

SUSAN SMITH JONES, PhD
FOREWORD BY DAVID CRADDOCK

CHOOSE
to
THRIVE

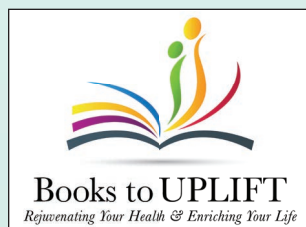
*Open Up to Vitality,
Prosperity & Equanimity*

CHOOSE *to* THRIVE

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Prosperity & Equanimity*

SUSAN SMITH JONES, PhD

FOREWORD BY DAVID CRADDOCK



The health suggestions and recommendations in this book are based on the training, research and personal experiences of the author. Because each person and each situation is unique, the author and publisher encourage the reader to check with his or her physician or other health professional before using any procedure outlined in this book. Neither the author nor the publisher is responsible for any adverse consequences resulting from any of the suggestions in this book.

Published by Books to UPLIFT
Los Angeles, CA

Cover and book design: Gary A. Rosenberg
Interior photos by AdobeStock.com and Susan Jones

ISBN: 978-0-9991492-4-9

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This book is dedicated in loving memory of my glorious mom, June, who, by her shining example, taught me about unconditional love, living with passion, following my heart, never giving up on my dreams and making the Golden Rule my default position every day.

And it's also joyfully dedicated to my two wonderful sisters, June and Jamie, who continually inspire me with their loving, generous hearts and the way they celebrate with gusto and vivacity their family, friends and life.

... And finally to you, for reading this book and for choosing to create your very best life and thrive—to experience the highest level of health, joy, love, peace, passion, success and balance possible. I salute your great adventure.



QUOTES FOR INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION

*Most people work so hard at living
that they forget how to live fully.*

—SUSAN SMITH JONES

If you can dream it, you can do it.

—WALT DISNEY

*Do not go where the path may lead. Go instead
where there is no path and leave a trail.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

*Have the vision to see, the faith to believe, and
the courage to act on your intuitive guidance.*

—SUSAN SMITH JONES

*Take a step of faith and no matter how you
feel, agree with God that He loves you.*

—JOYCE MEYER

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Foreword

By David Craddock

WHEN DR. SUSAN WROTE HER BOOK, *Invest in Yourself with Exercise: Tactics to Build the Exercise Habit and Enrich & Energize Your Workouts*, and sent it to me in England to peruse, I felt honored and her suggestions and detailed program in the book helped me upgrade my exercise program, tone up my muscles and lose the last ten pounds I was carrying around my waist. After reading it, we discussed some of the book's contents and she could tell how enthusiastic I was about this book. So, imagine my delight when Susan then asked me, during this telephone conversation, if I would be willing to write the Foreword for the book, and I gladly accepted the offer. If you haven't yet gotten a copy of this health-enriching book (and I encourage you to do so soon because it will change your health and life for the better!), you can still read my Foreword in its entirety on Susan's website.

Susan's writings and holistic health counseling with me have had a very positive influence in my life. And if you haven't read my Foreword for *Invest in Yourself with Exercise*, I will briefly encapsulate what I wrote previously so you can see how I met Susan and how fortunate I was when I asked her if she would guide me on bolstering my personal health program to which she accepted.

For almost 10 years, she has been my holistic health guru and coach, teaching me how to create vibrant health and get fit and strong. As a result, I now feel about 30 years younger than I did just a few years ago, and people tell me that I look better than I have in decades. My work with Susan has given me the fountain of youth and vitality. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me start back at the beginning.

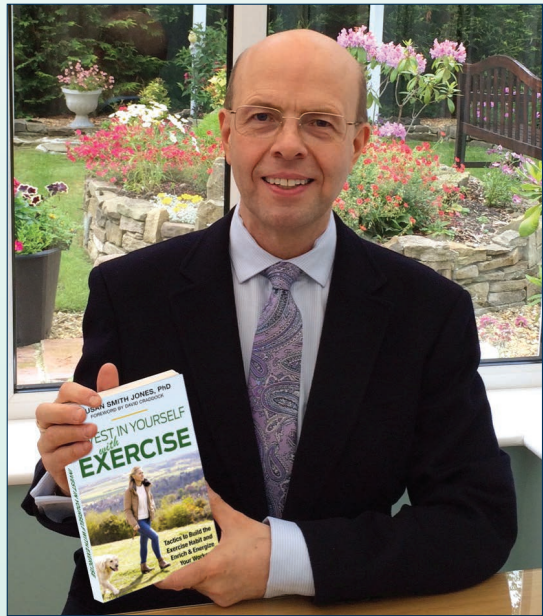
It was early June 2009 when my health seemed to be at an all-time low. In England where I live, I focused much of my time on my career

and didn't put time into my health needs. I had terrible allergies (they had plagued me for 30 years) and I definitely needed to lose lots of weight. I didn't know where to turn for the holistic help I desired.

There's a saying that . . . *When the student is ready, the teacher will appear*. One day I was talking to my mum (Marjorie) about my health issues. As always, in her positive approach to life, she said to me, "You will find the answers you seek." That same day, I got in the mail some information about a 3-Day Holistic Health Conference that would be held in London featuring many world-renowned health and human potential speakers. They were all experts in their fields from around the world, but the only one that truly caught my attention was the speaker Susan Smith Jones, PhD. She was giving three presentations on all aspects of healing and rejuvenating the body, mind and spirit, and I knew at that moment that I needed to attend.

Before I got this conference information, I had already known about Susan's work. Marjorie and I had been reading many of her articles in magazines in the UK and America, we had a few of her many books, and I saw her on a TV talk show when I was in New York City. On a few occasions, we even heard her on BBC radio talk shows in the UK and saw her on some British TV talk shows. We always enjoyed her holistic, practical and positive approach to wellness, balanced living and creating our best lives.

