

The Addiction Most Christians Accept

I don't want to judge. This post is only posing a question, opening dialogue. Last week I made a huge life decision: I gave up caffeine.

Believe me, it was a very hard decision to make. I love coffee. I'm from the Pacific Northwest. I grew up near Seattle—home of Starbucks and land of coffee aficionados.

Coffee was the start of my day. I like it strong and black. No cream—yuk. No sugar—double yuk!

And I honestly thought that the hardest part would be missing the taste of a rich, dark brew. Boy was I wrong.

Here's how it went:

It first started with drowsiness. I am so not kidding. The first day I couldn't stay awake no matter what I did. I think I fell asleep on the couch off and on all afternoon.

Have I ever mentioned that I don't take naps? Like ever?

In addition to that, I had this constant need to satisfy that void where my coffee used to be. I think I drank at least 5-6 cups of herbal tea before I gave up. Then started in the flu-like symptoms ... with a vengeance. It was horrid.

By evening I had a raging headache and I thought I would die.

Day 2: drowsiness. I took a 2-hour nap and could have slept longer but the kids woke up. That was Wednesday—when I posted my linky party without any content. That was due to the brain fog I had. I don't think I had two coherent thoughts all day. Add the lingering flu-like symptoms and lack of appetite.

But at least I didn't want to die.

Day 3: The fog started to clear. My tummy wasn't happy, but at least it wasn't sick. I just didn't have any appetite to speak of. My head hurt like crazy, but I wasn't drowsy—so I was thankful.

Day 4: I started feeling awesome. Natural energy overtook my system—lasting energy. My mind was clear, my appetite was back. I had a bit of a headache, but I hardly noticed it because I was just happy to feel normal again.

I am at the end of day 6 now. I do admit to craving that bitter, full-bodied cup of steaming joe.

But there's something that's nagged at me the whole week:

If one must endure such severe withdrawals when choosing to no longer have caffeine, should it not be considered as much an addictive substance as tobacco?

At this point in my own personal dialogue (and I have not made any conclusions yet—I am brainstorming with you a little), I don't see much of a difference.

Both are addictive.

Both carry health-risks in large quantities

Both cause horrible withdrawal symptoms when not used/consumed.

We preach about one while consuming the other.

So my question is: Is caffeine the acceptable addiction? Is it the addiction Christians are not willing to talk about? Is it possible that we don't want to know the answer because we have created fellowship around it?

I haven't arrived at an answer yet, but this I know:

I do not ever want to allow my body to become this dependent on any other substance again. I never want to allow my body to crave anything at all to this degree. I never want to have to put my body through such rigors so as to rid itself of a dependency.

I don't ever want to try to satisfy any void in my life apart from God's presence! I will forevermore be caffeine free!

Rosilind Jukic, a Pacific Northwest native, is a missionary living in Croatia and married to her Bosnian hero. Together they live in the country with their 2 active boys where she enjoys fruity candles, good coffee and a hot cup of herbal tea on a blustery fall evening. Her passion for writing led her to author her best-selling book. At A Little R & R she encourages women to find contentment in what God created them to be. You can also find her at Missional Call where she shares her passion for local and global missions. She can also be found at on a regular basis. You can follow her on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Google +.