# Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

## www.fedup.com.au

## ("courage award"  keyword only)

**Mostly excerpts, click on link to view full story**

**[1700] "40 years on and I'm happy and brimming with energy" after chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) (February 2026) COURAGE AWARD**

I had years of debilitating and depressing CFS/ Post Viral Syndrome after Hepatitis A in 1987, when I was in my mid 30s.

I had severe brain fog and very little time in the day when I could function. It was humiliating being told I was malingering, unfit, mentally unstable /and so on. The brain fog made driving dangerous, I found myself driving through red lights completely unaware. I would have to write down my address and phone number for any official telephone conversation.

After a bush walk, I would be flat on my back for four days. My heart would feel like it was struggling to beat. Sometimes it was fast. But oddly enough I would feel a lot better after a four hour uphill walk then four days of absolute inability to get off the bed to make a meal or watch TV.

My doctor who diagnosed CFS said that I had candida but the green juices and candida treatment he proposed made me extremely ill and with suicidal thoughts. I was then away from home and happened to leave the candida meds and stopped having all the recommended supplements. It surprised me greatly that after four days I went from really ill with suicidal thoughts to well, mentally and physically.

Fortunately a newspaper article by a doctor seeing CFS patients at RPAH sent me in the direction of the Allergy Clinic at RPAH. Turns out 50% of people with CFS developed sensitivity to chemicals in food, both natural and additives, as well as chemicals in our environment.

After a week of withdrawal from likely foods cause problems I suddenly felt alive again. Sensitive to lactose, salicylates, amines and two food additives - a preservative in bulk oils and spreads (not always listed on ingredients) and natural colouring 160b. The reaction I had to the 'preservative in oil' challenge was like being given a super dose of caffeine plus muscle pain.

I worked in the arts / illustration area - no more dark room chemicals, acrylic or oil paints. Cleaning products and perfume, petrol fumes, even spices and herbal oils were causing sudden and severe reactions - muscle pain and fatigue. Angry to be wasting so much time asleep and 'drugged' with exhaustion.

After just two weeks on the elimination diet I got my life back. I wore a respirator in the supermarket and carried it while travelling - like filling the car, painting, new carpets, people with perfume or nail polish on trains. I got a lot of backlash from TAFE art school and friends but I was well as long as I controlled what I ate and inhaled.

This was 40 years ago and I'm still happy and brimming with energy. I'm less sensitive to food and environmental chemicals - though I avoid them. I've found hospitals / surgery cause problems with preservative in drugs like morphine so I endured pain rather than the evil reaction I have to them.

It has sent me down a pathway to find natural, nontoxic options, research old recipes of paints, cosmetics and remedies. I have a wealth of knowledge of all things herbal and healthy.

I am grateful for my second life - like I have been very old now young again … though not in years. I recently rode a manual bike 15 km on an uphill gradient and 15 km back, it still feels like a miracle. It still always surprises me that I have a memory and energy after exercising - Heather

## [1692] “A godsend to our family” (June 2025) COURAGE AWARD

BLOG1692

Failsafe was a godsend to our family. I would highly recommend it to anyone who wonders whether food might be causing or making symptoms worse in their children. We have two children with autism and two with ADHD and I knew that at least one of them did better on a gluten and dairy-free diet, but the results of the Failsafe diet in my large family were better than I could have imagined.

My 3yo son with autism who prompted the diet made huge improvements. He started making eye contact and his social engagement increased out of sight. The amount of medication my older son needed was drastically reduced. Their sleep improved. My toddler's rash and mucousy nappies improved. The biggest surprise, totally unanticipated, was that our out of control, angry and aggressive 12 year old daughter calmed down and the whole family (including herself) started enjoying her company. Even my most 'neuro-typical' child showed a dramatic improvement - her nightly night terrors stopped and she had a huge improvement in concentration and imagination.

We followed the diet strictly for 10 months but struggled to successfully introduce even small amounts of other foods, even with the help of an experienced dietician. We eventually tried GAPS which we were unable to maintain due to expense and then went onto a gf/df/soy free diet staying away from preservatives and colours.

Fast forward to my baby now being a toddler who was more hyperactive and impulsive than any other child I've ever met, my eldest son with autism having meltdowns all day everyday and life in our homeschooling family was intolerable. Behavioural interventions were not working. So we went back to Failsafe. What a relief! Again we had big improvements in everyone. The meltdowns eased, and the edge was taken off the hyperactivity and impulsivity. My then 5yo, with a level 2 ASD diagnosis had been completely rigid about not getting into any water or the pool (showers were awful!). It didn't matter how much fun the other children were having he would not allow himself to be coaxed into the water at all, not even a toe. The same as he would only wear long tan coloured pants. We were a week or two into Failsafe and my husband took the other kids into the water at the pool while I held the baby and watched our non-swimmer. My son, unbelievably, allowed himself to be coaxed into the water, and had a lovely time playing in the water. He not long after asked me to buy him some pants in black! This was a huge encouragement to continue.

I would highly recommend anyone suspecting food as a cause or exacerbator of symptoms to give FAILSAFE a try. The great thing about it is that it is relatively fast, it is also a cheap diet to be on and it changes thinking about food and fragrances and the way we live. After FAILSAFE it is impossible to go to a supermarket with the same eyes. Thanks so much to Sue and Howard and the RPAH hospital for helping my family! – Sarah

**[1678] 635: "suffering for 6 years of hives" - Riborash (July 2024) COURAGE AWARD**

COURAGE AWARD In Dec 2017 I broke out for the first time in hives and a rash after eating Hot Sauce curry chicken dish my husband brought home from work. It lasted for 6 months, I was put on antihistamines and steroids, it did nothing for my symptoms, the only thing that soothed me was a bicarb soda bath and nappy rash cream that had zinc in it. But every day I would still break out, in the end all I could eat was cucumber and lettuce on a gluten-free wrap and some boiled chicken with olive oil. After researching I found a low histamine list from overseas, it had every food listed that was high histamine in a numbered pattern 0 for no reaction to a 3 for a bad reaction. I didn't realise that everything I was eating was causing the rash to stay. I started the diet, I got off all my medic...

**[1647] Hidden bread preservative "took us on a very, very unpleasant detour" (September 2022) COURAGE AWARD**

I want to thank you, once again, for giving us life changing support. We are truly grateful for the time and effort you put into helping persons like ourselves who are desperate for answers, to find positive, life-changing solutions! I just had to share with you what has happened since our last email. And just in case you want to publish it, I will start from our earlier experiences with you. Back in the mid-90s we had 2 severely intolerant children. They lived on potatoes, chicken, lamb, carrots and rice. Their reactions were vast... severe stomach cramps, vomiting, ear infections, sleeplessness, eczema, hyperactivity, anger, anxiety, diarrhea, constipation, snoring and noisy breathing. And lots of crying. One day our GP phoned me. He'd seen a book called Fed Up by Sue Dengate and thou...

**[1607] Danielle's story - 'every day felt like groundhog day' COURAGE AWARD (July 2021)**

When I stumbled upon your website, at the time with my eldest 2 kids behaviour, every day felt like groundhog day. I was a mess, at my wits' end and barely surviving, not to mention the toll it was taking my relationship with my husband. When we started our failsafe journey in 2019, our 4 year-old was the worst of the 3 kids with: * hyperactivity * no impulse control * didn't like loud noises * defiance* OCD * hard to get to sleep * phases of night wakings * sensory issues * mood swings * extremely fussy eater * anxiety * autistic traits (salicylates and amines) * no volume control * strips off his clothes (salicylates) * aggressive behavior * constantly running away. It was at the point where we didn't want to go out as a family, play dates or dinner because we had to keep our eye on h...

**[1594] Teenager with autism and depression (March 2021) COURAGE AWARD**

I am 18, turning 19 in March … I'm currently in university, studying on campus. I have ASD (Autism), GAD (Generalised Anxiety Disorder), ADHD and Depression… I have struggled all my life with food intolerances, in fact my mum tells me I almost died when I was a baby because of them. I was failsafe until I was 5 and then mum eased off a bit. And I recently went back on because my symptoms were getting out of hand. I have found massive improvements - Jemma WATCH VIDEO

9min 25sec

**[1536] "I wouldn't have stuck out the food changes if it hadn't changed my life in such a positive way" (August 2019) COURAGE AWARD**

I usually share meal ideas, but wanted to share a little on how going failsafe has benefited my life. This time last year, as you can see in the pics I was severely overweight. I was sick all the time, migraines that doctors couldn't find the solution for (every month for probably 10 years, sometimes just a couple of days at a time but a lot of the time they would last 2 weeks straight), IBS symptoms, asthma so bad I was on the nebulizer every half hour to an hour, frequent stomach ulcer attacks, over the last 20 odd years I would be up 20+ times a night to constantly pee and always just feeling blah. I had accepted all these things as just who I was, and actually didn't even realise how sick and tired I was, until I wasn't sick and tired anymore.

The other pics are of me today, 60kgs weight loss (have literally halved my weight), no longer use the nebulizer in fact I haven't even needed a single puff of ventolin since going failsafe or the constant courses of steroids, off all medication for stomach ulcers and migraines. I sleep through the night most nights (Well as good as you can sleep through with a toddler in the bed), I no longer need to race to the toilet often and the greatest part of all migraine free ?. I can actually count on 1 hand how many little headaches I have had in the last year and each one was as a result of eating the wrong thing. Now obviously the physical change is what everyone notices in me, and always asks how I lost the weight. Whilst I don't recommend failsafe as a weight loss solution, it has definitely played a big part in my overall journey. I didn't drop 60kgs just changing the food I was eating, I have

worked very hard with daily exercise and learning portion control and getting into the habit of eating smaller portions but more frequently (I would usually only eat one meal a day but then eat a lot of munchies at night), I now eat 6 times a day, 3 meals plus 3 snacks. I wouldn't be able to exercise as I do if I wasn't feeling well or tired all the time. I wouldn't have stuck out the food changes if it hadn't changed my life in such a positive way.

A huge thanks you to Sue Dengate, who has literally changed my life. Thank you to each and everyone in the facebook group, the support, advice and ideas I get on here have been incredible, I don't know how many times I have been in the supermarket and been able to ask a question and get a response so quickly.

I hope my story can encourage others as others have encouraged me, and I will continue to share our meals to help others as I have been helped over the year seeing what others create – Sarah

**[1513] Salicylates "I picked out my funeral dress" (December 2018) COURAGE AWARD**

I would like to thank you for what is most certainly the best website on the planet. After 44 years of health problems which severely escalated 9 years ago, I was about as near death as I would ever care to be. Doctors were treating me for autoimmune neuroimmunological syndrome… with huge amounts of medication and big scary treatments of intravenous immunoglobulin. They told me I would likely die if it didn't work... Two months after the treatment, I started to get even more ill and I picked out my funeral dress. And that's when the doctors pretty much gave up. I was severely disabled and in huge amounts of pain. I had become so toxic I was going into anaphylaxis with nothing but light needed to trigger it. Every time I ate, I would end up on the floor or seizing. When we worked out it was something environmental, we started with a low histamine diet. But I was eating blueberries, broccoli and olive oil, and I really thought it was all over, until I worked out the Salicylate connection. Finding a truly reliable resource of information was hard, your website is just that, and continues to be an invaluable asset to my survival. By connecting the preservatives and amines, your website has been life-saving. The reversal of my multitude of horrific symptoms is nothing short of miraculous. I lost 25kg of inflammation fluid in just weeks, I had been trying to use my poor body carrying that for 9 years, whilst trying to eat 'healthy' vegetables to lose the 'fat', ironically getting bigger and more ill. Thank you for all the time and energy you put into what you do, I will be forever grateful - Sara Altman, Ibiza

**LATER:** Awareness about PST Enzyme deficiency is something the medical profession globally could stand to improve on, and fast, before they pointlessly over-medicate and nearly kill the next poor sufferer. I have also never felt better than I do today, or understood the human body as much as I do now. You guys, along with the work of Rosemary Waring and Anne Swain back in the 70s, are the reason I am alive - S

**[1475] "Don't underestimate what time can do" (January 2018) COURAGE AWARD**

Failsafe - the future always looks so dismal when all you see is posts about intolerance and reaction.

Well, my 13yo just walked into the kitchen to make herself a smoothie with milk, yoghurt, blueberries, raspberries, banana, and mango. Having finished all the apples and polished off the

remains of last night's Sunkist (a fizzy orange drink that in Australia contains only one preservative, 211 benzoate but other ingredients overseas), and is planning to make choc-chip biscuits tomorrow.

How big a deal is this? Where did we start?

Well, by the time she was 2 years old we'd gone DF then additive-free then full FS. With dietitian supervision, we were at one point FS DF GF SF egg-free sulphurous food free and something in lentils/beans had set her off, no pears and no added sugars and no vegetable oils, and she was essentially a low amine carnivore. It got to the point where I understood that it was every time I put the food on a plate or in a cup - it was the FS dishwashing liquid!

So having found a safe dishwashing powder but not a dishwashing liquid, and making my own laundry detergent, and using nothing but steam for mopping, etc. my little girl who was living on pretty much just meat was finally clear.

Things weren't looking promising.

It took quite a bit of puzzling, but ultimately she passed dairy, soy, wheat (but not bread) and sugar and was okay with rice bran oil.

Choko. Pass. Swede. Pass.

Once I took the fruit and veg out, she passed the other challenge foods.

