

select simpler...

respect the body...



Be Choosy! News, Events and Tips

FLASHBACK : MARCH 2008, STARTING MY JOURNEY

Cautious and curious I observed the clean green lifestyle from the edge, absorbing words like toxin free and organic, much as an eight-year girl might circle the perimeter of a new playground. Trying to appear confident but not knowing where to start. Maybe I was waiting for welcoming eye contact serving as acknowledgement to come and play, or just the right timing when our town paper advertised a workshop discussing household toxins my heart committed instantly.

But my brain was skeptical. I had developed a habit of filing newspaper headlines and evening news sound bites into an overflowing drawer in my head labeled "deal with it later." My mind resisted change. Finally, I pacified this internal quarrel between my head and heart by convincing two girlfriends to sign up with me with the promise of going out after for a bite to eat.

Of course, I *knew* chemicals were in household products. It was intimidating to attempt to pronounce ingredients listed on counter spray, snack food or suntan lotion. If the pretty font on the front side of a lotion bottle said "natural," that was the only reassurance I needed to smother it on my little ones dry winter skin. Utmost faith escorted me by the elbow right up to the registers whenever I shopped. A company – I am sure - would never knowingly, or simply was prohibited, from using ingredients linked to harm in products.

I was naïve.

The presenters of the workshop hoped to provide education, but unfortunately, frustration and fear descended on the small wide-eyed audience. The warnings were more than my mind could handle. I interpreted their message as the world was going to cave, society was mutating, and it was *my* fault through the decisions I made as a mom.

I scribbled many of the harmful ingredients mentioned on the back of a bank receipt found in the bottom of my purse. BPA, parabens, BHT (I put a question mark next to that one? What did it stand for?) Chlorine bleach (was this the same a regular bleach?) Thal - thal –something...Scribbling around the corner onto the backside, I wrote a reminder to check nail polishes for unnecessary ingredients.

By the end of the evening, I felt confused and overwhelmed.

Later in the week, I pulled out the crumpled list in a grocery store to make a good faith effort. Standing in the shampoo aisle, I adjusted my eyes to the tiny print, turning the products to their rear side. My list said I should avoid *sodium laurel sulfate*. It was prominently listed in the shampoo. And this one, and this one. Let's try another. Parabens. No parabens in this product! Wait, yes, methylparaben. Was that the same? I do not understand. Deep breath. Think. The children's shampoo said on the front 'natural' but had almost every word from my *list* on the label.



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My feet started to feel like concrete attached to the ground. The aisle seemed to grow in my peripheral vision and I could not think. My littlest one was standing in the cart out of boredom. I wanted to snap at her, but she was not the cause of my frustration.

What was I supposed to do? Years of shopping experience took-over. I grabbed the most economical brand and threw it in the cart. I had remorse pushing the cart to the front of the store but I felt inundated with too much information, and at the same time, *not* enough.

For two weeks, I stewed over my indecision. The ruthless impatient part of me wanted to ignore what I had heard. Ignorance could be my way out. I will continue to shop according to coupons, sales, and name brands and eliminate this shopping induced anxiety.

But my core chanted Knowledge is Responsibility..... Knowledge is Responsibility.

My inner spirit knew there was substance to the workshop and my curiosity took charge. I wanted to know *how* toxins entered my home, how they were stored in my body - and my children's bodies - without me having a say in the matter.

It was time to blaze a path to "opt-out" of mainstream consumerism and go search for options.
And yes, **THERE ARE OPTIONS.**

FLASHFORWARD: JUNE'S OPTION

Ssssspp...over here. How would you like a directory to help ease your shopping induced anxiety? One that consists of small, medium and a few large companies who have pledged to make safer products? So when you run out of that handsoap next week, you have a resource of online companies to peruse and explore? In addition, these companies have committed to provide greater transparency to us, their consumers. Isn't this nice?

Start by watching "[Why Choose Product from a Compact Signer?](#)" A short interview with Karen Roche of [Be Green Bath and Body](#), a Compact Signer. (Karen was by my side at the first workshop I attended, and we followed our passions from there.)

Then, explore the Campaign for Safe Cosmetic's listing of [Compact Signers](#). While we are making the changes on the home front, the Campaign is tackling the elimination of the use of chemicals linked health problems for everyones home front.

Have fun playing! I would love to hear if you discover a product you love from this recommendation.

(The above story is an excerpt from [My Journey & Your One Intriguing Change](#), a 21-minute audio download if you would like to hear the entire version!)

Until next time, **Congratulations** on your journey to choosing wiser, selecting simpler and respecting the body.

Take care,
Kristi Marsh

If you have received this from a kind acquaintance, please [subscribe for future editions](#).