

COSMOPOLITAN

hippy



A MODERN
GIRL'S GUIDE
TO BEING
HEALTHY &
FABULOUS

SAMPLE

Leandra Brady-Walker

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DISCLAIMER

Darlings, this book is my baby. It is the advice I give all my patients.

But that's just it. It's advice and information only. It is not to replace the one-on-one practitioner-client relationship.

As all health procedures and practices carry risks, and everybody is different, please speak to your chiropractor or other health practitioner before embarking on any of the amazing diet or lifestyle advice you might find in this book, or any other book or blog or magazine, or while talking to the guy down the street.

I wish you all the best for the journey you are on.

The original Cosmopolitan Hippy,

 *Leandra*
xxx

18 REASONS WHY YOU NEED THIS BOOK

1. You're a busy modern woman who wants to be on top of her game.
2. You enjoy life, eating out, dressing well and generally have a busy social and work life.
3. You generally take care of yourself, but you still don't feel 100%.
4. You feel run down most of the time.
5. You get every little sniffle going around.
6. You don't have the time, or the inclination, to be sick.
7. You're not sure what you're doing wrong (health-wise) or why you don't feel "good".
8. You go to your GP for answers, but all you ever get is pills.
9. You don't *like* taking pills.
10. You want to be healthier, but it all seems too hard.
11. You're not really sure who to ask for help.
12. Everything you read is about weight loss. You don't want to lose weight - you want to be healthier!
13. You're not sure what being healthier is... and you just want to be able to easily get out of bed in the morning.
14. If being healthier means you have to give up your lifestyle, you'd rather eat your Kate Spade handbag.
15. The words *meditation*, *detox* and *wheatgrass* make you nauseous.

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16. You're curious about things like meditation, detox and wheatgrass, but the things you read and the people you ask about them seem extreme and they don't understand you or your lifestyle.
17. You feel like there is no middle ground when it comes to being healthy – you're either an unwashed hippy or Amy Winehouse.
18. Sometimes you wish you had a fairy godmother that would make all your health decisions for you.

A STRANGER IS JUST A FRIEND YOU HAVEN'T MET

Hi there!

I'm Leandra. I'm a chiropractor. As a doctor, you'd assume I know a lot about health, and I do (I wrote this book, right?). You might be surprised to hear I wasn't always the beacon of vitality that you see on the back cover. In fact, as a kid I was rather sickly. Not in a sniffly way - it was more that I was tired. I always had a bit of a tummy ache and a little headache. I never felt... *good*.

I would ask my GP, "why?" and his answer was always "I don't know". I had every test, urine, blood, ultrasound, x-ray and nothing, I was completely "healthy".

And so my journey began, to find out "What's eating Leandra Walker?"

Med school? I thought about medical school, but frankly, I had seen what my GP could offer people like me and I wasn't overly impressed. I had seen a chiropractor since I was young (I'm accident prone, you see) and he seemed like a pretty switched-on guy, so off I went. I started studying to become a chiropractor.

It wasn't until I really got into my second year of studying chiropractic that I had my light bulb moment. All of my "health issues" came from one place - my nervous system. All of the poor food, the hours at a

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desk, the stressing over global warming (...or what to wear on Friday night) was taking its toll on my nerves. Literally.

From then on I knew what I had to change to make myself "healthy".

But some stuff I read was weird, (raw foods?) and time consuming (meditation?). I still wanted to have the cosmopolitan life I was used to - not move to a hippy commune and eat wheatgrass at every meal.

How do you strike that balance?

Luckily for you, from an early age, I was destined to be where I am today, a healthcare practitioner. With answers.

SO WHAT IS "HEALTH"?

Health is a word that has been bandied about a lot lately. That's because it is complicated. As a society, we have come to realise that being healthy is more than just having clear blood work. It's about the whole package.

Instead of quoting The World Health Organisation's description, I will simply say that **I believe that health is about feeling good.** Feeling well. Having that inner peace and contentment that eludes many of us. It's not about jumping out of bed every morning at 5am to do sun salutations (I'm not a morning person), but it is about leaping out of bed pain-free, content, and with a will to do something. Anything.