Life got a lot easier.

Passed 211. Passed 133 (blue).

Medication got a lot easier.

Started looking outside of FS at fruit/veg.

She passed, step by step, sweet potato, beetroot, blueberries, lychees, mango, raspberries, mulberries, corn.

... and that was pretty much it, until suddenly at about 8 years old she wasn't as sensitive. Suddenly, she pretty much just woke up one morning and was okay with pears and bananas and other things, and was simply less sensitive in general. A single ham sandwich could now happen, whereas it previously would have meant a reaction.

... and then at 12 years old, having not been able to have so much as half an apple in ten years without being up all night crying in pain, she's eating an apple a day.

We still need to navigate. The Sunkist has 211. Most other drinks are still very much off limits. And it's very much a limited treat.

But life isn't what it looked like it was going to be.

While others have at times criticised the lack of the latest "must have health food", she's healthy and happy and has a wide range of nutrition in her current diet as is. ????

How did she get there? What did we do?

Nothing. Stayed within her limits, maximising her nutrition and maintaining her health as best we could. Yoghurt (Vaalia) helps when she's been unwell and is more sensitive, a few home made broths/stocks from stews along the way, but that's it. Nothing special.

Just because it looks bad now doesn't mean it's going to stay that way. One or two answers can clear the way for more answers to follow, and suddenly things can be very different. Don't underestimate what time can do - Tracy

**[1439] "Thank you for changing my life" - US teen (May 2017) COURAGE AWARD**

Wow! I cannot believe I'm finally taking the time to write this email that I have been thinking about writing for nearly a year and a half (I am 15 now). I cannot even express to you in words how you have changed my life...

Before doing this diet, throughout childhood I have experienced a range of symptoms of food intolerance (ODD, OCD, depression and anxiety) but these were not bad enough to be classified as disorders. I had no idea that they could have a link to food.

I have also had IBS symptoms, feelings of panic/nervousness, irrational fears, inability to focus on thoughts at times, headaches, nauseousness, hyperactivity, reflux, 'weird' behavior (thought to be associated with ADHD), stomach aches and pains, food cravings and more. After doing the Diet and cutting out salicylates, amines and additives I already began to notice a WORLD of a difference. It was AMAZING!! When I started the diet in full (also cutting out dairy foods, wheat, grains and soy) the results were UNBELIEVABLE!!! My symptoms greatly reduced and (some even disappeared completely)!!!

Further, I was diagnosed with ADHD as well. Although some of it is really ADHD (and I am medicated for it) I have found a large part of it (and behaviors associated with it) to be greatly influenced through diet!

When I first found the diet, I decided to do it, but take a break for the summer. I planned to begin it after I came back from sleep away camp that summer. I went to camp and ate EVERYTHING; I told myself nothing was off limits. I ate tons of high salicylate fruits and LOTS of artificial junk (candy, cake, lots of artificial preservatives, etc.) as well as lots of amines, dairy, some wheat and soy (all of which I now know I am sensitive to). Because of this, I developed an eating disorder, extreme anxiety, depression and worsened ADHD and stomach problems. I was under-weight and recommended to an Eating Disorder Clinic later on. I was so miserable; yet I remembered this diet... I decided to start it up again. So that fall, I started eating less and less of the high chemical foods I had been eating and more Failsafe foods. As I slowly cut out the foods I was sensitive, my body was starting to heal! The eating disorder, depression, anxiety, obsessive thoughts and awful stomach aches and pains went away!!! It was amazing!!!!

Now I have been sticking to mainly Failsafe foods (low salicylate, but a less strict approach to amines). I still avoid additives and glutamates though; as well as dairy foods, wheat, soy and grains.

Also, read your **ebook "Fed Up With Food Intolerance: A Personal Story"**. It was moving and I like it very much. I liked it so much that I did "Character Summaries" and a "Character Chart" for some of the characters. I also recently finished creating a "Timeline" of events in the story and I did it just because.

What's more, you have INSPIRED me. Food intolerance is a HUGE passion of mine that I now know about (because of your site) and I want to help others and impact their lives the way you have. This information has touched me in a deep way – Teenager (15, USA)

Link to photo of personal story timeline.

https://www.fedup.com.au/images/stories/1439usteenSMALL.jpg

**[1438] Amines: "chocolate is literally a safety issue in our family" (May 2017) COURAGE AWARD**

I'm here to offload I'm afraid, after a super stressy and dramatic morning. My daughter is 23, mildly Aspergers, and with a long history of extreme highs, lows and over reactions. This morning she lost the plot more than probably ever before, literally turning her room upside down, screaming, hitting herself repeatedly in the face with both hands, while attacking me verbally and even threatening to kill herself.

Deep down, I do not believe that she is mentally ill in any way, in fact I would bet everything that she has eaten chocolate in the last 48 hours, and possibly a fair bit of it.

My sister and I, both in our 40's, gave up chocolate at least 15 years ago, and literally never touch it, because it makes us angry, and my daughter knows this. I've warned her about it many times, and the last time she lost her temper in an alarming way (at a security guard in the jobcentre of all places) it turned out that she'd eaten choc the 2 preceding days and she then swore off it herself.

I wish she was a little kid that I could dunk in an Epsom bath, and feed a strict elim diet.

As for the why, I would put the blame fair and square on phenylethylamine. It's the only amine found in chocolate, and so far, the only amine that makes me, my sis and daughter lose the plot in this kind of way. And the amine quantity is also much higher in choc than in other things. I am mid-way through my amine trial at present, but it's a strictly tuna/meat/bananas type of trial - chocolate is literally a safety issue in our family - specially as my daughter is now car driving age.

Because my sis and I have such a definite reaction to chocolate, I would actually be very scared of my girl approaching standard mental health services, and ending up either wrongly diagnosed with something terrible, which would make her feel even more 'like a freak' (being 'the autistic girl' has already made her feel that way to some extent through childhood) or being put on mind altering medication which could potentially cause massive, longer term damage to her mind and emotional

coping capabilities. I'm hoping within a couple of days that we'll be able to discuss this properly.

Chocolate has a very dark side for some of us. I honestly think that there are thousands of violent crimes carried out every day in the world, purely due to people eating the wrong stuff for them.

**Later**

She came home last night full of apologies and tears, and willing to admit that she's had chocolate over the weekend. I'm hoping she can see now that losing all control over your emotions and risking physical injury and worse, is not a fair swap for having a flavour in your mouth for a few minutes – Kathy from UK.

**[1397] 160b: Another frightening reaction to 'natural food colour' annatto (June 2016) COURAGE AWARD**

On December 4th 2015, my son (12, has Down Syndrome-but highly functioning), my daughter, and I were walking into our family doctor's office to pick up a prescription. We were holding hands as there is a very busy medical center there and drivers often do not pay attention to pedestrians. Anyway, we were walking across the parking lot when suddenly my son stopped, jerked his hands away from us and began to scream "stranger!" But pointing at myself and my daughter. We tried to catch him but he kept pulling away, yelling help, and saying he didn't know us. I knew immediately by the look on his face that he was not playing a joke or kidding in any way. He truly looked afraid. I was terrified, my daughter was crying and yelling "momma, what's happening, what's wrong with him?"

I said we've got to get him inside- we yelled for the nurse and a couple of men who were there as patients, also assisted us in getting him inside. The staff knew immediately something was wrong and took us straight back to an exam room. The doctor came in and began a routine exam, drew blood, took urine, a blood pressure reading and temperature. Everything was within normal limits. He sent blood and urine off for stat testing and sent us to the hospital to a brain scan done (MRI), which was also normal. His urine came back positive for cysts and blood, but no bacteria. His liver test showed no signs of disease but appeared slightly enlarged on ultrasound. For 10 days we went through this hell of not knowing what to do or what could be wrong. Test after test. We were certain he had a stroke of some sort, or possibly a seizure. We could find no proof other than his disturbing behaviour. He could no longer walk on his own, he could no longer read or write. He had distorted vision that made him question everything he saw. He had fits of screaming as if in horrible pain. He was rocking constantly. He would stay awake 2 to 3 days at a time then sleep for only 4 hours. He couldn't hold a fork or spoon. He couldn't dress himself. He was terrified of water, and he was still having times he didn't recognize any of us. I stayed up late with my oldest daughter as she had moved in to help with her little brother until we could find out what was wrong. He had even had to go back to wearing diapers because he would pee and sadly even poop himself and not even realize what he had done.

The doctors said that they thought maybe puberty was coming for him and that some children with Downs were affected by this and regressed to 4 and 5 year old mentality. I just knew in my heart they were wrong. I believed that if it were what they said it would have happened gradually, not all at once. All I got were "I'm sorry" and offers of strong medications to "control" him. I couldn't do that and I didn't accept that. I cried Christmas Eve and prayed with my daughters for a miracle. I put my youngest daughter to bed and my oldest daughter and I started putting things together for Christmas morning. We were wrapping the kids' gifts and talking about Christmases past when my daughter said, "remember how their kid would only eat chicken nuggets and Mac and cheese and it was sick all the time"? She was speaking of an ex family member, but I suddenly interrupted and said "YES! I remember! It was something about food dye that Kraft was using in their mac and cheese!"

It hit me all at once, that was it, I knew in my heart immediately but how could I find out for sure. Suddenly I was looking up every food my son had eaten in the last month that was not completely made by me or put together by God (not being sarcastic). I pulled out boxes, went through food labels and if we had no more of something he had eaten , I looked it up online. He had been on a kick of 3 mini chocolate donuts and a scoop of vanilla ice cream for a snack each afternoon and ate either Cheese Nips or MovieTime buttered microwave popcorn at night for a snack. He had been getting a "smoothie" made with Coffee Mate, ice, water, banana, vanilla, and sugar at breakfast with a poached egg and 2 sausage patties. His lunch was a Kraft single, and deli ham or turkey on whole wheat, with lettuce and tomato and frozen French fries that were oven baked. Supper meal was always a roasted meat and plain steamed vegetables, cottage cheese and sometimes a home-made bread or roll. After reading ALL the labels almost EVERY FOOD ITEM HE WAS EATING contained Annatto. The French fries, the crackers, the ice cream, the coffee mate, the popcorn, the cheese slice, EVERY meal except our evening meal contained Annatto. I knew I had been given the answer I needed. I started searching annatto online and kept getting RECIPES to prepare with it!!! I needed someone who knew it was bad for you too, someone who knew some people could not metabolize this stuff! I finally came across your site and read what you had to say. I had the verification I needed and now was gonna figure out how to flush that out of his body.

I immediately began using food grade diatomaceous earth on him by mixing it in unflavored yogurt. I gave him 15 drops of ConcenTrace Trace minerals in fresh squeezed orange juice that morning. I started giving him purified water and squeezing lemon in it or making him purified water with fruit infusion in it. Black tea with raw sugar or wild honey and the day after Christmas I got on Amazon and ordered bee pollen, green propolis, and more ConcenTrace minerals, plus concentrate vitamin paks.

I threw out every single annatto item I could find and flushed his system with all the good stuff I could get in him. It took about 7 days to hear him laugh again and within ten days he could walk straight. Three weeks before he could get his sense of comedic timing back and tell jokes like his old self and about a month before his vision cleared. I thank God so much for answering that prayer. That is truly all I could ever want. To know my son is gonna be ok. We had a setback lately however which is how I found your site again as I has forgotten to bookmark it. Anyway, he's been getting that look in his eyes again, like he's not sure who he's talking to. He's also has a couple of toilet accidents and not wanting to come out of his room because he's seeing shadows after him? Anyway,

yesterday I found that his "all natural" real fruit juice gummy multivitamins contain none other than ANNATTO! These were recommended by our pharmacist. My (our) doctor, has listed Annatto on my sons chart as an allergen under "food and medications" now. He said he had it listed under food only, as he had no idea it was used in medications. The pharmacist said she had NEVER heard of it so she had no way of knowing it was used in vitamins (it was listed under ingredients on the bottle) anyway she wouldn't refund the $35.00 for a product he should never have had. She swears her "autistic" son has taken them for years. I suggested that she take him off them and any other things with annatto in them, just to be sure he has autism at all. She told me there are always going to be "websites and parents out there looking for an excuse for their child's illness" and that sometimes we just have to accept what we are given. I just looked at her and said how happy I was for such "websites and parents" or I would have never had verification that I was on the right track with my son.

My son has not yet learned to read fully again and still can't write. But, I believe in time he will be completely himself. I am just shocked at how much a simple waxy seeded plant took from him and how hard we've had to fight to get him back from its clutches. I have seen some horrible things as a nurse, but I have to say I think the damage from Annatto his more harmful than any drug addiction I've ever seen and certainly needs much more attention from parents and the medical community. I don't know how it is in AU and European countries or in the Asian countries. I am sure that in the United States that this "natural," food additive is in far too many food items. Almost everything from cookies to casseroles contain this "poison" and the U.S. seems to have no plans to cut back on it. It is dangerous. Period. Sadly, too many people here are afraid they will have to cut out a food that their family just loves or their kids can't get by without its taste or convenience, so they would rather give them a pill to counteract it. Another sad reality is some parents find they can get a social security disability check for their children who have learning disabilities of things like attention deficit disorder, and they are not gonna give up that check for a cure (this is not ALL parents, but I have met MANY who call it their "fun money" for "having to take care" of such a child).

