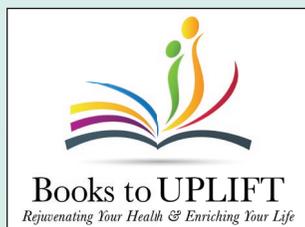


# CHOOSE *to* THRIVE

*Open Up to Vitality,  
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.

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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

# Afterword

THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO READ THIS BOOK. I hope in some way, through the pages of this book, I have inspired and motivated you to make positive changes in your personal health program and holistic lifestyle, and to cherish and celebrate your life each and every day. Here are some of my final thoughts about physical, mental and spiritual well-being that I'll leave with you as you embark on your thriving adventure—your life.

**Life is all about the choices we make day in, day out.** Living our best life means choosing to appreciate our magnificent bodies. The body is sacred, a temple of the living, loving God, and therefore deserves reverence. Treat yourself with respect. Don't wait until you're sick to recognize the miracle of your body. Honor the love inside you and the love you are.

If you want to become healthier and more powerful, begin with how you feel about yourself and accept your body as a temple. Heaven on earth is inside each one of us at this moment. In your unique body, mind and spirit, you have been given everything you need to be the best you can be, to thrive in your health and life. So cherish and respect your body unconditionally—no matter what its current shape—because it is sacred.



As a divine being, made in the image and likeness of God, you deserve tender, loving care. We may find this difficult to accept, especially where our bodies are concerned. Many of us need to learn to be a friend to our bodies. Getting mad at our bodies only makes matters worse. Although they are but temporary homes for our spiritual beings, we must still take care of them because they are sacred vessels for this voyage on earth. Love your body and be committed to staying fit for your life journey.

Start today by tuning in more attentively to your body. It is a fantastic feedback machine. If you listen, you will discover that it communicates very well. When you get a headache, your body is trying to tell you something. Listen to your body's signals. The key is your willingness to listen and act. If you feel pain, what is your body trying to tell you? It may be telling you that you're eating too much, or eating the wrong kinds of food, or smoking or drinking too much, or not sleeping enough, or not drinking enough water or getting enough exercise. It could be telling you that you need to get outside more to play and pray, or that there's too much emotional congestion in your life.

Listen to your body. Respect and appreciate it. Take loving care of it. You will learn to discern what your body is trying to tell you. And please, choose your doctor carefully. Choose someone who practices a wellness lifestyle and who listens to you. There is a tendency today for doctors to turn to technology and all kinds of elaborate testing first, or to prescribe a regimen of medications, before listening to you or to their own intuition. I don't think it's a good trend.

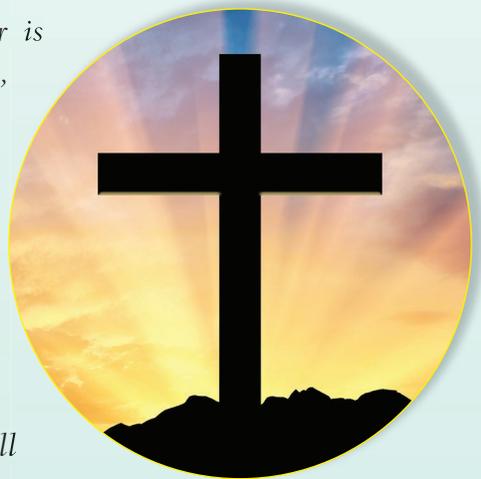
As you think about your health and health care, ask yourself both of these questions: what can the doctor do for me? And, how can I help myself? You are the authority on your body. Educate yourself. If you have specific health conditions, read up on them online and figure out how to get the best possible care. And remember this: It is normal to be healthy. It's your divine birthright to be well. **Choose wisely and show by your daily actions that you are a champion of creating your best, healthiest life.**

Before I conclude this Afterword and the book, I wanted to take an opportunity to share with you, my valued reader, something about my God-centered life and how my Christian faith intertwines in my personal and professional life.

Living a faith-centered life is my #1 health and vitality secret. Each morning, before I exercise, I first begin my day by reading a passage from the Bible and then meditate on what I just perused. This sacred, morning practice starts my day off on a positive, peaceful note and fills me with joy and serenity. I let God's love shine forth from me into all of my activities for the day and evening. Connecting to God each morning, and other times during the day, reinforces in me that I can choose to thrive and live a peaceful, balanced life, and it begins with my thoughts and what I put my attention on throughout the day.

As mentioned previously in the book, one of my favorite Bible passages is found in Philippians 4:8-9:

*“Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Whatever you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and the God of peace will be with you.”*



Daily, I aspire to take loving care of my body temple given to me as a gift from God, and to celebrate the joy of living with as many people as possible in my work and experiences.

# Resources

Please refer to **www.SusanSmithJones.com** to learn more about, or to purchase, these books. You will find the full list of Susan's titles on her website.

