

A PERPETUAL ITCH

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When goblins prowl...

WITH AUTUMN comes that eerie, haunting, yet magical time of black cats, skeletons, and witches riding their brooms across the face of the full moon ... Halloween! How exciting to be a part of the traditional fun of this ancient observance! Yet, in this time of terror it is incumbent upon us to exert extra caution in watching over our youngsters because the forces of evil are afoot. We are horrified to discover that such fiendish devices as razor blades are implanted in treats, and candy may be laced with poison by the despicable elements within society today. The once-common school carnivals and church parties of earlier days have given way to less innocent activities. Neighborhoods which once catered to their own children now are invaded by truckloads of kids from across town, accompanied by greedy parents who seek out new neighborhoods to plunder. Can we not stop this devilish rush toward total decadence? If we don't, the time will come when no one will answer calls of "Trick or Treat!" and that will be another milestone on the road to self-destruction. #



COFFEE: COMMON ADDICTION

WHEN I WAS A KID, coffee was allowed with breakfast, but only one cup and that one heavily laced with milk and sugar. I very seldom drank it. Later on when I would occasionally have dinner at the home of my teenage true love, coffee was always served, so to be polite, I accepted a cup. There was a cream pitcher on the table, but no sugar bowl, so to be polite, I drank my cup as the rest did—without sugar. When my duty to my country was called for, I chose the Navy, which, as all sailors know, runs on coffee. Without a fully functional coffee mess, a naval unit was out of kilter and suspect in all its actions. Thus began my love affair with the addictive little bean that smells so good when it's being roasted.

As the nation's nutritional experts began to expound on our bad habits, one area of controversy was caffeine. I recall an amusing incident which occurred during my physical examination conducted prior to my discharge from the Navy. The examination included a urine test, of

course, and a buddy and I were the last two to provide a specimen. Later, my friend was called to one side by a corpsman who admonished him to cut down on his coffee drinking; his caffeine was too high. He loudly protested that the urine specimens had been switched at the lab, but the lab technician refused to make any change—regardless of the fact that my friend never drank coffee! We laughed about it and I reduced my coffee-drinking by perhaps one cup a day.

When de-caf coffee became widely available, I tried it as a way of mollifying certain members of my family who had become convinced that each cup of coffee was a nail in my coffin. The de-caf just didn't work well as a kick-starter for me in the mornings, so I compromised by drinking de-caf only after breakfast and that has worked for me. I suspect that many others have done that, too.

After my fifty-four year love affair with coffee, I am not going to give up the genuine thing for breakfast. Now that we have been showered with warnings of excess usage of caffeine, along with the horrifying news that it is found in such things as chocolate, tea, and sodas of all kinds, each morning cup becomes more precious.



ANOTHER KIND OF ADDICTION

SUPPOSE for a moment that our nation is comparable in size to Norway, Sweden, or almost any other European country. Would our attitude toward the rest of the world be the same? If the United States was not the superpower and self-styled world leader that it is, would we be perceived as "ugly Americans?" What is it in men that prompts us to show resentment for being less than the absolute tops in every aspect of relationship with the entire world?

While it is distressing to recognize that as Americans, we are often unfairly branded as being "spoiled" or as exhibiting utterly snobbish and "superior" attitudes toward the rest of the world, it is interesting to note that how a nation reacts to our society is dependant upon our current relationship with that nation. If our leaders censure another nation, then we become the "bad guy" to that nation and its allies. But if any nation censures us, then we are still the "bad guy" and we deserve to be put in our proper place. How drastically this "pick on the big dog" attitude changes when we are called upon to assist other nations economically and militarily!

Granted that some small portion of our "melting pot" society may embarrass the rest of us by their boorish behavior abroad, the majority of our contacts with other nations is warm and friendly. In a one-on-one basis, we are all brothers under the skin and we all react much the same toward each other. Human values are similar in all cultures. As Americans, we may be suspect in the eyes of other nations, but our best course is to exhibit the best in social behaviors, and if we do that, the America that we love will also be loved by the rest of the world--maybe. It's worth trying. (Isn't it?) #