THE 3 STRESSORS

"If stress burned calories, I'd be a supermodel." – Author unknown

Stress. It's everywhere, isn't it? Some days I feel like all I hear from my patients is "I'm so stressed." We're all "stressed". I mean, stress is simply an external force acting on a body or object. We have external forces acting on us all the time, like gravity. Us chiropractors talk about three types of stressors: **Physical, Chemical and Emotional**. They're pretty self-explanatory, however to break it down:

PHYSICAL STRESS

Things like bumps, falls, knocks, birth trauma, poor posture, stepping off a curb incorrectly, wearing the wrong shoes, the way you walk, move, lift and sit.

CHEMICAL STRESS

Includes the food we eat, the air we breathe, medications, alcohol, vaccinations, and pesticides.

EMOTIONAL STRESS

This is the one we all think about when we think about 'stress'. What we think, how we feel and react towards everyone and everything around us. Our internal voice that keeps us awake at night, deadlines, the mortgage, what to wear on Saturday night... each type of stress is equally important, and each one exerts its effect on the nervous system.

STRESS: IT CAN BE GOOD FOR US

In fact 'stress', as an external force, is actually good for us. It forces us to change, adapt and evolve. Without it we would still be lumps of primordial ooze. However in our modern work-a-day world, the artificial types and amounts of stress we are putting on our bodies hinders rather than helps us flourish and ultimately evolve.

When you're under stress, your body releases the stress hormone, cortisol. Cortisol helps your body deal with the clear and present danger your body is facing. To do that, it dials down the systems you don't require (like the immune system) to survive the danger in front of you, and mobilises energy stores from fat. In small doses, it's great for us. It keeps us alive and gives us what we need, when we need it, to get through stressful situations.

But what if your stress *isn't* a tiger? What if the stress hangs around? What if it's a deadline that's two weeks away? The longer a stress is around, the longer cortisol stays in your system, which means the longer your non-stress systems are suppressed.

Suppress your immune system and you get sick

Suppress your digestive system and you get stomach pains, your bowel habits change and you might get Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). Suppress your reproductive system and you get irregular periods, PMS and have difficulty getting pregnant.

INTRODUCTION

Too much cortisol in your system:

- damages the cells in the brain that are responsible for long term memory formation
- reduces bone formation, predisposing you to osteoporosis
- increases blood pressure by making you more sensitive to adrenaline
- produces an increase in appetite and cravings for fatty and sugary foods.

With all of this going on in your body, it's pretty obvious that long-term stress isn't good for you. So many of the things we busy modern women do to ourselves every day, from incorrect footwear to that mid-morning Diet Coke increase either our chemical, physical or emotional stress.

I have divided my knowledge of stress into 3 bite-sized chunks – Physical, Chemical and Emotional. My goal is to help you reduce the stress in your daily life without having to give up everything that you love.

Part 1

PHYSICAL STRESS

“Let’s get physical, physical
I wanna get physical
Let’s get into physical
Let me hear your body talk,
your body talk
Let me hear your body talk.”

- *Olivia Newton-John*

CLICK CLACK: THE BENEFITS OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE

"The doctor of the future will give no medication, but will interest his patients in the care of the human frame, diet and in the cause and prevention of disease."

– Thomas Edison

Ok, so obviously this is going to be totally biased and pro-chiropractic. I am a chiropractor, after all. Before I go any further, I'll let you in on a little secret... I hate being adjusted (that's the word chiropractors use for a treatment or 'manipulation' as some say). It's uncomfortable, I don't like the noises and may the truth be told, I make all matter of sounds when I'm being treated to voice how much I don't like it - so much so that my husband (and chiropractor) says I'm his worst patient.

SO WHY AM I A CHIROPRACTOR?

And why do I get adjusted every week, sometimes twice or three times a week? Because I love the way it makes me feel.

It's just a few seconds (yes, that's right, an adjustment only takes a few seconds) of pain for an entire week's worth of pleasure. In fact, I never know how terrible I actually feel until I have had my regular adjustment. When I get off that table, colours seem brighter, I think more clearly, I walk straighter and I look thinner. That's because of the standing up straighter part - it's (sadly) not a miracle weight-loss cure.

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When I tell people how much chiropractic care I have they're usually shocked. *'But you're so young!'* they say, or *'did you have a bad accident?'* Here's the thing, chiropractic isn't about treating back pain. Shocking, I know. Chiropractic is SO MUCH MORE than just back pain.

WHAT IS CHIROPRACTIC?

