

HOWe THINGS ARE... .October 2006

Hi!

A couple years ago I was diagnosed with some medical condition (those of you who know the story know I can't ever remember the name of it so even though I could look it up, it's far more realistic if I tell you, "I have the thing I can't ever remember the name of" --- plus its name is unimportant for the story). So 2004, I learned I have whatever it is and I should make an effort to reduce the amount of sugar in my diet. I was all grumpy about this because I like the sugar family and also, how am I supposed to gain any weight at all if I cut out things with sugar (the entire Ben & Jerry's product line for instance --- those tiny little containers are like 1000 calories).

So I'm told I *should* reduce the amount of sugar. I made a less than zealous attempt to *actually* reduce the amount of sugar I ate until some time later when eating sugar began to make me ill, really quite awful. And suddenly it wasn't so big an effort to reduce sugar because my desire to not feel miserable far outweighs any kind of desire to eat something sweet. Right?

Then maybe nine months after I seriously reduced sugar, I realized I feel fantastic. I'm thinking this condition --whatever it's called--, it maybe didn't just develop a couple years ago. It's entirely possible that I've had whatever it is all along and if I knew and cut out sugar a long time ago, I could've felt this great for a whole long time.

So now that I know this, let's say tomorrow suddenly eating sugar no longer makes me ill so there's no aversive quality to sugar anymore. I still have zero desire to add sugar back because I'm rather attached to feeling physically well. I'm mildly amused when I get sympathy from people who discover that I can't have sugar --- like martyr or saint status because I'm sacrificing something --- when reality I couldn't be more happy to not eat it.

And why, you ask, the big long health story? I made a connection the other week --- that sugar in my diet is not unlike whatever various and sundry bad habits (spiritual and otherwise) I've developed over time. Something I didn't even know had some negative impact on my life until I cut the habit out and experience my great life with it gone. There may or may not be some ill effect that triggers me to cut it out. If the thing makes me sick or hurts me in some way of course, it's more noticeable that removing it is a good plan. But even when there's no noticeable ill effect, the bad habit is so not worth what I miss because of it --- even when there are short term benefits to the bad habit (sugary things taste good before they make me ill). The startling thing is I didn't know what it was I was missing before. But when I experience life with the bad thing removed, it makes no sense to characterize this as having "given up" something. If you knew what I've gained, no sane person would choose to go back...

Stuff you could pray about...

- Those colleagues I really wanted to meet at Computer Technical Conference --- at least one had his visa application denied. I believe God knows what He's doing and all but this was not the outcome I wanted. You decide how to pray now...
- I did accept a new role --- my new title is IT Engineering Manager (or something similar --- those are all the words, but they might not be in that order --- I'm pretty sure there's a psychological reason for the things I have difficulty remembering: medical conditions and my new job title). It's an interesting little journey I've been on (or I'm on, my journey continues, not trying to claim I've arrived or anything).
- This year's adventure falling into place for me --- I'll be in Istanbul, Turkey November 5 – 14 (and in Ephesus one of those days).

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