Marjorie and I attended the conference together in London and were not disappointed. Susan's three presentations were



life-changing for us. One was about fitness and simple, sound ways to create a strong, lean body and how to stay motivated to exercise for life. Another one of her talks was about nutrition and how to fuel the body with the healthiest foods and break unhealthy food habits. And her third presentation was all about the essential “healthy living extras,” as Susan would always refer to them—the other wellness components that can make a profound difference in how we look and feel, such as sleep, water hydration, stress reduction, meditation and prayer-time, positive relationships, an attitude of gratitude, why and how to declutter one’s home and office, simple ways to upgrade our living spaces, time outside in nature and more.

I couldn’t get enough of her talks. Throughout all three, I was taking copious notes as I sat in the front row each time. During the question and answer sessions of each talk, I was always the first person to raise my hand and ask for clarification on things she discussed. Susan was always patient, thoughtful and sensitive to my questions and other people’s questions in the room. It was clear from her three standing ovations that everyone else in the room appreciated her three talks as much as I did.

At the end of the third presentation, I asked Susan if she would be willing to meet with me privately in the lecture hall after everyone left to talk about some of my mum’s and my personal health concerns and possibly even agree to work with me. During that first session with her, I knew, for sure, that I was guided to the best teacher for me. Susan is knowledgeable and kind, has a wonderful sense of humor and knows how to inspire, motivate and empower her clients. When I asked if she would agree to coach me on how to get healthy and fit, she agreed and suggested that I fly to Santa Monica (Los Angeles) with Marjorie (she was 80 at the time) the following late December 2009/early January 2010 to “end the year and start the new year off with a positive commitment to health and youthful vitality,” she said. We started the counseling process the last half of 2009 with telephone conference calls weekly where she would answer my many health and fitness questions.

This trip and time with Susan turned out to be a godsend for Marjorie and me. The first morning, the three of us were sitting in the Fig restaurant at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel in Santa Monica where we were staying, and during this early morning breakfast, she was going over the personal food and exercise diary I had kept for the previous two weeks. She asked me to write down every single thing that I ate, and the water I drank, and not to forget anything—no matter how small. Additionally, I had to write down any physical exercise I did, too, which was only one day of a brief 15-minute walk between two meetings in London (of course, I now choose to be physically active every day in some way!).

As I watched her looking over my diary of notes, which also included Marjorie's food diary and no exercise at all to report, Susan was very quiet. She kept writing notes on the sides of my pages, and I did notice her eyes get bigger as she read on. My mum and I tapped each other under the table wondering what Susan was thinking. For about six minutes or so (probably the longest six minutes of my life, aside from our first power walk that same afternoon on the bluff!), she said nothing while she was examining all the foods I ate from the two previous weeks written in my lifestyle diary along with my nonexistent exercise routine.

I was getting more nervous by the second. What was she going to say, I thought? Was she wishing that we had not come to Los Angeles to be coached by her? "Please Susan, say something so I know there's hope for my goal of getting healthy and fit," I pondered inside my head. Then, she finally looked up, smiled a big grin at my mum and me, and said in the most positive tone the following: "Okay David and Marjorie, we have lots of work to do and I have loads to teach you both, but I am confident that you will both leave here healthier than either of you have ever been in your lives. I also know that you will feel so motivated, inspired and empowered that you'll want to continue with this same program I'll be giving you when you get home. So let's get started by both of you telling me, since you've looked at the Fig's breakfast menu for over five minutes, what you'd

like to order now that's healthy." She also sensed that we were both a little nervous not knowing what to expect.

And that was the beginning of our life-changing work with Susan. She was positive right from the start and has never wavered in all the time to be anything other than optimistic, enthusiastic, forthright and always sensitive to both of us. And by the way, even though I thought she wasn't aware of our nervousness and how my mum and



I tapped each other's knees under the table, Susan mentioned to us that there's nothing to be anxious about. She would give us both one of the most wonderful, positive experiences we've ever had while we both get healthy. One of the things I learned about Susan that first visit, and it's still true to this day, is that she's aware of everything around her, likes to live in the present moment with

optimistic enthusiasm and is ever so eager to help others feel good about themselves and create their best, healthiest lives.

For two weeks we stayed at the lovely Fairmont Miramar Hotel on the bluff across from the Santa Monica beach and every day and evening, Susan worked with both Marjorie and me, teaching us about all of the principles and practices of a healthy lifestyle. According to Susan, I needed to lose about 75 pounds and get healthy (before I arrived, I thought I only needed to lose about 30 pounds!), and Marjorie needed to gain about six pounds and become mobile again. Mum arrived in a wheelchair, barely able to walk on her own, and I resolved



to achieve significant improvement in my health and was open to any guidance Susan would be giving me.

On that first day after breakfast, Susan took both of us to the hotel's beautiful, fully-loaded gym to do weight training and use the aerobic equipment, which we did *every day* we were there. She took me hiking in the mountains of Santa Monica, for long walks on the beach, and taught us many other enjoyable ways to exercise that were actually pleasurable such as exercising in the swimming pool in the beautiful sunshine of Santa Monica (quite different from England's cold weather!). All the time, she would talk to us in great detail and educate us about why we should or should not do things a certain way, and yes, I continued to take lots of notes daily. She said that when we got back home to England, both of us needed a strong understanding of all the principles of why we eat or don't eat specific foods, or do certain things, so we would stay inspired and motivated when Susan wasn't with us. She even showed us how to order off restaurant menus for healthy selections, how to shop at grocery stores for the healthiest foods, made sure we were well-hydrated, slept each night for eight hours and she made the process of getting healthy really fun! Susan encouraged us to meditate, relax and chill out when things

got stressful; she gave us reasons why and tips on how to declutter our living spaces (including our homes, offices, cars, etc.); she also covered in detail how to sleep like a baby each night and took us to her home and gave us private cooking lessons.

And if that were not enough, Susan, in her spare time, works with clients on upgrading and refurbishing their homes, both exterior and interior. So I showed her photos of my home in England and she guided me on beautiful and sophisticated changes I could make to my home (inside and out), gardens and surroundings. Because of her terrific suggestions, I added shutters, a new front door and new windows, new gutters and down spouts, new walkways, hanging flower baskets, new garden flowers and a picket fence to my home, and people in my neighborhood often stop by to tell me how great my home now looks.

