

What counts as an intoxicant?

Maybe the things that I don't regard as intoxicants are more serious than the things that I do see as intoxicants, because I notice them less. I notice much more precisely how many beers I have on any given day than how many coffees I have.

First: coffee.

I usually do not think of this as a serious intoxicant, but I do use a lot of it and I feel like I need it, to combat tiredness.

So what exactly does it do?

The first thing it supplies is a feeling of solidity. I had not really expected this although I realize now it's one of the reasons I prefer coffee to tea – tea has a much lighter feeling, even the high-caffeine sorts.

The hyped-up "really awake" feeling comes a while later, it's not an immediate effect. And it's not wakefulness, it's hyperactivity.

The feeling of "ah, now I'm awake" that accompanies the first cup is hardly physical when I look at it closely. There probably is a strong symbolic part to it, but I will need to look into that.

And then: food.

That feeling of solidity is important to me in eating as well. It makes me seek out filling (i.e. fatty) food rather than fruit or vegetables.

When I want to eat something filling, I sometimes resolve to eat some fruit instead. However, this does provide the solidity I want, and it does give permission for eating. I usually end up raiding the cookie jar quite soon after that. Time to try another pattern?

This realization does make me feel: "now that I know this, how can I stop it?", but this might be a bit premature. My usual reaction would be to try and stop eating those foods by pure will power. This time, I will first look into the process more closely and see what that does to my motivation.

Next

Next week, I will look more closely at my relationship with food, look at the process of it affecting my mood, try to arrive at a fuller appreciation of what food does to me and whether this is healthy (in a very broad sense) and see where there are opportunities for change.