*Living on the Lighter Side*

*The Curative Kitchen & Lifestyle*

*Healthy, Happy & Radiant . . . at Any Age*

*Wired to Meditate*

(Audio Book)

*Choose to Live Peacefully*

(Audio Book)

*Vegetable Soup/The Fruit Bowl*

(Co-authored with Dianne Warren  
for children ages 1–8)

*Body Temple Vitality*

*Affirming God's Love*

*Invest in Yourself with Exercise*

*God-Centered Health*

# 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.



If you enjoyed this book, please visit: **SusanSmithJones.com**, **ChristianLifestyleMatters.com** and **BooksToUplift.com** for more details on Susan and her work. Her books and websites are like having a “holistic health app” for anything related to holistic health and living a faith- and God-centered life.

If you'd like to receive Susan's free monthly *Healthy Living Newsletters* filled with uplifting, empowering and high-powered information, go to **SusanSmithJones.com** and sign-up on the page **Subscribe & Win!** It takes only 15 seconds and you will also receive several gifts from Susan.



*We need to find God, and He cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence.*

—MOTHER TERESA

*Affirm the inherent goodness of living by saying thank you.*

—THOMAS KINKADE

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

—THOMAS A. EDISON

*Cherish the music that stirs in your heart, the beauty that forms in your mind, the loveliness that drapes in your purest thoughts, for out of them will grow all delightful conditions, all heavenly environments; of these, if you but remain true to them, your world will at last be built.*

—JAMES ALLEN

*It's not easy being grateful all the time. But it's when you feel least thankful that you are most in need of what gratitude can give you.*

—OPRAH WINFREY

*One of the most important keys to effective prayer is approaching God as His friend. A friendship involves loving and being loved. It means knowing that God is on your side, wanting to help you, cheering you on and always keeping your best interest in mind. God loves you and desires your friendship!*

—JOYCE MEYER

# Sunflowers: Their Meaning & Symbology

WHILE NOT A RARE FLOWER, the Sunflower is still a beautiful symbol of power for many people. In many ways, it's more powerful in what it symbolizes because it is easy to grow in your backyard or a patio container.

In my 20s, I was given the nickname “Sunny” because of how much I relished this sunny, happy gem, the Sunflower, and how I always took (and still do to this day) a positive approach to life. So this is why I chose to begin and end this book with glorious sunflowers.

## Meaning of the Sunflower

The sunflower has developed unique meanings across the world, and many cultures share similar views of the flower thanks to its physical characteristics. Some of the most common meanings include:

- ☀️ Long life, mainly since most varieties stand in full bloom for months on end during the hottest days of summer
- ☀️ Feelings of adoration, admiration and platonic love towards a person, such as a family member or friend
- ☀️ Loyalty and strong bonds between two people, as represented by the strong and upright stem
- ☀️ Seeking out positivity and strength, as the bloom turns to face the sun
- ☀️ Nourishing yourself and others, since the sunflower produces an abundance of edible seeds
- ☀️ Brightening your mood, through the vibrancy of the yellow or orange petals
- ☀️ Good fortune and lasting happiness

## Etymological Meaning of the Sunflower

The English name for the Sunflower is quite literal and taken from its bright sun-like appearance. Its scientific name, *Helianthus*, is just as literal because it combines the two Greek words for sun and flower.

## Symbolism of the Sunflower

It's no surprise that both ancient and modern people associated the Sunflower with warmth, positivity, power, strength and happiness since it bears such a strong resemblance to the Sun itself. In Greek mythology, it's tied to a story of a nymph who becomes the flower after losing her love. Victorian flower language ascribes a meaning of gratitude to the dwarf Sunflower, while it's considered a good luck charm for occasions like graduations and new businesses in China. Of course, Sunflowers also feature prominently in works from artists like Van Gogh.

## Sunflower Facts

- ☀️ The Sunflower is native to North America, but it has spread across the world through export.
- ☀️ Native Americans planted wild varieties as a source of food, but modern breeding has emphasized petal size and count over seed production in many varieties.
- ☀️ The Sunflower can range in height from six inches to over 12 feet tall, depending on the variety.

## Botanical Characteristics of the Sunflower

Aside from being beautiful and important symbolically, the Sunflower is downright useful. Almost all varieties produce edible and delicious seeds (and you can grow salubrious green sprouts from the seeds) with loads of health benefits, especially when eaten raw (not roasted or salted). If you don't eat the seeds yourself, you can feed your local songbirds just by letting the seeds dry on the stalk. The entire plant also produces a pale yellow dye.

## How the Sunflower Inspires Susan

When I look at a Sunflower, I can't help but to think of God's love and light, power and energy, in my life, and also how we can all choose to thrive each day by incorporating the following principles into our lives:

*To stand tall and follow our dreams; to always focus on the positive; to show kindness to others; to be our own best friend; to be the best we can be and to consistently remember to celebrate the miracle of YOU and life itself.*