Back to Santa Monica: one of my favorite exercises in the hotel's gym was the rowing machine. Susan taught me how to row with good form to prevent injury and get the maximum benefits and now I row several times weekly back in England. It's my favorite aerobic activity in the gym because it's great as a cardio workout, but it is also an excellent endurance- and strength-builder.

When we arrived in Los Angeles, Susan promised she would give us both her recipe for the "fountain of youth" and teach us how to maintain it when we got back home to England. Well, she did accomplish this and so much more. Marjorie arrived in Santa Monica unable to walk without assistance and 14 days later, mum built up to walking three miles a day without help, and was gobsmacked at how great she felt. In fact, she didn't want to leave Susan or the sunshine. Marjorie had never stepped foot in a gym before this trip, and she grew to love the weight training because she could see her strength increasing by the day. Susan patiently helped her feel comfortable with the weights and aerobic machines and watched her every movement.

Mum was over-the-moon with joy and vitality when she left and had gained six pounds, exactly what she needed. Oh, by the way, when we got back to England, Marjorie joined our local gym and kept weight training regularly. In fact, the local newspaper in our town in England

wrote an article about Marjorie and her weight training, as she was the oldest member of the gym.

By the way, Susan's #1 secret to looking younger is to smile and she's right. As a result of my health and fitness achievements, I am smiling all the time now and people tell me often how youthful I look.

When I arrived under Susan's holistic care on the first day, I noticed how tired I felt after our one-mile jog/power walk on the bluff overlooking the Santa Monica Bay. By the last few days, I was weight training for one hour, hiking the steep mountains in Santa Monica for three hours with Susan, and jogging on the soft sand of the beach for another workout—all in the same day! In-between these arduous workouts, we would stretch often to increase flexibility.

Another one of her promises to me was that if I would follow her allergy program for four months when I got home, I would be rid of my allergies for good after 30 years of this annoyance. She was right. Within just under four months of taking some specific nutritional supplements and cleaning up my diet, keeping more hydrated and getting more sleep, my allergies were gone and have never returned.

I returned back to England 13 pounds lighter in 14 days, and we ate all day long. It was like a miracle to me! I learned a whole new way of eating—choosing delicious high fiber, plant-based, nutrient-rich foods. Those two weeks under Susan's guidance changed my health and life for the better. Since my visit with Susan early January 2010, I've continued with her healthy living program, have lost almost 80 pounds through



regular exercise and a healthy diet, and she checks in with me regularly to fine-tune my personal plan of action for optimum health and youthful vitality . . . always. I can honestly say that I have never felt better in my life than I do right now.

Presently, I eat a clean, healthy, lean diet and choose organic foods, whenever possible. It's easy to order at restaurants now because most menus have healthy alternatives or the chefs are willing and happy to prepare healthy dishes for me.

Because of Susan's positive teachings, combined with my desire to stay healthy, happy, strong and fit well into older age, I now usually workout in the local gym in town four to six days weekly. Susan even came over and helped me set up a home gym with some aerobic equipment (yes, it includes a rowing machine), a couple benches, dumbbells and other machines (and yes, she even guided me on how to spruce up my home's interior and to declutter and organize everything better!). This way when my schedule is really tight with work, conferences and meetings, I still have a place in my home to exercise. And now, when I travel to locations around the world to give my lectures and presentations and to meet with clients, I always take my fitness clothes to get in power walks or jogs; I find hotels that have in-house gyms; and I pack in my luggage exercise bands which weigh next to nothing that are simple to use in the hotel room.

Something else changed in me when I lost all my extra weight. I cared more about my personal appearance, how I dressed and what grooming I did to look and feel my best. I've learned from Susan that this is very common. When one carries around lots of extra weight for years, as I did, you often simply dress for comfort, wearing the same sloppy clothes that are loose fitting and don't hang well on the body. That's what I did for a couple of decades. I was embarrassed with being so overweight and didn't put much thought into how I dressed or looked. As you can imagine, after I lost about 80 pounds, nothing in my clothes closets fit me any more—not my suits, jackets, sweaters (we say jumpers in the UK), shirts, exercise clothes, and even my shoes.

On this one particular visit to Los Angeles for several business meetings and to confer with Susan on upgrading my fitness and nutrition program, I turned on the TV and watched one of my favorite programs—Joel Osteen’s show and listened to his discussion on *Commitment to Excellence*. In his talk, he mentioned we should all strive for excellence in every area of our lives, including our living spaces (homes, offices and cars), in how we dress and look, in what we eat, in how we exercise and in how we care for our bodies with grooming. His words truly inspired me.

As luck would have it, that same afternoon, seemingly out of nowhere because I hadn’t told Susan about Joel’s sermon topic, she showed me her impressive album of “before” and “after” photos of countless client makeovers. Doing *Whole-Body Rejuvenation Makeovers* with clients of all ages—from pre-teens to seniors to help people look and feel their best from the inside out, top to bottom is another one of her many talents and gifts. The photos were amazing, to say the least. Everyone looked younger, healthier and more vibrant in the “after” photos with different style clothing, hairstyles, good grooming and reduction of weight. Knowing that I’m always in the best of hands with Susan, I asked her if she would please do a Whole-Body Rejuvenation Makeover on me since none of my clothes fit me anymore.

So for the next two days, from head-to-toe, she rejuvenated my body and appearance and knew exactly what I needed to do. She had a hairstylist give me a different haircut (with the little hair I have left on my head these days!); I purchased and learned how to use moisturizers on my face and around my eyes; I experienced my first manicure and pedicure (which I now do monthly in England); and she took me shopping to a few different stores in Santa Monica, Brentwood and Beverly Hills for an entire new collection of suits, jackets, shirts, fitness attire, belts, shoes and more. Even my watches and rings needed to be made smaller with my 80-pound weight loss.

