

Detox challenge — accepted —

One Seaside woman leads others in cutting out sugar

Jennifer Visser was dealing with lower-back pain. On the advice of a naturopath, she went on a cleanse, cutting sugar from her diet. The results were remarkable.

“Three days later my A.D.D. cleared up,” Visser says. “I was amazed. I’ve never, ever been able to focus like that. It was incredible. I was hooked.” And while it took a little longer, her back pain subsided as well.

“It changed my life,” Visser says.

Now she’s spreading the word.

In January, Visser will lead a 10-day sugar detox challenge. It’s free, open to discerning eaters and dabblers alike.

The event is associated with Visser’s business — she is a licensed massage therapist and proprietor of The Healthy Hub, a massage and wellness center opening in Seaside Jan. 2. The effort is too an extension of Visser’s effervescent, compassionate and giving personality.

It is also the latest iteration of a series of food and cooking classes Visser has held in Seaside. Last year, with the aforementioned naturopath in tow, Visser presented “Diet For Disease Prevention,” to a packed Bob Chisholm Community Center. She was inspired by the turnout.

“I thought the best way to carry the momentum and help them was to hold a cooking class,” she says. “I held three cooking classes on how to cook without grains or soy or dairy or legumes to make delicious meals and make believers out of people.”

Now she’s offering, in a sense, the graduate class: sugar detox.

“I chose this sugar detox because people feel the best when they do it,” Visser says. “Nobody



Jennifer Visser serves up a Sugar-Free Paleo Taco Salad. The salad will be featured at the kick-off dinner for Visser’s 10-day sugar detox challenge, set for 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12 at Seaside Coffee House.

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“I’ll go over how to stock your pantry, recipes, meal planning, all that stuff then give folks a week to prepare,” Visser explains. For the purposes of this cleanse, she adds, having time to get ready is important, as it entails more than just abstaining from sweets.

“In this detox, sugar is anything that converts into sugar in your body,” Visser explains. For example, some seemingly benign foods — like grains and legumes — are out. “A baked potato is just as high in sugar as soda pop, conversion-wise,” she says. Visser’s version of the sugar-free diet leans heavily on meats and vegetables.

The detox challenge begins Monday, Jan. 12. It will kick off with a sugar-free dinner at Seaside Coffee House at 6:30 p.m.

Over the course of the 10 days, Visser — who’ll participate in the detox as well — intends to stay engaged online and in per-

Coastal Life

Story and photos by ANDREW TONRY



This Sugar-Free Paleo Taco Salad will be featured at the kick-off dinner for a community sugar detox challenge, set for 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12 at Seaside Coffee House.



To help participants prepare for the sugar detox challenge, Jennifer Visser will lead an introductory meeting at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 5 at Seaside Coffee House. She’ll discuss how to stock your pantry, recipes and meal planning for the 10-day challenge.

son, offering tips and encouragement. As she’s done the cleanse three times before, she knows it’s not easy.

“Thirty-three percent of people actual do go through sugar withdrawals,” Visser says. “The withdrawals aren’t anything major — you’re not going to die or anything. But it can last for two to five days.” Symptoms include headaches, fatigue and irritability.

“That’s why you need the support of the community,” she adds. “It may seem extreme but to get the extreme results you’ve got to

go all the way.” Visser confidently maintains that the sugar detox offers much more than run-of-the-mill dieting.

“People are thinking of the New Year, and they’re looking for ways to find the ‘new you,’” she says. “This is the best way because it connects you to your food, and it’s long-lasting.

“It’s not just: ‘I’m going to eat less,’” Visser continues. “People are going to walk away having become more conscious eaters. That is huge because that is long-lasting. Losing five pounds is not.”