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presented by



How to Cold Turkey Like a Local

A LOCAL'S GUIDE TO QUITTING COFFEE

On the morning of October 31st, two days before the presidential election and during a full moon, planetary retrogrades and a global pandemic, I decided to quit coffee cold turkey. Not just coffee mind you. I decided that all caffeine was to be eradicated from my life and it was simply because I had run out of it. I'd already kind of been thinking about it but that Halloween morning, I opened my cabinets only to find a nearly empty bag of coffee so I shrugged my shoulders, got back under a blanket and Googled all the terrible cold turkey withdrawal symptoms that someone who's been drinking coffee since high school might have.

I found warnings about headaches, fatigue, low energy, irritability, anxiety, poor concentration, depressed mood and tremors and I thought it sounded pretty similar to how I was already feeling during 2020 and more prominently, the days entering the election so I thought, what the heck, let's do this.

The next few days were interesting. I found myself staring at a lot of walls or out the window. I once caught myself staring at a bird for like, 15 minutes and daydreaming about it. About how cute it was bouncing around looking for food. Daydreaming was, in fact, my number one hobby for much of my cold turkey journey. Many times I'd drift off thinking about what my life would be like without my caffeinated love--my former life's blood. Not in a nostalgic I'll miss it kind of way, but in a reinventive way. Like, what kind of person will I be without coffee? Would I be super cool and super chill, no longer anxious? Would I be an herbal tea drinking yogi who wears flowy skirts, eats raw and says things like 'namaste' and 'rad'? Would I own a matching tea set and china? Would I start eating tiny sandwiches at high noon?

All these things were crossing my mind while the world was imploding around me; the too-close election, the pandemic and worry about 'what if's'. And while I was lamenting over the future of our country--and also wondering how you would make tiny sandwiches--I kept losing track of what I was doing or set something important down somewhere and I'd immediately forget what and where it was.

It was as if I was walking through a dream, but also watching the country balance on a precarious tilting point. At this point, I thought the smartest thing to do was to go out, get some fresh air and get my blood flowing on day number four without caffeine, so I went on a mountain bike ride.

Of course, when I got to the trail I realized I'd forgotten everything. I left my water bottle and phone at home and I'd improperly dressed myself because I didn't have enough bandwidth to figure out what the temperature would be. While I rode, I sort of felt like I was both high and hungover; everything was going really slow and I had a headache. And even though I was bouncing downhill on some technical rock, I was still thinking about how cute birds are and also electoral votes and why Nevada was taking so long to turn blue. Then I crashed. Naturally.

I probably should have seen it coming, but the tumble was slow enough not to do any damage and just left me a bit bloody and bruised. When I got back

down the trail to my truck what I saw was not the blood from my knee, but, in my stupor, I saw the way the evening fall light was hitting the tall grass in the meadow in front of me. How beautiful it was. The world is beautiful and also burning in flames and that's what it feels like to quit coffee cold turkey.

It took about a week for me to get out of my quixotic state. Appropriately enough, I feel like it was the day we finally heard a conclusion for the election that I started seeing things a little more clearly. I was feeling less depressed and anxious and the headaches, fatigue, low energy, poor concentration, irritability and tremors had abated. I celebrated the outcome with happy tears and a cup of hot tea and the turkey no longer felt so cold.

How to Quit Coffee like a Local

Don't be like me. Be smart. Taper with some lightly caffeinated tea and then hit the herbal tea hard. Stock up at **Old Barrel Tea Company & Create Art and Tea**.

If you want to be extreme like me and go cold turkey, be prepared. Biking, hiking, and even walking are much more dangerous when your head is in a withdrawal cloud, so to be safe, check the **Durango Trails** website for tips and always wear a helmet, knee and elbow pads, and bring extra water and snacks. Even if you're just walking to the kitchen. Gear can be found at **2nd Ave Sports, Pine Needle Mountaineering, Durango Outdoor Exchange** or **Backcountry Experience**.

Know where to go when you inevitably get hurt when you walked to the kitchen: **San Juan Hand Therapy, Pathfinder Chiropractic, Advantage Physical Therapy & Wellness, Absolute Physical Therapy and Wellness**

While you're healing from your injury, figure out what kind of "non-coffee person" you're going to be.

A flowy relaxed yogi? Head over to **Animas Trading Company** for a fitting wardrobe and **Yoga Durango** to learn yoga or **Pilates Durango** if you want to be a tough yogi. Want to host tea parties with your dog? **There's No Place Like Home** and **Urban Market** for tea pots, matching dish sets and aprons.

You'll be doing a lot of wall-staring when you quit coffee cold turkey, so put something pretty on your walls. Go to **Studio &, Scenic Aperture** and **Paul Folwell Studio** for something pretty to stare at. It's always better when there's something pretty.

-JENNAYE DERGE

