Introducing Living Nectar

We want to leave you with a full recap from the two of us about why we believe Living Nectar deserves a place within SHAPE ReClaimed.

We weren't out looking for a new sweetener. Living Nectar actually found us. The owner of Selina Naturally Celtic Sea Salt, brought it to our attention and said to Linda, *"I really think you need to take a serious look at this for your program."* When someone whose products and philosophy we've respected says that to us, we listen. But we don't automatically adopt something simply because someone recommends it. We investigate.

So that's exactly what we did. We spent the summer learning about Living Nectar, using it ourselves, tasting it, cooking with it, studying the research and asking one very important question: **Does this really belong in SHAPE?** The deeper we got into it, the more we began to believe we weren't simply looking at another sweetener. We were looking at something that fully aligns with one of the foundational principles we've taught since the beginning of SHAPE: **eat whole, real food.** What really stopped us in our tracks was the glycemic story. That's when Living Nectar went from *"This is interesting" to "We need to understand this."*

For 16 years, we've described SHAPE as **"Living, Breathing, Ever-Changing."** Those words have always meant something to us. As we've learned more about what SHAPE is capable of doing and how we can better support the body's ability to heal, we've evolved right along with it. There haven't been many dramatic evolutions in recent years because the foundation of SHAPE, our SHAPE Drops combined with our unique nutrition protocol, has continued to serve our practitioners and patients extraordinarily well. But **"Living, Breathing, Ever-Changing"** means we never stop looking, learning or asking whether there is a better way.

Over these 16 years, we made the best recommendations we could based on the information, products and options available to us at the time. **Living Nectar wasn't available to us when SHAPE began. It is now.** Advances have made it possible for this Palmyra blossom nectar from India to become available to us in a dried, usable form. When something becomes available that we believe may be better than what we've recommended in the past, investigating it isn't a departure from SHAPE. **It is exactly what a Live, Breathing, Ever-Changing program should do.**

We've also had 16 years to observe what happens with alternative sweeteners in the real world. Stevia, monk fruit, xylitol and other alternatives gave us ways to provide sweetness without conventional sugar, and they were the best options we knew to recommend at the time. But we've repeatedly observed something that has bothered us: **eliminating sugar doesn't necessarily eliminate the desire for sweetness.** In many people, that "sweet tooth monster" seems to keep asking for more.

That's one of the things that has made Living Nectar so intriguing to us. Instead of another non-nutritive sweetener whose primary job is simply to make something taste sweet, we're looking at a **whole food** that provides naturally occurring nutrients and plant compounds along with its sweetness. In our own experience using Living Nectar throughout the summer, we've found ourselves much more satisfied without that constant drive for more sweetness. We believe this deserves further attention within SHAPE.

So, let's address the elephant in the room. **Yes, Living Nectar is sugar.** We're not hiding from that word, nor are we asking you to suddenly believe sugar is a health food. We're asking you to look at the science with us and recognize that **not every source of sweetness is metabolically or nutritionally identical.**

We're not adding sugar back. We're rethinking sweetness.

For years, the question has been, **"What can we use instead of sugar?"** Living Nectar made us ask a different question: ***"What if we stopped trying to replace sugar and started choosing a better source of sweetness?"*** We don't look at Living Nectar as simply another sugar substitute. We look at it as a **functional whole food** that happens to sweeten, a source of sweetness that brings something to the table beyond sweetness.

This is why glycemic index and glycemic load became such important parts of our investigation. We don't want anyone to simply be afraid of the word *sugar*. We want to understand the source, the amount consumed, the glycemic response and the glycemic load. The question isn't simply, *"How many grams of sugar does it contain?"* The better question is, **"What is the metabolic impact of the amount I'm actually consuming?"** Glycemic index tells us part of that story. Glycemic load brings the amount actually consumed into the conversation.

What initially caught our attention wasn't simply that Living Nectar was "natural." Lots of things are natural. **It was the glycemic story that made us look deeper.** As you heard in the presentation, Palmyra nectar is much more nutritionally and biologically interesting than ordinary refined table sugar. The naturally occurring nutrients and plant compounds being investigated made us want to know even more. We're not claiming Living Nectar treats diabetes, inflammation or disease. **The science is interesting enough without exaggerating it.** What we are saying is that Living Nectar gives us a very different whole-food option for sweetness than we've had available to us before.

Our own experience matters to us too. We didn't hear about Living Nectar one day and decide SHAPE should start using it the next. **We spent months living with it ourselves.** We've tasted it, cooked with it, experimented with it and incorporated it into recipes. What surprised us wasn't simply that we liked it. **It began changing the way we thought about sweetness within SHAPE.** Our personal experience isn't a clinical study, nor would we present it as one. But it was compelling enough that we wanted to dig deeper into the science and bring this conversation to all of you.

So what does this mean for SHAPE?

We're not chasing **zero grams of sugar at any cost.** We're trying to create metabolic health. We're trying to help people change their relationship with food. We're trying to reduce the constant desire for intensely sweet foods. And when sweetness is appropriate, we want to use **the smallest amount necessary from the best whole-food source we can find.**

Less sweetness. Better source. Smaller amounts. Whole food.
You're also going to see Living Nectar incorporated into recipes in our new cookbook. We're not suggesting people start eating Living Nectar by the tablespoon because it's "healthy." That's not what this is about. In many recipes, we're using a small amount distributed across multiple servings. Instead of looking only at the amount of sugar in a tablespoon, we also need to consider how much is actually

consumed in one serving of the finished food. And ultimately, the goal isn't to make everything sweeter. **It's actually the opposite. We want people to need less sweetness and be satisfied with less.** For years, we've taught people what to remove. Living Nectar gives us an opportunity to teach something more sophisticated: **WHAT WE CHOOSE TO PUT BACK MATTERS.**

Does that mean we'll be asking our SHAPE patients and clients to begin replacing the alternative sweeteners we've recommended in the past with Living Nectar? Yes, it does. We believe Living Nectar is the better choice and one that more closely aligns with the whole, real-food philosophy at the heart of SHAPE ReClaimed. And making the switch is simple. Living Nectar can be used as a 1:1 replacement for table sugar, making it easy to incorporate into everyday cooking and recipes. Living Nectar should be used sparingly by those who are on FasTrac.

We will be updating our Program Guidebook in time to reflect on this evolution.

We're not interested in replacing one dependence on sweetness with another. We're interested in helping people need less sweetness and when they do, they are consuming a healthier whole-food when sweetness is appropriate.

Stay curious. Ask hard questions. Look at the science.

That's what we've always done. Because after 16 years, SHAPE remains exactly what we've always said it is: **Living. Breathing. Ever-Changing.** And we wouldn't want it any other way.

With appreciation,

Dr. Todd & Linda