To say she’s an expert on rejuvenation, clothes styling and grooming, and to say that I was delighted with the results, would both be understatements. She gave me an entire course in those two days on



what it means to “Dress for Success,” whether wearing business suits, casual jackets or exercise clothes. In the past, mainly because of my hefty weight issues, I just wore anything that fit, paying no attention to how I looked. But there’s an idiom in America that “clothes make the man.” Susan helped me

to understand that people often judge others according to the way they dress.

I also learned, firsthand, that dressing well helps people to be more successful. When I put on those new clothes that fit me perfectly, were more sophisticated and classy, I felt more confident and debonair, and these feelings translated into my business life. Of course, it didn’t hurt that all my colleagues, friends and family, for the first time in my life, when I started wearing all of these great-fitting, stylish clothes, kept telling me that I’ve never looked better or younger in my life. People continued to tell me that I looked about 30 years younger than my age. What Susan did for my health and appearance has been priceless and added such joy, confidence and equanimity to my life. I am now thriving in my life in every way, thanks to Susan’s support and expertise.

As Susan told me in those rejuvenation makeover days, you never know when a TV show may want to interview you, or you get a request to go to the Parliament for a meeting or you need to meet with influential business people and celebrities with last-minute invitations. So you always want to look your best, exude excellence and feel confident, self-assured, refined and sophisticated—and ready at

a moment's notice to say YES to life's adventures and not put them off because you're not feeling confident with how you look and feel. Now I shudder to think back to how I used to dress and didn't care at all about grooming or my appearance and am deeply grateful to Susan for showing me how to be a class act with sartorial elegance.

In all her sagacity, Susan always reminds me that “When you commit to something like an exercise program, don't let your excuses get in your way. You must follow through on your commitment to fitness and arrange your personal circumstances so that your lifestyle totally supports your commitment.” She'd often tell me to “Do the things you need to do to order your life, eliminate non-essentials and focus on what is important.”

Susan helped me to understand that if we don't have health, we lose our enjoyment and appreciation of life. It is truly our greatest wealth. She taught me that I am the president and CEO of my body and life and it's up to me to take great care of my body. Here's something she emphasized often to me: “To become master of your outer life, you must first become master of your inner world—CEO of your mind. Teach your mind how to think differently: how to be calm, loving, courageous and optimistic. The body reflects the mind and the mind reflect the spirit; all three are connected and holistic health incorporates the loving care of the whole person. Eating healthy foods gives you a more positive attitude. Choosing to be grateful for your miraculous body makes it easier to exercise and get ample sleep at night. So each day make your health a top priority and take loving care of your body with nutritious foods, daily exercise, positive living habits and a cheerful attitude.” I will never forget her teachings and now



in my work with other people, I often share some of the health- and life-enriching teachings I learned from Susan and am still learning to this day.

So when she asked me if I would write the Foreword for the other book, *Invest in Yourself with Exercise*, it was my great pleasure. In the pages of that informative and uplifting book, you'll learn from Susan the importance of exercise for overall high-level wellness; how to get the most from your workouts; ways to stay motivated to exercise; tips to prevent exercise boredom, burnout and injury; the best exercises to look younger, bolster energy and lose weight; how to fight excess fat by mastering your metabolism; how to incorporate prayer-walking to enhance mental and spiritual health; ways to turn dreams into reality; the power of choice; and much more.

“An investment in yourself and in your health,” as Susan repeated to me often in our training and teaching sessions, “is the best investment you can make.” That book will inspire, motivate and empower you, too.

So now, fast forward to this book *Choose to Thrive*. A couple years ago, Susan started working with me on much more than my health and fitness program. In addition to attending many of her workshops around the world and cooking classes, she has been working with me on other principles and practices for high quality living and, on a personal note, helping me cope and deal with my sadness and grief over my mother's passing.

From Susan, I've learned about the physiology of stress and how unmanaged chronic stress wreaks havoc on the entire body; I learned a variety of stress management techniques including deep breathing, visualization and meditation, which for Susan and me as Christians is based on inspiring verses within the Bible; her teachings have reinforced my long-held beliefs of why it's so important to make my word count, make my word gold, and to go the extra mile and always be open to learning new things and testing new concepts; and I also learned how to be more effective in all of my business dealings when relating to others and managing transactions. Susan always emphasizes the

importance of making a commitment, staying disciplined in achieving goals and following through on your words with actions. Susan demystified how to live a balanced lifestyle, invite equanimity into my daily routines and be prosperous in mind first to then see it manifest in my life. In short, Susan has made a positive difference in every area of my life and, as a result, my business, home life and health are all thriving.

So just over a year ago, in one of our healthy living conference calls, I thanked her for showing me in multiple ways how to truly thrive in every area of my life. I told her I now understood how it needs to be a holistic approach with the body, mind and spirit all supporting each other and in balance, as she always taught me and emphasized in our sessions together and by telephone.

It was at that moment that I casually mentioned to her, half seriously and half jokingly, that “Susan, you should write another book entitled *Choose to Thrive: Open Up to Vitality, Prosperity & Equanimity*.” For about 30 seconds after hearing my suggestion, she was quiet. Then she enthusiastically said, “I love your idea David and, YES, indeed, that’s what I’ll write about in my next book. But I have one condition. Will you write another Foreword for this new book when I finish it?” With alacrity, I responded that it would be my honor to work with her again on another Foreword, so that brings us to the present and this new Foreword.

Susan’s books and other writings inspire people around the world, especially me. She’s one of those rare authors who writes the way she talks. She shines in her ability to take complex ideas and complicated research and distill it all down to easy-to-comprehend and understand, practical guidance and motivation.

Since writing the Foreword for *Invest in Yourself with Exercise*, countless people have asked me privately... “*What is Susan really like, since you know her so well and she has worked with you for years? What can you tell me about Susan that others may not know?*” This is something I can share with you from personal experience of working with Susan privately, attending many of her lectures and workshops, taking many of her cooking and holistic health classes, and spending

countless hours with her exercising, hiking, going to the gym and eating meals out together.