Chiropractic simply means *'to do by hand'* which is why it's a hands-on manual therapy. Most chiropractors use their hands, their table, special pelvic blocks, or an adjusting tool (called an activator) on your spine or extremities. This is not to put your bones back into place; it's to (for want of a better phrase) switch on your nervous system.

Have you ever heard of neuroplasticity? No?

Fair enough. It's not something you chat about over morning coffee, but in a nutshell, neuroplasticity is your brain and nervous system's ability to change and adapt over time. This is what we chiropractors take advantage of.

You see, you are not just a hard-wired computer. By doing certain things repeatedly, your body will adapt to doing these things more effectively. It's how we learn. Like learning to paint your nails. I'll bet that, like me, the first time you did it there was polish all over the place, but gradually, the more you did it, the better you got at it. That's because the neural pathways that are required to help you paint your nails get stronger and stronger each time you paint your nails. Interestingly, if you stopped

PART 1, PHYSICAL STRESS

painting your nails and started getting regular manicures instead, the next time you tried to do it yourself you wouldn't be so good at it. Right?

Well, the same thing happens everywhere in your body, even if you're unaware of it. Sometimes the neural pathways aren't for nail painting. They're for digesting food in your stomach. You do that all the time without thinking about it, and you have been for ages, so you're awesome at it, but what if something stopped your body doing it properly? Now obviously you can't outsource food digestion like you can nail care, so the only way you would stop doing it properly would be if there was a problem with the way the instructions got to your stomach.

Still with me?

Okay. So the way information gets from your brain (where it's stored) to where the instructions are needed (in this case, in your stomach) is via your spinal cord and nerves. So, the spinal cord is super delicate and is protected by the bones of your spine. Most of the time the bones of your spine move really well, but sometimes they don't.

When they don't, they prevent instructions from getting to where they are needed. Kind of like when you have a bad mobile phone connection. The instructions get muddled and your stomach's not quite sure what to do - then boom - upset stomach.

Get it?.

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So the smart money's not on treating the stomach, but on removing the interference in the spine.

KEEP ON MOVING

There are three things that stop the bones of the spine moving as they should. They are your 3 stressors - Physical, Chemical and Emotional. As chiropractors, we not only adjust your spine, getting those bones moving well and that nervous system turned on, but we also help you identify what areas of your life are not conducive to good health.

Are you sitting too much?

Is there too much sugar in your diet?

Do you worry about things out of your control?

Believe it or not, these things all impact on your health and your chiropractor is the best person out there to help you with these things.

And THAT is what chiropractic is about. It's about letting your body and brain communicate more effectively so that you function better, at your best.

Oh - and it's also awesome for getting rid of back pain and headaches, but you knew that already, didn't you?

PART 2

CHEMICAL STRESS

“Body concentrates order.
It continuously self-repairs.
Every five days you get a new
stomach lining. You get a new liver
every two months. Your skin replaces itself
every six weeks. Every year, 98 percent of the
atoms of your body are replaced. This non-stop
chemical replacement, metabolism, is a sure sign of life.”

- *Lynn Margulis*

PYRAMID SCHEME: WHY THE FOOD PYRAMID IS WHACK

"The naked truth is always better than the best-dressed lie."

—Author unknown

Few things irk me as much as the Food Pyramid. There are so many things wrong with it, yet it is advocated as the 'gold standard' in nutrition and the path to healthy living. So what's my beef with this type of diet?

Firstly, let's look at how the pyramid came about. It was first published in 1978 in Denmark, but in 1992 the United States Department of Agriculture adopted it. That's right, it wasn't created by doctors or nutritionists. It was written by a Government department whose aims were to meet the needs of farmers and to promote agricultural trade and production. Knowing that, take another look at the pyramid.

WHAT'S IN A FOOD PYRAMID?

Take a look at *figure 20*. What is sitting at the bottom? Grains. Grains are complex carbohydrates and these are not good for your body as they are broken down into sugar. This increases your blood sugar, requiring a surge in insulin to bring your blood sugar back to base line. This stresses your pancreas and can lead to insulin resistance causing obesity and diabetes. Too much sugar in the blood will also cause damage to arteries, leading to heart disease and high blood pressure.



Figure 20: The conventional food pyramid. Cereals and carbohydrates make up the majority of the "conventional" diet with vegetables, fruits and proteins playing second fiddle.

