Garlic and Healing

November 22, 2016 By Matt Starr

Last weekend in Vermont, the thin rays of mid-November sun made 45 degrees of warmth just perfect for a sweat shirt and jeans, especially with an all-day outdoor job at hand. One sweet last taste of diluted summer sunshine, bidding us adieu, wishing us a lovely winter.

We bask in the weekend weather with another time of transition upon us. We start thinking of winter tires, snowshoes and skis, sharp skates and wood stacking.

Today though, it's warm, and we can shelve those pre-winter wanderings for a little longer.

This warmer feeling got me out in my future garden (moving in about a month), which I'm building from grassy lawn. It's no small task. The season's grand finale was yesterday, as I smoothed out the clumpy wet earth and added compost to begin the process of building better soil and growing food. I finished the second day by planting the first seeds of this new garden. Garlic cloves are in (yay!), covered with compost, all cozy in their thick layers of fluffy hay.

It's a new beginning.

It took a lot of work, and will continue to need care as we consistently build the soil, use cover crops, compost, and our good shovels to keep working on it through time, helping it to be healthier.

The metaphor is screaming at me. Chronic illness is like the sod's roots, tangled and matted to make digging a total bear in the beginning. Faced with the burden of poor health as we work with chronic illness and disease, the first challenge is to embrace life as it is right now. It involves starting a process of hope, change, and personal peace, as we dig through the fear, isolation, and feelings of lost control.

Pushing that shovel into endless clods of clay is hard, and it's also hard to shift our attitudes. But the payoff is enormous. When you embrace and celebrate all that is good, you naturally fall more in love with your life and can be more open for healing.

You can meditate, go for walks, drop some unhealthy items from your grocery list or lifestyle choices, be more kind – the list is endless.

Maybe this is a time for some help; a health coach or naturopath or some other qualified guide. I couldn't face 1500 square feet of sod removal, so I hired a local farmer to rotovate it. I got some

help. And now I can hoe, shovel, mulch and smooth the space enough to plant the garlic.

Are you ready to commit time, energy, and resources that will help you be healthier? I hope so, in whatever form works best for you.

Where’s the payoff? Well, think about what you want out of your precious life. What do you hope for, what do you most deeply desire? Once those things have been identified, put your commitment to the test, and start doing things that can help your hopes come to fruition. I have written about many actions and strategies you can use.

It’s time to clear your mind, like clearing the land and establishing a beginning garden, so that those first seeds spout and grow into what you want.

In growing garlic, or in reclaiming your health, remember…

Anything is Possible

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