

A BREATH of Fresh Air



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Are you tired of cleaning your home with chemicals that harm the environment? Are you having allergic reactions to air fresheners and fabric deodorizers? Are you concerned about the impact these products are having on your brain and body?... *You're not alone.*

It's overwhelming to think of the number of chemicals we introduce into our bodies every day, and not just from the environment, but right inside our very own homes. When we take inventory of the products we use, we become aware of the staggering chemical overload we subject our bodies to every day. We begin in the kitchen with abrasive cleaners and antibacterial sprays, in the living room we spray our furniture with heavily fragranced fabric deodorizers, in the bathroom we use toilet bowl cleaner and air fresheners, in the bedroom we burn paraffin candles, in the laundry room we use fabric softeners and the list goes on, and on, and on.

Unfortunately, these products contain harmful chemical VOCs (volatile organic compounds, chemicals that have a high

vapor pressure at room temperature) which can cause irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat as well as cause asthma, nausea, headaches, and migraines. Continued exposure has been attributed to damage to the central nervous system and has been linked to some forms of cancer.

The more we educate ourselves, the more compelled we become to take control of what we expose ourselves to on a daily basis by seeking natural alternatives.

Here are a few ways to bring "Green Cleaning" into your home!

AIR FRESHENER

My favourite way to freshen up the air in my home is by putting a small saucepan of water to simmer with dried herbs, spices, or extracts such as cinnamon, cloves, and vanilla. These are particularly pleasant for the winter months when coupled with discarded orange and lemon peels. Brewing a pot of coffee also adds a fresh comforting smell that is always pleasing and most welcoming when entertaining.

Plants are an excellent way to increase indoor air quality. The following plants are known for their air purifying properties:

- Spider
- English Ivy
- Bamboo Palm
- Gerbera Daisy
- Sansevieria
- Chrysanthemum
- Corn Plant
- Rubber Tree
- Pothos
- Philodendron
- Parlor Palm
- Aloe Vera

CANDLES

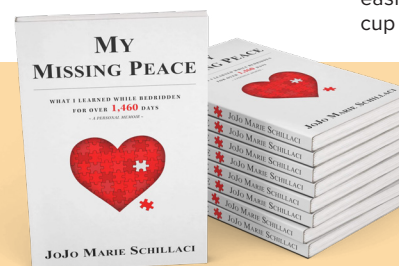
Nothing creates ambiance like a room full of scented candles, but it can also create a toxic soup in the air. There's no need to sacrifice this simple pleasure! Exchanging

paraffin candles with a healthy alternative such as soy or bees wax will create the mood, without the toxins. They have become increasingly popular and are just as fragrant as their unhealthy counterparts. If scent is not essential, perhaps consider investing in a battery-operated alternative.

IN THE KITCHEN

Lemons have far more uses in the kitchen than just for cooking! Adding discarded lemons to your dishwasher helps cut grease and adds a fresh lemon scent while washing.

Cleaning your microwave has never been easier! Add an entire half of a lemon to 1 cup of water and place in your microwave



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on high for 5 minutes, then wait another 5 minutes before opening the door to allow the steam to work its magic. Open the door and simply wipe the inside clean!

Give your cutting boards a refresher by sprinkling salt on them and then rubbing all sides with half a lemon. Rinse clean and enjoy the fresh scent!

Use lemon juice to disinfect countertops! The citric acid will help remove tough stains and act as a natural disinfectant, but always be sure to test a small section first that is hidden from sight.

No more dreading cleaning the oven! Simply squeeze 3 whole lemons into a large oven-safe baking dish full of water, then bake for 30 minutes at 250 degrees. Do not open the door until the oven completely cools (approximately 30 minutes). Simply use a sponge to wipe away the grease and grime!

IN THE BATHROOM

Borax is the BOMB! Available in most grocery stores and dirt cheap, Borax which has been around since the 1800s, is a great healthier alternative to harsh chemicals. To clean toilet bowls, mix 1/4 cup borax or baking soda and 1 cup vinegar in the toilet. Let it sit for 15 minutes (or longer, if necessary), scrub, and flush. As a scouring agent, simply combine 1 cup baking soda, 1 cup borax, and 1 cup kosher salt in a jar. Sprinkle on the area to be cleaned, wipe with a sponge, and rinse.

To get your glass and mirrors sparkling clean naturally, combine 1/4 cup vinegar and 4 cups warm water in a spray bottle then wipe clean using a dry cloth or piece of newspaper.

By making the choice to switch to all-natural cleaners, you are creating a safer home for your family, helping heal the planet, and saving money; the perfect trifecta for mind, body, and soul!

Remember to be gentle with yourself. It's always about taking small, but steady steps forward by making small, yet powerful changes each day. Don't get overwhelmed, just keep taking that next right step...*it simply begins with you!*

