



Chapter 1

Introduction: Tell Me It Can't Be Done, and Watch Me Do It!

I am a failure, folks. I am a failed mathematician. I am a failed mechanical engineer. And I am a failed high school teacher. I owe these failures, obliquely, along with all the consequences they've brought me, to a strange friend and enemy. Its name? *Food*.

Along came the raw foods revolution and suddenly my failures became surprising virtues and values. Everything I'd done up to this point revealed itself as a precious gift that I would integrate into my new endeavor. From the realm of mathematics came the gifts of logic and deductive reasoning. From engineering, I learned how to research, to dig deep, looking for unorthodox solutions. From teaching ninth graders in an all-boys school, I acquired three vital attributes: perseverance, survival skills, and raw courage.

I'm fortunate to hold advanced degrees in mechanical engineering and theoretical mathematics. But I've spent the

last decade devoting every waking moment to researching the benefits and techniques of consuming raw foods. *Why on earth*, I used to wonder, *did I spend so many years studying hard science without using it?* Had I defied my destiny? Wasn't I supposed to be squatting in some underground supercollider facility, holed up with brilliant social misfits, hurling bits of atoms at other bits of atoms, munching on ineptly homemade tuna sandwiches, and playing exotic computer games?

One day I picked up a book on quantum physics. Suddenly, it was *there!* I *knew* it! I had to write a book on Quantum Eating. It all began to make sense — my abundant academic background, the vast experience of my raw food journey, endless research and keen interest in beauty and anti-aging. I've experienced many life changes, including changing countries and careers. But deep down, I somehow *knew* that anti-aging research was central to my life's direction even before I was consciously aware of it.

All my life people told me there were things I just couldn't do. I had to overcome the inevitable prejudice that the world holds against handicapped people. It is as if people feel that a deficiency in your physical appearance makes you deficient in every other way. Some people like to put you down. Especially, it seems, when you're already down. Often, they do so innocently, unintentionally.

When I was a child, because of the bilateral hip problem, my parents were told I would never walk. After years of grueling therapy, I *did* learn to walk without crutches, though I still had a limp. It was then that I experienced, for the first time, the wonderful feeling that comes from accomplishing something that others think *impossible*. As Walter Bagehot put it, "The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do."

When we immigrated to America, I visited orthopedists to find one who would rise to the challenge of my hip disability. It “couldn’t be done,” they said. So I went to get a second opinion. A third. Ultimately, even a fifth opinion. The sixth doctor was utterly dismissive: “Why are you so hard-headed? You have limped all your life until now. You are going to limp for the rest of it. Just get used to the idea!”

That’s all I needed. I stopped pleading with doctors. I began thinking — for myself. I found my own solution. Then I found a doctor with enough courage and vision to go along with my idea. The result: I am an orthopedic miracle!

My high school English teacher told my mother that I would never learn English. She wanted me out of her English class because I was hopeless. I overheard this conversation. From that day I made straight A’s. I think my passion for English and the audacity to write books in English sprang from her putdown.

When I was a teenager, my girlfriend told me outright, “If I looked like you, I wouldn’t even want to live.” My interest in beauty was a direct result of the hurt I experienced that day. It took me many years to find my way to what I now call (to employ one of my trademarks) “Rawsome Beauty.” The advantage of Rawsome beauty over in-born beauty is this: In-born beauty fades, but you can be Rawsomely beautiful when you are 40, 50, 60 and beyond. So these days I receive numerous emails from my seminar attendees with generous beauty compliments.

For me, even something as simple as attending a first-time yoga class can become a major obstacle — physically and emotionally. My first encounter with Bikram yoga resulted in a confrontation with the studio’s owner. My stringent hip limitations made me unfit for most of the 26 Bikram poses. Breathing exercises and the shavasana (the “dead body pose”) were all I could manage without serious modification.

So I came equipped with a strap. Little did I know, bringing a prop and insisting I keep it because of my affliction's severity, was a crime worthy of threats to call the police.

After this encounter I took private yoga classes. Eighteen months later I was back in the same studio. I love it. These days, when I am more flexible, I am able to appreciate the unbendable Bikram rules my instructor imposes. I will soon submit an article about my yoga experience to one of the yoga journals. I am also expected to attach pictures of some of my poses. No matter how hard I have to work to perfect them I promise one day you will see them in print.

