

Raw Summit Interview with Lydia Kindheart

Kevin: Hi everyone, this is Kevin Gianni, Optimal Health Expert, and I'd like to welcome you to a very special Raw Summit Teleseminar, which can be found online at www.rawsummit.com. The purpose of the Raw Summit is to pass along cutting edge information about raw and living food technologies for you to reach optimal health, wellness, and success.

Today I have a special bonus guest on the line who's going to give some incredible insights into the raw food business world. She's created her own line of dehydrated foods and has them distributed all around the country. Lydia Kindheart is founder and creator of Lydia's Organics. So, Lydia I want to welcome to the Raw Summit.

Lydia: Thank you.

Kevin: So let's get right into it and let's talk a little bit about how this all started, how did Lydia's Organics come to be.

Lydia: Well it's been a journey.

Kevin: Yes.

Lydia: First, it always starts with yourself and still continues to evolve through as I develop and grow, but I did lot of experimenting when I was 16 and 17 with food and fasting and read a lot of books and with more was a great inspiration, Arnold Ehret, Victor's, and just a lot of books and taking me back to nature and simplicity. I was raised in Paris, France.

Kevin: Okay.

Lydia: And through that I spent a lot of time in nature and went in really remote places where I would fast and experiment on myself to see what this people were talking about. It's one thing to read about something but then to experience it...when I was 16, I did a 10-day fast on water and I really understood the relation between spiritual awareness and diet and how things really open and that it was a way to connect more to the world. So, that got me really inspired and excited. So, through reading and living really simply, remotely, I - actually my first dehydrated food was in the desert and I was sprouting a lot of things. And I sprouted some weeds and I was using a lot of Essenes' principles of blessing it with air and water and sun and hand ground it with a hand mill and then made a patty and put it on a rock in the desert. So, that was my first dehydrated food.

Kevin: Really?

Lydia: Yes. So, I understood concepts and then of how you can preserve food that way and the importance of sprouting and how the life force... Seeds are dormant and that when you sprout things, the life force through water,

through air just starts extending. Then, I went through my life and really affected my own self and touched a lot of people just through my travels and put people on cleanses and different things. There are a lot of stories of people really being transformed like this 60-year-old lady in the desert. I was growing wheatgrass and sunflower sprouts and she was in so much pain in every which way and she totally did this cleanse and everything turned around.

Kevin: Really?

Lydia: Yes, everything went away. And she said she hasn't felt that good in years. So, I went through my life touching people in that way. I studied herbs, made my own my herbal products, and did massage and just different healing modalities. I really wanted to heal myself, connect more to nature. I had a passion for food and the way of touching people with food. Ever since I was a little girl really it was full of parties, my family parties, I would make dishes and usually a lot of fruit salads and things like that. Then, my first commercial raw food place, let's see, back-up a little bit. Actually, I was at a gathering of about 200 people, and I was growing all the sprouts at the trade for me being there. There were all sorts of workshops, and I go in the kitchen and I noticed that the food that they were making was quite ... lacked creativity and nutrition and life, like beans, rice, pasta, and there were gardens. Some foods were available, some things we could take. So, we get volunteers and end up creating meals. At every meal, I would come in to care of the sprouts. So, I ended up...I was always in the kitchen.

Then, I was telling myself, wow, you're not participating in the workshops, you're not connecting enough to people, you're not growing spiritually. I start putting a guilt trip on myself. And then one day, I was bringing the food out in this big bowl and I would tell the volunteers to put prayers in the food and we would sing in the food and bring it out, and I connected with the people in the line and they were like smiling and just really showing appreciation. And I realized that through the food I was connecting and touching every single person that was present there and it really touched me on such a deep level of understanding. The transformational aspect of food, the chemical aspect of food, and how through love and your care and consciousness as you make food that you can really affect people's lives, and that stayed with me until now. I've used that in my life and that's how I implement that concept in what I do today with the foods on a commercial level.

Kevin: Wow! Now that's a huge topic that I want to discuss. How do you incorporate that at a commercial level?

