

Phase II of Peter's Life Story

After four years on the Natural Hygiene diet (April 1996 to March 2000), I found that I was enjoying a fairly good level of health. However, after having read all about Natural Hygiene from Dr Shelton's books, I was aware that the ultimate thing in Natural Hygiene was a long water-only fast. I thought that if I am going to talk about NH so much I should experience this.

Also in 1995, I contracted a rare eye problem called "Macular Degeneration" which means that in my right eye, I can see only blurred images and cannot read. The cause for this is not known and there are no drugs or cures or treatments available. Even Laser treatment cannot be done since the leak was too close to the centre of the eye or Macula. When I went to attend the annual convention of the American Natural Hygiene Society in the US in 1999, I met Dr Scott who told me that fasting could halt the progression of my problem and possibly even reverse it. Encouraged by my mentor, Dr Keiki Sidhwa, I landed up in the US on April 24, 2000, at Dr Scott's clinic in Cleveland. I was accompanied by my wife Rita, who had two cysts in her breasts and was told that fasting would help heal this problem also.

I had read a huge amount of literature on fasting but nothing prepared me for the experience. I did an 18 day fast on pure-water only. After that, I felt I could not take it any more and broke the fast, and had two days on pure juices and then two days on raw food. But I felt that my body was not ready for the food and I was feeling uncomfortable so I went back on the fast and did another 13 days on water only. Thus I did a total of 31 days, and then one month more of 100% raw diet while I recovered my strength from the fast. My wife Rita did 18 days water fast, took about a two-week break and then did one more week on water.

What were my experiences? Funnily enough, hunger was never a problem. I did become weak but was able to go to the bathroom on my own and even go downstairs for a sunbath once a day. I was also reading, writing, listening to music etc. The two biggest problems of fasting that I faced were sleep (or rather lack of it) and boredom. A regular person eating a normal diet needs about eight hours of sleep daily, but a fasting person needs only 3. So I was awake almost 20-21 hours a day. The problem is, what do you do? There is a limit to the amount of reading you can do and music you can listen to. So passing the time is a little difficult and you don't get much sleep at night you just lie in bed. Some people have a severe crisis, but I was lucky I didn't have very serious problems. My wife got very weak and could not even get out of bed for two weeks during the fast. But she recovered after she broke the fast. We both lost about one pound a day during the fast so altogether I lost about 31 pounds. I have put on most of it back.

Results of the fast: My eye problem (vision) improved subjectively but the problem did not go away. Dr Scott said that perhaps a longer fast was needed- of around 40 days. Several other problems were detected in the comprehensive blood tests done every week. I had some

markers indicating oncoming heart disease, which were reversed at the end of the fast. An advanced cancer detection test, which showed abnormal levels, also reversed at the end of the fast. This normally happens only if the patient is given chemotherapy, radiation therapy or surgery. This was amazing. Also, my general health improved, my skin and complexion got better, my eyes cleared up and got bright and shining, and the whole inner body was feeling clean and light. My wife did not get rid of the fibroids but we feel that they became smaller. Also, she experienced all the general health benefits that I did.

The one month on raw helped me re-educate my taste buds. Now I can eat a completely raw meal of fruits or vegetables without any dressing and even without salt. I was able to get over my salt habit- but now it's back! But still, I eat two meals a day without any salt whatsoever.

However, the 100% raw diet did not suit me. Even after one month of raw food, I did not recover my strength after the fast. However just adding some steamed potato for one week helped a great deal, and adding about 15-20% conservatively cooked vegan food helped me get back my strength and fly back to India after another two weeks. Altogether I was away from home for almost three and a half months!

After one year, in July 2001, I did an 11 day fast with Dr Keiki Sidhwa in the UK. He told me that given my eye problem, which was a degenerative problem normally only affecting elderly people, I should do a fast every year to keep the problem in check. This time I was accompanied by my mother aged 56, who did a seven day fast with me.

Dr Sidhwa is much milder than Dr Scott and a practical person, unlike Dr Scott who is a perfectionist and idealist. Dr Sidhwa allows us to watch TV and video unlike at Dr Scott where there is no TV on the premises. Also after the fast, he is not so strict on food combining. He serves small quantities of yoghurt. And even some times some bread, rice or cooked food. The net result was that the fast was a lot easier and I recovered almost fully my strength in 10 days to be able to fly back to India. This time too I lost about 15 pounds but I have put it all back on after resuming my normal diet. I had a small crisis on Day 3 headache, body ache, vomiting, diarrhoea but Dr Sidhwa said it was my body just eliminating all accumulated toxins. The symptoms passed in less than 24 hours and the rest of the fast was peaceful. I feel much lighter and fitter and all my friends say I look younger too. What a bonus!

Dr Sidhwa says that now I can do a one week fast on my own if I am careful about my diet rest of the year. Let's see how it goes. Fasting is giving your body a chance for house-cleaning much like sending your car for regular servicing. It is maligned only by those who have not tried it.

The above was written in 2002. I am reviewing it in 2020.. eighteen years later... and let me share with you how my progress has been and whether I have been able to stick to the program in the long term.