

## Paula Watkinson, Magna Inc.

### My First Smoothie, a Survivor's Story

It all started with Linda Labute, who I interviewed for the *Smoothie Mama* article in the December 2014 edition of *Good for You*...

Linda's enthusiasm over blended greens got me curious. Listening to her speak about energy levels and focus, her passion for everything smoothie, was like listening to somebody who scored front row tickets to a sold-out rock concert. I admit, I didn't really understand what all the excitement was about, but I wanted to.

To me, green smoothies were like milkshakes but without the sweet cold goodness of ice cream, without the welcome rush of brain freeze, without the decadent bloat of satisfaction. With the veggies laid out in front of me, I realized I was facing a pureed salad, with an added banana for palatability. (Admit it, you just puckered your lips too.) But I needed to do something healthy to offset the damage done by the nightly handfuls of chocolate chips from the Costco-sized bag that I'd bought with the honest intention of baking cookies for my kids,... not midnight cupboard raids with my two cats watching with judgmental squints.

Linda suggests four or five veggies and one fruit, so into the blender jar I add chopped kale, shredded carrots, five leaves of spinach (yuk – I have a childlike aversion to this particular green leaf), some red and green cabbage, and a few wilted broccoli florets from the bottom of my vegetable crisper. And then the banana... lovingly peeled, strings carefully removed, delicately broken into pieces and set atop the heap of vile greens. *Don't let me down, banana!*

Drown the concoction in a cup of tap water (Linda advises filtered water, but I'm a rebel), add 2 ice cubes (also unfiltered, so there!) then hit go.



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Nothing happens. I fiddle with my brand new, digital blender—*for the love of God, how do I puree this mess?* (Brief aside to check the manual)—and voila! Screeching, high-velocity, grinding and spinning, with that poor banana caught in a Tasmanian devil weed patch.

I'm skeptical. I know Linda loves them, but the thought of drinking vegetables makes my lips retract. Ninety seconds later, I pour the goo into a glass, pop in a straw (already I'm wincing at the chunks I'm bound to suck up) and move in for a tentative sip.

Hmm, not as horrific as anticipated. In fact, it's surprisingly smooth with no unsavory globs. *Well done, 700 watt blender that I bought on sale for \$65 dollars!* I lean in for a more generous gulp and it occurs to me that the banana actually trumped the spinach in the ultimate nutrition-taste throw-down. VICTORY! 'Hmm' is changed to 'Mmmmm' because I'm actually enjoying my First Ever green smoothie!

I could do this! I could drink my fruits and veggies! In fact, I'm already looking forward to the next one, curious to see if blueberries are strong enough to cover the bitter bite of kale. I'm already feeling a little smug about my new healthy habit. To a healthier 2015 – cheers!