Lydia: Well, there are different levels. First of all, there's the consciousness of how you make the food. I believe in finding balance through fibers, through chlorophyll, through nutrition, through seaweeds. Seaweeds remove heavy metals and radio activity and are highly mineralized. Fiber, people lack fiber and toxins adhere to the fiber and help move things through your body.

Chlorophyll brings you oxygen, highly nutritious. Iron, calcium, protein, nuts – you know, very powerful staple that all sorts of nutrition and protein in such. I tried to balance these things in the foods that I make, so it's a balanced food and it gets a lot of these aspects. Obviously not the tropical mango bar or something like that, but I try to play with the fibers, so there's not too many nuts. Too many nuts are hard to process, so I try to balance it with fiber.

So first, that's the first step on like a physical level with the nutrition, right? Through my care of people, I was trying to find something that's going to go in people's body, that's going to affect them in a positive way. Then, if you look at my logo it's the heart and wings and it's the center. I've used that for, I don't know, over 20 years or something. To me it represents operating from the heart and care and love and spreading that in anything you do. Wings can travel far. They can travel all around the world. So, using that concept and sharing it with others that you work with in a company and trying to educate people on the power of what we are doing. All our products are made with our hands. Our hands touch every single product.

I explained how love and care is passed though your hands, you know, hand healing. All that has been known for ages that your hands are an expression of yourself. So, as everything is touched with care, it goes into the food. Creating a good environment where people feel loved and supported is really critical for me. It's like I love the people here and try to create where people can express themselves and be themselves, enjoy being there, and we have challenges as a small company. Sometimes finances have been really tight and it's been a huge journey, but a lot of us have been here a long time and have stuck together as a team and understanding and just, elbow to elbow, making this work. Having that atmosphere of being cared for, then people are happier and it just goes in the food.

Kevin: Yes. How many people do you have working for you?

Lydia: Right now about 30 and it varies when I do festivals. They can grow up to 50, and I close my restaurant.

Kevin: And so do you pray around the food before you send it out or is there any ritual like that as well?

Lydia: There's none because at this point honestly I don't really make the food. I'll do it like for a special wedding and catering or I'm involved in festivals and things like that, but I'm more of the organizer and keep things going. So, there's none, but there is a sense of like what do I stand for, what do I believe, and try to emanate that throughout the company because I'm the core and I'm the leader and try to just hold that within that space. I will be now honest, I don't always hold that space and I do the best I can, and it's hard running a business in this world. So things fall to the crack but that is my concept and that is what I tried to do on a regular basis and

hold that energy. I feel that if you hold the focus and that's what you believe in, you don't necessarily need to do it for every single thing and all that because that carries throughout.

Kevin: Sure. A lot of people would say that you putting your logo with the heart and the wings would give the food enough energy to be incredibly vibrant. Do you believe that?

Lydia: I don't think that that's enough.

Kevin: Okay.

Lydia: I think that it helps. Everything that we do that represents love and care is going to add too. So, yes, it is a piece and it's a piece maybe that people recognize and look at and maybe hits them in a certain way, and it is on the top of my label. So, it does stand for some things. It definitely has an affect alone. It does on many things.

Kevin: Yes. How did your business go from drying of some sprouts in the desert? First of, I want to know if the taste is good or not.

Lydia: No, not that great.

Kevin: Okay. How did it go from there to having 30 people underneath you, working as a team to bring some of these fantastic food to the public? I mean what went on in your head to say, "Hey, I really need to get out there and do this."

Lydia: It was kind of things thrown in my path, honestly. I've been a gypsy all my life. I traveled all around in the United States and in the world and I lived in Hawaii off and on for seven years. I have a daughter. She's 16 now and that helped really ground me and try to create more being a responsible parent and single mother and sole caregiver. So, I wanted to provide the best for her so that would create a little of bit of different lifestyle. I was a merchant. I sold jewelries since I was 16 actually, and I had a store in Fairfax for three and half years. I got to know people in the community and there was a little juice bar around on the same block around the corner. And we became friends, and he was selling the space and now I was like I really want to change my life. I used to put prayers in my beadwork and my jewelry. I was like, "This is not satisfying enough for me." I've always been somebody who just really wanted to make a difference in the world. And often, it was like really frustrating because I didn't know which way to go.

