

## The Closet Vegan

by Cathy Allen, aka "Tofu Eating, Tree Hugger"

A friend had called to discuss her Memorial Day Weekend outing and shared with me that she had run into some "Tofu Eating, Tree Huggers!" and how her exchange was not so delightful. I laughed to myself because the night before I had prepared a wonderful Vegan Lasagna laced with tofu and I thought, "If she only knew."

It's sad that there is a stigma in the world for those who care about their bodies and what they put into them and who have a concern for the planet which we share with all God's creatures.

I recently attended Delisa's Food for Life Nutrition and Cooking Class sponsored by the Cancer Project. At first I thought, "I don't have cancer" and wondered if this class would have anything of interest to me, but a friend explained to me it was to help cook healthier meals, so I signed up but re-

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ally wasn't sure what to expect. You see, I have always enjoyed cooking great meals and baking delightful goodies. Time in the kitchen is therapeutic, a way to forget about everything else and focus on creating a dish that will bring a smile to those enjoying it.

I love to read cookbooks, I love good restaurants, I love food! But I've never given much thought to how healthy it is or exactly how it affects my body.

I've never considered myself obese. A little overweight . . . but someday ... I'll exercise and cook healthier ... someday. Well, that day has come; I'm



making cheesy sauce out of cashews and nutritional yeast, making tofu a la everything and using egg replacement and whole wheat flour in my baked goods.

SSSHHHH... don't tell them, I have to be somewhat quiet and sneaky about my new cooking habits because not everyone in my circle of family and friends are happy about it. That's funny because I don't always discuss the ingredients and they seem to clean up their plates.

A story in the Bible comes to mind. Daniel 1:12 – "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who ate the royal food..." 13 – "At the end of the

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ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food.”

Not everyone likes change. There's a common mentality of “It's how we've always done it” and “If it's not broke, don't try to fix it!” Well, I've changed. I'm not eating the royal food anymore and I like this change! I scan old familiar recipes and think about how to make the substitutions to make it healthier and my list of new recipes to try is a mile long. Going to the grocery store is a new adventure. I'm better educated, reading labels and buying organic when I can. Along with eating a very healthy diet I've started walking and have lost 10 pounds. Once your mind and body are in agreement it all naturally comes together.

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# Alaska Vegetarian Society

## **Mission Statement:**

To create a compassionate and sustainable world by inspiring and supporting reverence for all life and the adoption of a plant-based diet.

## **Who to Call**



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- Volunteer to be a foster home for homeless animals.
- Post info about animals you have lost or found.
- Donate food, bedding, toys, kennels, leashes, & money.