Susan's dynamic presence is an inspiration to all who desire to not only talk, but also walk the way of wellness, balance and living life fully alive. Her enthusiasm, experience and her vast knowledge of the current fields of balanced living, nutrition, exercise and holistic health are great gifts to everyone she encounters. She has a way of living the principles she speaks about that causes others, myself included, to desire to follow the path of healthy living. Susan is a vibrant expression of health, aliveness and zest for living.

A consummate motivational lecturer, she is the kind of speaker that every program director wishes for but rarely ever experiences. She is always filled with enthusiasm and it's catching. Radiantly beautiful inside and out, she's one of the most amazing people I've ever met—a perfectly balanced person of inner strength, kindness, humor and a peaceful equanimity. She's a storehouse of life-altering knowledge that is



up-to-date; she's a Renaissance woman and gifted teacher who brings together modern research and ageless wisdom in all of her work, including her workshops, books, audio programs or her dynamic radio and television interviews.

There is something else about Susan that is difficult to define. It's her total consciousness of love, joy and well-being. I host seminars in the UK, America and internationally for my *Time for Investment* company, and invite world-renowned speakers to talk about finance,

investing, the economy, saving money, credit card debt, prosperity, abundance and why health is the greatest wealth (of course, those health talks are always given by Susan!). We have all had seminar presenters or attended a seminar with presenters who knew the material, but behind the scenes we were disappointed to find that they didn't really live the truth they were teaching. I assure you that Dr. Susan embodies the truth she shares.

And I might add, what a sense of humor she has—it's delightful and makes me happy every time I am with her. Susan helped bring out my sense of humor by watching how she talks to others, presents her motivational lectures and deals with her own stresses. In every encounter she has with others,

she always tries to build someone up and find a way to tickle their funny bone. One of the first quotes she said to me when my mum and I first worked with her in Santa Monica late 2009/early 2010 was by Maya Angelou, who said... *People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.* How true that is! People tell me often



how good they always feel in Susan's presence. She's a practical joker, yes indeed, and loves to laugh a lot. Susan taught me early on when I first worked with her about the power of relaxation to rejuvenate and restore the soul, the therapeutic effects and relationship-enhancing qualities of sharing fun and enjoyment together, and how we need to smile and laugh more, and she is the perfect example. Very little in life makes Susan upset and feel totally stressed out. Her attitude is always about seeing the best in everyone and everything and finding reasons to laugh as much as possible. No wonder her nickname is "Sunny." Let

me give you one of many countless examples of Susan’s jovial, comical and light-hearted attitude... no matter the circumstances.

She was giving a cooking class to about 20 people in her home. This was the first class since she totally refurbished her kitchen and large adjoining family room with new cabinets, wood floors, shiplap on the walls, new paint everywhere, wood beam ceilings, new area rugs, etc.—everything was new and beautiful and she was so excited for her guests to see how she decorated it all. It happened to be St. Patrick’s Day and during this lunch-time class, everything was laid out on the massive marble island in the center of her kitchen and the guests were either seated around the island or standing behind. All of the foods made during the previous hour were displayed on the island to eat shortly. But first, she wanted to finish her cooking and nutrition demonstrations by making a healthy and delicious green smoothie. So into the blender went fresh almond milk (that was just made fresh earlier), frozen blueberries and raspberries, a frozen banana, one cucumber, a tablespoon of flaxseeds, some baby leaf spinach, celery, a dash of cinnamon and ice cubes. She blended it all in the 72-ounce jar, which was filled to the brim with scrumptious, creamy, totally blended green smoothie. She took off the lid and was about to give us all a sample when she realized that she forgot to put in some kale. Susan then asked one of the guests seated at the end island stool to get the kale from the refrigerator and finish making the smoothie while she went to use the bathroom and quickly changed her clothes before eating.

So while Susan was at the far end of her home in her bedroom suite, this guest put some kale into the blender and you’ve probably already guessed what was about to happen next. She forgot to put the lid on the blender after the kale went in and she pressed the start button that was already on high speed before anyone had a chance to tell her to put the lid back on top first. With the force of an angry volcano, this green 72-ounce smoothie shot up to the high ceiling above, drenching all the shiplap in “green goodness” and also covering the entire island with all of the food, the floors, the area rugs, the

walls and most of the people watching, too. Everyone was in shock and didn't even know what to say so most of the guests were totally silent and, at the same time, very nervous because Susan's kitchen and family room was just refurbished and now everything was green.

Susan danced out of her bedroom and down the hall singing a song and was eager to sit down with everyone and start eating all of the foods that were just created the previous hour. Then she saw what happened and everyone was staring at her and Susan, to the surprise and delight of everyone, started laughing so hard that everyone else started laughing. It definitely relieved the tension in the room. But Susan couldn't stop laughing for about 3 minutes; in fact, she was laughing so hard that she was tearing up. Then she said joyfully, "It's my fault, I forgot to tell you to put the lid on, and how beautiful is this! Today is St. Patrick's Day and now there's no need to decorate because everything is already green." Well, that made all of the guests laugh even more. Everyone joined in with the cleaning up and Susan turned on some great music and ordered some food to be delivered from a local restaurant for everyone to eat together, since all of the dishes/meals on the island ready to sample and eat were covered in green smoothie.

That, in a nutshell, is Susan. She's filled with vitality, joy, happiness, optimism and celebration for everyone she meets and for life itself. And that's what shines through in the pages of this book *Choose to Thrive*. You will feel like you are visiting Susan at her home and sitting at her kitchen table as she visits with you and shares her pearls of wisdom to guide you on how to experience true aliveness, how to live more fully and how to thrive in all areas of your life. As you read this upbeat book, you will feel like Susan is your friend, too, because she's truly a friend to everyone.

I have one word of warning for you. Once you meet Susan, or read this dynamic book, or listen to or read her other wonderful, uplifting books and audio programs, you'll be inspired to make some major lifestyle changes for the better. So, get yourself ready—for a healthier and more joyful, peaceful new you will emerge once you've met this glorious Renaissance lady through the pages of this book.

