

She said...

Quitting coffee?

Top 10 tips for breaking the habit

One week, five days, eight hours, 24 minutes and 16 seconds ago, I quit coffee. I quit cold turkey after 40 years of slurping God's gift to get up and go.

It wasn't easy. In fact, it ranks right up there as one of the most difficult things I've given up.

Honestly, I didn't think I'd make it past the first day without the stuff.

Since there is no upside to that fateful Day 1 without coffee, I offer these top 10 tips on quitting java.

10. Begin your journey to recovery admitting you are powerless anywhere near the deep rich aroma of coffee brewing. Doctor's orders help but are not necessary to be successful.

9. Have a replacement plan in place before the break of dawn. Hot tea, hot cocoa, or hot milk may work just as well. (Yeah, right.)

8. Summon reinforcement. Since you are going to feel like doggy dodo during the first 24 hours, you'll need a lot of encouragement and coaxing. Call in one or two of your best friends to stand by you.

7. Drink some more caffeine free tea. It's o.k. to reminisce your love for coffee, but stay the course.

6. Even though you have a splitting caffeine headache, do not, I repeat, do not yell at your husband. It will only make matters worse.

5. Argue with the naysayer in your head. Never mind what she's

telling you about how you cannot exist without your coffee. Stick to the plan.

4. Don't be seduced by the television ad touting, "America runs on coffee." Even though this is a true statement, pay no attention to it and go take a nap.

3. Drink more caffeine-free tea and take another nap.

2. Remind yourself that legends of people have gone before you down the long narrow road to being coffee free and they lived to tell about it. It's just you don't remember any at the moment.

1. Seek a higher power. Pray for Day 2 to arrive quickly. Drink some more caffeine free tea. Take three more naps. Call four more friends. If you make it to the second day without coffee, you have arrived to the other side. Congratulations.



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A resident of Southeast South Dakota, Paula Damon is a national award-winning columnist. Her columns have won first-place in National Federation of Press Women, South Dakota Press Women and Iowa Press Women Communications Contests. In the 2009 South Dakota Press Women Communications Contest, Paula's columns took three first-place awards.

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■ by Paula Damon

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