

Joshua's Lessons

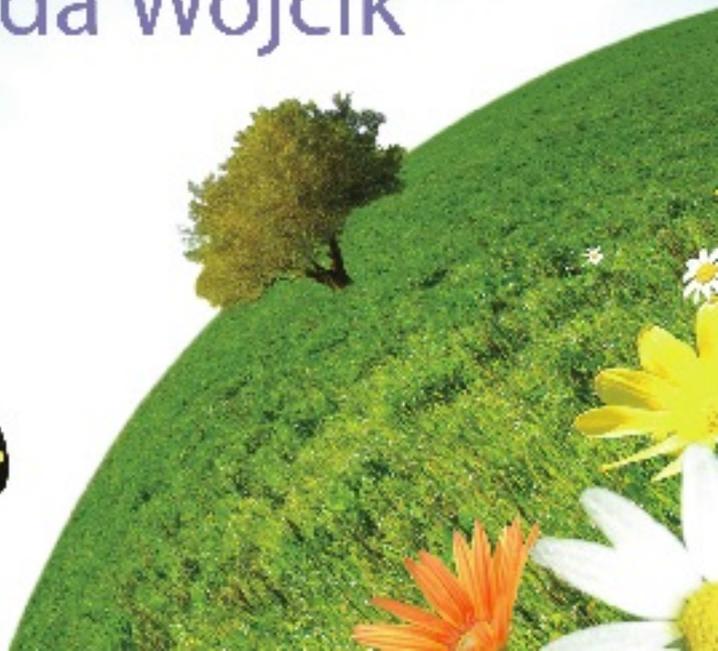
Raising a Healthy Child
in a Toxic World

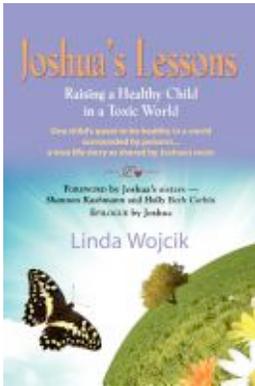
One child's quest to be healthy in a world
surrounded by poisons...
a true life story as shared by Joshua's mom



FOREWORD by Joshua's sisters —
Shannon Kashmann and Holly Beth Corbin
EPILOGUE by Joshua

Linda Wojcik





Joshua's mom was determined to find the cause of her son's erratic behaviors and physical illnesses. Her search led to chemicals in his food, water and environment. Joshua's Lessons is the story of one child's quest to become healthy in a world inundated with poisons. His experiences will inspire every parent to create that which our sensitive children are demanding of us--a toxic free world in which to learn and play.

Joshua's Lessons

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JOSHUA'S LESSONS

Raising a Healthy Child in a Toxic World

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were not coming back into my home. They were leaving for good and I was making sure of it.

In no time, I witness a marked improvement in Joshua's behavior. He was spending less time in his room and more time with us at the dinner table. The energy of our home was becoming more balanced and happy. Joshua was starting to feel safe and secure. So was the rest of our family.

This was a life altering day. We understood the changes we would have to commit to as a family to ensure Joshua's happy state of mind and we were willing to go the extra yards. Joshua would be fully supported by all of us.

Don't Drink The Water!

The water Joshua drinks cannot be tainted with rust inhibitors, chlorine or fluoride. It must be pure. Drinking water that is contaminated with chemicals can have profound negative effects, especially to a chemically sensitive child like Joshua.

One of Joshua's earliest symptoms of chemical poisoning was anger and rage. As Joshua learned to recognize the chemicals that triggered these emotions, we were able to avoid them by replacing chemicals in our home with natural alternatives. With each change, the frequency and volume of his outbursts dissipated.

Changes to his food and environment were essential, and the introduction of alternative medicines helped to further improve his behavior. He was happier and healthier for all our efforts. Every so often, however, his nasty behavior resurfaced. We used these opportunities to learn more about how his body reacted to certain outside influences.

