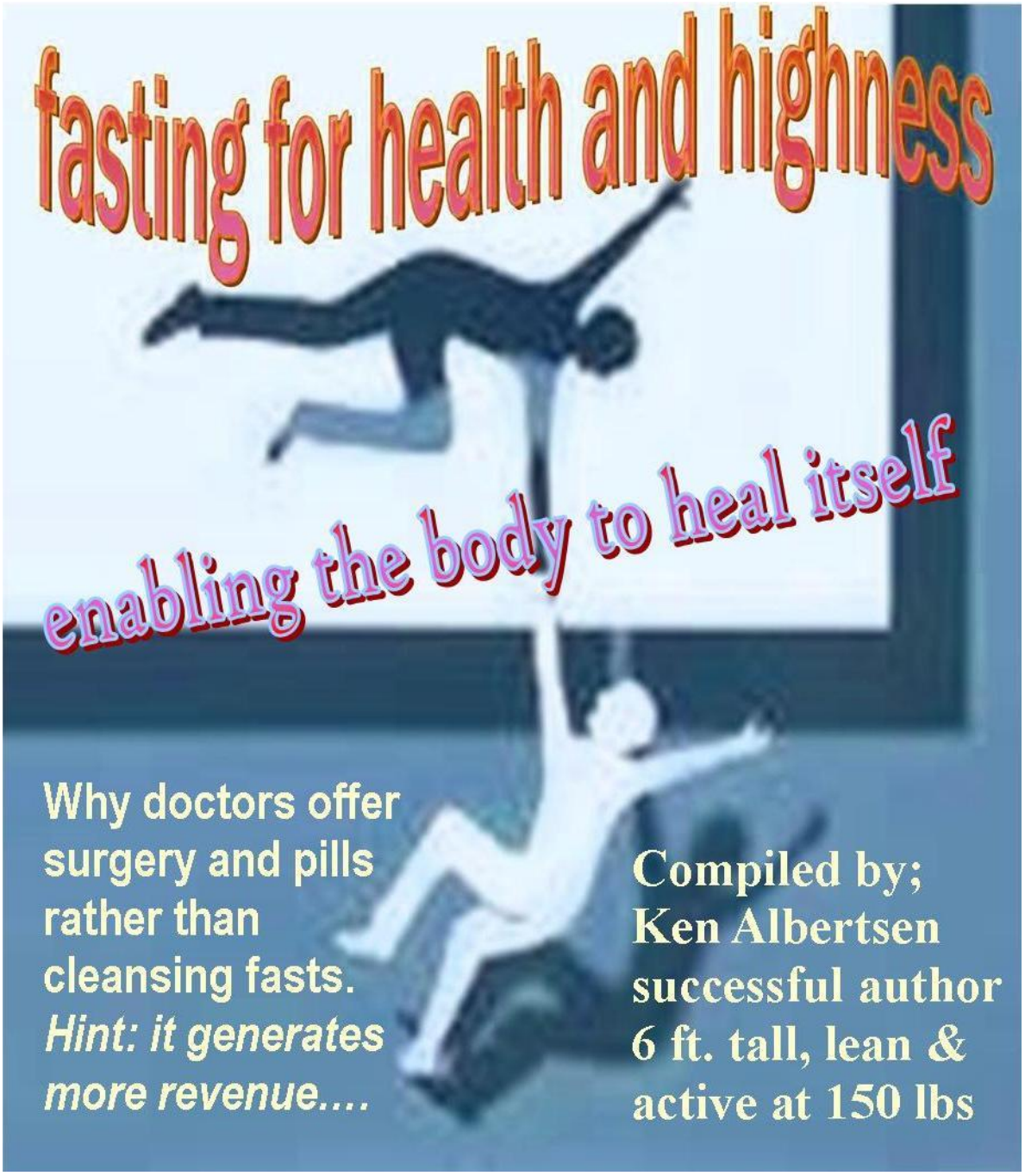

By Ken Albertsen

FASTING FOR HEALTH

.....AND HIGHNESS

eBook version includes illustrated section:
Seven Stretches to Relieve Lower Back Pain

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The model in photos at last part of this booklet is Kenn Cloud, an Akha woman from Chiang Rai.

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"Fasting is the greatest remedy – the physician within."
Philippus Paracelsus, pioneering Swiss physician

FOREWORD

A person's body is continually trying to cleanse itself. One of the healthiest things a person can do is to facilitate that process. That's what a proper fast does.

A juice fast is different than a 'water-only' fast. As its name implies, a juice fast allows for some fruit and vegetable juices. A water-only fast is severe and possibly dangerous because it doesn't flush out toxins from the body as effectively as a juice fast. For a person without fasting experience, the release of too many toxins during a water-only fast could prove harmful. That's why, for all but experienced fasters, a juice fast is preferable.

