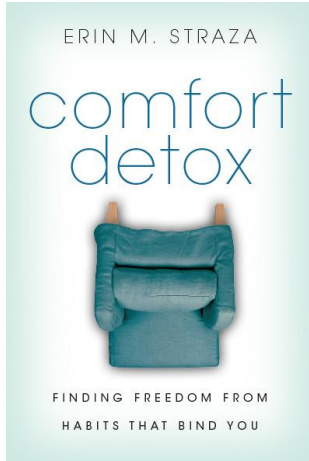




# Q & A



*Comfort Detox: Finding Freedom From Habits That Bind You*  
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*“Comfort Detox exposes the way our everyday complacencies keep us from seeing and responding to the needs of those both near and far. With compassion and conviction, Erin Straza shows us how we can and why we must break the habits that serve self rather than others.”*

— Karen Swallow Prior, author of *Booked* and *Fierce Convictions*

## Don't Get Too Comfortable

**Why do you think detoxing is so popular today? What does it say about our society?**

**Erin Straza:** People want freedom from the excesses they've become accustomed to. Small indulgences, over time, can wield great authority in our lives! There are countless detox programs available on the market today for food, drugs, relationships, stress, digital usage, and more. We are looking for ways to gain back some authority and agency to live more healthful lives physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Our vulnerability to overindulgence and our subsequent need for detoxing are part-and-parcel to our consumerist culture. We are conditioned to be always on the lookout for the latest and greatest thing that will meet our deepest felt need. This pursuit places the needs of self above all else; we want what we want, when we want it. Whatever the need of the moment—whether it be convenience, relational security, increased status, and so on—self-satisfaction is the driving factor underneath the surface. The popularity of detoxing shows that we know something is amiss in us, even if we can only diagnose the outward symptoms.

**What prompted you to write a book on detoxing from comfort?**

**Straza:** I was seeing patterns and habits in my life that were not life-giving to others or myself because I was being driven by a need to be comfortable. The more I explored my motivations, I began to see a far-reaching problem: living for personal comfort had infiltrated every aspect of my life—my time, my relationships, my life pursuits. The false comforts I sought never satisfied because God designed us to find our comfort in him alone.

In *Comfort Detox* I address the need we all have to detox from our comfort-addicted ways and run to God for the comfort we need so that true comfort—coming from God—can abound to people and places desperate for hope and healing.

**What does “comfort detox” mean?**

**Straza:** *Comfort Detox* explores the ways we live to maintain and expand our personal comfort relationally, emotionally, and culturally. Faulty sources of comfort lock us into self-focused and self-defeating patterns. When we seek true comfort from God, he fills us full so we can then be a comfort to others.

**In what ways do many of us avoid detoxing from our comforts? What are specific examples?**

**Straza:** We are really good at maintaining the status quo! One of the most common ways we stay locked into comfortable ways is in how we go about making decisions in daily life. Choices are made based on what's least disruptive to self. We act based on convenience or

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## Q & A



Erin Straza is a contemplative writer, heartfelt speaker, and redeemed dreamer. She is managing editor of *Christ and Pop Culture Magazine* and host of *Persuasion* podcast. As a freelance communications consultant, Erin helps organizations tell their stories in authentic and compelling ways. She lives in Illinois with her husband, Mike.

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what's safe or what will maintain the façade of perfection. All these things are comfort-driven: We don't want our schedules messed up or our physical health threatened or our reputation tarnished, so we say no to many things God may actually be calling us to participate in.

Relationships are another area driven by comfort. We keep people at arm's length out of fear that they will be too needy or that we will become too vulnerable. When people are hurting, it's so easy to send warm thoughts from afar rather than being present in the pain. Our refusal to engage a hurting world is all about maintaining a safe-minimum distance from pain; we want to be comfortable emotionally, not feeling too much. But this aim causes our hearts to grow numb and become dysfunctional. We may be comfortable, but that's only because we are growing more and more detached from life in all its mess and glory.

**In the first two sections of *Comfort Detox* you help readers work through their own patterns of staying comfortable and point them to God, who is our True Comfort. Part three is called "Comfort Set Loose." What does that mean?**

**Straza:** The third part casts a vision for life when it isn't ruled by comfort's lure. By turning away from pseudo comforts, we can fully receive God's pure comfort. We are then set loose to extend God's grace and mercy to a world desperate for freedom from the false comforts that never satisfy. I wanted to provide readers with a vision for the many ways this will work itself out in our lives.

**How do you hope readers respond to *Comfort Detox*?**

**Straza:** I hope readers

- awaken to the ways false comfort has lured us from living as God's comfort agents;
- discover how comfort addiction is dictating our daily lives, relationships, and life goals;
- learn effective ways of detoxing from pseudo comforts to revive our desire for the true comfort that comes from God alone; and
- find freedom from the habits that bind us to false comfort and steal away our ability to be God's comfort agents.