Thank you for letting me tell our story. I pray that its better every day and I will be far more diligent in my label checking, so I can be sure Annatto is out of our lives FOR GOOD ! I hope someone out there who even suspects that they or their child could be affected by a food additive that they try an elimination diet just to be sure. Just because everyone isn't bothered by it doesn't mean you or a loved one isn't. Doctors don't always have an answer. Trust me, our doctor is a great doctor and a good friend and he never even GUESSED something like this was affecting my son. I've had 5 children and been a nurse for 30 years and neither did I. If I hadn't had my memory jostled into remembering Kraft taking the dye out of their mac and cheese and all the complaints about it, I would never have thought to look it up. I would have never found your site and my son likely would be in a very bad situation right now and we would still be hopping from doctor to doctor in search of an answer. You will never know,....never know, how much stress we were under. How much fear I had that my son had some horrible disease creeping up on him and stealing away his life. That any moment he could possibly just stop eating, or breathing. I didn't know and no doctor could tell me otherwise. Now even though I haven't read of anyone's case as extreme as my son. What if they don't know. I think of children who have died from unknown causes and young people in institutions because their families couldn't care for them anymore because one day they started with an unknown illness they

never could overcome. That could have been my son. He just turned 13. If I hadn't found out, how long could I have continued to change diapers and spoon feed him? Would he keep growing bigger? Would he have gotten worse? He was already getting worse by the day. Would it have leveled off or continued? These thoughts are there now but not because I fear a return but because I fear there are others out there who are in the same position we were.

I pray not, but if there is someone out there, just try and see if it is something they have always liked or something that they started not long before. Flavored pudding, Ensure, yogurts, or any plain old everyday foods that everyone else eats. And remember, just because you've never had an allergy to a food or a reaction to an additive before does not mean you aren't now. Allergies can develop at ANY time.

I'm just thankful that a website like yours is out there to help point someone in the right direction. I appreciate it very much and hope you keep up the good work in letting people know what is out there and what can be done about it - Lynn from USA

(**Sue's comment:** Thanks to Lynn for sharing this amazing story. A few warnings: If you think you are affected by annatto 160b, you do not need to take any special products to detox. Simply stop consuming annatto - and expect some withdrawal symptoms within two weeks. For behavioural reactions, normally these present as a day or two of increased symptoms e.g. on days 4 and 5. Withdrawal symptoms can include agitation or tearfulness, followed by increasing improvements. Most people who realise they react to one food additive are likely to be affected by some other food additives - and possibly some "healthy" natural foods - as well).

**[1395] Depression: an update on what I'm calling "the diet that saved my life" (June 2016) COURAGE AWARD**

**First post:**

This diet is freaking amazing!

I have had extremely severe ADHD and Aspergers diagnosed from when I was six and depression so serious that I have been suicidal for the past two years and have had such bad anxiety that I only leave the house about every couple of weeks when I absolutely have no choice. I mainly just lie on

the sofa, feeling angry, bitter, exhausted, depressed and resentful of my horrible headspace.

But today ONE FREAKING DAY ON THIS WONDER DIET, today I got up, showered and got dressed (a genuine achievement), got ready and went out to town! I have had the best day in months and months, I did my errands, I wasn't in a bad headspace, I wasn't anxious, I was sensible, productive and most of all - HAPPY.

I had previously read about how people noticed extremely quick changes and improvements, sometimes in a number of hours and honestly, I was sceptical. That's all changed now. This diet has already changed my life and it's only the first day.

Onwards and upwards from here hopefully!!! - Ffion from UK.

**Two days later:**

For those of you who didn't see my first post I have severe major depression which leads to suicidal tendencies, self destructive behaviour and I also have horrific anxiety and very severe ADHD and Aspergers. Or rather.... I USED to.

This morning for the first time in over two years I got up and went for a morning run. I didn't go far and I didn't go fast but it's a start and is just one more indication that I'm really living now - not barely existing like I was previously.

I'm doing the strict elimination diet. To be honest though, I wouldn't care if I had to eat like this for the rest of my life as long as I feel as good as I am now.

**Update one month later:**

So I've been doing this diet for a month now, I chose to do the very strict total elimination diet because of the colossal amount of issues I was trying to tackle.

I have since done some challenges but have reacted to all so far - especially glutamates! I thought not having the things I used to eat so much of would be really hard (especially since I'm such foodie) but I can honestly say, for the first time ever, that the benefits of not having the stuff (drastically) outweigh the drawbacks.

I can honestly say that since I first started this diet, my life has been unrecognisably changed for the better.

One of the biggest, most welcome changes in me since going on this has been the total disappearance of my crippling anxiety and panic disorder which resulted in me often not being able to leave the house for days on end and leaving me unable to interact with other people as well.

Well like I said, that's not an issue any more. Since last month I actually joined an animal right group (something I feel passionate about). I didn't know anyone in the group and just kind of showed up to one of their open events and introduced myself.

This might not seem strange or much of an achievement but this is coming from the girl who wouldn't answer her house phone because she didn't know who was calling and was afraid it might be someone she didn't know.

Not only that but I have taken part in many of the awareness events that the group do. These events consist of going into the city centre, setting up a stall and talking to the general public to raise awareness about the importance of animal rights. A month ago it would genuinely have been funny to even suggest that I might do something like this because the thought of me being alone, in town, talking to strangers was so ridiculous.

I would also have not been safe to be in town on my own, due to my ADHD prompting me to often act irrationally and impulsively, putting myself and others at risk.

But I'm not that person any more and have taken part in 3 events so far and have loved every one of them! I now have a circle of friends who I see regularly and who, if I do have a hard day like everyone has once in a while, I can call and speak to about what's going on.

There is so much more I could write about, including going into detail about how my self-destructive tendencies have disappeared "as if like magic" some would say but I won't expand on all areas of how things have changed for the better, instead I will just leave you with this.

People always used to know my name for the wrong reasons.

At school I was "that strange girl who can't sit still" or "that girl who had a meltdown when the fire alarms were tested" or "that girl who's suspended because she lost her mind when she was asked to do work with a partner".

At uni I was "that girl who never shows up to lectures because she's scared" or "that girl who never looks anyone in the eye" or "that girl who can't join a conversation without cutting everyone off or shouting out".

I was always known for the wrong reasons.

But now people are actually NOT recognising me, and it's for all the right reasons. People see me doing an awareness event and say "that can't be Ffion" or they see my pictures of me running and say "ok, but who went with you" because they can't wrap their heads around the fact that it is now safe for me to be out on my own because I am no longer a danger to myself.

Before this diet I was surviving, and now I am genuinely, for the first time in my whole life, living life to the full. And I'm not about to stop - Ffion from UK.

**[1291] Depression and food intolerance - my story (November 2014) COURAGE AWARD**

To coin a phrase from the UK Inland Revenue advertising....."To have depression, is very depressing". It is also very debilitating, with symptoms of loss of energy and fatigue, poor concentration, physical and mental slowing down and anxiety. I had all these symptoms over a period of forty years, and they increased in intensity during the twenty-year period from 1960. During this time, I was married and had two children. It was a difficult time, as the depression affected my working life, although I was able to hold down a job as a dispenser in retail pharmacy, my accuracy at dispensing was not compromised, but promotion eluded me. During the early 70's, I opened my own drug store in the City of London it was a struggle to order goods, keep the books, and I was under constant stress to maintain the status quo.

By this time, I was under medication from my G.P., which did not have any effect. He also recommended group therapy, which I attended on a weekly basis. This was a total waste of time, as I realised that I was not like the people who attended each session, especially as I learned that some of them had been going for four years, and still had the same problems. By this time I was becoming suicidal, as I could not cope with the idea that I would have to wake up each morning with all the symptoms, and fight my way through each and every day.

I then decided to take stock of the situation and realised that there must be a hidden agenda and a cause for my depression. I started going to the library (no internet in those days) to look for some thing that could help me. One of the books I found was "Not all in the Mind" by Dr. Richard Mackarness. From this book, I discovered the world of food allergy and food intolerance that Dr. Mackarness had encountered on his trip to America in 1958 when he stayed with Dr.Ted Randolph at his clinic in Chicago. He learnt that Dr.Albert Rowe in the 1920's and 30's, designed what he called the elimination diet, this was further improved by Dr. Randolph who introduced the five day fast at the beginning of an investigation. On returning to the UK, Dr. Mackarness tested this method in his general practice for several years.

However, the case that caught my attention was a patient who was violent, self harming, abusing her children and with strong feelings of guilt. She had been treated with ECT and a wide variety of medications in high doses, which did not produce any improvement. The doctors were considering brain surgery. Dr Mackarness suggested that food intolerance could be the problem. He then set up an experiment under controlled conditions where he starved the patient for five days and then she was given test doses of specified foods. It was shown that certain foods (one of which was pork) made her violent, and if she kept off those foods, her condition improved drastically. So much so, that she was sent home with no medication at all, and remained well, as long as she kept to the safe foods.

Was this the cause of my own problems? My mother had been diagnosed with manic depression, which was never resolved, even though she was treated with ECT and was on continuous medication, and she died of a cerebral haemorrhage. Could she have had the same problem? Why didn't my GP ever mention that food could have been the source of my depression?

I then decided to eliminate wheat and dairy products from my diet, to see what would happen. This was a tough decision as my favourite foods were bread, weetabix, cow's milk, cheese, ice cream and biscuits. However, I persisted, and I remember waking up one morning, three weeks later, with a clear head, and not feeling tired.. I was normal!!!!!!. It was an incredible feeling.

To make up for the foods I had eliminated, I was eating a lot of eggs and chocolate. The symptoms returned, so they were out. Eventually, I found that oats and rye affected me, also beer – anything with grain. My alcoholic refreshments were limited to the grape, champagne, brandy and red wine....not bad, I suppose. However, my intake of fruit and vegetables increased, I could eat fish and meat. I stopped tea and coffee, and kept to fruit juice and herb and fruit teas. Rice cakes replaced bread.

Today, there are plenty of wheat-free, gluten-free and dairy-free foods, soya and goat's milk, cheese and yoghurt. However, for thirty plus years, I have lived an active life without wheat and dairy products. At age eighty, I am still active.I have my own teeth, and I am not on any allopathic medication. I eat organic foods (without pesticides, hormones, herbicides, and additives).

In the area of mental health, it is sad that the medical profession has chosen to ignore food intolerance, even though it has been proven (especially by the work of Dr. Mackarness) that food can be a contributory factor. In my opinion, the two indications to food intolerance and mental health is:- 1) the food that you love the most and crave for, is the one that is doing the most harm and, 2) if long term medication is not producing a cure, then there is probably another agenda. Elimination diets can be carried out in tandem with medication to see what happens.

In January 2006, the Mental Health Foundation launched their campaign "Feeding Minds The impact of food on mental health". They asked me if I would tell my story to the media and I was on BBC1 TV, BBC Five Live and LBC, plus other newspaper follow-ups.

"My Story" and other articles have been published in the U.K. newsletter of the "Action Against Allergy" organisation which was founded by Dr.Mackarness, who in his later life retired to Australia.

My mission is to spread the word, especially as there is an increase in mental problems amongst the younger generation whose diet needs to be addressed, rather than blanket medication - Brian from the UK

**[1204] Salicylates: a brush with insanity (July 2013) COURAGE AWARD**

Our family had a brief encounter with the elimination diet in the mid nineties and then another longer one some time after 2000. Never supervised. We considered ourselves to be living a healthy lifestyle, eating lots of fruit and vegies, enjoying an alcoholic drink at times but not excessively and we all exercised regularly. Food additives ended up on the forbidden list. Energy levels were really on the low side for our age but that only made us try harder to live the way we thought health should be achieved. Of course there were some other problems too but they weren't very big or we just never got to the bottom of them and had given up really. Yes, we had eliminated salicylates

from the diet at some stage but it looks like we missed the changes in ourselves. Perhaps a supervising dietician would have been able to keep us on track.

More than ten years after the first attempt at the diet, in order to cope with the stresses of my job, I decided that I would eat only fruit at lunch times, lots of healthy oranges and other fruit. A fair bit of fruit really because I was exercising about 2 hours every day as well. In the evening I cooked heaps of tasty vegies (taste means often high in salicylates) ...

A week later, I happened to meet a young lady and we had a chat. Later on in the week I met her again, just before she headed off to live 600km in one direction. At the end of the week I was off to live similar distance in the opposite direction. Again we had a chat.

A few days after the last encounter with the young lady I kept thinking about her. On the first day this seemed a bit amusing, like being in love but it was getting stronger and stronger and soon a reality check happened. What the hell am I doing?

1. I am a married man with children, I don't need this.
2. I hardly know anything about her, we had two brief chats and at the time I wasn't really terribly interested. Nothing happened between us.
3. She never showed an interest in me, this is just fantasy.

It got worse and worse. My thoughts came back to her all the time. Every 5 minutes of every day for the next 15 days. I saw her face, went back to the relatively few sentences we exchanged, went over them time and time again. Going around in circles. It happened during the day, when going to bed and it was also the first thing I thought of when waking up in the morning. Everything reminded me of her. Strong feelings were boiling up in me, automatic and unstoppable. Emotionally I was on edge. It was hard to concentrate at work, it was hard to listen in meetings. It was getting between my family and me.

There seemed to be no end to it. I had lost control but I could not explain why, which of course made it worse because I could not do anything about it. I was eating healthy food, exercising heaps, cut out the last alcohol because life was troubling me already as it was. No coffee, no tea, no additives, no smokes. I felt that I was close to going crazy or was I crazy already? I used to pride myself on thinking logically and having a very practical outlook on life. What had happened to me?