You may wonder what the word 'highness' is doing in the book's title. It's a rarely used word that usually heard in relation to royalty, as in; 'your highness.' Though the analogy could apply to all people in an altruistic way, the word 'highness' in this context refers to 'a higher state of consciousness.' Latter parts of the text will elaborate on aspects of that, and show how 'getting high' need not involve drugs – and a properly done fast will induce a natural high.

When a person sleeps, he/she allows the body a respite from eating. During that 'down time' the body will try and deal with the excesses of the previous 15 hours' indulgences. That's why the first meal is called breakfast. The grim reality is that most of us eat copious amounts of food, and much of that is still undigested when we wake to start filling up again. The body tries valiantly to clean itself, but it's often a losing battle. The proof of that is the overweight and misshapen bodies we see everyday. Those bodies usually belong to people who eat more than their digestive tract can process. Granted, it's more complicated than that, but too-slowly digested foodstuff is a primary reason for obesity.

The average meat eater has about 15 pounds of partially digested meat in his or her gut at any one time. It's not a pretty picture, but this text is about telling it straight, and not beating around the bush. If you're squeamish, you can skip the next few sentences, but it needs to be said: The average gut has inert bits of stuff stuck in the colon. It's the consistency of soft plastic and it serves no good purpose at all. At times, it partially blocks the colon, forcing its walls to extend, and thereby slowing down bowel movements (BM) that should move faster – thereby increasing putrification and enabling toxins to get re-absorbed into the blood and body.

All people have toxins stored in the tissues of their bodies. It starts in the womb and, unless a person lives an astonishingly clean lifestyle, the build-up continues. Even breast milk contains measurable amounts of toxins. Trace amounts of toxins permeate much of the air we breathe, as well as the liquids and solids we ingest. The oceanographer Jacques Cousteau commented in his latter years that, of the thousands of underwater dives he had taken all over the world, no body of water was free of detectable pollution.

One major contributor is formaldehyde, a residual gas that we breathe from furniture and building materials. It's particularly prevalent in newly built or refurbished sites. After Hurricane Katrina, many New Orleans residents were issued mobile homes by the U.S. Federal government. Many inhabitants got sick. A few years later, it was found that the

mobile homes were emitting formaldehyde. The units got recalled, but not until residents had breathed foul air for many months.

Formaldehyde, you and the environment

from greenlivingtips.com

While formaldehyde (also known as methyl aldehyde, methylene oxide, oxymethylene and oxomethane) is a natural occurring substance in the environment; mankind has pushed the presence of this toxic chemical to incredible levels; in fact, it's one of the most common indoor pollutants.

Formaldehyde is volatile organic compound (VOC), meaning that it becomes a gas at normal room temperatures.

Avoiding formaldehyde-ridden products is very difficult. Formaldehyde is used in the creation of polymers (plastics) and other chemicals and is very common in adhesives. Many common items common in homes and offices contain at least trace amounts.

Formaldehyde - human and environmental poison

One of the problems of formaldehyde is that products containing it slowly give off toxic vapors over time. For humans, inhaling atmospheric concentrations above 0.1 mg/kg can cause eye and mucous membrane irritation, breathing difficulties and headaches. It's interesting to note that many new mobile homes, houses and offices contain levels above this.

When in contact with the skin, it can cause irritation, burns and dermatitis, In large doses, formaldehyde can be lethal. The chemical is listed as a known human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer.

In many animals and birds, formaldehyde has the same effects as in humans when ingested or inhaled. It can also create reproductive problems such as low fertility. In an aquatic environment, formaldehyde is very and somewhat persistently toxic as it has a half life of between a day and ten days. Toxicity to plants remains unknown.

Avoiding Formaldehyde

There really is no way to totally avoid this chemical, especially in urban areas. On top of what man creates purposely, formaldehyde is also formed through sunlight interaction with smog; so driving your car less will also help decrease

formaldehyde levels in the atmosphere. It's also present in cigarette smoke.

Similarly, it’s no secret that many professions are compelled to deal with noxious fumes. Besides those who work routinely with internal combustion engines, such as mechanics, drivers, road crews, or commuters, there are other professions that involve other noxious chemicals, namely; woodworkers, painters, salespeople at carpet outlets, etc. Unhealthy fumes also affect workers at various types of manufacturing plants.

In my earlier adopted town of Grass Valley, California, there was an Army Surplus shop. Twin brothers ran the place, and both were big guys. Some of their best selling products were foam pads. One couldn't help but notice the twins' complexions getting worse. Their skin was slightly bloated and had pastel blotches – light pink, dark pink, and tan - mottled over their faces. Their eyes seemed bulbous and teary. Before their fiftieth birthdays, both guys died of cancer. Three things those fellows could have done to improve their health and extend their lives: 1. have all the foam pads individually sealed in plastic 2. have two big fans, one blowing in, and one blowing out, to keep a continual flow of air in the shop. 3. fast periodically.

