



YOUR KINDLE NOTES FOR:

The Fasting Cure

by Upton Sinclair

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21 Highlights

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present opinions I have given in this book. I am not saying this to apologize for an inconsistency, but to record a growth. In those days I believed something, because other people told me; today I know something else, because I have tried it upon myself. My object in publishing this book is twofold: first, to have something to which I can refer people, so that I will not have to answer half a dozen “fasting letters “ every day for the rest of my life ; and second, in the hope of attracting sufficient attention to the subject to interest some scientific men in making a real investigation of it.

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began. The fast has become a commonplace to me now; but I will assume that it is as new and as startling to the reader as it was to myself at first, and will describe my sensations at length. I was very hungry for the first day — the unwholesome, ravening sort of hunger that all dyspeptics know. I had a little hunger the second morning, and thereafter, to my very great astonishment, no hunger whatever — no more interest in food than if I had never known the taste of it. Previous to the fast I had had a headache every day for two or three weeks. It lasted through the first day and then disappeared — never to return.

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two after meals; now I could do whatever I chose. Formerly I had been dependent upon all kinds of laxative preparations ; now I forgot about them. I no longer had headaches. I went bareheaded in the rain, I sat in cold draughts of air, and was apparently immune to colds. And, above all, I had that marvellous, abounding energy, so that whenever I had a spare minute or two I would begin to stand on my head, or to “ chin “ myself, or do some other “ stunt,” from sheer exuberance of animal spirits.

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But it seems to me that I am able to do more work and harder work with my mind while eating beefsteaks than under any other regime; and while this continues to be the case there will be one less vegetarian in the world.

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The fast is to me the key to eternal youth, the secret of perfect and permanent health.

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And I shall continue so just as long as I stand by my present resolve, which is to fast at the slightest hint of any symptom of ill-being — a cold or a headache, a feeling of depression, or a coated tongue, or a scratch on the finger which does not heal quickly.

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Superfluous nutriment is taken into the system and ferments, and the body is filled with a greater quantity of poisonous matter than the organs of elimination can handle. The result is the clogging of these organs and of the blood-vessels — such is the meaning of headaches and rheumatism, arteriosclerosis, paralysis, apoplexy, Bright's disease, cirrhosis, etc. And by impairing the blood and lowering the vitality, this same condition prepares the system for infection — for “colds,” or pneumonia, or tuberculosis, or any of the fevers. As soon as the fast begins, and the first hunger has been withstood, the secretions cease, and the whole assimilative system, which takes so much of the energies of the body, goes out of business. The body then begins a sort of house-cleaning, which must be helped by an enema and a bath daily, and, above all, by copious water-drinking. The tongue becomes coated, the breath and the perspiration offensive; and this continues until the diseased matter has been entirely cast out, when the tongue clears and hunger reasserts itself in unmistakable form.

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out of curiosity. I do not advise people to fast who have nothing the matter with them, and I do not advise the fast

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One should drink all the water he possibly can while fasting, only not taking too much at a time. I take a glass full every hour, at least; sometimes every half hour. It is a good plan to drink a great deal of water at the outset, whenever meal time comes around, and one thinks of the other folks beginning to eat. I drink the water cold, because it is less trouble, but if there is any hot water about, I prefer that. Hot water between meals is an immensely valuable suggestion which I owe to Dr. Salisbury. One should

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There is no greater delusion than that a person needs strength to fast. The weaker you are from disease, the more certain it is that you need to fast, the more certain it is that your body has not strength enough to digest the food you are taking into it.

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And yet that same physician professes a religion which through nearly two thousand years has recommended “fasting and prayer” as the method of the soul's achievement; and he will go to church and listen reverently to accounts of a forty-day fast in the wilderness ! And he lives in a country in which there are sanatoriums where hundreds of people are fasting all the time, and where twenty or thirty-day fasts occasion no more remark than a good golf-score at a summer hotel ! If you have any doubt that such fasts are taken, you can very quickly

convince yourself. Less than a year ago I saw a man completing a fifty-day fast; I talked with him day by day, and I knew absolutely that it was all in good faith.

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If you take a fast and really need the fast, you will find your tongue so coated that you can scrape it with a knife-blade.

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The fast is not an ordeal, it is a rest; and I have known people to lose interest in food as completely as if they had never tasted any in their lives. I know one lady who, to the consternation of her friends and relatives, began a fast three days before Christmas and continued it until three days after New Year's; and on both the holidays she cooked a turkey and served it for her children. On another occasion, during a week's fast, she "put up" several gallons of preserves; the only inconvenience being that she had to call in a neighbor to taste them and see if they were done. I myself took a twelve-day fast while living alone with my little boy, and three times every day I went into the pantry and set out a meal for him. I was not troubled at all by the sight of the food.

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Perhaps I ought also to specify that a good deal of the success of the diet may have been owing to the hot-water regimen which is a part of it. An hour or two before every meal one is supposed to sip at least a pint of very hot water, which has the effect of cleansing out the stomach, and stimulates peristaltic action to a remarkable degree. I had been accustomed to drink hot water while fasting, but I had never taken it systematically, as I did at this time. It is a trick well worth knowing about.

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Am enclosing clipping which shows that prominent men up here in the great Northwest are not afraid to try out certain methods of fighting disease merely because they are thought to be "new" "or "faddy" (tho' in truth the fast cure is as old as the Old Testament).

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a complete fast the first time, I began again Sept. 4th, and fasted thirteen

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In none of the four fasts which I have taken have I set any time limit or taken it as a stunt at all, but only have been guided by conditions as they developed. In no instance

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cured in nine cases out of ten, as this was Dr. Salisbury's average of cures when they stuck to the treatment. I acknowledge

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Dr. Kellogg's argument is a very plausible one; for many years it sufficed to keep me from trying the experiment of the fast. I know that it has kept many other people. His claim is, in brief" that during the fast the body is living off its own tissue; that we are therefore meat-eaters, and even cannibals" while fasting. We are living on a kind of food which is over-rich in proteid, and which generates excessive quantities of uric acid, indican" etc. This" as I say, sounds plausible" but I found by actual experiment that the facts do not work out according to the theory. I myself have taken a week's fast recently, with perfect success. During this time I had not one particle of weakness or trouble of any sort. Perhaps it may be that my body was excreting undue amounts of uric acid and indican, but I did not know it, and it did me no harm so far as I could discover. I am much less afraid of the consequences of living from my own body tissue" since I have tried for myself the experiment of living on the tissues of other animals.

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So far as I can make out, beef is the one article of diet which never does me any harm, no matter how much of it I eat. The same thing is true, apparently, with my little boy.

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Another benefit that he mentions is the lessening of his desire for sugar" that he is satisfied with the sugar sweet that is in the food itself" which is so much more healthful than the cane sugar. Another thing that he speaks of is the reduction in his weight, which he needed.
