



Fasting is voluntarily going without food, which many people do periodically for a variety of reasons. Fasting is completely different from experiencing hunger, the fear of being hungry, and food insecurity. Our hope is that through participation, you will emotionally feel love and support for people who are hungry, and also physically feel what it is like to not be able to eat when our bodies crave it.

Fasting Option – Participation Guidelines

- **Choose a length of time** for your fast. Please consider your health; you may wish to consult a doctor when choosing. Suggestions are by meal; one, two, or three meals. Stretch yourself if you can.
- **Choose a date** for your fast. This could be a day during National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week or another date that works well for you. Choose an average day where you are expected to do regular life things and yet allows you some time to focus your thoughts and reflect on your experiences.
- **Invite others to join you.** With others close to you joining you for this experience, there will be more opportunity for connection and to gain insights.
- **Choose a focus** for your fast. Select an area of hunger that is close to your heart or perhaps an area you want to see improved or learn more about. This would be something meaningful to you.
- **Consider donating** the amount you would have spent on food during your Challenge, to support local organizations who work to improve food security community wide.

Reflect and Share Your Experience

Through reflection and sharing your experiences with friends, family, and others, a real connection and desire to end food insecurity could be gained. We would love to hear about your experience, new-found realizations, or how you plan to help end hunger. Send us an email (director@willamettehungerchallenge.org) or share your thoughts on your social media platforms using #hungerchallenge. It will be wonderful to hear all that is discovered!

Pre-Challenge Reflections:

As you prepare for your fast, ask yourself some of the following questions.

- How long have you chosen to fast? How did you arrive at this length? Do you anticipate it will be easy or challenging to fast for this length of time?
- What day have you chosen to fast? Is this a day that you will be physically active, using your mind, or sedentary? Is there time in the day to focus your thoughts?

- Is there a particular focus for your fast / Why are you choosing to fast? For kids who are hungry? To show support for an agency that works to end hunger? For homeless people who don't know where their next meal will come from? In support of neighbors who lost everything in the wild fires? Try to put why you are fasting into words.
- Have you asked others to join you in fasting? If so, will you all be fasting at the same time? Do you have a time scheduled to reflect and share as a group after the fast? Maybe plan to share a fast breaking meal.
- What are you hoping to take away from your experience?

Mid-Challenge Check-In:

As you are fasting, check-in with yourself:

- How are you feeling? Have you noticed any mood changes, changes in energy level, or ability to perform at your best?
- Have you been able to focus your thoughts on your predetermined subject matter? If so, what are you discovering? If not, is there something preventing you from being able to focus your thoughts?

Post -Challenge Reflection:

Now that you've completed your fast, take a moment to reflect on your experience and share with others.

- Did you learn something new about yourself? Was this something you anticipated or did it surprise you?
- Did you notice any physical, mental or emotional changes during your fast? Would it have been difficult for you to perform well during a physical or mental test? What if you had to do those same tests after going without food for several days or without enough food for long periods of time?
- Were you able to focus your thoughts on the topic you chose? Did you discover something new concerning this matter? Did you discover a call to action?
- Has your level of gratitude, empathy, or compassion changed?
- How was your experience similar or different from others you know who fasted? If you participated with a group, were you able to share your experiences with each other? Was there a common feeling or experience among your group?
- Is there one thing in particular that you will take away from your experience?

Various organizations in the Willamette Valley work to alleviate hunger, food insecurity, and their root causes in our community. Links to many of these groups can be found on the [Willamette Valley Hunger Challenge](#) website. Take some time and learn what resources are available. Choose one or more that resonate with you, get involved, and give them your financial support.