Kevin: Sure.

Lydia: So, then I looked at this as an opportunity and I had a friend who was willing to invest and we went in this. He knew my skills in making food, so we went in this and it was the first raw food place in Marin about 11 years ago. I was very dogmatic at that time. I wouldn't even sell hot tea. And

you can make one tea that's not cooked you know, but I was like very hardcore.

Kevin: Yes.

Lydia: But it was a huge learning experience for me and I was working way too much. I had, still had, my store that was in transition, a single mom, and starting a new business, and there are all sorts of problems learning, you know, what am I doing. But it really taught me something because I was so dogmatic with food for years and really hardcore on what raw food is. I was eating all raw and alkaline and I was very acidic. I was so acidic through stress and it was such a revelation for me. It's like it's not just food that you make. In order to be healthy, you need to breath, take time for yourself, nurture yourself, smell flowers, you know. So, that was the used learning curve.

The restaurant only lasted – it wasn't a restaurant - it's a more cafe deli, a small place, but I learned so much there. And I developed a lot of recipes and also discovered how through dehydrated foods, I could preserves things really well. I did a lot of experimenting. It was a space that I could play a lot and people would come in. It was such a community-based thing when people come in and I develop relationships that I could see this works for people, that doesn't work, or this needs tweaking. So, it's a constant play. There's a lot of room for it. So, I closed that and then I had a delivery service and did a lot of catering and freelancing. I went to Hawaii and I came back. A girlfriend had a commercial kitchen that she was renting out to share. So, I came back and decided to do that and I was already making products to sell because it was just a good way. People started ordering, just people from word of mouth and I just built a little bit of a name in old clients for myself. And then I started doing a lot of festivals and catering.

Kevin: What made you make the decision to go into the festivals?

Lydia: I just wanted to continue making foods, so it's just like what opportunities are opening up, and it's a way that I could make food and not have like a specific, like commitment with a restaurant or something like that. So it's more freelance. And then I just got more serious with my dehydrated foods. It just grew and grew, and I took a business partner who saw my potential. I've always known the potential but finances always is something, and he put a small chunk of money but it helped a lot. But yet, after six months I didn't want to be his partner anymore. His way that he looked at the world and the employees and such wasn't what I believed in. And what happened, I ended up being in debt to him and he charged me a lot of money for his time for the six months. It pushed me. What I did was a blessing in disguise because I borrowed some money from friends and worked really hard to make it happen to pay him back. And then, I got indebt and it pushed me to grow my business and take responsibility because I've never owed money and I take that seriously and I wanted to pay people back. So, I've worked really, really hard and

made a commitment to grow my company. I had to come up with big numbers in order to pay that back. That pushed my company to grow.

Kevin: What did you do in that time period? I mean I really believe that listening to stories like these can inspire people. And so what did you do when you realized you were indebt, first time you've been indebt, which is a scary thing for a lot of people. If you are someone who really has a mission and wants to spread the message that you want to spread, what did you think and what were some of the first steps that you took?

Lydia: Honestly, I am not a person that plans, and at this point I have to with my business, but I've been a person that tries to listen and I'm a very hard worker. I mean a lot of people know me and say I'm the hardest worker that they've ever met. It's just when I believe in something, I just go for it and I just trust that it will work out because I feel so strong about it that I know that my heart, my will, will take me there no matter what.

I work crazy. Sometimes, 20-hourdays nonstop for days and days and a single mom and I've hurt myself doing it. I'll go as free spirit, "Am I doing the right thing?" And then, I don't know, I get an e-mail or a phone call, a kid that was with ADD or something like cancer that my product was helping. Every time I would look to quit, something like that would happen and like, "Okay. I'm sticking with it. I'm listening."

Kevin: Yes.