The move at the end of the week to another town brought a change in diet with it. Still a fair bit of fruit, but less. My brain got marginally better but would still be bad for another 12 days. By that time Sue's DVD "Fed Up with Children's Behaviour: how food and additives affect behaviour" had come in and I watched it several times. Then the penny dropped, perhaps it was salicylates? Perhaps we had missed salicylates the first two times playing with the elimination diet. I cut fruit out of my diet immediately since I was desperate to get back to normal. It took another 2 plus weeks before I started to consider myself normal again. Other things improved too: singing voice better and more consistent than ever, sticky poos less of a problem, sleep improved, bloating reduced, feeling of incomplete evacuation reduced.

This was the closest encounter I've ever had with a run-away brain. Needless to say, it was not a constructive part of our marriage, however, we have survived. This story embarrasses me extremely but perhaps others can benefit from it ... - by email

**[1150] Relief for dodgy bladder - urgency and frequency (October 2012) COURAGE AWARD**

I've done 14 day of strict elimination, and am now doing the salicylate challenge.

So far, I have had relief for so many symptoms, the main one being a 'drugged' feeling in the morning, even after 10 hours of sleep  felt I needed another 6 or so hours..... Within a few days of starting elimination, this ridiculous lethargy is GONE! My 18yr old daughter has the same symptom, and inspired by my result, she is now doing the elimination diet also. She has also had relief from feeling 'drugged', after a few days.

My biggest triumph is with my bladder though. All my life (I'm now 45), I've had a dodgy bladder urgency and frequency. Often managing to produce only tiny amounts of urine, but have to go NOW. The embarrassments and shame I've endured over the years.....

Anyway, at the end of the first week of elimination diet, I noticed that my bladder was less sensitive. Those 'urgent urges' still come sometimes, but I can hold them off and not have to go to the toilet 3 times in one hour after a cup of tea. My bladder capacity seems set at 250mls though  not a lot. At various times, I have tried to do bladder training, which aims to increase the capacity by holding off a bit longer, then a bit longer to 'stretch' the bladder. With my extra-enthusiastic bladder muscles, I just could not manage to do this.

Right now, it's happening! I feel I have some control over my bladder.

I'm hopeful that it will improve more over time, but if it doesn't, I'm very very grateful for the improvement I've had  cannot tell you how much this condition has affected my life  always looking for a toilet, going 'just in case', embarrassing accidents etc. Bit reluctant to do any challenges, for fear that my bladder will go backwards, even if it's only temporary. But I need more variety of food!

Many years ago, a urologist told me that he couldn't help  I'd had all the tests and investigations etc already  and he could find nothing physically wrong with me. He said that he saw 6 or 7 women EVERY WEEK with my problem. All of them had, apparently, 'nothing wrong with them'. Yet they still had urgency and frequency.

At various times I eliminated the usual suspects  coffee, chocolate, alcohol  to no improvement.

No one ever suggested that it was the normal, healthy, every day foods I was eating that might be the problem. I cannot believe it has taken me this long to stumble on a solution and reclaim a part of my life previously spent crossing my legs, rushing rudely away from conversations, desperately hunting for a toilet, desperately queuing for the toilet, weeing in all sorts of embarrassing places due to lack of toilet, actually wetting myself and having to clean up and change clothes, and on it goes endlessly.

I know it is early days yet, but I am just so thrilled to have had the improvement I'm experiencing.

Thank you so much Sue, for your excellent work  I will be forever grateful. - by email

**[1110] How learning about food intolerance changed my life (April 2012) COURAGE AWARD**

I thought I knew about food and nutrition, as I learnt about this at Uni .....however, little did I know, how little I knew....about 6 years ago now I heard that Sue Dengate was on TV talking about food additives and how they affected kids behaviour, so I went to her website **www.fedup.com.au** where I bought her DVD and books, at that stage purely as part of my ongoing education, as I treat a lot of kids in my practice.

After watching Sue's DVD with my husband, we decided to try the FAILSAFE program, which is based on the program created by the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, as we wanted to see if it would help my husband's asthma.

After just a few days of my whole family being on the program we were amazed to find that not only my husband's asthma had dramatically improved, but my son was much calmer, and happier. In addition, we were all sleeping better, and from that time pretty much all arguments have stopped in our home.

Personally, I noticed that I became more calm and relaxed, not that I thought I was uptight or stressed before, but after 5 days on the program I felt incredibly happy, and couldn't stop smiling, I felt as if I was on a yearlong holiday!

I hadn't realised that food intolerances were affecting the way I was coping in life, but now life is so much easier, and I accomplish so much more, because I am even more 'clear thinking' than I was before.

I really notice it in my son.....if he eats foods that are not the best for him, he becomes cranky, and emotional, plus he suffers from nightmares and unnecessary worrying during the day. But when we are careful with his food, which is most of the time, we have a happy, relaxed boy who sleeps well and wakes up with a smile.

Over the last 6 years I have recommended many of my patients to try the Failsafe program, and most of them are amazed at how it changes their lives. A side benefit, for people suffering with back pain, is that many back pain sufferers, as well as migraine sufferers, actually have less frequent bouts of pain when following the program. I personally experienced this as well....after having Chiro for many years to help my bad back, I was relieved to find that by simply eliminating problematic foods for me, I became pain free like I had never done before. Today I still have Chiropractic for preventative health reasons, but knowing about the food side of things and how it affects my health has truly made such a change to my life.

On a very personal note.....my husband and I were constantly arguing before we changed what we ate, we had years of trouble and were seriously considering divorce. After 5 days on the program we suddenly had peace between us. Very quickly our relationship was rebuilt without the negative effects of food intolerances affecting our moods and attitudes to each other. I will be forever

grateful to Sue and Howard Dengate for making this information public, apart from our massive health benefits, both my husband and myself firmly believe that the Failsafe program actually saved our marriage. When we look at what we have today, a strong happy family living peacefully together, we have to pinch ourselves, as it is so far from the reality of our lives before we learned about our food intolerances. We are incredibly grateful for Sue and Howard's work, we believe it has saved our boys from having to live in a split family, and has saved us from the stresses ad sadness that would surely have come from our divorce. - Kellie Dawson, Chiropractor, Springwood, QLD

**[1088] Severe anxiety from salicylates (January 2012) COURAGE AWARD**

My daughter Rose is 7 years old. Since she was about 18 months old, we had problems with her waking every night with nightmares. Although her behaviour was not exceptionally good, it was not an issue at the time. When Rose started 4 year old kinder we started to notice that her eczema was getting quite bad and that it was not responding to any remedies that we tried. We saw doctors who just said that she might grow out of it. When Rose started school, there was a huge turning point. Her behaviour I would say was ADHD behaviour – tantrums, itching all over her body, stomach pains, still having nightmares, oppositional defiance and the list goes on, and the worst of all, severe anxiety with me leaving her. Rose's anxiety was so bad that she had to be physically removed from me when I left her at school, even punching and kicking at the teachers. Rose would not leave me at all, even on weekends.

With trying to counteract the behaviour part, I stopped all additives and preservatives. Rose's behaviour became so much better. We noticed that her sleep, and feelings of anxiety did not improve.

After reading your book, I made an appointment with a dietician and started on the Elimination Diet. Everything started to improve with Rose, in leaps and bounds, except the anxiety. With many trials, I have now established that Rose is very sensitive to SALICYLATES.

I now have a daughter who is very confident, well mannered, has no problems sleeping, no eczema, nor does she have anxiety.

I can only say that without your help, I had no idea where to turn. The professional field let me down big time.

We have been doing this for about 12 months and I am a true advocate of Failsafe. I want to introduce this to our school. When my daughter was in Prep we had a lot to do with the Principal, as Rose spent a lot of time in her office, as they believed she was being naughty. Last year I was determined to prove them wrong by showing them that food did contribute to children's behaviour. I did often say that it was the food Rose was eating, but I know they did not believe me. I can now truly say that Rose's behaviour was as a result of the food, its additives and preservatives, as she is a different student. Well mannered, high achiever, leader material. Thank you. - Sharon, Vic

**[1068] Grandmother's night terrors, anxiety, paranoia, depression and brain fog helped by diet (July 2011) COURAGE AWARD**

My daughter bought the Fed Up book to help her son, my one year old grandson who was cranky, unable to sleep, hyperactive and constantly cleared his throat. After reading the book, I saw myself in the symptoms of night terrors, anxiety, depression and brain fogginess. So I joined him on the diet (we all live together) and I haven't had one night terror since. (Prior to this I was having at least 5 night terrors a week and hated going to bed.) I have had the occasional bad dream when eating off the diet, but nothing like they were. My anxiety lifted, the depression went away and for the first semester since returning to university I understood what they were saying, I participated in class and starting talking and laughing like a 'normal' person.

Before that I was constantly anxious, paranoid, stressed and felt 'stupid.' I thought people didn't like me, I wasn't good enough, and I was unmotivated to reach my goals.

My husband didn't believe in food affecting people, and was critical of our changes, however has seen remarkable changes in the baby and in me. He said to me recently 'what's the matter with you?' as I was sullen and quiet. I admitted I ate something off the diet (but I used to be like that most of the time). Now he cooks me failsafe meals at night and reads labels before buying foods.

I stay away from additives, salicylates, amines, glutamates and dairy. It can be difficult to eat a limited diet, but the world is so much more fun, it's worth it!

Thank you for writing the books and creating the DVD. It's given me back the opportunity to experience the wonderful life I have. - Monica

**[1066] Anniversary: 12 months failsafe for severe eczema (July 2011) COURAGE AWARD**

Sleepless nights... what an understatement! We were averaging 2/3 hrs sleep a night when the kids' problems hit a peak. This went on for months.

We were at a loss as to what had taken over our family and was slowly breaking us all down to a point of no return. As parents, feeling helpless, exhausted, and desperate was quickly becoming our normal. For our children it was far worse, they were struggling constantly with scratching, bleeding and screaming in pain, day and night. Finding our 4 month old son bleeding in his cot was a regular occurrence. Then there were the times holding our 6 year old daughter while she screamed, thrashed, and clawed at her flesh causing it to bleed. All too often they were in unison and my husband held our baby trying to comfort him as he suffered the same way while I held our daughter.

A vicious cycle of skin infections, constant discomfort, and numerous trips to doctors who assured us it was just eczema only added to our desperation.

We knew the kids had allergies and avoided all the allergens as directed by specialists but unknowingly we were contributing daily to their severe discomfort by what we were feeding them - and it wasn't even a bad diet ... or so we thought!

Our life line came the day we saw Sue on the local news, she mentioned itchy skin rashes and I took notice! Life changed that day. Slowly but surely we eliminated the foods and personal care products that were causing this chaos.

It is our anniversary this month ...12 months failsafe and our gift is 2 beautiful children with silky smooth skin (we regularly run our hands over it amazed at the difference), no more rashes, itching or screaming through the night & guess what?... they are both calmer & more engaged ... behaviour was not our original motivation to become failsafe but we have noticed the changes in them in this area as well and what an absolute bonus that is.

Thanks Sue and Howard for your many years of research and hard work and also for giving us a place to turn when there seemed no where else to go, we are forever grateful – Deb (Deb is organising the **Fedup Roadshow** talk in Taree 2011)

**[1060] 'Crohns disease' due to salicylates (May 2011) (July 2011) COURAGE AWARD**

I have two girls aged 4 and 2 years and recently my two-year-old daughter Isabella had very bad tummy pain, bleeding gums, bad breath, a fissure on her bottom and blood in her stools. The first sign was the bleeding gums. They just kept getting worse and worse as we brushed and it hurt her to eat anything.

Then there was her tummy pain which was also getting worse. She was not gaining any weight (actually losing weight the year before but thought she was a fussy eater!) and is still very little for her age. I saw various doctors about her fissure and tummy pain and also mentioned her gums and no-one would help me. One doctor did say it was a fissure but didn't address the other issues.

She also had bad breath and was very whingy and clingy most of the time.

Anyway I decided to take her to our local University dentist as it is free and they are fantastic with kids. They ended up referring us to the Dentistry section at Westmead Childrens' Hospital. To cut a long story short they kept bringing people into the room until they reached the highest person in the place and he said he thought it was either Crohn's Disease or Leukaemia. After months of testing including a gum biopsy and an endoscopy and colonoscopy the Gastroenterologist confirmed it was Crohn's. They then got us back and said they want to trial her on a preservative free/additive free/antioxidant free diet. So off we went on the challenge to stop all these nasty foods.

They gave me a list of foods I could give her and a list to avoid. They said she could have milk, all fruit, vegetables, pasta etc as long as there are no additives. Anyway while researching one day I stumbled across something on your website. I knew of your website and it was helping me greatly but this day I was reading about Salicylates and Amines. I had NO IDEA what they were before that moment.

It suddenly occurred to me that I had been giving Isabella her favourite juice every morning, sometimes two cups. It was V8 Tropical juice which says it has no preservatives etc but I didn't realise about the salicylates. I stopped it that day and told her I had run out and had to go to the shop to buy more! (Saying that helps to avoid an argument!!) To my amazement her bad tummy pain stopped that day! I haven't given her the juice since and it's been about 3 months. Her gums got better, her fissure got better and her bad breath went away. She has had tummy pain now and then but I am fine-tuning her diet and think she could be totally sensitive to salicylates. I make my own

washing detergent and wash her with Alpha Keri fragrance free but haven't gone as far as stopping my perfumed products like hairspray etc.

