

A FREE INDEED COMPANION

The Hungry Days

The free companion pack for
The Fast That Breaks Chains

Everything nobody tells you about the three days before a fast, the day after, and what to pray while your stomach is loud.

Suzanne D. Burns

suzannedburns.com

A note before you start

Most people do not lose a fast in the middle. They lose it in the three days before it, when they eat like a condemned prisoner and then wonder why day one feels like the flu. Or they lose it on the far side, when they break a serious fast with a cheeseburger and spend the night regretting every decision they have ever made.

The middle is the part the book covers. This pack is the two ends, plus the thing you actually need at two in the afternoon on day four, which is not more teaching. It is words to pray when you cannot think of any.

Print it. Write on it. The trackers are meant to be marked up in pen, not admired.

Suzanne

Before you fast at all

Talk to your doctor first if you are pregnant or nursing, diabetic, underweight, taking medication that must be eaten with, recovering from surgery, or living with a heart condition or kidney disease.

If you have a history of an eating disorder, fasting is not your tool. There is no spiritual loss in choosing a media fast, a sugar fast, or a fast from something other than food. God is not withholding anything from you.

You do not get bonus points for landing in the hospital. That line is in the book because I mean it.

Part One: The Three Days Before

A fast starts before the fast. What you do on Friday decides how Monday feels. These three days are not about willpower. They are about lowering the volume on your body so your spirit can be heard over it.

Day minus three: decide and write it down

Pick the length and the type now, in writing, before hunger gets a vote. A fast with no end date is not a fast. It is a mood, and it will end the first bad afternoon.

Write one sentence naming what you are fasting for. Specific, not vague. Not "a breakthrough" but "my son to come home and stay home." You will read this sentence on day four when you cannot remember why you started.

I am fasting from _____ for _____ days, beginning _____.

What I am asking God for, in one sentence:

Day minus two: come down off the sugar and the caffeine

Almost every headache on day one and day two is caffeine withdrawal, not hunger, and it is entirely avoidable. Cut your coffee in half today. Cut it in half again tomorrow. Do the same with sugar.

This is the single most practical thing in this pack. People quit fasts on day two because they feel terrible and they assume the fast is doing it. It usually is not. It is the coffee.

What to eat these two days

- Smaller portions. Not less often, just less.
- Real food that grew somewhere. Vegetables, fruit, whole grains, beans, eggs.
- Water, more than feels necessary. Your body will thank you on day one.
- Drop the fried, the processed, the alcohol and the late-night snack now rather than later.

Day minus one: clear the calendar and tell one person

Look at the days ahead and move what can be moved. Do not begin a three-day fast the day before you host Thanksgiving. Your flesh will use the scheduling conflict as a legal argument and it will win.

Tell one person. Not a room, not the internet. One person who will ask you on day three how it is going and will not make a thing of it. Jesus warned about announcing fasts to be seen. He did not warn about accountability.

Eat a normal last meal, not a farewell feast. A big heavy meal stretches your stomach and makes the first twenty-four hours louder than they need to be.

The night before, pray this

"Father, I am setting this time aside for You and for _____. I am not buying anything from You and I am not impressing anyone. I am making room. When I am hungry, let it turn me toward You instead of toward the refrigerator. Holy Spirit, carry me through what I cannot carry. Amen."

Part Two: The Day After

The breaking of a fast is the part people get wrong, and it is the part that can genuinely hurt you. Your digestive system has been quiet. Waking it up with grease and volume is how a beautiful fast ends in an emergency room, and the longer you fasted the more this matters.

The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride. Ecclesiastes 7:8

The rule of halves

However long you fasted, take roughly half that long to come back to normal eating. Three days fasted, a day and a half easing back. Twenty-one days fasted, a full week.

The order to eat things in

When	What	What to stay away from
First few hours	Broth, diluted juice, herbal tea. Small amounts, slowly.	Anything solid. Anything cold and heavy.
Rest of day one	Soft cooked vegetables, a little soup, watermelon or cooked apple.	Meat, dairy, bread, fried anything, sugar.
Day two	Yogurt, eggs, steamed vegetables, rice, soft fruit.	Red meat, cheese, fried food, large portions.
Day three onward	Add protein back gradually. Chew everything longer than feels necessary.	The celebration meal. Save it for the end of the week.

If you fasted three days or fewer on water, one careful day is usually enough. If you fasted a week or more, do not improvise. Follow the table and be boring about it.

