

## Anita's Story – Be Careful What You Ask For

Be careful what you ask for. I thought I wanted clarity about what was causing my bouts of debilitating fatigue and brain fog. When I sorted it out, I thought it was the end of the world as I knew it. My food journal yelled at me in plain English that wheat was keeping me exhausted. I was my own source of data and I'd repeated the experiments many times. After a Suppers meeting, I was usually a little disappointed there hadn't been bread or dessert, but I never got that plunging fatigue after a meeting. Any morning that I allowed myself a bagel I was yawning by 10:00, barely able to prop my eyes open. When I went to an Italian restaurant, I simply could not eat just one piece of bread while waiting for my dinner. The world narrowed if I tried and it took incredible energy and concentration to resist that basket on the table. I could ruin an evening out trying to use will power to resist 62 cents worth of flour, salt and yeast.

I dutifully recorded my reactions, hoping that other explanations would emerge, chronic job stress, exhaustion from dealing with my teenagers, even chocolate would have been better news.

No. It was the wheat. How I feel is data and my body was telling the truth.

Before I tried giving it up, I asked other members for pointers on nutritional harm reduction, recommendations from friends who accomplished this feat. I'm including their suggestions in my story, maybe it will make things less daunting for somebody else in my situation.

- \* Be ready with delicious foods and don't count calories when you first go off wheat. You can think about calories later if you want to. Nuts, seeds, fruits, leftovers all work. Where I used to have a handful of crackers, I'd now grab a handful of almonds.
- \* Use ground almonds for quiche crusts. Just oil or butter the pie pan and swirl around ½ cup of almond meal so it coats the pan.
- \* There are some wheat-free breads at the whole food store that taste pretty good, especially if you toast them.
- \* The health food store also carries gluten free flours that work just fine for making gravies and biscuits if you can't face life without baked goods.
- \* Make pizza on flourless tortillas (but don't call it pizza if you have kids), also available at health food stores.
- \* Eat more protein and vegetables at the beginning of the day and see if that reduces cravings for baked goods later in the day.

I'm not saying these tips made it easy. I am saying doing these things made it *possible* to give up some of my favorite foods, the same foods that gave me a lift followed by debilitating fatigue. I miss my comfort foods less and less as I enjoy my new way of eating more and more. And I certainly don't miss nodding off in the middle of the morning after bagel brain fog roles in.