PART 2, CHEMICAL STRESS

Dairy is also an issue. Not only does it have sugar (lactose is a sugar) but also cow's milk is irritating to the bowel and mucosal membranes, producing sticky mucus. This results in the pleasant symptoms of a phlegmy cough and sticky bowel motions. Charming!

The other problem is that fats are at the top. I'll let you in on a little secret. **FATS ARE NOT BAD FOR YOU!** Fats found in olive oil, nuts, seeds, avocado and even high quality organic meat actually help you lose weight, keep your blood sugar level and decrease your chances of heart disease and diabetes.

THE FOOD PYRAMID: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

If the Food Pyramid is bad for you, why do we have it? I hate to sound like a crazy cat woman conspiracy theorist but... the reason is money. Grains and dairy are huge parts of the western economy, even if they are detrimental to health. We farm them, we sell them, and so we need to find someone to buy them.

So obviously, I came up with my own Monument to Cosmopolitan Clean Eating (*figure 21*), which looks a little like this:

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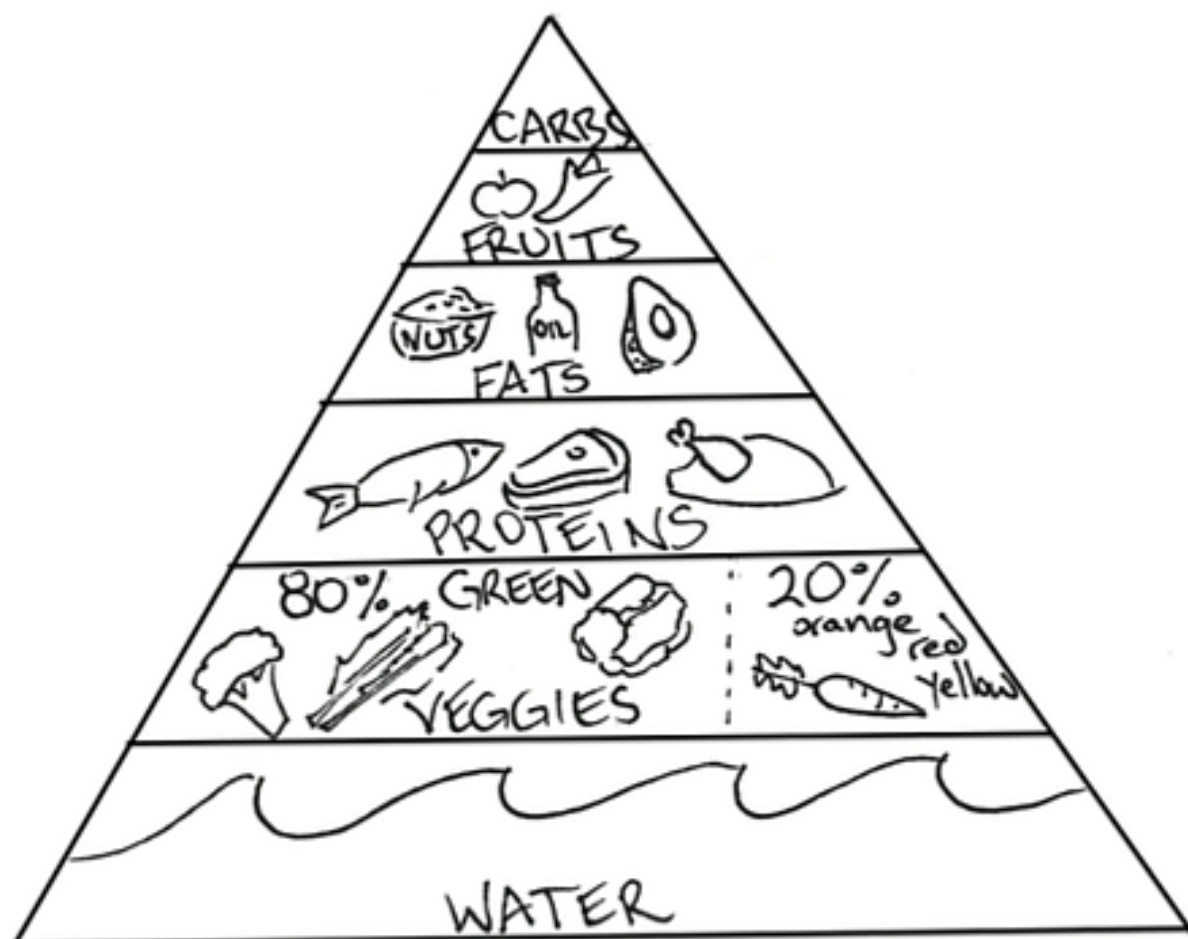


