

Chapter 11: Perfect Health

I opened the bag I brought back to my apartment from The Raj and took out several brown bottles with Maharishi's picture on the label. The snowy Himalayas framed the name of each product—"Mind Plus," "Blissful Sleep," "Worry Free Tea," "Stress Free Mind," and "Elim-Tox-O."

The virtues were duly noted:

"Authentic formula."

"Increases mental energy."

"Over 5,000 years of clinical research."

"Verified by modern science."

Each label had a long list of herbal ingredients including Indian Trumpet Flower, Winter Cherry, Spreading Hogweed, Muskroot, Heart-Leaved Moonseed, Clove, Butterfly Pea, Long Pepper, Licorice, Chinese Cinnamon, Giant Potato, and Yellow Berried Nightshade.

I opened the bottle of Mind Plus and took a whiff. It smelled like the Christmas fruitcake that sat in grandmother's cupboard since the Eisenhower administration. I was supposed to take two teaspoons of the stuff twice a day.

Might as well give it a try. I poured out a spoon of the dark, syrupy liquid and threw it back.

Yow! My glands contracted in terror. It tasted like fruitcake-flavored motor oil.

As the medicinal fruitcake vapor spread through my sinuses, I read a handout titled "Main Principles for This Balancing Diet."

"Food must be freshly prepared, preferably in your own home."

“Do not use frozen, canned, bottled, packaged, or processed foods.”

“Do not consume any leftovers (i.e., food that has been cooked and then refrigerated).”

Uh-oh. This could be worse than I thought.

As I read on, I discovered an extensive list of food items that must be avoided...

“No red meat. No oily or heavy food preparations such as fried foods, cream sauces, heavy deserts, or pies. No raw vegetables or salads. No potatoes, beets, or root vegetables (except carrots). No hot spices such as chilies, hot peppers, or jalapenos. No bread made with yeast, sourdough, or baking powder/soda. No pizza, cookies, chocolate, cocoa, candy, pastries, or baked goods. No curdled milk products such as yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, or sour cream. No butter, cream, ice cream, or any other frozen deserts. No vinegar or vinegar-containing substances including catsup, mustard, pickles, olives, or relishes.”

Et cetera. And to drink?

“No cold water or ice. No soft drinks or carbonated beverages or carbonated water. No alcohol. No caffeinated drinks (coffee, tea, or cola). No bottled, packaged, reconstituted, or canned fruit or vegetable juices.”

Poor health was looking better and better.

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