The purpose of this email is to send you a HUUUUUUGGGGGGEEE thank you for putting out the website and your books! I haven't come across anything on your site (maybe I've missed it) about the diet helping people with Crohn's Disease so maybe Isabella 's experience will help someone else.

If we had not have found your article about Salicylates then Isabella would have been put onto steroids at two years of age. The diet itself has changed our family greatly as well. My 4 year-old daughter is concentrating better, doesn't argue with me like she used to and isn't as emotional. Her learning ability has increased as well. I don't have restless leg syndrome anymore and I feel much better in myself.

The months before Isabella was diagnosed with Crohn's were unbearable and it was just horrible seeing my little girl go through all of that pain and not be able to fix it. Now, thanks to you, she is bouncing out of her skin and is a happy little two-year-old (with the occasional tummy pain).

It still brings tears to my eyes thinking about the past 6 months and what we've all been through. Everyone I run into I tell about it as there's probably someone else out there suffering but thinking they are eating healthy with all that fruit.

Update: Isabella has been getting through the capsule challenges very slowly. She didn't react to 'A' (I have no idea what they are) and 'B' she had a MAJOR reaction to so I'm looking forward to finding out what that was! She had all the symptoms of Crohn's back (except bleeding gums (although I think if we had of kept giving her whatever it was for a period of time that her gums would soon start to bleed again). Her behaviour was also just terrible. Words can't explain how defiant, grumpy, emotional etc she was. She also started to wet the bed! I felt really sorry for her that I gave her that on purpose. With all the ones she has reacted to (every one of them except 'A') it has taken a good week or so for all symptoms to disappear. I have noticed with everything she has like additives she develops a sore on the outside corner of her mouth. It gets really bad and then when she is back on the plain diet it heals. Very strange but I'll be able to tell when she's lying when she's older if she's had something she shouldn't! - Shelley, NSW

**[1023] Victoria's CFS & perfume sensitivity story (May 2011) COURAGE AWARD**

My daughter Victoria is now 13 years old. When she was five she became very unwell with a gastro bug and was quite ill for three weeks (vomiting, diarrhoea, nausea). The sensation of nausea did not go away after she recovered. After some weeks we were referred to a paediatrician who diagnosed nervous dyspepsia. I knew this was not right and asked to be referred to a gastroenterologist. The GP reluctantly did so. The paed gastro specialist did an endoscopy and found a helicobacter ulcer which was then treated with antibiotics. Unfortunately the nausea remained, and diarrhoea started to become more of problem.

We were referred to a dietitian who dealt with intolerances and followed her elimination diet to the letter with very little improvement. I understand now that this dietitian's diet was quite relaxed and included many foods in the moderate category (yoghurt, mangoes, just ripe bananas, Colby cheese

etc). We abandoned the diet after three months and just ate home-cooked plainish food with no artificial additives (this did include a range of organic fruit and veg).

For the next six or so years we battled with Victoria's health. The tummy problems continued (nausea, diarrhoea). Her immune system was poor (she caught everything going around). She was irritable, impatient and not affectionate. She constantly had dark circles under her eyes. And then about three years ago she began to suffer frequent headaches mainly sinus ones. She was just never well.

We went everywhere and did everything to try to help her (blood tests, acupuncturist, paediatric allergist, naturopath, eye tests, physiotherapist, ear/nose/throat specialist you name it we did it with no improvement).

Now it is relevant to talk about myself for a moment. For 20 years I have had turns where after eating out I would become really unwell. This was usually at a restaurant. First I get nausea, then feel faint and break out in a cold sweat followed by vomiting or diarrhoea or both. Sometimes I do actually faint. Even though we had not had any success with the early (relaxed) elimination diet I did learn about food chemicals at this time, and realised that it was ultra high-amine foods that I was reacting to (e.g. camembert cheese followed by aged beef with wine gravy etc).

Now cut back to mid last year one evening I prepared a meal of very fresh roast organic chicken (with skin) and homemade gravy, potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower and peas. After eating some of her meal, Victoria had a similar reaction to the ones I described above. This was the first time she had had the same type of turn as me. I recognised that this meal was high in amines (but not too high for me) and realised that amines were a problem for her.

So then I read your books and went to a new dietitian (dealing with intolerances) and discovered that Victoria needs to eat a diet low in all food chemicals. If she does stay absolutely strict she is reasonably well. The nausea problem has reduced dramatically, as has the diarrhoea. She is less irritable and more affectionate. Her headaches have reduced. Her immunity is better. We have seen a real improvement!

Her diet is very limited. (Unfortunately, she is also intolerant to raffinose, so she can't even eat all the vegies in the low category!) We have to get our meat from a butcher who phones me the day the beef arrives from the abattoir, and I go that day and buy (and freeze) meat for the next month. She is very sensitive.

Victoria's sinus headache problem is certainly affected by food chemicals - it has improved quite a lot on the elimination diet, but a whole range of environmental allergens seem to trigger it too. The grass being cut affects her. Walking through the detergent isle in the supermarket affects her. The smell of perfume and cosmetics affects her. Household chemicals affect her. Some particular irritants:

- Hairspray and other spray-on hair products: She feels an urgent need to remove herself from the smell of these products. She feels she can taste them and they cause her a serious

headache. We can't go to a normal hairdressing salon - she says they are toxic. We have our hair cut at a home salon and the hairdresser doesnt use any products on us.

- Dust: she is aware of dust if it is around and finds it unpleasant because it irritates her nose, but it is not until later that she develops a sinus headache. These headaches can be quite bad and last for many days.
- Perfumes/aromatherapy scents: these smells are all really distasteful to her. She feels nauseous and headachy in environments that are scented. She has a strong feeling that she needs to leave.
- Garden smells and pollens: she is very aware of them - they make her nose feel sneezy and occasionally she develops a headache.
- The smell of clothes washing detergent and other cleaners are most distasteful to Victoria. The skin on her face flushes and feels irritated, and she develops a headache if exposed to the smell for more than a couple of minutes. For washing sheets and pillow cases I often just use a hot water cycle with no detergent and dry them in the sun. They look and smell clean to us. For washing clothes I use the skin care cycle on our machine which uses more water and does an extra rinse, and just use a little OMO Sensitive or Earth Choice Sensitive. Once again, things come out clean, even with less detergent. We can't detect a fragrance after washing and drying in the sun.
- If we happen to wear a garment that has been washed in normal fragrant powder for whatever reason, we both feel unwell and get a headache. I developed a very severe headache that lasted for days once (years ago) as I had lent a shirt to someone and they returned it after washing it in normal detergent and using Fabulon during the ironing process. I foolishly wore it to work and became so unwell and dizzy that I had to go home sick! We ourselves use Mitchum unscented deodorant, QV non soap alternative, Bod ultrasensitive fragrance free shampoo and conditioner purchased online from Biome or Simple shampoo and Conditioner ordered in by our local pharmacy.
- Victoria notices and dislikes the smell of petrol, cigarette smoke and basically anything else with a strong smell.
- Oppressive humid weather gives Victoria (and her grandmother) a sinus headache.

I suffer from sinus headaches too, and all of the above affect me, but I am not nearly as sensitive. Victoria and I both have a fantastic sense of smell. We can both smell cigarette smoke from a neighbour smoking in his back yard four big house blocks away. We are both super sensitive to food smells as well, especially protein foods (which of course comes in very handy with catering for an amine responder!)

One of the many specialists we have taken Victoria to is a paediatric allergist. She took one look at Victoria and commented that she looked like an allergy sufferer. She noticed (amongst other things) the dark circles under Victoria's eyes and a wrinkle or line across her nose that indicated constant rubbing of her nose. Victoria was tested for a wide range of commons allergens, but the skin prick

tests did not reveal allergy. The specialist said that she was surprised, and recommended Victoria use a saline nasal spray (which she does) and use antihistamines when needed as she may be allergic to things other than what she was tested for.

The whole body load issue is certainly relevant for Victoria. How badly she responds to irritating food and smells certainly varies according to the load on her body school stress, PMT, illness etc. She is definitely doing better on a diet of all low chemical foods, but it does not take much to upset her balance.

When Victoria is not doing well she feels overstimulated very easily by light, noise, smells (of course) and other stimulants. She also has poor volume control at such times, even though she is usually a quiet girl. Another recurring problem is urinary tract irritation not pain or burning just a constant feeling of needing to dash to the loo.

I have two other things I wanted to mention (for what they are worth):

- Victoria is gifted. She was accelerated a whole grade in primary school and excels academically. I nearly choked on my tea when I read in one of your books that we 'should not blame bad behaviour on giftedness' - I had been blaming her prickliness, impatience and irritability with others on giftedness to some degree.
- We have very recently discovered that Victoria's blood levels of Vitamin D are in the normal range (55), but only barely. Our dietitian (from the failsafe list) says that in her opinion the bare minimum should be 75 and we should be aiming for 100. She says that recent overseas research indicates that there is a link between intolerances and low vitamin D levels. We are trying to get Victoria into the sun for safe periods every day to improve this, and will test again in 3 months …

Update 3 months later: We have actually been faring better over the last month or so. We had a re-test for vitamin D levels and to our surprise discovered that despite trying to increase sun-exposure, Victoria's levels were still at the low-normal level of 55 (normal range is 50-300). Our dietitian had suggested previously that we should aim for higher than 100. So I decided to try a failsafe vitamin D capsule. I don't know if that has helped, or it is just a co-incidence, but after a couple of weeks Victoria seems to be back to faring quite well on the low-chemical diet. I am cautiously optimistic.

What a long story - and this is only a small part of it! Thanks very much for your wonderful work. Your books and website are fantastic. I am very grateful. - Carol, by email

**[1009] ADHD: Denied enrolment at 2 schools (March 2011) COURAGE AWARD**

I just wanted thank you!!! My 9 year old son has ADHD, ODD, OCD, anxiety and a learning disability. He was denied enrolment at 2 schools because they feared his ADHD would disrupt other children. He was constantly in trouble at school and has been suspended. He was frustrated and upset every morning and every night, at times he couldn't sit at the dinner table without crying from the stress he felt, he found it very difficult to cope from day to day. From when he was a very young age, my husband and I worked very hard at managing his problems and saw numerous specialists. Originally we took him off bread with preservatives when he was 2 years old. It wasn't until we were at our

wits' end a year ago, with schools and counsellors telling us to 'medicate him' - that I decided to buy your book.

A year on, our son avoids salicylates and additives and I have to say I have had a recent comment from a friend who hasn't seen him for a year and she said 'we were so impressed with your son's politeness, his impeccable table manners, you two have done so well with him!, even my sister commented on what a lovely boy he is!'

We managed to get him into a new school, one that I believed would work with us to 'manage' his issues better. Then his new school teacher rang me to say 'I have had a beautiful week with your son, he is very respectful, very caring towards the other children, has lovely manners and we haven't had one episode of hyperactivity or disruptive behaviour, he has a lot to offer and is doing very well'

I have near cried with pure relief and excitement that the little boy I got glimpses off occasionally over the last 9 years is now that nice little boy all day EVERY DAY! and other people can see it.

As a parent who had tried everything to avoid medication, I finally feel we have found the answer to successfully managing a child with behavioural issues. I now tell people – Failsafe, Structure, Management, and above all: Understanding. Your book is gold to us. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. – Leonie, NSW

[**1008] Fragrance: Our sensitivity to perfumes and fragranced products (March 2011) COURAGE AWARD**

I've become increasing sensitive to perfumes and fragrances. For me it triggers an intense, immediate burning headache, dizziness, nausea, and a reflexive instinct to want to get away. The longer I'm exposed to the smell, I find it hard to look up, hard to make eye contact with people, my heart rate speeds up and I feel hot and a bit shivery. I feel like I have to keep an eye on the ground to know where it is, have trouble telling where objects are around me, and kind of lose my sense of where I am in space.

Background noise seems to become louder as well, and I feel a rising panic and need to escape. I had a 'brain episode' about 3-4 yrs ago, some kind of massive seizure that had symptoms similar to a stroke. Since then, my problems with perfumes have increased dramatically, though I think I've always had a slight problem with scents. In March 2009 I was prescribed Methotrexate (an immuno-suppressant) as my psoriasis had become so severe it almost landed me in hospital with a life-threatening version. This has side effects of nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and dizziness, which have gradually lessened over time, but still rear up at least a couple of times each week. Since being on this drug I find it particularly difficult to cope with perfumes. From what my two ASD boys have been able to tell me, I think their responses are fairly similar, but they have difficulty describing the sensations, and they tend to go into Autistic withdrawal / blocking behaviours.

A couple of weeks ago we took the boys to a cinema to watch Despicable Me. A teenage girl entered with a small group of friends and sat in the row in front of us. The perfume smell was so strong I had to shift the four of us back 3 rows to escape it, and still left the cinema with a headache.

The worst places for the boys and I to enter are public toilets with automatic fragrance sprayers. One was introduced to our local shopping centre, and we were caught unawares. I sat down on the toilet, and was suddenly sprayed by a fountain of this horrible scent – it triggered of a bout of vomiting which meant I was stuck in there with the scent. When I finally escaped, I found that hubby had encountered the same problem on taking the boys into the Men's toilet. The elder was biting his hands and pulling his hair, and the younger was bouncing and squirming uncontrollably. We abandoned the idea of grocery shopping and went home to recover. Now we make sure we go to the toilet at home before we leave.