Fasting wouldn't have been a magic bullet for them. Indeed, if they'd started with a water-only fast, it might have killed them. The reason; it would likely have released considerable amounts of toxins stored in their glands and tissues, while not being able to flush the stuff out effectively enough. So much toxins released into their blood and glands could have been fatal. There's a little known term for that toxic predicament; 'Herxheimer's Reaction,' which we'll elaborate upon later.

There's been much research in the past decades looking for direct cause and effect between the chemicals in our modern world and how and whether those chemicals trigger the growth of cancer and other diseases. Even if a person had not read the plethora of reports, it's clear that there's a connection between toxic chemicals and ensuing diseases. About the only people who may harbor doubts about the correlation may be those with vested interests in particular chemicals and name brands. For years there was denial by big tobacco companies that nicotine was addictive. However, even Big Tobacco's high priced lobbyists and top echelon lawyers couldn't stem the tide of common sense - which everyone else could see clearly.

Showing cause and effect between a chemical that someone may have ingested as a child, and a cancer that reveals itself years or decades later is nigh impossible. What is known, is that there are various types of cancer, and cancer can affect nearly every part of the body. Even with a biopsy of cancerous tissue, it's doubtful the origin can be revealed. This text is not an attempt to articulate different types of ailments and what sorts of chemical exposure may have caused them. Such a tome could be bigger than the Encyclopedia Britannica. Instead, this text asserts that a significant portion of chemicals in the average person's environment carry potential harm.

We'll never know whether some weird chemicals we sniffed 25 years ago, or some processed item we ate last month will trigger a life-threatening ailment in later years. Regardless, a sensible juice fast every so often could serve as a precaution against bad stuff happening later on. There's no guarantee, but just as you flush out the grimy fluids in your vehicle when you do an oil change, it can do no harm (and a lot of good) to flush out the ol' bod as well. One could go on and make comparisons to changing vehicle filters, or pouring new clean fluids to replace old, but you get the picture.

1. EVOLVING

Basically, a cleansing fast is a way to flush toxins out of the body. Let's take a look at how cleansing fasts can get rid of some of that build-up.

The human body is a product of tens of millions of years of development. Everyone has complaints once in awhile, but despite its flaws, it's an amazing compilation; a complex organism that is self-powered and can reproduce. To do so, it needs energy sources, and it expels waste in the process. The energy input comes from the sun, from plants, from air and water, and from myriad complex molecules we ingest. All life on Earth is related. People share a significant degree of genetic material even with simple viruses and bacteria. For that reason, it can be argued that all life stemmed from one self-replicating organism – probably similar to RNA, the precursor to DNA. Some people think that life is too amazing to have arisen as a product of natural phenomena. Most of those folks therefore attribute the creation and diversity of life to a God-like power a.k.a. Intelligent Design. Others, for similar reasons, believe life was 'seeded' here on Earth from another part of the universe – by comet or asteroid.

Still others (myself included) believe life arose on this planet by natural means. As amazing as life creation is, it is nevertheless possible that it started on this one little planet. One interesting theory proposes that replication first came about in a medium of bubbles in mud. Regardless, it didn't need a God-like entity give the go ahead. As for being 'seeded' here from elsewhere, that's a remote possibility – however improbable. Even if the 'seeding' theory were true, then life would have had to have been created at some earlier time and place.

Micro flora and fauna migrate on to and in to our bodies every day. Even after a shower, human skin plays host to millions of micro-organisms. The accumulated net weight of tiny flora and fauna within the body is several pounds. We're about seventy percent water, the same percentage as water to land on the surface of the planet - and the water in our bodies has roughly the same degree of salinity as ocean water. Life is interconnected. Most micro-organisms are benign, some are helpful, and some can be harmful – especially if they get out of hand. Pathogenic organisms multiply where they can. They aren't nefarious, and they don't scheme to infect, they simply increase their numbers wherever conditions allow, and do so as unthinkingly as a rock tumbling down a hill.

A well-functioning immune system has specialized cells that find and disable pathogens. To back up a bit, the first thing immune system does, even during its fetal stage within the womb of its mother, is learn to discern between itself and all else – which we can call 'non-self.' This process can be called 'self-recognition.' Rare abnormalities in that process yield such debilitating ailments as 'auto-immunity disorder' – where a body's immune system attacks its host body, i.e., itself.