In conclusion, all of Susan's books are terrific, but this one is now my favorite because her sage advice, practical tips and buoyant, vivacious personality sparkle forth on every page. And from my personal experience of working with Susan for almost a decade, and seeing her firsthand interactions with others, I can say for certain that Susan has never met a stranger and can speak with anyone from all walks of life. She has a calm and peaceful demeanor, the humor of a comedian, the curiosity of a child, the wisdom of a favorite grandparent and the non-judgment of a best friend—all rolled into one. *Choose to Thrive* will also bless your life, as it has for me many times over, in countless ways and put you on the path to high-level vitality, success, prosperity, equanimity and a balanced, joy-filled life. Enjoy!

David Craddock, MA (Oxon), BA (Hons)

DavidCraddock.com

TimeForInvestment.com



Introduction

*Your life is really part of an unfolding plan,
a charted voyage, an exquisitely executed work of art.*

—THOMAS KINKADE

*If one advances confidently in the direction of his
dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has
imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected
in common hours. . . .*

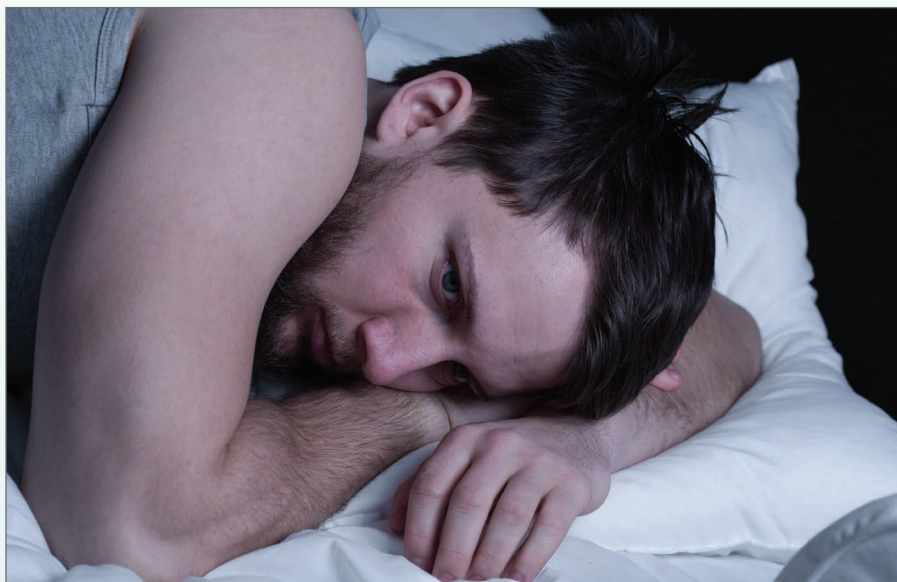
*If you have built castles in the air, your work
need not be lost; that is where they should be.
Now put foundations under them.*

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU

STRESS IS A MAJOR PROBLEM IN MODERN LIFE. Technological advances have increased the pressure to keep busy, even during leisure hours. We talk on the telephone and text while we drive, watch television while we read, conduct business while we listen to the radio.

We are continually overstimulated, receiving more information from television, computers, radio and satellites than our ancestors of several generations ago ever could have imagined! This year alone you will probably make more appointments, meet more people and go more places than your grandparents did in their entire lives. All this manic rushing around creates a life filled with stress.

Given our current pace, we have little time to relax and cultivate relationships with our spouses, children, friends and nature. Is it any



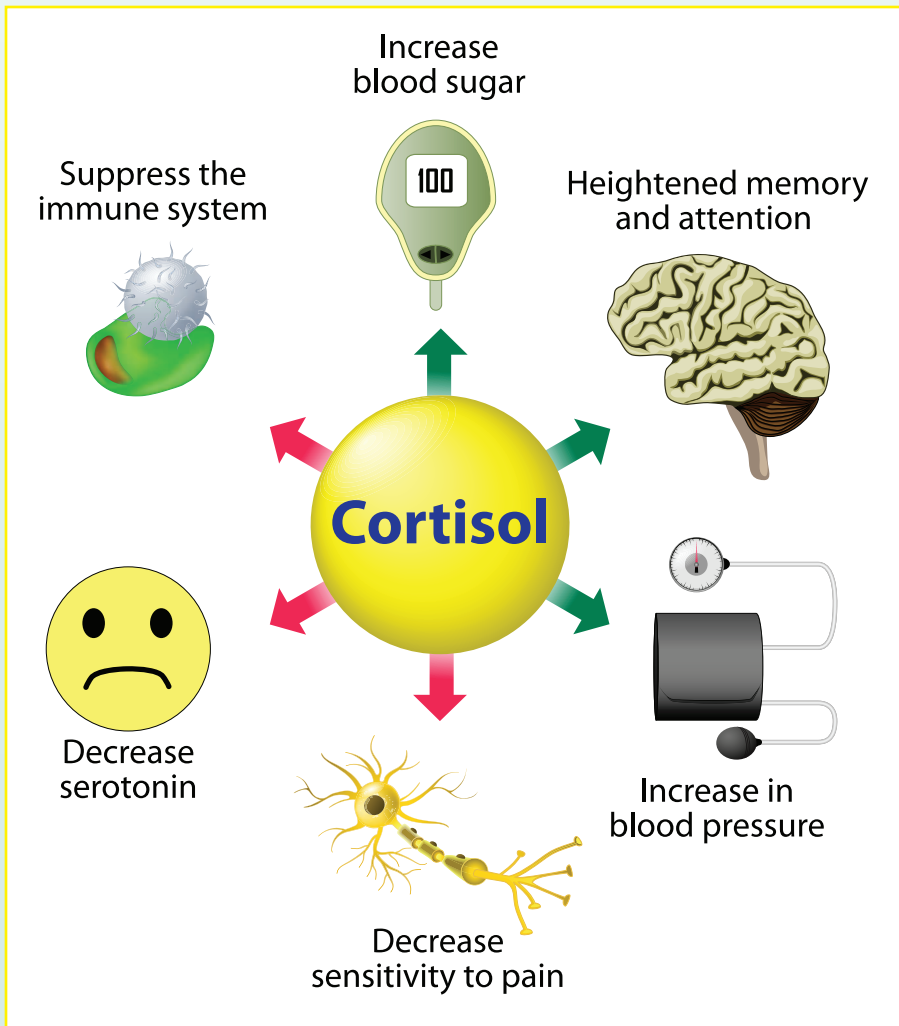
wonder that stress-related diseases are now on the rise? Some studies even suggest that 80–90 percent of all doctor visits are for stress-related complaints. Stress-related illness is implicated in our rapidly escalating health care costs, and health problems attributed to job stress are estimated to cost U.S. businesses \$150 billion every year.