Lydia: Also, I'll share one of the first good-size festival I ever did. It's a sweet story, so I want to share this. It was my mother and my daughter, who was like seven at that time, and myself. My daughter basically handled the money. My mom was serving things, and I was trying to keep up, make food as fast as I could. It was so beautiful, all three of us working together, these three generations; and people, the responses that we got for the food, it was very inspiring. My mother used to package all my products. My daughter, sometimes it would be like 10 o'clock at night and I was like, "Sonya, I need to chop 150 pounds of carrots. Will you help me?" And she's out there with a big knife, you know, 7 or 8 years old and she's just chopping carrots. It's just like, they've always helped me create this today and I'm so grateful, so grateful. So, it's really – I think that when it comes down to beyond business plans, beyond being organized, which is really crucial, your heart. Where do you put your heart? What do you believe in? What do you want to do? Your passion will take you anywhere and don't let anybody stop you or say, "You can't do this," because you can.

Kevin: Have people told you that you couldn't do it?

Lydia: Oh, sure. I also had people look at my business today and seen what I've done and know me for a while and they shake their heads, and I have business background. They go, "I don't understand how you did it. It makes no sense." And I've had a lot of grace. I've had a lot of magic happened to make this happen truly.

Kevin: It's okay as long as it happened. Don't you think that it is okay?

Lydia: Absolutely. It doesn't matter how it was done.

Kevin: Who cares about the business plan?

Lydia: Yes. It doesn't matter, but I have learned like with business you do need certain things. You do need to understand your books and numbers and all that. I think it's emerging in both worlds and the world today is about merging both worlds - nature, spirit, the sweetness, the kindness of life, of love- and yet, we live in a world that's harsh. I'm talking about the dry, black and white aspect of the society that's been created on this planet. And it's about how do we bring that nature, that love, that kindness into this world for it to merge so we can live in a sustainable way. And that's what I'm, at this point, I'm trying to find balance with in my own self. I have a hard time like, even, honestly, eating right like me taking time to eat and nurture myself because I'm so busy and I'm trying to hold so much. And it's a challenge to nurture ourselves in this world. So, I don't know where I was going with that.

Kevin: No. What we're going to do – I want to move in to growth and I want to talk about now that you've gotten your products in a bunch of places around the country, I mean, what is next for you? What's your ultimate goal?

Lydia: Well, this is the reason I have a restaurant for three and a half years. Recently, I closed in January. I love that it was community-based and it was like – I just loved it. Locals would come in and it was just beautifully, family environment but it was taking too much of my time and energy and I needed to streamline. So, what I'm doing right now is I'm really streamlining. I'm booked for certain events for the rest of the year that I do every year, and I'm not taking on anymore catering gigs or anything to really focus. So, right now I'm trying to streamline and focus my energy to patch up any holes that there is. It's like you have to watch growing too fast. If you don't take care of the things, the foundations, the details – the details is what holds everything up. I'm working with the staff and really trying to unite everybody and everybody feels supported, so we can move forward. So, right now, I'm trying to really stabilize why I am doing that. I am stabilizing and really going through everything, so it works really well. So, that's what I'm focusing on.

We're moving forward. We're taking on a lot of new accounts, and we're paying attention. It's like how much can we take on with doing that. And growing organically is really crucial. My advice to anybody who does anything in business like that is to be careful not to take on anything too fast. It's like grow in increments. Okay, we're taking this on and we're growing this, okay, and we're watching it. How we're able to stabilize? You know, with staff, bringing more people, being organized; every time you go a step up, you have to be more organized and implement new

systems that you haven't had to hold that. I'm just trying to grow and grow like that.

My ultimate goal and dream, I mean it's huge, but I'm also trying to listen to what spirit wants because what do I know? There is greater plan of what I know. I'm just a person. But if I could live my vision out, it's like having centers all over the world that are self-sustained through farming, through dehydrating foods, so it would be more of a localized market in different areas, having a place where people can come heal and learn, how do we live simply, get back to earth, learn how to eat. We forget how many people never feel the earth underneath their feet, feel the sunshine, smell flowers, make a simple salad, harvest some stuff that you've grown; those are basic essentials of life that we are so removed from. So, I like to create centers that people can come back and nobody is turned away because in the States, in order to be healthy and healed, you have cancer, you're weak, your finances are stretched, in order to go to an alternative way, it can be very expensive. I want to create a place where nobody is turned away. You can chip-in in different ways. You have finances, you can help garden or if you can't, you take care of yourself. So, that would be one thing and then create projects like in sections of Africa. They're just burning all the wood and okay let's bring in solar oven. Let's show them how to clean water with certain plants or several bunch of oil all over the place. Let's put in some oysters mushroom, which will clean up the dirt and are actually edible. All this is available to clean things up. Bring this awareness that a lot of people don't know or, have access to that information and need help and support. So, to have networks of like, hey, this is going on can you go with this group over here and educate people and give them tools and work together. So, that's my ultimate goal.

