

## KICKING CAFFEINE

According to Dr. Frank Lipman, author of the book *Spent*, coffee has no nutritional value and tends to be steeped in pesticides. It's also pricey, particularly if you hit a coffee shop a few times a week. Caffeine is also an addictive and powerful stimulant that raises blood pressure, dehydrates organs, weakens the immune system and robs your energy because it stimulates stress hormones and interferes with the body's natural rhythms. Though it may sound extreme, I'm with Dr. Lipman in the belief that most people should get coffee out of their daily lives, particularly if they're stressed, exhausted or are having trouble sleeping.

### HOW HOOKED ARE YOU?

If you need a cup of coffee in order to get going in the morning, consider rethinking your relationship to caffeine. Keep in mind that caffeine is not just in coffee. It lurks in sodas, soft drinks, tea, some herbal teas, chocolate and even some medications, like Anacin and Excedrin. Always read the labels! There's even a little caffeine in decaffeinated coffee. We can always discuss options on the message board after class.

### DON'T GO COLD TURKEY.

You certainly don't have to go cold turkey when quitting coffee. It's best to taper off in small increments so as not to trigger the junkie-like withdrawal symptoms many people struggle with. The mission is to slowly dial down the caffeine so your body can acclimate over time.

Here's a painless strategy to try when you're ready to unhook from the caffeine drip:

**DAY 1:** Today, have your usual amount of coffee.

**DAY 2 - DAY 5:** Blend your coffee 50/50 with decaf (preferably certified organic).

**DAY 6:** Blend your coffee 25/75 with decaf (see note above)

**DAY 7:** Start drinking pure decaf or switch to green tea



*Adapted from Dr. Frank Lipman*