I see unrelenting stress as a sickness of epidemic proportions—a “busyness” or “hurry” sickness. But you don’t have to let it overwhelm you. You can *choose* to slow down and thrive—create a life of balance and joy. I’ll address this throughout the pages of this book, but for now, let’s see if you can find any of these signs of “hurry” sickness in your daily life.

1. Do you eat in a rush, eat while standing or walking or eat while driving?
2. Does your busy life prevent you from spending much time at home? And when you finally get home, are you too tired to do much beyond collapse and “veg out” in front of the television?
3. Do you routinely drive too fast, run yellow lights, constantly change lanes and jockey for position? Are you impatient with other drivers?

acids. Amino acids are the building blocks of protein, and they are also the building blocks of the immune system, blood vessels, muscles and other tissues. Thus, the immune system, blood vessels and muscles all rely on cortisol for strength and proper function. Cortisol prevents the loss of too much sodium from the body and helps maintain blood pressure as well. It also helps to suppress reactions such as pain, allergic reactions and inflammation.

Perhaps most interesting of all, cortisol helps the body protect itself from itself. For example, during a strenuous workout, the body



PART 2

Nurture Your Life with Vitality & Experience Aliveness

OUR LIVES ARE MADE UP OF MILLIONS OF CHOICES. Moment to moment, we are always choosing. What we are consists of the sum of our choices: what we think, what we imagine, how we react, what we eat, what we say, what we feel and what we expect. It's time to take back the responsibility for our own lives and start using the power that is ours to create what we want—a healthy, fit body and a fulfilling, joyful and peaceful life.

Let's explore more closely the importance of our day-to-day food (and other lifestyle) choices and the need to reprogram and retrain our senses to release self-limiting beliefs and habits. Your primary goal on what I refer to as my “Experience Aliveness” program is to get to the point where you are eating a reasonable amount of the highest quality foods and adopting positive, health-promoting lifestyle habits. More than 2,400 years ago, Pythagoras said, “Choose what is best; habit will soon render it agreeable and easy.”

Although it's important to choose healthy foods, don't become a fanatic about what you eat. It's what you choose to eat on a daily basis that makes the difference, not the occasional lapse. Worrying about every little piece of food that goes into your mouth is far more harmful in the long run than infrequent splurges.

Learn to think in terms of *whole foods*. It's when you begin cutting, cooking and processing foods that your system gets into trouble. Whenever you are able, eat your foods whole, just the way nature

made them, complete with vitamins, minerals, enzymes, amino acids, natural sugars, fibers and water, in the right proportions for efficient use by your body. Fresh organic fruits and vegetables, legumes, nuts and seeds and sprouts carefully selected and prepared to suit your particular needs and desires are ideal foods for the vibrantly alive body. (Please refer to my book *Body Temple Vitality* on how to become a kitchen gardener—the ABCs of growing fresh, delicious, healthy sprouts at home in a few days and in three minutes of your time daily.)

You may feel that it's too difficult to switch all at once to a new nutritional, natural-foods program. That's a common reaction and that's OK. You can break in gradually, if you wish, switching first to the foods that appeal to you the most and gradually adding the others. Or perhaps, choose to eat fresh fruit for breakfast, a colorful salad for lunch with lots of leafy greens and vegetables, with another salad for dinner with some cooked plant-based food in the evening such as a bowl of soup and steamed vegetables. It may take a few weeks for your digestive system to become accustomed to handling these new whole, high-fiber, living foods.



PART 3

Honor Your Life with 13 Enriching Lifestyle Choices

*Everyone is born a genius,
but the process of living de-geniuses them.*

—BUCKMINSTER FULLER

EACH OF US FACES TREMENDOUS CHALLENGES every day. As we get up each morning, we may face myriad stressors—getting the kids off to school, driving in bumper-to-bumper traffic, presenting a career-making (or career-breaking) report to the boss, balancing the household budget and so much more. It can seem like there is not enough time in the day to accomplish all you need to do. These are just some of the ways everyday life can get us down. If poorly managed, these challenges can lead to many forms of stress, depression and anxiety.

Stress is a fact of life, but you can choose not to make it a way of life for you. By incorporating most or all of the tips below, you will experience more joy and less stress; you will start thriving in your life. You will be well on your way to creating a healthy, happy, peaceful, fulfilling and soul-satisfying life. Not only do these tips help assuage stress, they also help prevent and alleviate disease and depression, boost energy and restore youthful vitality.

Living a stress-free life is not a reasonable goal. The real goal is to learn to deal with stress actively and effectively. Although that's easier for some people than others, studies suggest that anyone can learn to

In the 1960s, Abraham Maslow wrote his famous book, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, which helped turn around the emphasis of psychology. Psychology was my undergraduate major at UCLA, and I was drawn to Maslow's work. Unlike most psychologists of his day, he chose to study high-functioning people—those living their highest potential—rather than people with problems. Maslow developed a psychology of being—not of striving, but arriving and thriving; not of trying to get someplace, but living fully. He found a common denominator among all his high-functioning subjects. They all had a vision and were committed to it, believed they had the power to master life and were self-motivated and disciplined. Do you believe you have the power to master life? How committed, motivated and disciplined are you to follow your highest vision and purest heart's desire?