Kevin: That's great.

Lydia: I don't know if I'll ever realize it but anything I can do towards that and anything that can affect people's lives in a positive way, I'm glad to be of service.

Kevin: That's fantastic. And so, how does Lydia's Organics fit in to that?

Lydia: Lydia's Organics is creating a model to be a successful business, to understand this concept, to support organic farming, how the green company and compost and educate people because in order to hold all that to take it to a level like that, you have to develop systems and organize how are you going to fulfill your dream and be organized and develop systems because the more organized you are, the farther that you can go. So, it's like a ground roots kind of thing. It's like let's get this going. Let's get the finances happening, let's get this successful functioning really well and then start out reaching. We're not there yet.

Kevin: Yes.

Lydia: Right.

Kevin: What can you say to the 16-year-old girl who's out there now, dehydrating some sprouts on a rock desert? What can you say to her or him and say - what advice would you give them and say...if you want to spread your message through food, what advice do you have?

Lydia: First, really understand on a personal level because you really can't do anything a 100% outwardly if you don't understand it inwardly. So, it's to really go inside and feel it. What is good to you? What does it mean? How does it affect you? Experiment. And then when you really understand it then go outwardly and feel your passion, what does it mean to you and what do you want to do with it. It's an internal journey. My business has been a total spiritual journey for me. I have learned so much. I have to communicate. At one point I have 65 people on my staff.

Kevin: Wow!

Lydia: And when I was doing a lot more things there were distractions [ph 29:03] . It's like how do I balance that and learn to communicate with people, have compassion for people. Everybody's different, you know. So, you have to learn to be super sensitive and understand different cultures, different ways of thinking, be patient, have compassion, and push people towards to what you are trying to focus on without running over people, without losing your temper, without being drained.

Kevin: It sounds like a microcosm, just something a little bit larger.

Lydia: Yes, exactly. Absolutely! I think anything in our life is a reflection of the whole world. I mean if we look at just our body, we are mother earth incarnate. We are made of soil. We are made of water, the rivers, and our blood flow through us. To really understand that, if we heal ourselves and how we live our lives, we heal the planet. And if we heal the planet, we heal ourselves. It's so deep and, really, I've said this for a long time but just recently, I've really delved deep into this of the correlations of mother earth and ourselves. And there's more, but that's a core level. We can be spiritual and kind of like and such, but to really take it, it's about bringing love and consciousness manifest into matter, into the earth. The earth is ever abundant, ever giving, ever loving; and our bodies are unconditionally very supporting to kind of heal if we could really learn to honor ourselves, our sacred temple. What a gift that would be. If everybody can do that, we would automatically heal the planet.

Kevin: It's amazing. Why don't you tell us a little about these organics and some of the products that you sell and where people can get them?

Lydia: Sure. I make five or six different crackers, I lose track. I have different crackers like I have these green crackers like instant food. We have that with a little bit of salad. I love eating it with green soup. I have a glass of green soup in front of me. These crackers are like concentrated food. I also make a sunflower seed bread. Again, I have lot of vegetables and

greens in it. So, you can actually rehydrate it in water and you can make a sandwich out of it.

Kevin: Really?