Windex and whiteboard cleaning spray have an appalling effect on my elder son, trigger out of control behaviours, self harm, high temperatures, headaches, vomiting and diarrhoea. Perfumes and body sprays such as Impulse are awful, incense sticks are a nightmare, car and toilet deodorizing products are the worst, possibly due to the confined, airless space. – by email

**[963] Depression and social phobia: diet a lifesaver (October 2010) COURAGE AWARD**

I can't tell you how happy I am to have found out about FAILSAFE (by accident). It's only day three and I feel like a different person. However, I will be aware of any withdrawal symptoms over the next few days or weeks.

If this diet works, as I'm sure it will, you will have literally saved my life. I was on the brink of giving up. I felt my life was over. Words can't describe how ill and depressed I had become. Life was miserable. No doctor wanted to help, couldn't help or just didn't believe me. One doctor told me my symptoms were all psychosomatic.

I went to the shops today and didn't have social phobia. That in itself is a miracle. My depression has lifted. My nerves are calm and my tummy is happy. It's not a chore in any way to eat the foods recommended and avoid the others.

Update after one month - Overall, the depression is the best it's ever been. Of course, there have been days where I've felt down and discouraged. Even then, I handled a relapse of chronic fatigue more positively than I have ever done before. My daughter noticed this too and told me so. I just took one day at a time and listened to my body. Many days were spent flat on my back, which is the best thing I could have done anyway.

The social phobia is long standing (since about 8yrs old). Looking back at my childhood, I think that there were many foods that were affecting me. I had terrible shyness, was afraid of everything, had constipation, tummy aches, migraines, bad breath, heat intolerance, fluctuating weight and eating disorders (binges and starving).

Update after six months – I am happy to report ongoing improvements in overall mental, emotional and health conditions. I have had around 40 people now, tell me how amazing I am looking (I must have looked terrible before). They ask me what's my secret? I am happy to tell them- FAILSAFE!! I will never go back to eating the way I was. This diet is for life. - Liz, NSW

**[925] 220: Asthmatic son affected by illegal sulphites in mince (June 2010) [COURAGE AWARD]**

I tested the mince at my local butcher yesterday. I bought the meat at 16.35pm, got home, tested it and the reading was between 180-400mg! It changed colour so quickly to the deepest shade on the side of the test strip container I didn't need to wait 30 seconds to see it change. On a positive note, I went in to Aldi and tested their meat today and it had no discernible change, so I guess I'll buy my meat there. My son takes daily asthma medication and has been sick since I deviated from my expensive organic butcher to the garbage they sell at the local butcher. My son has been on numerous cortisone courses this year as well as daily antihistamines and antibiotics - I couldn't figure out what was causing it until I came across the sulphur dioxide article on your website. I have reported these people to Primesafe (Victorian Government food regulatory body) and I am thinking of pursuing legal action due to the impact it has had on my son, I can't believe I stood at that butcher earlier this year and they lied to me and told me they did not use preservatives in their mince - they were so helpful telling me what did and didn't contain it and how I could get preso free sausages etc. I should have known it was too good to be true. - Tonya, VIC.

**[901] Has his sights on the Olympic games (February 2010) COURAGE AWARD**

We began our Failsafe journey 3 years ago. My now 9 year old was 18 months when the doctors first made the suggestion that he should be medicated. I flat out refused to medicate a little baby, and advised the doctors that food was triggering his extreme behaviour. On almost every occasion I was either laughed at or made to feel a fool and told that 'food doesn't alter behaviour' - this was despite the fact that he already been diagnosed with anaphylaxis to eggs and a severe dairy allergy and suffered chronic reflux as a baby, and I myself had suffered food intolerance for many years - this went on for nearly 6 years ...

As I wasn't particularly well versed in the ways of the internet and had no idea where to turn, I took things on myself, taking a common sense approach to removing things from my son's diet - if he went 'crazy', the food was removed and replaced with something else that didn't make him 'crazy'... We discovered that wheat was a major player in triggering offensive, violent and extremely hyperactive behaviour and insomnia ... so that was removed, and my son has been wheat free for nearly 9 years now. Whilst the wheat free diet took the edge off his severe behaviors, he was still an unpleasant, uncontrollable child and we tried many disciplinary techniques, play techniques, putting him in sports, we had his eyes and hearing checked and still had no answers.

His severe reflux started again at 6 years old, and once again doctors wanted to treat the symptoms and not determine the cause ... I went along with what the doctors wanted, but the reflux medication appeared to exacerbate the behavioural symptoms. We dealt with the behaviours as they reared their ugly heads, but in addition to the reflux, my son then continued to get more and more physiological symptoms, such as rashes, vomiting, and severe hayfever - I knew this certainly wasn't normal - and he was beginning to have random and bizarre allergic reactions and I had absolutely no idea what he was reacting to. The culmination of these allergic reactions ended up with an anaphylactic reaction, to what has since been determined as an allergy to red meat.

Unfortunately it took an anaphylactic reaction to have to doctors send me in the right direction. We saw a paed who prescribed adrenalin and promptly sent us on to an immunologist ... who explained

to us that allergies and food intolerance often go hand in hand. Following all the usual tests and discussing at length my son's behavioural issues we were sent to an accredited dietitian for help and to be placed on an elimination diet.

We found the most amazing dietitian, who was very supportive and was very eager to help. Once I knew what the problem might be, I began my research as well ... and that is where I discovered the fed up website. On the elimination diet and the subequent food challenges, we have since discovered that my son is completely intolerant to wheat, completely intolerant to amines, completely intolerant to glutamates, colours and preservatives and we have discovered that certain brands of shampoos, toothpaste and hair products trigger negative behaviour, he also has a milder intolerance to salicylates, but we are very strict with what he does have. Luckily, he has grown out of his dairy and egg allergies, which makes the preparation of food that little bit easier.

My son went from a child who slept no more than 3-4 hours a night, couldn't sit still, was compulsive, aggressive, insolent, destructive, hyperactive, would make constant noises, had severe reflux, had eczema, has issues at school with book work and reading, etc, to a child who is pleasant, well mannered, focused and actually sleeps. And it was with the advent of the new diet/lifestyle that we also discovered that my son has quite a talent for sport.

Before the diet, my son didn't have the attention span to stay between the white lines on a running track or didn't think he had to wait for the starter's gun in a running or swimming race. Within the first 6 months of the lifestyle change he went on to represent his school in swimming and athletics, in the next year he went onto represent at regional level and last year competed at state level in swimming, cross country and athletics, for both the school and at club level. And this year, as a 9 year old, my son has already broken records on the athletics track and is on is way to breaking more records in the pool ... he has his sights firmly on the Olympic games in 2020, he just isn't sure which sport he wants to compete in!!

I find that his discipline in his chosen sport helps to keep him disciplined in his diet, and I am very honest and blunt in explaining to him what is in the foods that he wants to eat and why he can't eat other stuff. We are about to begin meeting with our dietitian again to ensure that he is receiving adequate nutrition to sustain the endurance that he requires for his sports and to ensure that he is receiving adequate protein for proper muscle development.

People are often perplexed as to how a child who 'misses out' on so much food can be quite so athletic ... I explain to them that the food he doesn't eat actually enables his sporting and academic ability, but sadly, most people can't understand that concept. They can't understand why my son simply drinks water and eats an apple and some rice cakes or a chicken sandwich after a race when every other kid at a swim meet is eating a chocolate bar or drinking a powerade or the newest fad - pouring honey all over a banana to 'restore their energy'.

We still have bad days, and find peer pressure a constant issue, but as a family we are positive towards all facets of my son's limited diet and I am constantly inventing new and interesting things to eat! - Belinda, NSW

**[879] Miraculous change in extreme sleeping problems (November 2009) COURAGE AWARD**

I was a single mother living alone away from family support, breastfeeding and juggling a wonderful son who at 12 months was barely sleeping 4 hours a day. Most days he looked as if he had drunk a can of "red bull" - eyes rolling, twitching and distant - and sleep only ever seemed to come lightly for short periods once he was beyond exhausted.

He had a rash all over his body that just kept spreading and it made me cry watching him tear at it all day and all night without any relief.

At 12 months I put him into a local day care centre for 2 days a week for some sort of break (sleeping sometimes in the car just around the corner too tired to make it home to sleep after dropping him off). He was a real handful there as he would not settle and ever sleep and would upset all the other babies with his screaming.

I was beside myself by the time I swallowed what pride a new sleepless mum had left and sought every kind of assistance I could - my baby health nurse, my local doctor, and then another doctor all said it was normal (as they all shrugged their shoulders) and the eczema was a lifetime hereditary thing ...

I was even assessed at a local government "sleep clinic" on the gold coast - an awful experience with him not sleeping at all for them and them saying 20 hours without sleep "may be normal for him " - (bugger me !!)

After my lowest darkest point whereby at about 14 months he barely slept in 40 mins increments I was sent to the state children's sleep school in Brisbane. The basic program philosophy is about controlled crying - but that wasn't his problem …

It was a 5 day hellish event I would wish on no one. He screamed and cried for the first 3 days solid and set new limits in sleep deprivation - made easier the 3rd day only because he totally lost his voice and his screams couldn't be heard !!! By day 4 he slept (passed out) from sheer exhaustion - so that was apparently a success and I was sent home day 5!!

After only a day or two at home it was obvious there was no improvement.

The next few weeks as I contemplated our future without support, sleep or potential for work as things stood really took its toll, until I was blessed to come across a pharmacist in our local pharmacy. She sat me down and really talked me through the failsafe approach - and really took the time to make it sink in. I was an unwilling participant as when you are so exhausted anything new seems to be insurmountable.

It took 4 days!!! only 4 days !! from having someone waking 8 times a night to 2 times a night!!! from sleeping 4 hours a day to 8 hours - and 10 hours by the end of the week. Once I switched to A2 milk the loop was complete and he started sleeping the night through by the end of week 2. The change was nothing short of miraculous.

For my son to go from the least favourite boy in his kindy to the favourite almost within a week!! It was like someone had handed me a new son.

He became an affectionate loving inquisitive boy that every mum would be so proud of - no tantrums, no fits of rage, renewed energy and able on concentrate on things so much better he simply bloomed, like watching a wilted flower come back to life after rain.

His rash completely healed - completely!! He is now 2.5 years and it has never returned!!

When I tell people about all the positive changes we have had on the diet, they seem to think the diet I fed him before failsafe was really poor. They assume it was full of red cordial, McDonalds, coloured commercial lollies etc but I was aware of colours and MSG and he NEVER had those. At the time I was following the diet recommended by the child care centre. It was the sulphur dioxide in dried fruits, the hidden nitrates in meats, and natural colour 160b I wasn't aware of, that were our biggest problems, also I was breast feeding at the time and was having more "junk food" and stimulants from comfort eating to keep me functioning so he was getting it that way. I realise my mistake in overdoing a "healthy diet" mostly consisting of a mega high salicylates, high amines and glutamates!! and although I was careful about colours and some preservatives, my son's biggest and most immediate reactions came from fish/ meats/ and preserved fruits.

Having followed all the information you have put out there in the Failsafe Cookbook my son has thrived!! He has come from behind to be the tallest and fittest in his class. The effect this failsafe lifestyle has had on Patrick has been evident to all who knew him "before diet" as we call it.

I often have people ask me about your work, especially from his childcare centre as they have followed his progress and it's so rewarding to see the individual but still dramatic change it has on other babies, toddlers and children.

I get angry when I think of the torment and the lost first 12 months of his life - and that a children's hospital in a week could not assist or pick up what a pharmacist did in seconds - but promise in my own prayers of thanks for you and the pharmacist that I will do my best to help those similar suffering mums that cross my own path. Thank you. - Patrick's proud mum, Qld

**[853] Additive-free, but favourite foods were tomatoes (August 2009) COURAGE AWARD**

We're 3 weeks in to Failsafe, and I feel as if I've won the lottery!!! 3 kids aged 10, 8 and 5, all extremely active and slightly frenetic. The oldest was diagnosed with Aspergers and ADD at about 6 years of age, but concerns were noted since he was about 4 - very fixated on certain activities, difficulty being aware of his environment, very impulsive etc. He repeated reception as he was really struggling, very highly strung. We cut down on additives with some improvement, but he was still very hooked into his own thoughts and obsessional in thinking and behaviour, talking out in class, struggling academically. He was still incontinent of number ones and twos, as he had such poor awareness of his body, and inability to attend to more than one thing at a time (ie concentrating on schoolwork or a game, and bodily sensations).

He was placed on Concerta (a type of Ritalin) at 8 years of age, which led to a very noticeable improvement in ability to concentrate in school, and less impulsivity. This was the very thing we had

not wanted to do with our child, but we couldn't continue with daily sneaky poos, constantly spacing out at school, and that level of impulsivity was taking its toll on the whole family. While I do believe medication is over-prescribed and should only be a last resort, we had done everything we could, and it did help. I strongly believe parents should not automatically be judged for medicating their children, we are all doing our best, with whatever information we have.

He began to really shut down about 18 months ago, becoming very isolated, spending every school break time alone reading, and not even responding to questions at home, instead preferring to read alone. He was very sullen, on bad days yelling at schoolmates who tried to engage him. He had no friends, and swung between a sullen and angry boy, or a highly impulsive, giggly and inappropriate "in your face" kid.