2. EXEMPLIFY COMMITMENT & PERSONAL SELF-DISCIPLINE

Breakthroughs and miracles occur when people are willing to live from their highest vision, commitment and discipline. A commitment is the honoring of a decision. When you're committed, you allow nothing to deter you from reaching your goal. You are disciplined even when you are not feeling motivated. Making a commitment is being willing to put all of your resources on the line and taking responsibility for the outcome.

Commitment—to a project, a relationship, a health and fitness program or a spiritual practice—can lend stability to the stressful,

PART 4

Open Up to Prosperity: Turning Your Dreams Into Reality

The way for you to be happy and successful, to get more of the things you really want in life, is to get the combinations to the locks. Instead of spinning the dials of life hoping for a lucky break, as if you were playing a slot machine, you must instead study and emulate those who already have done what you want to do and achieved the results you want to achieve.

—BRIAN TRACY

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY WE CREATE OUR OWN REALITY. In fact, I've been suggesting it throughout this book. But what does that really mean? Let's explore how to turn our dreams into reality.

PUTTING OUR THOUGHTS TO WORK

In the 1970s, positive thinking became almost synonymous with success. In its early use in contexts such as Dale Carnegie's success courses, positive thinking meant using willpower and conscious, positive thoughts to achieve goals. Napoleon Hill's maxim for success, "What you can conceive and believe, you can achieve," was a popular positive thinking slogan. Never underestimate the Divine potential of positive thinking. Rightly employed, this power of the mind is a

HUMOR TIME

*A man's health can be judged by which he
takes two at a time—pills or stairs.*

—JOAN WELSH

*If you can't afford a doctor, go to an airport—
you'll get a free x-ray and a breast exam, and if you
mention Al Qaeda, you'll get a free colonoscopy.*

*I'm not crazy. I'm just special. No, wait...
maybe I'm crazy. One second... I have to
talk to myself about this, hold on...*

I am in shape! Round is a shape.

*If walking were good for your health, the postman would
be immortal. A whale swims all day, only eats fish, only
drinks water and is fat. A rabbit only eats vegetables, runs
and hops all day long and only lives 5 years. A tortoise
doesn't run and does nothing energetic, yet it lives for
45 years. And you tell me to exercise! I don't think so.*

*Men are like wine. Some turn to vinegar,
but the best improve with age.*

—POPE JOHN XXII

*Just remember, once you're over the hill,
you begin to pick up speed.*

—CHARLES SCHULZ

About *Susan Smith Jones, PhD*



FOR A WOMAN WITH THREE OF AMERICA'S AND THE UK'S MOST ORDINARY NAMES, **Dr. Susan Smith Jones** has certainly made extraordinary contributions in the fields of holistic health, longevity, optimum nutrition, high-level fitness and balanced, peaceful living. For starters, she taught students, staff and faculty at UCLA how to be healthy and fit for 30 years!

Susan is the founder and president of Health Unlimited, a Los Angeles-based consulting firm dedicated to optimal wellness and holistic health education. As a renowned motivational speaker, Susan travels internationally as a frequent radio/TV talk show guest and motivational speaker (seminars, workshops, lectures and keynote

address); she's also the author of more than 2,500 magazine articles and over 30 books, including—*The Curative Kitchen & Lifestyle; Living on the Lighter Side; Healthy, Happy & Radiant... at Any Age; Invest in Yourself with Exercise, Affirming God's Love* and *Body Temple Vitality*.

Susan is in a unique position to testify on the efficacy of her basic message that health is the result of choice. When her back was fractured in an automobile accident, her physician told her that she would never be able to carry “anything heavier than a small purse.” Susan chose not to accept this verdict; within six months, there was no longer any pain or evidence of the fracture. Soon, she fully regained her health and active lifestyle. Susan attributes her healing to her natural-foods diet, a daily well-rounded fitness program, a strong God- and faith-centered life, along with the power of determination, balanced living and a deep commitment to expressing her highest potential. Since that time, she has been constantly active in spreading the message that anyone can choose radiant health and rejuvenation. Her inspiring message and innovative techniques for achieving total health in body, mind and spirit have won her a grateful and enthusiastic following and have put her in constant demand internationally as a health and fitness consultant and educator. A gifted teacher, Susan brings together modern research and ageless wisdom in all of her work. When she's not traveling the world, she resides in both West Los Angeles and England.



Ever wonder why even the most physically fit people feel off-kilter at times and lose that joy of living? Overwhelmed by life? Always wishing they could look better and thrive more from day to day? To be truly healthy, people need to do more than eat a colorful, whole-foods diet, get enough shut-eye and jog around the block. They also need to be mentally and spiritually balanced—calm, focused, energized and joyful—something author Susan Smith Jones, PhD, has been practicing and teaching for over 35 years.

“Getting back to basics” is the foundation of Susan’s most helpful and comprehensive book, ***Choose to Thrive***. Her easy-to-follow program is an indispensable and refreshing change from most health and self-improvement books that only focus on one particular aspect of health. Balance is the key and Susan keeps the reader focused on the long-term results that come from a healthy lifestyle. Whether you are looking for the best superfoods to restore youthful vitality, easy ways to minimize stress and feel joyfully alive, or just want to simplify life, feel confident, achieve heartfelt goals, prosper and achieve success and flourish in your life, ***Choose to Thrive*** is the book with it all.

Excerpt from David Craddock’s Foreword

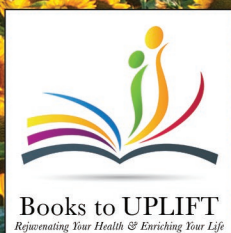
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For more than 35 years, Susan Smith Jones, PhD has been one of the world’s most recognizable names and faces in the fields of holistic health and fitness, human potential and balanced living. She travels worldwide as a motivational speaker and consultant, and is the author of many health-related books.

To learn more about Susan and her work, please visit:

SusanSmithJones.com



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