The body's immune system may seem to be a relatively new development, as far as bodily systems go, but it's actually one of the most ancient developments of the body, at least as old as the vascular system. After all, as long as organisms have existed, there have always been other organisms trying to invade it. In some rare long-ago instances, those invaders became co-opted by the host organism. Sometimes this has led to symbiotic relationships, where a would-be invasive organism develops a permanent way to live and multiply within the host.

In line with that, there are organisms which are clearly not part of the host, but which the immune system does not attack. In a sense, the immune system tolerates them. A prime example are the many types of microorganisms which inhabit a healthy colon. It's good the immune system doesn't attack those, because it would be a 'grave day' for the host (a pun borrowed from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, which plays on the word 'grave' as it relates to where dead people are buried).

One of the most effective components of a well-functioning immune system are T-cells, which are part of the body's white blood cells. T-cells continually bump in to other cells while flowing through the blood system. If they bump into something which is not part of their host's body, they engulf it, and then the whole package gets flushed out – specialized cell and intruder together. The cell selflessly sacrifices itself to do its mindless duty. The so-called intruder may be bacteria, a virus, a fungi, a drug, or it may be something dead or inert. Regardless, the 'search and destroy' scenario goes on 24/7 within the body – eliminating non-familiar things, and getting them flushed out.

There are various ways with which the body expels toxins – and none of them are pretty. Phlegm, snot, bowel movement, urine, perspiration, gas (body odor), tears & eye crud, and saliva are a partial list.

People shed. A partial list of people sheddings include; nail clippings, hair, scabs, dandruff, boogers, and dead skin. The major portion of sweepings from a house floor likely contain stuff people shed. Fasting accelerates that process and after a successful fast, shedding is lessened for a time – because the body is cleaner. Fasting also expels toxins by fluids. During the first few days of a fast, there will often be a greater-that-normal amount of the expectorate fluids (a.k.a. spit). It might be a bit yukky for the uninitiated, but it's a beneficial part of the process.

Another area of concern is the mouth. Bad breath and more-than-usual tooth scuzz is to be expected, as stuff gets eliminated. Fasting people like to spit. It's not an attractive habit, but it's better than swallowing. Since they don't make spittoons any more, one can have a bowl nearby when indoors (when outside, no big deal). Even alongside the bed, it's not a bad idea to have a spittoon. Society dictates that spitting is low-class, but it's a rather good way to get rid of phlegm. Nose blowing is another un-pretty but essential part of fasting. Best is first one nostril, then the other. Some Yogis have a method where they can run a cotton string through a nostril – and out through the mouth – sort of like flossing the nasal passages.

Since we're on the subject of flossing, here's a two cent's overview: Some think flossing is just running a piece of string floss between teeth. Flossing is more serious than that. One wants to get the string low in the gap between the teeth, and move it firmly up on either side of that gap, to dynamically scrape off the scuzz that's built up between the teeth.

Flossing once per day is good. Twice per day is better – each time followed by vigorous brushing. Gargling with salt water is good for the gums. Brushing not only gets teeth clean, it's at least as important for invigorating and strengthening the gums. There's a little tool that some dentists use to measure the depth of the gap – where gums meet the teeth. The shallower the gap, the better. A depth of 5 or 6 mm is not good. Deeper than that, and a person is risking serious dental trouble.

Try scrapping your tongue with something like a blunt butter knife. The residue isn't pretty, but it's indicative of the buildup that normally takes place in the mouth – whether fasting or not. It might even give you pause, next time your lover puckers up to plant a juicy French kiss on your pie hole.

During the first two or three days of a fast, it's not uncommon to have more than normal body odor. Again that's ok and not to be interpreted as something going wrong. Bad breath, body odor, smelly feet, ….all those things are part of the initial fasting process. Experienced fasters will likely have less of that – particularly if their earlier fasts were effective. However, it's all relative to the individual's situation. If, for example, a person has been smoking and doing an unhealthy diet for decades – then naturally that person is going to have a larger amount of toxins to flush out. Though that person may make considerable progress for their first fast, they will continue to eliminate old built-up stuff in subsequent fasts. Also, their first fast will likely be one of the toughest things they've ever done in their lives. The eating habit is tough to alter.

We all love the textures and flavors of food. Most people have been trained since infancy to expect food three or more times per day. People talk about addiction to sex as being tough to deal with. Try going without sex for a week versus going without food. For most people, going without sex would be less challenging. There's another basic reason, besides hunger, that fasting might be a tough row to hoe: The first two or three days you'll likely feel crumby. This is particular likely for first time fasters, though veteran fasters aren't inured from feeling ill-at-ease also. However, experienced fasters will know what to expect – and hopefully they've flushed out most of their toxins in earlier fasts – so the doldrums of those first few days won't be as acute.