We had been additive free for some time, and he had a blood test which showed he was intolerant to wheat, strawberries, dairy and cocoa so those were out also. We had done the rounds of psychiatrist, psychologist, social skills training, occupational therapy, etc.

He is now in year 4 and just prior to commencing diet, he dirtied his pants at school and then told a classmate about it! I panicked, I could not pinpoint any additives that would have led to the behaviour, and I felt desperate. I went to the Autism SA resource centre where I found "The Failsafe Cookbook", and I haven't put it down since!

Our oldest son's favourite foods were tomatoes, and Nonna's pasta and meatballs - he would scoff a whole punnet of cherry tomatoes in one go if he could. Our second child could have best been described as a fruit addict, regularly eating 5 apples after school (I would find the cores littered around the house). He is an academically capable kid, but could be very oppositional, and was diagnosed as having an auditory processing disorder. He was very hyperactive also. Our youngest daughter had an almost normal diet, I think because I was so exhausted from meeting the needs of the older two that I didn't have the energy to say "No", to be honest!! I did notice that she was much harder to settle to sleep than the other two, especially after eating raisin toast (even with "no preservatives on the pack!), and flavoured snacks, which were given by friends etc.

Since the diet, the improvements have been extraordinary! I had to have a meeting at home with a colleague, and my children played lego together, without arguing mind you, for about 1.5 hours!!! My oldest has dry pants at the end of the day, responds when asked questions, engages in appropriate conversation, and most heartwarming of all, has had several successful playdates with a boy from school. I was able to leave all three with my mother last week while I worked without her having a breakdown. She was shocked at the difference, and my father reported that my oldest pruned a whole row of grapes for him!

The "fruit addict" is the most changed! He is polite, helpful (someone pinch me, please!). Our daughter is sleeping better, still has made an artform of irritating her brothers, but our home is overall much more harmonious, and I am so grateful.

My husband and I are both southern European, and it seems strange that our children could be intolerant to tomatoes and the like. I'm still a bit puzzled, but I chatted about it to my dad, who migrated from southern Italy in 1960. According to him, my nonna only cooked with tomatoes once

a week, for a Sunday lunch of pasta, with the rest of the meals being pasta with beans or lentils, or a vegetable soup. Unfortunately most Italian cuisine now involves a tin of peeled tomatoes and regular flavourings of wine and cheese in almost every recipe, so that's a real challenge for us.

It makes me incredibly angry that even basic foods are laced with additives that are harming our children. I see parents at breaking point and children whose self esteem and learning are compromised, and it is incomprehensible. I for one am TIRED of it.

Thank you so much for your care and compassion in the important work that you do. - by email, Adelaide

(Natural Confectionery Lollies are NOT failsafe due to sals and amines in flavours they are only suitable for people who are additive-free)

**[814] Depression and anxiety due to processed foods (June 2009) COURAGE AWARD**

I am total agreement with your stories regarding depression etc due to food intolerance. I suffered for about ten years trying all sorts of things. I was depressed, anxious and had a host of strange sensations and numbness, foggy, bad tempered, the list goes on.

The diet I followed was basically to eat non processed foods, and I believe what I was actually eliminating was flavour enhancers, including HVP and other hidden enhancers. I have felt that MSG has been my downfall, although things like other additives are excluded.

I continue to work now at 66, with a clear head and vitality. I am angry at the time I have spent seeing doctors and withdrawing from society due to low esteem and negative feelings. Angry is a little strong and just relieved that I have found relief without drugs/medication of any sort.

As with some of the other people who have written in, I found relief by my own experimentation. Dangerous, but I did it. And it worked. I have relayed my story to many people and doctors, and I would say most of them don't really believe that this will work, and that is the problem. I understand that, because in my earlier days I would have thought the same.

Following my diet was very difficult with only a little change in the early stages (like the first week), and in the early days, I didn't think it would work. Luckily I stuck to it. I try to impress people that the diet appears boring but in the end one's sanity is the objective. It took me about two weeks for a reasonable and significant improvement, and two months for complete and total freedom from symptoms. – Ralph, by email

UPDATE at Fedup Roadshow 2011: 'I have to give you an update. Originally I thought MSG was to blame, but now I realise it could have been any of the nasty additives and ingredients in processed foods.'

**[722]: "By god she is a ratty child!" (February 2009) [COURAGE AWARD]**

My step-sister is 3 years old, and by god she is a ratty child! Her language skills are very under-developed for someone her age, and she very rarely does what she is told. She is extremely loud and boisterous, cannot sit still or quietly, is very destructive, swears, yells, screams, and cannot play

nicely with other children as she is very rough. A clean room can quite easily become a disaster zone within minutes. We have given up cleaning her room, as she pulls clothes and toys out as soon as we have finished. She is also up to 10-11 o'clock at night.

She often dances and sings and often makes references to people's private parts as well as other embarrassing things, and we have cause to believe that these actions are done for attention (even though it is the wrong kind of attention).

I have cause to believe that food additives have a strong part to play in this due to her lax diet. She is spoilt and gets what she wants, from chips, lollies, chocolates, ice creams, and soft drinks. She has quite a lot of milos everyday, I once counted 4 in one morning! If she is not drinking milo, she is having soft drink, cordial or juice. She very rarely eats any un-processed foods or drinks any water.

Our dinner times are healthy, generally consisting of vegetables, a salad and some source of meat, or sometimes spaghetti bolognaise. She refuses to eat any of it, and shortly after dinner demands some kind of snack-type food.

My mother is finding her daughter's behaviour extremely unbearable, even becoming embarrassed to take her out in public. My mum's struggle to keep her sanity has increased since recently giving birth, making it extremely difficult to look after the baby and put up with my sister.

I need your advice to convince my parents that my sister's diet is not ok, and drastic changes are needed. – *by email from a teenager who wins a copy of our DVD Fed Up with Children's Behaviour*. Here's hoping it will help with the family situation.

**[682] I was pushed to control cry my son (September 2008) [COURAGE AWARD]**

I just wanted to tell you about the startling difference we have seen in my son since removing salicylates. He is now 18 months old and the difference is profound - removing apple alone reduced nearly all of his night wakings, and removing avocado and corn as well has stopped his moodiness, screaming and irritability. His reflux is more under control and he no longer screams during the day and most especially at night. If he does we know it means either he or I have eaten something we shouldn't by accident. I've also determined that he reacts to a lot of additives as well. 160b produces aggressiveness, defiance and screaming within 24 hours. I now have a really happy well behaved little boy. I was pushed to control cry my son due to his poor sleeping, but I knew something deeper was wrong. I'm SO glad I went with my gut instinct that it was food related. – *Taryn, Vic*

**[648] ADHD teen suicide attempts (May 2008) Winner of Courage Award May 2008**

I started failsafe eating a week ago in absolute desperation with my 14 year-old son who was diagnosed with ADHD and ODD at the age of 6 years old. He progressed well on medication until we had a car accident last year and he suffered minor brain damage. After the accident his behaviour became worse and he has attempted suicide several times. Last Wednesday I took him to hospital for sedation after he broke windows and several holes in the wall with his head. Thursday morning I searched the net for a solution and came across your website. I started the diet that day. Today I have a son who obeys, talks to you face to face, calmer, quieter, he smiles and has got himself a job

part time which he loves. If he is offered food at work he says no and takes his own or waits until he gets home.

One week later ... Today is day 15 and he is still going great. We have just had the best school holidays with our two sons playing instead of fighting physically and verbally. At work, his boss doesn't even know he has ADHD and ODD. He did eat a piece of chicken at work and advised me his brain felt funny and would not eat anything that is not on the list. I'm glad he tried something off the list in moderation and noticed the difference. Your Failsafe Cookbook has been a great help and I do not leave the house without the list of basic foods and list of additives. I call this my bible. Not only has his behaviour changed but also his stomach pains and migraines are a thing of the past. The television has gone from a volume of 60 to 15. Thank you for your website that changed our lives and made my teenager happier. The difference has been unbelievable. - Janelle, Qld.

**[634] Silent reflux, gastro, extreme nappy rash – months of needless medication (February 2008) WINNER OF THE COURAGE AWARD**

The writer of the following letter wins our award for persisting despite all the paid 'experts' being against her:

My 13 month-old son has had silent reflux (just weaned him off losec now), and yet still has bad gastro problems - excessive burping, difficulty swallowing/coordination with swallow and breathing, tummy aches (frequent back arching, screaming and night waking all the time). My paed has recommended an immunologist but reading your website it seems we need to do a diet approach for intolerances.

I have always been careful with my diet as I breastfed him avoiding foods that were known to cause wind. I even saw a dietitian out of desperation when he was a little babe - who took my money and told me breastmilk is not affected by what Mum eats. My instincts told me otherwise. I know that strawberries, tomatoes, stock, gravy (to some extent), sausages (two nights in a row), citrus, onion and ham produces bad painful gastro reactions in him. Yet despite avoiding these, our problems still continue. If we eat out, guaranteed he will have a bad night in the next 24 hrs and bad poos for days after. My son has never had a normal poo - even on breastmilk. Acid smell is very common, and it produces the worst nappy rash I've ever seen with skin completely gone and large patches of exposed sores.

**Two weeks later …**

In the two weeks since I first emailed you from sheer desperation, I almost cry every time I think about how my little son's severe gastro problems have so simply and easily disappeared. He slept through the night 48 hrs from our first meal of chicken fried in golden syrup with pasta (the only quick makeshift meal I could make the first night after I emailed you!). His reactions of reflux, pain in tummy, badly burnt bottoms (v. extreme), excessive night waking and festy burps have all disappeared!!!! I have spent the past 13 months in a sleep deprived land (lasting on about 4 random hours a night on average), with my daughter not getting much quality mum attention and my husband declaring 'no more, this is it re: kids'.

Now I have a son who in two weeks has spoken five extra words, gained 600g weight, sleeps hard, eats hard, plays hard (every mum's dream), plus two new teeth - and generally very alert, smart, and most of all, wakes from his sleep playing in his cot – no screaming. Two days after I started with that first crude meal I woke in the morning to hear his toy whizzing around, and not him – a dark cloud just physically lifted from my body and I just knew this was the last piece of the puzzle of our long journey. I continued the diet from the info on your internet site and saw the dietitian you mentioned. The other amazing thing is that my husband is a completely different man (see story [630] 'No need for Beyond Blue due to diet').

I have now seen three dietitians, three paed's and a whole swank of GPs. I could have saved my son months and months of pain and high levels of losec medication. The medical profession has a lot to answer for, not listening to Mum's intuition. We had attended a feeding clinic where they have sessions with a dietitian, speech pathologist, and child health nurse (3 with you and bub) to work out reflux issues. My son had all three problems - still has swallow/coordination problems, and is very very cautious with food textures. So I spent most my time in these clinics (been 3 times already) talking diet - and you know I remembered this morning out of nowhere that the dietitian in these clinics did say something like: 'tomatoes, strawberries, stock - yes they contain salicylates, ahh but you don't need to worry about that. That's too much detail.' I did question her again on it, but I forgot what the 'salicylate' word was at our next visit and ended up sounding stupid. I was nearly there with my list of existing reacting foods but did not have the expertise to link them together. I thought it was acids affecting my son and sugar affecting my husband. Oh well. Move forward. At least I have my husband back again and a gorgeous boy we can all enjoy. :) – Fiona, ACT

**[599] Anita's speech: a 10-year-old tells her school about food intolerance (November 2007) WINNER OF THE COURAGE AWARD**

Near the end of 2006 I was getting sick and tired of all the kids at my old school ripping me off and teasing me for being on a 'diet'. In October I had a school project to do, something that we were passionate about. I asked my teacher if I could talk about the diet. So I spoke in front of 380 children, parents and teachers at Maitland Public School. See my speech below.

Parents, Teachers and Classmates, In June 2005 mum put myself and my brother on a diet as I was very hated and always getting into trouble and even being called 'Hekyl and Jekyll' by our school counsellor. No matter how hard I tried, I could not seem to behave better.

At first we hated the 'diet' because we couldn't have our 'normal' food and we did not like being teased some of the kids at our school, some of you did not invite us to birthday parties because of the diet. We soon realised how much better we felt and how much better we were behaving, the food wasn't that bad, it was really good and good for us, so we both decided that when people ripped us off we would say 'We are not on a diet, but an 'Adventure', we are not made to do it, we choose to because it will make us healthier'. So everyone in our family and friends call it our Adventure, not a diet.

On the adventure we have found that I react to Amines as well as the artificial stuff and especially 160b, and my brother reacts to Sulphites and the artificial stuff as well. Mum also found that I get very sick when I eat stuff with 160b which is advertised as natural, which I guess it is but they do not

tell you it can make you extremely sick. When I eat these types of foods, I get very irritable, cranky, aggressive, violent, black bags under my eyes and sometimes would bang my head against things to try and make the pain go away. I do not mean to do this but I cannot stop myself from doing it.

I have not had and neither has my brother any problems since June. It feels so much better to able to control myself and not get into trouble. I know that some people especially teachers I have already upset, and sadly I know no matter how hard I try or how good I get, you will not change your thoughts about me, so I have decided with my mum, dad and brother to move to the new school that is being built, just around the corner from our house to start a new 'Adventure' and hopefully will make new friends and people will accept me for who I am.

