

## Raving about the RAVE diet

By Miryam Wiley

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It didn't seem like something I would do: listen to a diet guy, pay attention to a new diet book. I know my nutrition and practice it, too.

As it turns out, however, I am convinced this is a coherent quest for truth in a world clouded with excessive amounts of information and little attention to serious knowledge.

An executive named Mike Anderson has put together a DVD and book that will decidedly make a difference in how you shop and vote. Have you heard about the RAVE diet?

I agree if you think the name is gimmicky, but the diet is not. Anderson said he started reading and realized that the amount of knowledge out there was not reflected in government guidelines. Subsidies in the food industry seem to lead the way before health concerns for the population.

"The more I read, the angrier I got," he told some 20 people during a dinner in Newton and the next day to a crowd of 30 at Newton-Wellesley Hospital on Sept. 29.

Why weren't those claims in the mainstream media, he wondered? Why did people in his family die or suffer from diseases that could have been cured or prevented if they had been encouraged to change their lifestyles?

Anderson started his own research and spent two years at it, culminating with a book and a DVD: "The RAVE Diet & Lifestyle," subtitled "The Natural Foods Diet with Meals that Heal." The DVD is called "Eating" and has a difficult-to-watch section on the abuse of animals for food.

The name RAVE stands for the basic reminders of what to live by: R for no refined foods, A for no animal foods, V for no vegetable oils and E for both, no exceptions and, yes, exercise.

"Exercise is very important, but it's not all," he said. "Exercise is not the key thing, cholesterol is."

Basically, the idea is to be more than a vegetarian and become what some call a vegan, one who does not eat meat, dairy or eggs. A plant food in its whole state is what makes a difference, but he considers whole wheat in breads acceptable.

"People tell me all the time how they have been able to reverse disease," Anderson said.

His DVD features medical doctors who themselves were able to reverse heart disease, having made the decision to try the diet instead of going ahead with open heart bypass surgeries.

Anderson, who lives in California, was invited to the Boston area by the National Institute of Whole Health. Anderson presented his research at NIWH's Whole Health Education, which conducts classes at the Newton Wellesley Hospital.

Dr. Mark Butterfield, who is finishing a preventive medicine residency at UMass Worcester, said, "There should be a lot more funding of preventive medicine. This country is so backwards, everything deals with consequences. They think about screening, why not prevent in the first place? Prevention is largely lifestyle."

Indeed, that was Anderson's message. He said the medical literature he reviewed led him to learn that virtually all diseases can be prevented if there would be incentives for people to stay away from all animal and refined foods and truly stick to exercise. Exercise, he insisted, is the only thing that will prevent osteoporosis -- not taking calcium pills, as the drug companies would like us to believe, or drinking lots of milk, as the dairy council so well advertises.

"You'd believe me fast if I had this," Anderson said, as he opened his shirt and revealed a Harvard sweatshirt. The crowd laughed as he buttoned himself up again, but that was the only laugh. His message was serious and he made his point well.

"You stop bringing in the garbage and the body heals itself," he said.