



Excerpt from *Changing the Face of Hunger*

Everyone has been very hungry at times. Fortunately, hunger lasting days or weeks is rare in the United States. Tony Hall has experienced it, but not due to poverty. While a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, he protested with a fast. He ate no food for 22 days when Congress ended some important work on global hunger. Read some of his account of that fast below. Then, complete the work your teacher assigns at the bottom of the page.

Physically and psychologically, the first week of the fast was the hardest. I was horribly hungry—I could say “in agony”—and getting weaker by the day. The hardest day of the fast came on Easter, which was my seventh day without eating. Our friends prepared a typical big American holiday dinner—turkey, potatoes, dressing, pie, cake. It drove me nuts. I had to leave them, go outside and take a walk, to get away from those wonderful aromas. I decided that if I could get through this day, I would be over the hump. I did, and I was.

The sensation of hunger faded in about a week. It’s as if the body gives up on getting food and stops demanding it. It was a revelation about the poor and

the hungry... whom I came to feel exceptionally close [with] as the fast went on. I now fully understood, in a way I never had before, a strange phenomenon I had witnessed during famines: starving children who refused to eat when food was finally offered to them.

The absence of hunger pangs did not mean I wasn’t feeling the

Words to Know

Exceptionally
Unusually

Revelation
Something surprising that becomes known

Famine
An extreme food shortage

Pang
A sudden, sharp pain

Phenomenon
An unusual fact or event

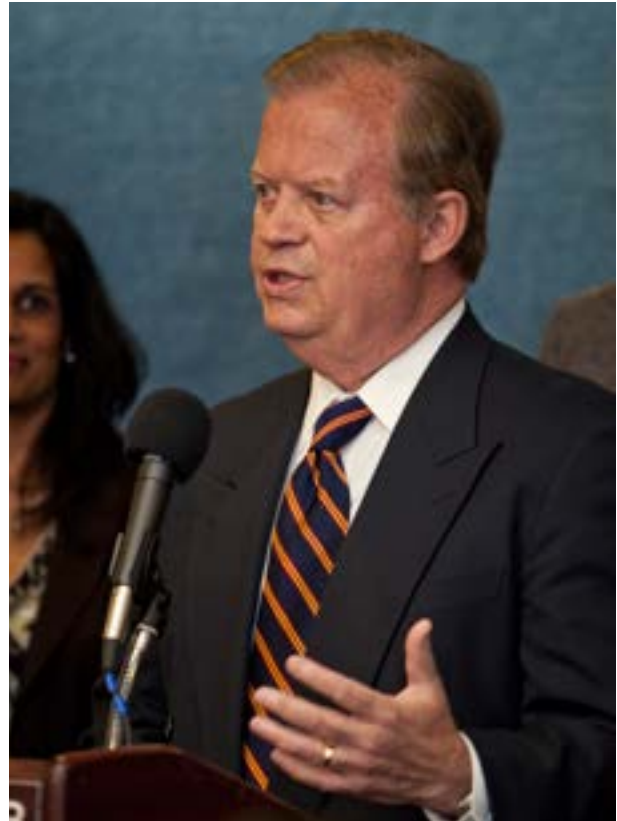
Psychologically
In a way relating to the mind



GET ACTIVE. SAVE LIVES.

physical effects of the fast, however. I'd wake up in the morning feeling fine. My head would be clear. I would think I had lots of energy. But after noon, I would fade. The energy would desert me and weakness would take over. I'd need to nap. Then, when I woke from the nap, I'd feel like I couldn't get up because I was so tired. Lacking the fuel of food, my body temperature apparently dropped, and I felt cold all the time. It also seemed my brain slowed down in the afternoon; I felt "dull." I thought of poor children who don't do well in school, who fall asleep in the afternoon, who become poor students because of poor nutrition.

Used by permission. *Changing The Face Of Hunger*, Tony Hall, 2006, Thomas Nelson. Nashville, Tennessee. All rights reserved.



Congressman Tony Hall fasted for 22 days.

© LAURA ELIZABETH POHL / BREAD FOR THE WORLD, CC BY-NC 2.0 (HTTPS://CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/LICENSES/RY-NC/2.0/), VIA FLICKR

Respond

Answer the following in complete sentences.

1 At the end of the first paragraph, Hall wrote, "I decided that if I could get through this day, I would be over the hump." What did he mean by that? Explain with details from the excerpt.



GET ACTIVE. SAVE LIVES.

2 From his fast, what did Hall learn about people experiencing real hunger? Include three facts from the excerpt in your answer.

3 Write a journal Imagine that you were to volunteer for the same fast to protest world hunger. Write fictional journal entries for the first, seventh, and fourteenth days of the fast. You should use the Hall excerpt to get ideas. However, write in your own words about what this fast might be like in your own life.