Figure 21: The Cosmopolitan Clean Eating Pyramid. Here, water is at the bottom, reminding you to hydrate, hydrate, hydrate! In this model, vegetables play a starring role, making up the majority of your diet. Vegetables are closely followed by good organic proteins such as fish, meat, eggs and fats like coconut, nuts, avocado and cold-pressed oils. Fruits are included as a "no more than 2 serves a day" food group while complex processed carbohydrates such as bread, pasta, cakes and biscuits should be "once and a while" foods.

PART 2, CHEMICAL STRESS

At the top we have **Sugars**, represented as both starchy processed carbohydrates (carbs) and fruits. ALL carbohydrates (including wheat products, rice, corn, potatoes, barley and oats) as well as fruit, alcohol, honey and refined sugars, like caster and brown, should only make up a fraction of your diet.

Next we have **Fats and Proteins** including meat, eggs, nuts, seeds (including quinoa and buckwheat), oils (but you should stick to cold pressed ones) and a small amount of goat or sheep derived dairy (a little organic cow dairy now and then is okay too).

And, you read it correctly, the majority of your diet should be vegetables and water. 80% of your vegetable intake should be green while the other 20% can be other colours such as red, yellow, orange, white and purple. Of this vegetable intake (if you're trying to be super good) half should be raw.

The reasons for this are simple. Vegetables are full of minerals and vitamins that are good for you and are as close to natural and alive that you can get, meaning that they keep you young and healthy. The Cosmopolitan Pyramid looks a lot different from the Food Pyramid, doesn't it?

PART 3

EMOTIONAL STRESS

“The advantage of the emotions is that they lead us astray.”

- *Oscar Wilde*

TURN OFF, BRAIN: THE BUSY GIRL'S GUIDE TO INSOMNIA

"To sleep; To sleep: perchance to dream." – Hamlet, Shakespeare

It might surprise you to know that I suffered from insomnia. Or maybe it's not such a surprise, since I'm a typical type-A-control-freak-workaholic-overachieving-perfectionist. I mean, there are 24 useable hours in every day... how can I waste eight of them on sleep?

What I discovered, and what may have already become obvious to you, is that without sleep you break down. Literally. You can't function and you're no use to anybody. There is a reason they use sleep deprivation as torture. Depriving yourself of just a few hours of precious rest will change the way your brain functions and ultimately the way it is organised. So, sleeping *less* actually makes you more stupid... and fatter!

Research has shown that people who get less sleep, eat more, crave salty and fatty foods and are less satisfied when they eat.

Being fat and stupid doesn't help you to get things done. So how do you catch some z's and make sure you get those required eight hours a night?

MY TOP 10 TRIED AND TESTED METHODS FOR A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

1. **Make sure your bedroom is a sanctuary.** That means no TV, no computers, no food and NO MOBILE PHONES! All of these things are too stimulating, not to mention the radiation they emit (see my section: Radioactive girl, page 185). They send the wrong messages to your brain. Is this a place for sleeping, or checking Facebook to see who got married? The only thing you should be doing in bed is sleeping or having sex. Full stop.
2. **Have a small snack.** Having a growling belly is not relaxing. It's distracting. So, a little snack can go a long way. Carbs make you sleepy, so 30g of carbs (about two cups of popcorn, three rice cakes or a handful of raw nuts) should see you off to Sleep Land.
3. **Maintain a regular bedtime.** That means no sleeping in. Getting into a routine will help your body learn when it's time to go to bed.
4. **Keep a notepad and pen by your bed.** Ever notice that you get your best ideas when you're just about to nod off? This is because your mind is clear without the day's distractions. However, they stop you from resting because you're trying to develop the idea instead of relaxing. Having a pen and paper to record your idea or To Do list (or whatever is keeping you from sleep) is a perfect solution because your idea is waiting for you to deal with tomorrow, giving you permission to nod off.
5. **Cut out caffeine and alcohol.** While a little glass of red might make you feel sleepy, it actually decreases the quality of your sleep,

PART 3, EMOTIONAL STRESS

making you more prone to waking up. Avoid caffeine and alcohol from lunchtime onwards if you're having trouble sleeping. Cocktails at breakfast it is!