Joshua was seven years old. It was September of his second year of elementary school. Shortly after school began, Joshua's behavior became violent. He came home every day and would literally start banging his head on the floor boards. I could not reason with him, nor

could he explain what might be causing these violent outbursts. I had not seen this behavior since we cleaned up our environment and our food years ago.

Each day I bombarded him with the same basic series of questions. "Do you smell anything strange at school? Is anyone painting in or around the school? Did they install new rugs on the floors?" We were all too familiar with the common triggers that often caused these behaviors.

His acute sense of smell had always helped in solving these dilemmas. This time, even Joshua was baffled. "No, Mom. There's nothing that smells strange at school. I don't know why I am acting this way. I can't control myself." He was right. He had no control over himself. He was angry and the pain he felt within was being played out through his actions. Spending alone time in his room was the only way he was able to calm down and gain control of him self.

As the behavior continued into the next week, my questions took on a greater urgency. I started delving into alternative areas of possible explanation. "Is anyone using something different in class? Does the teacher spray anything in the classroom? Can you smell any fumes or chemicals?" All I received in response were the same answers. He did not recognize anything that was unfamiliar or strange in his environment. Each afternoon, he was back in his room. How long could this go on?

By dinner time, Joshua's behavior shifted, and weekends were free of rage. That confirmed my suspicions that something at school was the trigger. I did not like the idea of him spending entire afternoons alone in his room, yet I could not stand to watch him abuse himself. Similarly, I did not wish to be abused by him either.

After many weeks of the entire family having to endure this roller-coaster ride, Joshua made a single statement that helped to solve his problem. "Mom, the water at school tastes funny."

The water tastes funny? Could that be the problem? Could he really "taste" something strange in the water? I began to reason that if his

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sense of smell was acute, why would his sense of taste be any different? A feeling of hope overcame me.

I was elated and quickly replied, "Stop drinking the water!" We sat and talked about the importance of this single statement. "Your sense of smell has always helped you recognize chemicals that affect you. Now your sense of taste is letting you know that you have another ally to help you heal. This is exciting. I am so happy you finally shared this information with me. Now what do we do about it?"

From the look on his face, Joshua was confused. Yes, the water tasted strange for awhile; however, he had no choice but to drink the water the school supplied. A trip to the bubbler was a ceremonial experience each day and the class participated together.

"Mom, I have to drink the water. I can't go all day without water." Joshua was a big water drinker. Water helped him flush chemicals and toxins through his system. However, if water were the problem, was it really helping him?

"You're right Josh. You do have to drink water. However, you cannot drink water that may be making you ill. Tomorrow I will fill a bottle with our water and you can drink that instead."

That was way too weird for Joshua. He already had to take all his own snacks and lunch into school. Everyone else shared the same snack; his was always different. Everyone else bought lunch; he always carried a lunch box. Now a water bottle too?

"If we don't do this, how will you know? How will you get better? Would you rather continue throwing yourself on the floor?"

That did not sit well with Joshua. He did not like spending every afternoon in his room. He was ready to heal.

"Okay, Mom. I need to know too."

The next day, Joshua left home armed with two items: a bottle with water from our well and a note for his teacher.

LINDA WOJCIK

“Dear Ms. _____. I think Joshua is experiencing a reaction from the water at school. Please allow him to bring in his own water for a few weeks to see if it helps improve his behavior.”

At that time, bringing water to school was not deemed an acceptable practice. The city water supplies were considered safe. Conversely, Joshua was considered strange and malady susceptible.

It no longer mattered to me what others might think. All that mattered was finding a solution to the problem that Joshua was experiencing. My son needed safe drinking water during the day and the school system was not supplying it. The solution was obvious; supply our own. Joshua understood that the bubbler was no longer an option, so he always kept a bottle of water with him and opted out of the daily bubbler ritual. Joshua was opting out before it was fashionable.

