood corpuscles have a life span of only about 120 days before being deposited into your spleen.<sup>2</sup> According to which researchers you consult, the cells that make up your liver—the all-important filter of toxins, pesticides, and drugs—can be turned over in as little as 150<sup>3</sup> to 500 days.<sup>4</sup>

## The State of Your Skin

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Fresh, glowing skin is very important to any woman who is beauty conscious, but your skin is also an extension of your overall health. When you shift your attitude in this direction, you can use this very visible aspect of your outer appearance as a message from every cell in your body about your well-being. Before we delve

## SKIN VERSUS HAIR RENEWAL

The state of your hair and skin is an extension of your overall health, and many people experience major transformations from lifeless and brittle hair to thicker, fuller hair after implementing the lifestyle shifts recommended in Radical Beauty. But you have to be patient, as hair, in particular, doesn't transform overnight. The surface layer of your skin, however, is renewed approximately every four weeks. So you can expect to see clearer and more vibrant skin after about a month of making a conscious shift to living more healthily and beautifully. It's also possible to see more of a "glow" to your skin in as little as a few days, as wastes clear from your system and circulation and nutrient flow to your skin improves.

No doubt about it, it does take longer for your hair to regain its natural health and beauty. Depending on your hair's length, it can be anywhere from three to six years old. On average, it grows about one centimeter, or just under half an inch, every month. You can start nourishing healthier hair follicles to produce healthier hair, but it will take additional time to see more dramatic improvements since it needs to grow. By making the proper shifts starting today, you can rest assured that beautiful hair is on the way.

into this shift, please do a quick examination on the current state of your skin. Go to the closest mirror and check out your face, neck, and hands. What is really going on?

### IS YOUR SKIN DRY?

Dry skin can indicate a deep level of dehydration, which needs to be addressed from within by hydrating with the right-temperature liquids and foods (more on this on page 91) as well as with proper skin-care products. You also might not be getting enough of the proper kinds and amounts of nourishing beauty fat. Some undernourishment or malabsorptive digestive issues may also be at play.

## IS YOUR SKIN OILY?

Excessive oil buildup in your complexion might indicate that your liver is overloaded and needs extra care or that you are not adequately metabolizing and assimilating your foods. Are you constipated? Perhaps you are overeating fats, especially the worst kinds (cooked, fried fats and heated vegetable oils). You also may be eating foods that are congestive or allergenic, or that you aren't digesting completely.

## IS YOUR SKIN BREAKING OUT?

Breakouts can indicate a toxic buildup in your system. Your elimination organs may be overwhelmed, which can encourage impurities to push out through your skin. There may be excessive phlegm buildup from overeating congestive, difficult-to-digest foods (such as dairy), or your digestive system may be compromised.

## IS YOUR SKIN RED OR RASHY?

Inflamed, red, or rashy skin might indicate that you are consistently eating something that is triggering an inflammatory or allergic response. Alternatively, you might be eating foods that are too “hot” for your system. In Ayurveda, internal overheating, known as excessive *Pitta*, is considered a major cause of aging.

If you are experiencing any of these skin conditions, don't worry! We bring these up so you have an honest base of assessment as we start to delve into dietary remedies. These skin issues can be balanced, starting with establishing powerful new nutritional rhythms for your long-term lifestyle. Let's dive in.

# Boost Your Circulation

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Optimal circulation is extremely important. Consider a huge, majestic apple tree. The roots of the tree, buried deep in the soil, have to absorb minerals and water from the earth and then pull them upward into the trunk and outward branches of the tree to nourish each tiny burgeoning twig and, ultimately, the

fruit—in this case, the apples. Without proper circulation throughout the tree, the apples would not get the nourishment they need, and they certainly would not be as juicy, delicious, or beautiful.

It's the same with your body. Circulation ensures that nutrients flow efficiently throughout your entire body, including up into your hair follicles to nourish every hair on your head. It also allows oxygen to reach all of your cells so they can turn over and the new cells grow healthily. Tissue healing is an intricate process that is also regulated by circulation.<sup>5</sup> Fat stored in your fat cells needs to be accessible so it can be flushed out to help you maintain your ideal weight. This process also removes aging toxins, pollutants, chemicals, and additives from your body.

Think back to the tree analogy. In your case, the “fruits” of your beauty include the outer, visible parts. But your body cannot possibly be expected to build healthy hair or glowing skin without excellent circulation supplying all its needs and efficiently removing the waste that constantly builds up in your system.