6. **Boost your melatonin.** Melatonin is a hormone that regulates your sleep/wake cycles. It is triggered by light exposure. So during the day try and get as much light exposure as you can. Move your desk closer to a window or go for a lunchtime walk. At night, turn off lights, TV, iPads and other backlit electronics at least an hour before bed. Try reading a book or taking a bath before hopping under the sheets.
7. **Keep your cool.** Research has shown the optimum temperature for sleep is 20°C. While this may sound a little cool, try snuggling up to keep yourself extra toasty.
8. **Shop for a new mattress and pillows.** Can't remember the last time you bought a new mattress? A good mattress should last 10 years. Is yours older? Toss it! It's mainly dead skin and sweat by now. Choosing a new mattress and pillow is like choosing your life partner, so I've dedicated a whole chapter to it. If you haven't already, read my section Sleep Tight, page 71.
9. **Splash out on beautiful bedding.** Nothing is worse than sweating it out on polyester sheets. Go on and treat yourself to cotton. I don't buy anything under 500 thread count now. Being comfortable is the number one priority to getting a good night's sleep. Oh, and make sure you change your sheets at least once a week.

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10. **Grab a supplement.** If none of the other tips worked, it might be time to roll out the big guns. Magnesium is my 'go to' supplement for sleep, since most of us are magnesium deficient. Other than helping with sleep, it also relieves headaches and muscle cramps. Lemon balm, passionflower, chamomile, hops, lavender and oats are all good things that you can try in tea form or tablet form.

So no more tossing and turning. In just 10 easy steps you can sleep like a baby.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Leandra Brady-Walker

is The Cosmopolitan Hippy.

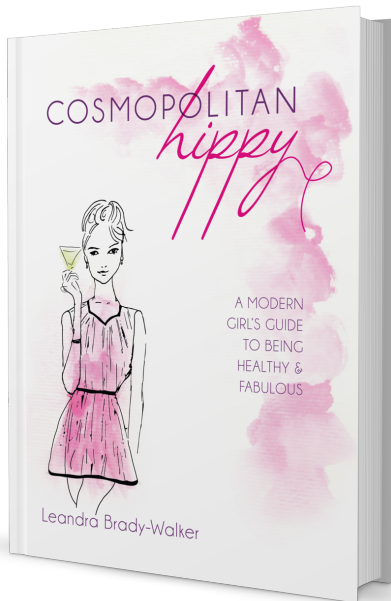
A busy modern woman who while completing three university degrees, writing one award winning research piece and another used by NASA. Leandra now owns and runs a thriving Chiropractic clinic with her husband. But she wasn't always the beacon of vitality she is now, she never felt "good". After much study, trial and error, Leandra eventually "cured" herself of migraines, joint aches, insomnia and digestive issues.

Now she is in an unique position to help time poor young women with the modern day health problems they face.

Her mission is to empower young women to make their own health decisions so that they can be healthier and happier and pass these lessons on.

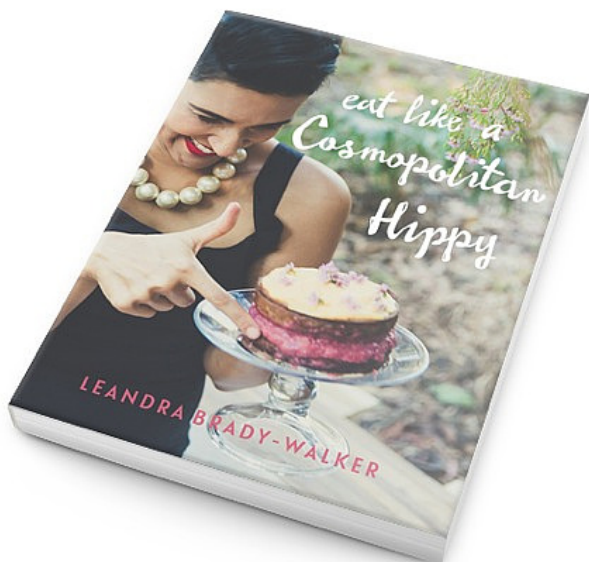
That's the end of the sample!

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