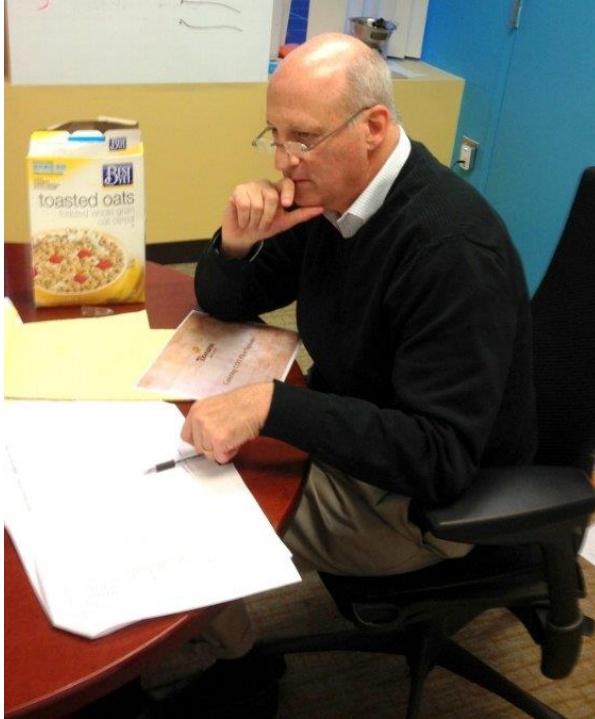


SNAP Challenge Day #2

September 14, 2013



I wanted to provide a quick update as I finish up Day Two of my SNAP Challenge.

In one sense, beginning the Challenge on Friday was an effective way to ease my body into the disruption of a new, constrained diet. I was busy enough at work that I was probably less aware than I would normally be upon initiating such a drastic change in routine. I kept my cereal close at hand to get me through the morning and the lentils and chickpeas provided a filling late lunch. By late afternoon, however, I began to re-think my strategy as I prepared for my family's traditional Yom Kippur observances. A day of fasting certainly allows me to stretch my resources. However, the next 24 hours, without the aid of carbo loading, may prove to be harder than past years.

There were a few key takeaways from my first day of the Challenge. First, the constraints as to how much I could eat in any one sitting turned me into a clock-watcher. I wanted to time my lunch for later in the day, but even with a busy schedule, it was impossible not to feel like the hours were dragging. When I finally ate lunch at around 2:30 p.m., it really felt like a reward, and I didn't take for granted the satisfaction that the meal provided.

That being said, beginning the Challenge on Friday, while it kept my mind occupied, did not help in the sense that I was around others who ate what they wanted, whenever they wanted it. I

usually don't notice or care when someone is eating around me, but today, it served to reinforce my present ascetic circumstances.

The distinctive ripping sound of someone biting into a fresh apple; the maracas-like percussion produced by a canister of Planters' peanuts; even the change in a person's voice that occurs when they speak with a lifesaver in their mouth – I was hyper aware whenever those around me consumed. At about 6:25 p.m., I even broke down and paid 40 cents to a colleague for a small handful of peanuts, and soon after, handed over a dime to another for an Atomic Fireball. For those keeping score, I'm down to \$5.05 remaining to supplement the groceries I bought at the start of the Challenge.

Not having coffee to start my day left me feeling sluggish in the morning and early afternoon. (Motivating myself to update this blog, for instance, was not easy, and the words aren't flowing as quickly without the aid of a caffeinated lubricant.) While I did enjoy the lentils and it proved filling, it's hard to say that it was the kind of "cravable" dish we talk about so much here at Panera. Without the elation or even mild sense of adventure around the food I consumed today, the meals felt very utilitarian. For the next week, beyond the hunger, I'm now bracing myself for another loss – the romance I normally associate with food.