

ANDREW McDOWELL

What did you have for breakfast this morning? If you're Andrew McDowell, author of upcoming e-book *I Am Raw*, chances are you had a "Greenhouse"—a beverage made of Spanish kale, cucumbers and celery. Crazy? Maybe. Effective? Definitely.

In just eight months, McDowell lost 129 pounds—an average of 16 pounds a month. His secret: eating raw.

McDowell is part of a growing movement of Raw Foodists—people who choose to eat uncooked, unprocessed, plant-based food 70-90% of the time. The nutrients and enzymes retained in these foods are so powerful that the diet continues to work even when you have a couple of "bad" eating days. "I did not go from zero to raw in eight months," McDowell admits. "I went on for three days...fell off...got back on...fell off."

Even so, McDowell has gone from an overwhelming 389 pounds to just 260 in a matter of months—just 35 pounds away from his final goal. "I do not believe in the word 'cheating' when it comes to diet," McDowell says. "Just remember...at the end of the day, you go back to raw."

It may sound unusual...but then, McDowell has always lived his life "outside of the box". He was born South side of Chicago in the 1960s, a place where dreams and reality seldom meet. Yet, in spite of their meager circumstances, McDowell's mother fostered the entrepreneurial spirit she recognized in her son. She assured him that he didn't need to settle for what was already out there. He could start "his own thing".

And it stuck. At age seven, when other boys were playing sports, McDowell was plotting his first business venture. Other kids spent money on baseball cards; McDowell painstakingly saved the \$375 required to take out an ad in the *National Enquirer*. Although those early endeavors were largely unsuccessful, they set the course that McDowell would follow through his life.

Over the years, McDowell sought out ways to help others while still establishing something of his own. He graduated from the Computer Learning Center in Chicago in 1988 and used his knowledge to start a successful computer parts business, Men in Green. He also self-published two books: *How to Use Your PC* and *How to Buy Desktop and Laptop Computers Cheap*.

McDowell has dabbled in the music industry, helping a friend produce and market his first album. He even tried his hand at inventing. His business card holder, the Maxxit, remains in circulation today, and his newest creation recently entered its manufacturing phase with a reputable shoe company in New York.

But in the midst of his successful and exciting career, McDowell was fighting a losing battle: his weight. Looking back on that time, McDowell is amazed at the correlation between being fat and being afraid. He sadly recalls "all the things that I was reluctant to do, all the places I would not go, all the things that I would not follow through on." His weight paralyzed him and kept him from achieving his goals.

McDowell tried every popular diet on the market, but he could not achieve any kind of lasting success. In the end, it was his visionary spirit that led to the greatest change in his life—raw eating.

Friend and colleague, Lamont Thompson describes the transformation in McDowell since he's embraced the raw food diet: "Not only is he thin, but he has a completely different attitude." McDowell's fear and discouragement are gone, along with 129 pounds of excess weight.

More importantly, McDowell has found a sense of purpose. "This is where my passion is," he says. "My passion is to tell other people that they *can* do it." His e-book, *I Am Raw*, will do just that.

Today, McDowell lives in Minnetonka, Minnesota with his wife and kids. His latest doctor's visit revealed that he is healthier than he's ever been. And of course, he couldn't be happier.