



Dr. Stephen Bailey



Rejuvenate your health with a safe, natural fast program at NW Naturopathic Clinic.

Portland's Fasting Guru: Dr. Stephen Bailey

By Alexa Meisler

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Spring cleaning for most includes organizing closets, taking a load of unused items to Goodwill and

maybe even a thorough top to bottom dust, vacuum and mop of the house. Spring cleansing on the other hand is a chance to take the same concept and apply it to your mind, body and spirit.

For 26 years, [Dr. Stephen Bailey](#), a doctor of Naturopathic medicine at [Northwest Naturopathic Clinic](#), has been facilitating juice fasts that offer a chance to awaken your spirit and expand clarity of consciousness, increase body awareness by developing improved mind-body communication, rejuvenate your health and detoxify by eliminating waste and harmful elements.

I participated in his Fall 2007 cleanse, and let me tell you, as someone who has done a few of these on my own, it's a completely different experience having a support team of other 'cleansers,' not to mention one of Portland's most well known naturopaths guiding you through the process.

This 13-day juice fast comes with many superior elements, such as Dr. Bailey himself, who offers three classes for the participants that focus on nutrition, fasting and health; a follow-up appointment; and a group of fellow fasters all taking part in the same journey.

"Having a shared goal in common and a support system breeds a higher success rate," Bailey explains. In fact, he estimates 98 - 99% of those who start his group fast complete it.

Dr. Bailey first fasted in 1968 and has continued to every year since then, has written *The Fasting Diet* and co-wrote *Juice Alive: The Ultimate Guide to Juicing Remedies* and is now in his 26th year of facilitating group fasts. The basic fast with Dr. Bailey lasts two weeks, but he has taken people 100 days or more over the years with continued juice fasts, water fasts and the master cleanse program.

The juice fast is broken down into three parts and begins with a three-day bulking period where you begin each day with a liver flush, and then eat, eat, eat! This period is the pre-fast diet, which includes a high fiber regime of fruits and vegetables — and a lot of chewing.

"Ninety percent of the work for this program is in the first three days in the form of non-stop eating, and can be the hardest part for some," Bailey notes.

This step of the fast is integral for many reasons: it cleans the digestive system, helps liver function, and helps prevent hunger during the second phase, the juice fast. This part consists of a lot of juicing and drinking of vegetables, primarily carrots, beets and celery. Tea and some fruit juice is also part of this portion. The fasting phase should last at least five days.

During this time, another important element is added: a colon cleansing in the form of a salt water flush, enema or colonic. Now, I know not many are thrilled with the thought of this, but it is an important facet in detoxifying and purging the body of toxins and waste. It also helps prevent headaches, fatigue and irritability during the fast. I opted to try all three and lived to tell the tale.

Dr. Bailey advises that the juice fast period is a great time for prayer and meditation, a time to reflect and allow mind-chatter to quiet: "The physical body is in communication with the mind and the spiritual needs of the individual. This is a time to think about your true life wants."

He continues, "There is a spiritual component to fast. Emotionally we get calmer. This is also a chance to help move us to healthier lifestyle. "

The post-fast or reintroduction diet is the final part of the experience. Dr. Bailey says the most important part of program is the reintroduction to foods; he provides a detailed schedule starting with fruits and vegetables, then cereals and grains, later fatty foods and finally high proteins.

Dr. Bailey advises to think about conscious consumption during this time because the body will have very recognizable reactions to foods you may be sensitive or allergic to. In fact, he says the one or two foods you are most looking forward to or even craving are probably the ones you should not be eating. Most common food sensitivities can include wheat or gluten, citrus, nightshade vegetables such as potatoes, peppers and tomatoes, and dairy products.

After completing a fast with the Dr. Bailey program, I wouldn't do it any other way. It is more than a fast — it is an experience, and chances are you will learn a lot about nutrition, food, health, your body, and just possibly, make some new friends along the way.

Dr. Bailey's 26th Annual Spring Cleanse is scheduled to begin on Thursday, April 17 and costs \$200 (plus the cost of juices) for first-time participants. Additional fasts are also planned for May, August and September. [Details and registration here.](#)

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