Want to make me do something? Just tell me it can't be done. I *like* to solve problems! And I believe every problem has a solution. I believe in doing *whatever* needs to be done to get where you want to be. Exercising stubborn legs for hours a day just to make them do what they're supposed to do, endlessly researching anti-aging practices — either way, I'll take it to the limit. Farmers call it "hoeing to the end of the row." My motto: Whatever it *takes*. You are likely fortunate — your "whatever it takes" may well be much less than mine.

Older people endure the same prejudices as the handicapped. I saw, early in life, a glimpse of what it's like to be old, a glimpse of how older people are treated. I was determined to find a way to avoid decrepitude. And dying young was *not* an option. I thought, *I have to find a way to avoid this fate*. And I did! The result of my research and experience is detailed in my three books. The book you are holding now, *Quantum Eating*, is the last in my trilogy devoted to anti-aging and Rawsome beauty. I strongly advise you to read my first two books before reading this book.

Some ideas you'll read here are different from those in my previous books. I stand by what I said in those books;

however, I am developing knowledge and experience and now I am at a different stage of life. New possibilities open, new practices emerge. It's my responsibility — indeed, my joy — to capture them for you in this new book.

There's a wonderfully insightful book by Thomas Kuhn that you should read, if the progress of science excites you. It's entitled *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Kuhn makes a penetrating point: When you're in the middle of a scientific revolution, you normally can't see it — like the calm at the center of the storm. So it is with life. When you're at a crossroads and your life makes a turn, you may not notice it until much later.

In 2005, my husband and I spent Christmas with the famous raw food family of Victoria Boutenko. (For the curious: No, we did not have a raw turkey for Christmas dinner.) Victoria set up a presentation for me in Ashland, Oregon, her hometown. We spent two full days with this radiant family, absorbing fresh raw foods knowledge, sharing green smoothies, and being immersed in their warm, vibrant energy. It was a genuinely life-altering experience. Victoria got interested in my personal regimen of not eating after 2 P.M. She encouraged me to write an article explaining my theory.

I was gripped with the same excitement until I sat down at my keyboard. *Theory?* I wondered. I didn't have a theory. All I knew in that moment was ... *my* raw food regimen felt thoroughly *good*, totally *right*. Doing it myself was one thing. But justifying it for others was a different story. Though I'd stumbled upon this life-enhancing practice through my own experience, my analytical mind needed more in order to help me explain it to others. I needed *proof*.

Research in nutrition is contradictory, at times, frustrating. It's like collecting berries (and really, come to think of it, it felt more like collecting a berry here and a berry

there, but never a whole quart). Information was scarce. Each book held promise, but each contributed only tiny insights, just snippets of information. Before I knew it, I was getting deeper and deeper into quantum physics. I read more than *three hundred books*. And I gained a deeper understanding of why my own practice with raw foods was so good, not only for me, but for many other people throughout history.

If there is anything that unites all cultures and philosophies, it is the never-ending quest for preserving youth and reversing age. In writing this book, I researched and adapted teachings from Christian, Buddhist, mystic, and animist traditions, as well as findings from eastern and western medicine. Longevity traditions are known in every culture. Collecting pearls of wisdom about long life, I let my studies span centuries, cultures, and endless variations, until I could string them together to create a necklace of knowledge.

Together we will explore all the way from the distant past to the most recent theories in anti-aging research. I have looked into the folk traditions and medical practices of different countries and cultures, devised a strategy to use every one of these different methods that offered real improvements in human well-being. Just like doctors from different specializations — cardiology, endocrinology, neurology, etc. — come together to save a person's life, the wisdom from different parts of the world must be combined to successfully tackle the aging puzzle.

What is Quantum Eating? It is an advanced level in the raw food lifestyle in which you eat 100 percent raw, twice daily and only in the first part of the day. In this book, step by step, I will supply the evidence for why this way of eating provides the utmost in anti-aging benefits. Each chapter discusses a specific topic. But the main point plays

out over the course of the whole book, and every chapter adds another piece to the anti-aging puzzle.

Science can be interpreted in different ways. Any research by experiment can never be 100 percent reliable. Nonetheless, I will introduce some research findings that are available. I will attempt to show how some scientific conclusions contradict logic, yet others confirm the wisdom of natural order. These latter findings can be convincing on a macro level, but on a quantum level, I have learned, even logic becomes questionable. So I implore you never to get attached to certain scientific hypotheses or theories — be ready to evaluate them and change entirely as new experiments, especially on your own body, open new secrets to you.