Joshua’s attitude changed overnight. He was suddenly coming home from school happy and sharing his day at the dinner table. His temper tantrums disappeared. He was proud of himself for having identified the problem. He no longer cared that others might think him weird. Pure water was important to his health and he trusted his water at home. Eventually, it was the only water he was willing to drink.

This was a transcendental moment. Joshua was now able to clearly see that being special was a gift and not a curse. His gift allowed him to learn more about himself and what was causing him to misbehave. It was another example of how the power of healing originates within.

Joshua did not want to be angry. He preferred happiness and contentment. Once he recognized the cause of his problem, he felt empowered to fix it. From that day on, Joshua knew enough to pay attention to both his sense of taste and his sense of smell. For my part, I felt the need to explain to his teacher what was happening with Joshua and the water at school.

The following week, I called the school to make an appointment to meet with Joshua’s teacher. I knew that our family was considered very strange, and bringing water to school was a strange request. I brought

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her up to date. As my story unfolded about the correlation between Joshua's behavior and the bubbler, she could not help but smile.

"There is no need to explain. Since Joshua has been bringing in his own water to school, I too have seen a marked improvement in his behavior. Not only that, since he stopped drinking from the bubbler, his grades have gone up!"

That was an important confirmation for Joshua. He knew his behavior had improved, but did not realize that his performance in school had improved as well. That single statement from his teacher opened Joshua's eyes to many new possibilities. Most significantly, he started paying attention to how certain chemicals might affect his ability to learn and to focus.

It also made Joshua feel good to have the support of his teacher. Henceforth, he no longer felt weird about bringing water from home to drink in school. From this one episode, I could not help but wonder, "How many other children were being affected in the same way?" I did not believe that Joshua was unique to this situation.

Joshua possessed a unique ability to "listen" through his senses. This is an ability that many of us once possessed, but which the vast majority have clearly lost or forgotten. The story did not end there:

Later that year, our local water company sent out a special notice to all of its customers. This notice was placed in the same envelope that contained the company's quarterly water bills. The notice politely informed customers that there had been a chemical spill in one of their wells. It went on to say that there was no real need for concern, because the problem had already been solved. It seems the solution to this problem was simply to increase the safety standards for that particular chemical.

Pure water is fast becoming a commodity of the past and the lack of pure water is indeed a huge problem. The solution to this problem was to convince everyone that drinking chemicals is acceptable.

LINDA WOJCIK

Joshua was being greatly affected by drinking water that was poisoning his system. A chemical spill in a water supply is a nightmare; changing standards to accommodate this nightmare is akin to a horror movie.

I spoke vehemently about this situation, but few seemed to care. Though I could not force change on the many, I could initiate change within myself. I could also teach my children what I knew to be true. Pure water is essential to a healthy mind and body. Today, my entire family is conscious about the water we drink and avoid any water that may be purified or contaminated with chemicals.

Symptoms of Chemical Poisoning

Chemical reactions come in many shapes and sizes. Joshua probably experienced all of them at one time or another throughout his healing.

Some common symptoms of Joshua's chemical sensitivities even to this day are: *Skin rashes, asthma, swollen glands, cysts, boils, inability to concentrate, irrational behavior, sinusitis, headaches, hives, exhaustion, and dizziness.*

The intensity of the reaction was often connected to the type of chemical and the length of the exposure. Sometimes Joshua would be able to tell immediately how bad the reaction was from the initial moment he was exposed. His body was like a temperature gauge, rising quickly to changes in his food, water and environment.

Many of the symptoms Joshua experienced are the same ones many children today are experiencing. If we were to recognize these symptoms as chemical poisoning, our lives will be greatly altered and chemical medicines could never be the cure; they would become part of the problem.

Joshua entered the world with a pure body, heart and mind. It did not take long to poison all three by unconsciously feeding him tainted food and water as well as introducing him into an environment surrounded with chemicals and poisons. To help him heal, I learned to