The spiritual half, which matters more

There is a second way to break a fast badly, and it leaves no physical symptoms. You end the fast and you end the seeking with it. The answer has not come yet, so you quietly file the whole thing under things that did not work.

Do not do that. Write down what you heard, even if it was nothing you can point at. Keep praying the same sentence for a while. Some of what a fast purchases does not arrive for months, and you will only recognize it later if you wrote down what you asked for.

What I heard, noticed, or want to keep watching for:

Part Three: What to Pray While You're Hungry

Cut these out, or fold the page and keep it in a pocket. They are short on purpose. Hunger makes people stupid, and I say that with love and from experience. When the fourth hour of an empty afternoon arrives, you do not need a paragraph. You need a sentence.

When the hunger hits

"Lord, this is the price. I am paying it on purpose, and I am paying it for _____. Take the ache and make it a prayer."

When you are irritable with everybody

"Father, this is my flesh, not my family. Forgive me. Give me the grace I am asking You to give them."

When you want to quit

"Holy Spirit, You are strong where I am not. I am not asking for willpower. I am asking You to carry this hour."

When nothing seems to be happening

"God, I am not fasting for a feeling. I am fasting because You are worth seeking whether I feel You or not. Keep me here."

When the old accusation comes back

"I am not earning anything. Jesus already paid. I am here because I want You, not because I owe You."

When you are praying for a person

"Lord, wherever _____ is right now, be there. Do what I cannot do and have never been able to do."

When you are tired to the bone

"Your strength is made perfect in my weakness. I am weak. Prove the verse in me today."

When you break it early by accident

"Father, I am not condemned. I am starting again right now, from this minute, with no shame in it."

When the breakthrough comes

"You did this. Not my discipline, not my hunger, not my worthiness. You. Thank You."

When it does not come

"I trust You with the timing. I am going to keep asking anyway, because that is what You told us to do."

Part Four: The 7-Day Fast Tracker

One line a day. Physical column is for what your body did. Spiritual column is for what you noticed, heard, or prayed. Do not skip the days that feel like nothing. Those are usually the ones worth reading back later.

Fasting for: _____ Started: _____

Day	Body	What I noticed or heard	Water
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

At the end of seven days, what I am still asking for:

Part Five: The 21-Day Fast Tracker

Three weeks is a different animal. Week one is your body complaining. Week two is usually the quietest and the hardest, because the novelty is gone and nothing has visibly changed. Week three is where most people report that something shifted. Knowing that in advance is half the battle.

Week One: the body argues

Day	Body	What I noticed or heard
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

Week Two: the quiet stretch

If you quit a 21-day fast, it will almost certainly be this week. Nothing is happening, you are used to being hungry, and the whole thing starts to feel pointless. It is not. Keep the line filled in even when the line says nothing.

Day	Body	What I noticed or heard
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		

Week Three: the turn

Day	Body	What I noticed or heard
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		

Part Six: The Breakthrough Record

This is the page you keep. Not the trackers, which get used up. This one. Every fast you ever complete goes on it in one line, and a few years from now it becomes the most persuasive document you own, because it is the record of what God actually did rather than what you remember Him doing.

I have watched this page change people's faith more than any sermon, because you cannot argue with your own handwriting.

Date	Length and type	What I asked for	What happened, and when

Before you close this

These pages are yours. Print them, write on them, lose them and print them again. Give them to somebody who needs them more than you do. There is no license and no catch.

Read this next

Done with This Cycle.

You have the weapon now. If what you keep fasting about is the same cycle coming around again, that book is the map for it. Fasting breaks the grip. The Restoration Roadmap deals with the root that keeps growing the thing back.

The rest of the Free Indeed books

- Fearless in Faith. Overcome anxiety, worry, depression and fear.
- Done with This Cycle. Break old patterns of addiction, bad habits and heartache.
- Soul Fight Club. Win the tug of war for your soul.
- The Fast That Breaks Chains. Practical biblical fasting for real-life miracles.
- Turning Toward Freedom. From arranged faith to a daily love match.

If you carry this work for other people as well as yourself, in a church, a shelter, a recovery ministry or a home, the other half of my books was written for you. Start with Rescue, Rebuild, Restore.

Where to find everything

Every free companion pack, the What's in the House devotional, and whatever I publish next lives at suzannedburns.com/fast and at suzannedburns.com.

At least a tithe of the author royalties from the Free Indeed books goes to Foundation House Ministries. Foundation House is my own ministry, and it is a maternity home for pregnant and parenting mothers in crisis. Your reading paid for something real before you ever finished this page.