The raw food lifestyle can only be individually experienced — it cannot be authoritatively proven. The best science can achieve is to disprove erroneous concepts. Nevertheless, I researched scientific findings extensively. I quote the available data, and present conclusions I believe scientists' research have arrived at, but never delivered. I have tried to present evidence and disclose flaws in reasoning, so you can judge for yourself whether my interpretations are plausible.

You must gain some degree of raw food maturity to proceed to Quantum Eating.

This book is dedicated to Victoria Boutenko, because without her encouragement I do not think this book would have ever seen the light of day. If you do not know who Victoria Boutenko is, this is a good indication that you may not be quite ready to take this advanced health journey. If your eyes are glazing over, wondering what on earth this woman is talking about, get my first book or other books on the raw food lifestyle and start at the beginning.

Everyone can benefit from not eating at night, but making Quantum Eating your lifestyle and enjoying every minute of it can be accomplished only on the 100 percent raw method. I consider it a great stroke of personal good fortune to have stumbled upon the raw food lifestyle. I advise you to learn and experience it as well.

I'm extremely grateful to Victoria for her persistent nudges. It wasn't until she encouraged me to share the discoveries of my own raw regimen that this new adventure began to unfold. Writing this book has changed my life. My prayer is that it will change yours.

Wearing your favorite old comfortable shoes — that's how it feels to write in your native tongue. Writing this book in English, from the perspective of my mother tongue, Russian, felt like running the Boston Marathon in stiletto heels. My beloved editor Sharron Carrell went to great lengths to fit Cinderella's slipper on this Russian stepsister's foot. My fairy godmother often had to wave her magic wand to find just the right words to express my ideas. If there are still some faults in my English it is because, sometimes, I fought ferociously to keep my authentic footprint, ignoring her better judgment.

I've read that many writers learn to speak perfect English but spend the rest of their lives trying to find something worth saying. Me — I'd rather have something valuable to say even if I say it imperfectly. I write fearlessly. I feel that the information that I have is so powerful that, even if my English stilettos sometimes disrupt my balance, the message itself will get me to the end of the race.

One thing I *do* know about writing ... You must lead people to the truth even if it means baring your heart in the process. It's true that "there is nothing new under the sun." However, it's equally true that each of us is a unique human

being with unique life experiences and knowledge. If you filter an idea through your very soul, there is a great chance you'll come up with something original. But this happens only on one condition: You must be completely honest with yourself. You must say what you genuinely feel — even if it contradicts mainstream opinion or you lose some popularity points. I strive to maintain such honesty in this book.

I believe in God. Therefore, I will use the word *God* where I feel it is appropriate. I was reared in the former Soviet Union as an atheist. I earned — and I do mean *earned* — the right to speak the name of God when I came to the U.S. I do so with great pride. If you believe in Mother Nature or the Universe ... fine with me, so long as you allow me to be who I am. You won't find me addressing the Creator as *He/She/It*. Consider: It is not Eenie/Meenie/Miney/Mo who wrote this book, but I, Tonya Zavasta, and you deserve to know where I stand.

I couldn't be "politically correct" if I tried. (And I *have* tried. But politically correct and socially inept proved *not* to be a winning combination.) You will find here no attempt to please everyone. I use *man, men, him*, etc. for persons generally. You'll find both *he* and *she* throughout the book, but never *he/she*. I love English too much already to commit such punctuational atrocities in the name of correctness. If this is socially abhorrent to you, well ... I'm comfortable with your opinion.

We live in a free country. Here I do not even have to hold a license, as I would have had to in the former Soviet Union, to write a book. Write your own book, if you like. Pollute it with meaningless oddities like the Victorians putting ruffles on the legs of their pianos because they thought limbs were obscene. My style is my own; it shouldn't keep you from exploring the validity of my ideas. I am convinced

that you can benefit greatly from a good book — even if you do not agree 100 percent with the author.

When I announced at my local raw food group that *Quantum Eating* was about to be released, a lady asked me: Who is going to write the foreword? I was stunned, then speechless (which does not happen to me often). Later I gave it some thought and came to two important revelations.

A foreword is usually written by a compatriot, an expert in the field. I wish there were someone who had gone before me to turn to for advice and clarification. But I am in uncharted waters. What I am presenting here has not been presented by anyone else. My second revelation was that I wished I could have the philosopher-mathematician, Pythagoras, write it. His diet was very similar to the one I advocate in this book. His contemporaries commented on his vitality and especially youthful and beautiful appearance even though sources say he lived to be 100. Since he is currently unavailable, I will struggle on alone. No foreword, but hopefully no backward either.