We cannot believe that the big companies are watching out for us, because they aren't, if they were, they would not be putting all of this stuff in our food when it makes us sick. They are more interested in getting money, which is wrong. Once you start looking at what is in our foods, it will make you sick to think that is what we are putting into our bodies.

Just by cutting out the additives, preservatives and natural things like 160b, you will see how much better you will feel, not just for us kids, but the adults as well. Our Adventure really has made a huge difference. Give it a try, it is a lot of work to make sure you don't eat the bad things, but if you have the support of your family and friends, it makes a great difference.... My brother and I are very lucky, we have mum, dad, grandma, grand-dad and our church all supporting us. Church, Before & After school care phone mum when they are having 'party' days and mum makes something that we can enjoy.

Parents, all you are pretty much doing is going back to basic eating like my parents and grandparents used to do not that long ago. We are all tired, but mum & dad both work full time and can manage to do this for us - to make us healthier. The more people that do this then the quicker the big companies will click and realise we won't be buying their unhealthy food.

Thank you for listening. I hope it makes a difference.

**[564] 635: "An attack of 635": anxiety, racing heart, headaches, rash (May 2007) SHARED COURAGE AWARD STORY FOR MAY 2007 NEWSLETTER**

I was suffering with what the doctor said was normal for my age 39, higher blood pressure, heart palpitations, not able to sleep on my left hand side, rash around my groin and armpits that I couldn't get rid of, weekly headaches and to top it of waking up at 2-3am every morning with a anxiety attack.

I was attending a anxiety meeting every week and seeing a psychologist but the problem was that I couldn't identify with any of the other people that came to the anxiety meeting. It seemed all of their complaints of the 100 or so different people that came to the meeting related to cyclic thought process that brought on the anxiety and kept them in that loop. I on the other hand felt a little on edge but was very relaxed about life. I delved into unresolved tensions with my psychologist but still no relief. Yoga and relaxation exercises seemed to help but what it truly did was let me watch my body go through the symptoms while I watched it happen in the third person. Because my

symptoms didn't fit the norm I refused to take any form of medication. I felt it was stupid to compound the problem until I knew what was causing it.

Finally I had yet again another anxiety attack. This time it was unbearable and my heart went over the 199 bpm that my machine could measure. I tried everything to relax but my system went into overdrive. My mother came around and my wife was there to help. I am amazingly good at relaxing my body but nothing seemed to help. I called nurse on call and they called an ambulance immediately upon hearing my symptoms. The ambulance arrived and went through the routine of checking me over and in the time they were there my body stabilised to around 100bpm. They gave me the option of going to hospital and waiting in the waiting room for 4-6 hours or stay at home and try and get over it. I took the wait at home option. The interesting thing from all of that is the male ambulance officer who leaned against the door frame for the whole time they were there said "gee you look like my wife does when she has a attack of 635" I thought he was full of it and ignored him at the time. I felt like I had run a marathon.

The following day I looked up 635 on the internet and noticed the rash and the headaches that I had were the same but nothing else rang a bell. Having nothing else to go on I looked into what had 635 in it as an ingredient. I was amazed to find my pies, pasties from the local bakery had beef booster and hence 635 + 621 that was Monday nights explained then a lot of chips + crackers that I had for lunch - even ones from the health food section of my local supermarket that state quite clearly on the packaging that 635 is not 621 and therefore is not bad for you. What a laugh! I must stress I had no belief that 635 was the cause of anything but my rash and headaches. I have not changed my lifestyle in any way except for removing 635 + 621 from my diet and only very recently removed 282. But a key interesting note is the 12 hour delay from eating the food to the full blown symptoms. I still eat selected junk food, I still exercise the same amount, I have even more pressure at work and I still get broken sleep from my now 2 year old.

When I would go to my doctor, her face would drop in that "not you again look" she would listen to me with bored expression and write in her notes, anxiety related. Please also note that my doctor since then acknowledged she has absolutely no knowledge of food intolerance re 635 – 621 and their symptoms. How are you expected to be helped if they are blind to these issues? The way I wish to truly express myself as to how I feel re their mainstream blindness is limited by my overriding desire to keep this letter polite. I have not read anywhere a person with my exact same experiences but I know it is simple. I have stopped eating 635 + 621 and I am back to how I remember the way I used to be.

From that week….

My multiple rashes of many years cleared up completely!

Not one single headache!

I have not had a single heart palpitation!

Not one single anxiety attack!

No hand or body tremors!

No racing heart!

No feeling of tension!

The only exception to this was when I went to a mothers' group party and ate some salt and vinegar chips laced with 621 + 635. I had a bad night sleep that night. I checked the chips at the supermarket the following day and found the suspect ingredients. I will not eat any food that I cannot check the ingredients. Hungry Jacks will not return my calls to tell me what foods have 635 in, and Nandos will not return my calls as well. It is of interesting note that the American version of Hungry Jacks (Burger King) + KFC list their ingredients but the similar Australian version of the web sites have the ingredients list missing. I FEEL LIKE A NEW MAN – Wayne, by email

**[563] IBS: colostomy for 11-month-old baby (May 2007) SHARED COURAGE AWARD STORY FOR MAY 2007 NEWSLETTER**

In reply to the Reader's Story [537] in the last newsletter about salicylate intolerance misdiagnosed as Irritable Bowel Syndrome, our story started 5 years ago. We have fraternal twins who were born at 37 weeks and seemingly healthy at the time, no problems within the pregnancy was diagnosed in regular scans or when they were born. My first clue, looking back, that twin 2 may not be all right was her failure to use her bowel until day 3. I remember her gagging on day 1 and being told by the nurse that this was common in newborns until they had their first motion.

We then continued on a very long path during her first twenty-one months of life with an unsettled baby. Both twins were breast feed however twin 2 was always unsettled. At 6 months we decided to introduce solids - starting out with farex and progressing to adding small amounts of pureed fruits, ie pear, apple, etc 'all the safe ones'. To our shock twin 2 started to get the most horrible nappy rash with excoriation and bleeding. We couldn't understand it and were regular with her nappy changes, we also noticed that she would strain whenever she tried to use her bowel. We went to see her Paediatrician who prescribed hydrozole cream and amoxil drops, suggested we try some small amounts of vegetables and sent us on our way.

Four months had passed and we were increasingly worried for our daughter who still suffered from the terrible nappy rash and constant visible straining when using her bowel (most unusual in a baby) and was generally unsettled. By now we had tried cows' formula (which resulted in vomiting) and soy formula (which resulted in diarrhea) and we had also noticed that with fruits the problem was worse. Things didn't improve and after many calls and visits to our GP and Paediatrician we decided to see another Paediatrician.

The next Paediatrician suggested we trial a prescribed formula for 2 weeks of 'Alfare'. This resulted in violent vomiting and trip back to him whereby an ultrasound was performed and we were informed that she in fact had chronic constipation, with a large mass in her colon. Our daughter was now 11 months-old and had to have immediate surgery to remove the mass which resulted in her having a colostomy for 3 months.

We were assured by the Paediatric Surgeon that in fact her problems were not food related and that she was born with an 'anorectal anomaly' and that all would be ok once the colostomy was reversed.

To our disappointment as soon as the colostomy was reversed we went straight back to the problems of severe nappy rash and excoriation on her full diet. Our daughter at 15 months was then seen by a Professor at the hospital who diagnosed disaccharidase deficiency (sucrose intolerance) to be the cause of the excoriation and unsettled behaviour; not the case.

Somehow eventually after breaking down many times and a visit again to our GPs rooms in desperation we were finally sent with a referral to the RPA Allergy Clinic (daughter 21months old). This was like a dream come true, they did a skin prick test for allergies; which showed no positive reactions (as suspected it would by the clinic Paediatrician). We were then talked through food intolerances and naturally occurring chemicals in foods which caused intolerances in some people! The evidence was there in front of us and we couldn't believe it we finally had answers. Our daughter is now a healthy 6.5 year old, on a low salicylate and mainly low chemical diet who continues to thrive and hasn't looked back. We do trial new foods occasionally and are starting to add small amounts of moderate salicylates to her diet and some dairy (her main drink is now rice milk). We know straight away if she has overloaded as this results in usually loose motions or not being able to control her motions. For us the evidence is overwhelming and we are just very grateful we have our daughter and we can now give her answers and solutions so that she continues to enjoy good health and happiness. - by email.

**[524] Open neglect by medical establishment (January 2007) COURAGE AWARD STORY FOR JANUARY 2007 NEWSLETTER**

Criminal. It's the only word that comes to mind when I realise that, from the age of 10, I have suffered terribly from asthma; and yet, over the next 23 years, not a single - I repeat NOT A SINGLE - so-called "doctor" ever once asked if my condition might be due to environmental factors", or that it might be caused by the food that I eat... All they ever did was pop a stethoscope on my back, and fill out a prescription for ventolin... "See ya next time, Mark!"

I am so angry and frustrated at the modern medical establishment for their open neglect. For years, almost every morning I would wake with an awful wheeze and a fit of coughing... And it only got worse as my 20's progressed!

When I think back to those days (although I never made the precise connection myself at the time), it got to the point where I would need my puffer after almost every meal! Macca's.. Pizza... Pies... even good 'ole home cooked meals like curries, stews & roasts! As you can imagine, I became very depressed.

I will also confess that I was indeed a smoker as well (I know, I know), but I gave them up around 3 years ago thinking that IT was the main *cause* of my asthma... Oddly enough, I was wrong ... the daily ritual wheezing-fest continued unabated. I was, by then, needing up to 20 puffs a day and my depression worsened. I remember thinking: "I've given up the damn ciggies, so why aren't I any better?! What's wrong with me?" I began to accept that I would NEVER recover from this ailment.

Then I discovered your website, "Fedup!" ... And oh what a life changer!

I bought the video a few months back and have read much of the material on the website, and with what I now know about salicylates, amines, preservatives and additives of all kinds, it finally all makes sense! So far, my family and I have managed to stop the intake of preservatives and additives (That's the EASY part!) with noticeable improvements too, I might add, especially for my asthma! However, I have not completely recovered yet, and my eldest son - although improved - still has temper problems; so, over the last two days we have finally started tackling the salicylate/amine issue... It's harder I'll admit, BUT, I can already see definite positive-changes from my first-born son, and in my own well-being as well.

It's been around 6 months now since we actively started amending our diet, and overall, my asthma is now highly manageable... (I now use the ventolin only rarely, and the morning-wheeze is completely gone!) But, it's not just that: I finally feel "in control" for the first time ever; I feel that there is now real hope that it could perhaps, go altogether! I really do.

Thank God for you, Sue. Thank you for caring enough about human beings in general, to do what you do. Alright, I'm falling to tears now... so I best go - Mark & family, Vic

See update: **story [1080]**

**[459] Dealing with ex-husbands (November 2006) COURAGE AWARD STORY NOVEMBER 2006**

Hi. I can already give you some feedback, as my 3 children and I have been on the elimination diet for 3 days. My eldest child is 14 (depression, asthma, sleeplessness, fatigue, restless legs, easily irritated, unmotivated etc): this morning she got out of bed without being nagged, had a shower without being told, all while smiling! I stopped taking antidepressants 2 weeks ago, and today for the first time since, I am not feeling my normal symptoms of depression. My youngest, 3, is hyperactive and today has been a lot calmer. He also normally wakes about 6am, and today slept in till 9:30!!! My elder son, 6, who has a learning delay, woke up teary and temperamental, as he was before bed last night, but he was at out-of-hours schoolcare yesterday and ate apple, cheese and yoghurt... One thing the book 'Fed up with children's behaviour' doesn't address is what to do when in a situation where I do not live with my ex-husband and he only sees the kids once a week, how do I get him to understand that the kids need to try this? He sees their issues as being 'normal' and although none of my kids are extreme in any way I want to give them the best life they can have, now and in the future. How do you convince people that relatively 'normal' kids still can benefit?

(later) thank you thank you!  Despite all of my best efforts, my ex-husband is aggressively sabotaging my efforts with my children, constantly telling them that failsafe foods are 'silly' and if they ask for failsafe foods he gets cross at them. They spent one night at his house (Day 11 of the elim.diet) and he gave them everything he could think of that was on the list of 'Don'ts'. Consequently they came home silly. Neither of the boys (6 and 3) could get to sleep that night, the littlest one crying and rolling around in bed sobbing 'I can't stop, I can't stop'. In desperation I gave them both a half teaspoon of bi carb, thinking 'this isn't going to do anything' (I should know better!). As it tasted so awful I let them chase it with a Werther's. Within 10 minutes they were both asleep....- by email.

**[438] I have well and truly got their attention now (August 2006) COURAGE AWARD STORY AUGUST 2006**

Maybe as parents we should take our children into these places, give them the harmful products and walk out and say see what happens and good luck. Then they might start listening. I did this to my son's school recently after they thought I was a mother overreacting to my son taking part in morning tea that was brought in by other students in the class. The Principal actually commented that "you need to let your children have a bit of fun in their lives". So I decided to let him join in the fun!

They got the shock of their lives when they saw the reaction they got in my son. His teacher made a comment to me that she was shocked at the change it caused in him. He was totally uncontrollable. I said "yes, I am not a mean mum just a caring one". She then said that she had discussed it with the Principal and they know that I am trying with him. It's amazing how they change their mind when you show them. Unfortunately he had to get into trouble to get their attention. But I think I have well and truly got their attention now - Tania from WA

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