Lydia: Oh, yes. It's kind of fun. You don't want to let it soak because they'll fall apart. But you can make a sandwich. I used to actually sell sandwiches in stores with it. It's a good alternative. You don't have to be raw [ph 3:55] People have gluten allergies, they want more fiber because bread, it kind of makes the lump in your system. They had word glu in it [ph 32:03], so there is a great alternative. Then, I make bars. There are crunchy bars. So, some people like them crunchy or you can rehydrate them in a warm tea, it's nice, tropical mango or some are with raspberries, some are apple-based. And I have 2 green bars, Spirulina and Crystal Manna. I use almonds. Sunflower seeds are my favorite nuts to use. And then I also make cereals, three types of cereals. One is just had cinnamon in it as far it's like it's not a sweetener but it has no form of sugar, sweetener, or whatsoever. For people who have sugar sensitivities and I think a lot of people do. And then I have sweeter cereals, the grainless apple cereal with apples and also some nuts and raisins and such and then a berry cereal and then trail mix. I'm working on some new products, so I'm going to be coming out with some new products. It's exciting. There are just so much possibilities. I'm available nationwide but not in every state. It's growing a lot and a lot of whole food. You can also go to my website, which is lydiasorganics.com and we're constantly updating stores that we're in so you can look where we are. We also ship directly to people who want to order from us. So, it's pretty available and we do a little bit of overseas, not a whole lot.

Kevin: Yes. That's great! There are actually two more questions came out while you were talking about that. So, let's keep going. When you talked about you dehydrate all your foods and there's some controversy but different people have different ideas of what dehydrated - with temperature, food should be dehydrated as to still be considered raw. What do you think?

Lydia: Yes. That is controversial in what test have been done. Excalibur has done a lot of test around it. The thing is when food is dehydrating, the moisture actually keeps it cooler so you can monitor it by keeping a thermometer in it which that's what we do.

Kevin: Oh, wow. Cool.

Lydia: We actually adjust the temperature as it goes along.

Kevin: So, it's not just a blanket, 100 in whatever degrees. It's exactly what you take it to be.

Lydia: Yes.

Kevin: It's great.

Lydia: We were doing a 118 and yet it's like we don't really know. There's not enough test that have been done with that, so Excalibur has done a lot of research on it though. So, it's pretty interesting. But the thing is, monitor your food so that doesn't get too hot.

Kevin: Yes. That's great. And then the other thing that you mentioned on the very beginning was you blessed some of the food that you're originally making with Essenes' principles. And I'm not necessarily that familiar. I know about Essenes, but I don't really know what the principles are and how you blessed that. Could you just maybe talk about that for a little bit?

Lydia: The Essenes was a group of people that love very simply and in harmony. They looked at each day of the week represented a certain energetic. Each part of a day represented a certain energetic. Maybe it was kindness or maybe it's like emotional aspect. It could also be like rooting energy, more praying, and times to pray and such. So, they recognize these different aspects and lunar and all these. They lived in alignment with that. So, there were different times for that. Also, the elements hold different energy; air, water, sun, and fire, earth. So, how do you bring those elements as a whole into what you do, you know, it's balance. It's like, like ayurveda, you have too much fire or you're too damp. In Chinese, also it has a lot of these cultures have different concepts. So, it's like how do you keep that balance by bringing that energy in into everything that you do. So, when you sprout something, you're bringing the water element. And then, after you rinse it, you bring the sun and the air, you know. And the seed itself is the earth element. So, those are the concepts I'm talking about.

Kevin: That's great.

Lydia: Yes. There's more in it, you know, people can look up because it's pretty involved with it. There were raw food and a lot of great teaching.

Kevin: Sure.

Lydia: Yes.

Kevin: Well, I want to thank you so much for your time. This has been a great interview. I'm excited. It's nice to learn how someone started that green and raw and an incredible business.

Lydia: Yes. It's been a journey.

Kevin: I imagine.

Lydia: This business has been a journey, and I'm really grateful to have it in my life. It gives me a purpose.

Kevin: Sure. And we set up a page where people can go. Well, you've mentioned your website already but you can also go to

www.rawsummit.com/lydia and you can go to there and you'll be taken to her site. So, Lydia, I want to thank you so much for being a part of the Raw Summit.

Lydia: Thank you so much and you have a great day.

Kevin: And take care, everyone. This is Kevin Gianni from the rawsummit.com. I will see you next time.