## QUICK BEAUTY CIRCULATION TEST

Take a look down and examine your fingernails. Do you see a white half-moon shape at the base of each fingernail? This can indicate that you have good circulation and vitality flowing through your body. If all or part of the half-moon is missing, it can mean that your circulation needs a boost. Either way, there is much you can do to improve your circulation further and allow your beauty to shine through. Check back in the future to see if the half-moon shapes eventually emerge or grow more prominent as you take steps to improve your beauty circulation.

Excessive toxins, mucus, arterial plaque, and waste buildup can congest your system and reduce your circulation. Capillaries, which are very tiny and narrow, carry nutrients and oxygen-rich blood through their thin walls to surrounding tissues. They also allow for cellular waste to return to the blood so it can be excreted from the body. If there are buildups or obstructions in your circulatory

system, beauty-building nutrition and oxygen become blocked, and your hair, skin, and nails all suffer. A buildup of toxicity in your system also taxes your whole body and contributes to accelerated aging. For instance, research shows that heavy metals, one of the many types of toxins we are exposed to from the food and water supply, as well as the environment, contribute to aging.<sup>6</sup>

Your outer beauty isn't the only element of Radical Beauty that requires excellent circulation. Magnetic energy is also captivatingly beautiful and dependent on this process. Have you ever met someone who was so full of passion and life that you couldn't help but feel drawn to her? A certain light pours out of her eyes and her authentically joyful smile. Her gestures and movements and even the way she walks all seem fluid and full of liveliness. We're all attracted to that kind of energy. Energy comes from the combustion of fuel, which requires oxygen. *Prana*, or your life-force energy, is circulated through the blood, or *rakta*. The better your circulation, the more oxygen is available to all of your body's cells, and the more naturally energized you will feel. This will make you all the more positively energetic and, in turn, all the more beautiful.

There are actually two different circulatory systems that work together to keep your body healthy: the *cardiovascular circulatory system* and the *lymphatic circulatory system*. The lymphatic system is discussed in detail later (see page 120); here we focus on using foods to boost your cardiovascular circulation. But both systems have to be supported in order to maximize your beauty results.

## Supporting Your Cardiovascular System for More Beautifying Oxygen and Nutrient Flow

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Perhaps you've only thought of your cardiovascular system in terms of how it impacts your heart health, but it also has a big effect on your beauty. The cardiovascular system pumps nutrients throughout the body to nourish the glowing skin and the strong hair and nails you desire. With each heartbeat, oxygen- and nutrient-rich blood is distributed to every cell. To boost your beauty, you need this pumping action to efficiently reach all your cells and carry the maximum amount of oxygen and nutrition.

## FOODS TO INCORPORATE FOR OPTIMAL CIRCULATION

Listed below are some of the most effective foods for boosting your cardiovascular system. Eating these foods is not a quick fix; you can't munch on a handful of blueberries and expect dramatically thicker hair the next day. But these are excellent foods to incorporate in order to see gradual but long-term shifts in your hair, skin, and energy. Going at your own pace, start incorporating them into your regular routine.

**BLUEBERRIES, STRAWBERRIES, GRAPES, AND CHERRIES:** All delicious bounty from nature, these tasty fruits contain flavonoids that protect your blood vessels and heart from cell-damaging free radicals.

**CITRUS FRUITS:** Citrus fruits are high in vitamin C, which helps to prevent plaque buildup in your arteries, are alkalizing upon metabolism (see page 54 for more discussion on this), and have cleansing properties to help flush out your system. Lemons are forever and always a top Radical Beauty fruit with many versatile uses. Just squeeze them into water or use them as a base for salad dressings. Other great citrus fruits include grapefruit, limes, oranges, and pomelos. (Be sure to seek these out when traveling in Asia and India, where they are natively grown and extra delicious.)

**BEE POLLEN:** Besides being rich in protein, antioxidants, and minerals, bee pollen contains a compound called rutin, which is an antioxidant bioflavonoid that has been found to strengthen capillaries and blood vessels and improve circulation. It has a faint honey taste, but it's not sweet per se. The best place to source it is from a local beekeeper. (Check out your local farmer's market.) Store extra amounts in your freezer. Bee pollen is a great addition to smoothies, and you can also take just a little spoonful of it plain and chew well. Note: As with any new food, be sure to start with a tiny amount first to see how your body reacts. If you have a honey or pollen allergy, bee pollen may not be suitable for you.

**AVOCADOS:** Avocados supply skin-softening, beautifying, and circulation-supporting monounsaturated fats, as well as lots of folic acid, B vitamins, and fiber. All of this will help support healthy blood flow.