

I have dealt with fanaticism on two different occasions, both concerning the health message. I wish to share both instances that have affected me physically with the church, in the hopes of showing what taking extreme and fanatical stances on health principles can do to others...

I have always had tough menstrual symptoms every month for 15 years now, with only a handful of times where I wasn't bedridden, nauseated, vomiting, or in great pain to the point where it would be difficult to stand up and walk. In recent years, I learned about how different herbs that I could take that can help alleviate my menstrual symptoms for each month. I often enjoy taking ginger teas with lemon and honey, but with the intense pain, one month back in January of 2023, I found that juicing ginger and making a hibiscus tea with it and drinking a small dose daily was what helped me to have very minimal to no symptoms at all. Because of this, I was consistent in taking ginger for that month.

I was happy to share what I've done to have such a good cycle with other sisters because I understood some experienced similar issues as to mine, and wanted to let them know that what has helped me could help them too. When sharing about my use of ginger, I got a comment about taking it daily not being good, as stated somewhere in SOP (note, I was never given the quotation on that). I've heard from some others before that sister White used ginger, but brother White removed it from their household altogether. I also heard that ginger, among other spices, is to be used only when it is needed, not at all in food, and not on a regular basis.

I've held onto the comment addressed to me about me taking ginger daily in the back of my mind for several months, not saying anything back in response because since I haven't been taking ginger daily as I did before, my symptoms each month have left me feeling sick and in great pain again. Ginger is my medicine that has helped me with this issue...if I was not supposed to take ginger (or any herb/spice) daily, that wouldn't have any effect on what I need for it to do. For example, there were times when I waited to take ginger the first day I began to experience cramping and nausea, the ginger did not help me, and sometimes, I got so nauseated from the pain, I was not able to hold the ginger or any other food or drink down...to me, what would be the point to take something only when the issue comes up, if I've been dealing with these symptoms every month for 15 years?

Another instance of fanatical health practices I've experienced was when I struggled to eat at least just one meal a day because someone used sister White to the extreme and said that our stomachs should be shrinking and we should learn to eat minimally each day, given the times that we were living in. The serving sizes found on packages of products were what they enforced, and I followed this just to avoid being called gluttonous and intemperate. For instance, if the cereal box said one cup, that's what I would eat; if the bag of chips said 8 chips, that's what I would eat, and so on and so forth. The portion sizes were to be followed to the tee. I used to work out heavily; I enjoy heavy lifting and generally felt good about working out, which meant I

ate a lot more than usual for my body to burn, but because of those extremes, I sometimes struggled to fully finish one meal (praise the Lord I'm getting better with eating more as my body needs). Before, my appetite would be so nonexistent, that a handful of nuts would suffice for about two days, on top of dealing with overwhelming amounts of stress, overworking, and suffering with low amounts of sleep this individual also caused.

This is what fanaticism has done to me, and how it can effect others. It can harm others, not just spiritually but physically, and as God's people, we are to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Matthew 10:16. We are to be mindful of what others can eat and cannot eat...and something such as spices becoming such a big issue as it has, I wanted to share that this is what is the possible result of going too far with extremes. God is gracious, and kind, and will help each of us strive for perfection while saving every soul exactly where they are at.

I wish to share one of my favorite verses about the use of herbs and how God gave of them:

"He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth;" Psalm 104:14

Thank you and God bless :)