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More of Who We are Made to be...& a Carrot Cake Makeover

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A New Year, a new YOU. Right? We're inundated with idea of makeovers every New Year. This year is no different. A new body, a balanced budget, a closer family, an organized house and the list of the ways we want to change goes on and on and on.

Soon, though (typically about eight weeks into the New Year when we're tired of swimming upstream), motivation wanes and attempted new habits wear away along with a waning hope of ever realizing our repeated resolutions. *Our human nature resorts to old ways, destroying our optimism for desired outcomes*. It's almost inevitable!

Our past tendencies taunt us until we simply let go and float downstream, a direction requiring less energy. Downstream: a direction where we don't have to face frustrations or fear failure.

But what is our fear and frustration really all about? Maybe we've been floating down the wrong stream all along. Maybe frustration, fear and failure are only inevitable if we stop trying to swim at all. Maybe we're meant to swim upstream...if we're in the right river.

I mean, *if we avoid working our way into the women we're meant to be, aren't you afraid we'll eventually sink in the stink of complacency?*

But I'm starting to think those New Year makeover resolutions direct our attention down the wrong path with the wrong purpose. So eventually we just stop and stay the same. We remain complacent and start to sink.

And fear THAT! ***Because when we get too comfortable we're not really living in Christ.*** When we start feeling too cozy and content, we've made the world our home and one thing I'm sure of is that *this is not our home*.

So we have to keep swimming upstream, up the river of real life in Christ!

That's why I keep on thinking about this idea of a *no fear* New Year, about taking risks for what I know is right and courageously living out loud wherever He calls me...as a mom, a wife, a woman, as

His warrior walking around in my own little spec on this world.

And something just occurred to me:

Living courageously doesn't mean we're without fear….. Real courage means we act in the face of our fears! We keep on doing the hard things despite barriers, fears and where the world wants to lead—even if it means swimming upstream.

And when we live in Christ, He claims our fear so we can walk out in His courage when we can't stand on our own. He steadies us when the current gets bad and saves us right when we think we'll sink.

So I think I'll start living a little scared and let Him stretch me…and then I'll let Him save me from my fears. Because there's no place safer than in my Savior's care.

Let's all start swimming upstream in a world that wants us to float right on into its fear and failure***. Let's strengthen our souls and let our Maker give us the makeover!*** And all along the way, we'll give each fear and frustration over to Him as we stand courageously in Christ, the only steadfast, trustworthy current!

This year that's the only way we'll ever be the moms, the women, the wives HE made us to be. ***BY ABIDING IN HIM!***

Abiding in Him: The only way to be the 'real deal' in a world full of false resolutions.

The real deal. That's what I was pondering one day in my kitchen as I explored the idea of abiding in Him and becoming more of who He made me to be. Naturally, this idea of makeovers morphed into a recipe! Sometimes, just like us, recipes also require some making-over into the 'real deal' that won't hurt us and will only nourish us. And so just like that, the (very related) topics of resolutions and rivers gave me some real food for thought…and a **carrot cake recipe** worth swimming upstream for!

(Everyone uses food for philosophizing, right??!!)

I know the same old traditional carrot cake recipe would have done the trick for a tasty sweet treat. But, I wanted something BETTER. I wanted to step out on a limb and take the old version of this cake to the next level with real ingredients plus a taste and texture that keeps you coming back for more.

I think I did it—the ingredient list looks a little like swimming upstream (for example, yes, I used prunes…the baby food kind). And I'll admit I was a little fearful it wouldn't ever turn out no matter how many tries. But, after just two attempts (and a third for confirmation), I think *this makeover makes carrot cake into MORE of what it's supposed to be*: sweet, most, dense, delectable, far lower in calories and higher in good nutrition.

Oh and, the frosting? That happens to be an original, unadulterated organic cream cheese frosting recipe because sometimes things are perfect just the way they are!

Enjoy…***and ABIDE!***

Recipe category

Sinless Sweet Treats [1]

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Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 cup sifted, unbleached cake flour
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt (such as Pink Himalayan)
- 2 eggs (I always use organic)
- 2 flax eggs (=4 tablespoons warm water combined with 2 tablespoons milled flax)
- 2 cups coconut sugar
- 1 cup prune puree (yep, the baby food)
- ⅓ cup melted coconut oil* See NOTES
- 2 cups shredded carrots
- 1 8 ounce can of crushed pineapple, drained
- ¼ cup toasted walnuts or pecans** See NOTES
- CREAM CHEESE FROSTING:
- 1 stick of REAL butter (I use grass fed)
- 1 8 ounce package of cream cheese (I use organic)
- 3 cups of organic powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- Milk--add sparingly to get the consistency you want

Recipe Instructions

- To make cake: Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat the inside of two 9-inch round layer-cake pans with cooking spray (I use organic coconut oil spray). OPTIONAL but safe: line bottom of pans with parchment paper cut to size.
- Stir together flours, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and salt in a medium bowl. Whisk together eggs and flax eggs in a large bowl. Add sugar, prune puree and oil and whisk until smooth. Add the flour mixture to the egg mixture and stir with a wooden spoon until blended. Stir in carrots, pineapple and nuts.
- Divide the batter among the prepared pans and bake until a cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes in the pan on a rack. Loosen edges and invert cakes onto racks. Peel off paper and let cool completely.
- To make frosting: Combine cream cheese, confectioners’ sugar and vanilla in a mixing bowl; beat with an electric mixer until smooth and creamy. Add milk little by little if needed to thin the frosting out.
- To assemble cake: Place 1 cake layer on a serving plate. Spread a scant ½ cup of the frosting over it. Top with the other cake layer and spread frosting over top and smooth frosting over sides.
- Store chilled but serve at room temperature.

Featured Image



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Recipe Notes

* Anytime you're using melted coconut oil in a recipe like this, be sure your other ingredients are at room temperature so the coconut oil doesn't start to solidify

**Toast your nuts by putting them in a pan on the stove and heating while stirring for just a few minutes until slightly browned and fragrant.

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