

# 3 Keys to Freedom From Emotional Eating

I once asked my email readers: What is your biggest weight-loss challenge? Emotional eating received *twice* as many votes as the No. 2 response.

When I weighed 240 pounds, I too ate to manage negative emotions. But during my 85-pound weight loss, I discovered freedom came down to three things:

**1. Courage to feel.** Most people who eat emotionally do so to escape negative emotions they don't want to feel. So, healing starts with taking an honest look at your eating behavior. Keep a food journal and pay attention to those times when you are eating when you aren't hungry. What is the emotion that you are feeling? Is it anger, depression, boredom, stress, unworthiness?

Whatever the emotions are, you must have the courage to stop burying them under food and face them.

**2. Willingness to trust.** Once you identify the emotions, you need faith to believe that you can handle them with God's help. In Psalm 46:1, you are assured that God is your refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

When I dealt with emotional eating, I used food as a substitute for God. So one of my first steps was to be willing to let go of my dependence on food and grab hold of God during emotional storms. It was the best decision I ever made, not only in my health but also in my peace of mind.

**3. Allowing God's power to work within you.** Ephesians 3:20 says, "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us." You have power inside of you to change! If

you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, then you have the Holy Spirit living inside of you, which is the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

The enemy deceives many into believing they are helpless victims with no power:

- He wants you to believe that you will never change.
- He doesn't want you praying.
- He doesn't want you praising God for what you have.
- He doesn't want you meditating on the excellencies of God.
- And he especially doesn't want you studying God's Word!

He knows that once you start doing those things, the power working within you will grow and you will no longer be open to his destructive suggestions. You will find that the comfort you were seeking is obtained best when you rely on God rather than food.

Through practicing spiritual disciplines like prayer, praise, worship and study of God's Word regularly, food will begin to resume its proper place your life and God can assume His proper place: first in *all* areas.

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify of God's healing power to end binge eating. She is the creator of the new online course "How to Stop Binge Eating." Charisma readers can get a special discount today with this coupon link.*

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# 10 Must-Dos for Middle-Aged Men

Some guys reach midlife, see more asphalt behind than in front, and panic. Midlife crisis mode. "The end is coming!" This doesn't have to be you. Midlife can be a time for purpose, meaning, re-evaluation and new energy.

Here are 10 must-dos for middle-aged men to help them finish well:

**1. Make health a priority.** Diet, exercise and how we deal with stress all go a long way to determine midlife vibrancy. It's no fun starting a big adventure only to stop after a mile. We know how to take care of our bodies; put that knowledge into practice.

**2. Escape the rat race.** The rat race puts extra stress on men already struggling with life. We need to escape from time to time. Take a spontaneous trip with your wife. Play hooky and spend the day having fun. Escape into your favorite music or novel. Reinvent.

**3. Regain your childlike joy.** Behaving like a child isn't always all bad! Avoid irresponsibility, but embrace childlike joy. In the eyes of child, the world has endless possibilities. Wake up with a gleam in your eye and joy in your heart. Determine to discover one new thing about the world every day.

**4. Make a pilgrimage.** Many men harbor a burning desire to explore, challenge limits, engage a quest and redefine who they are. What's your ultimate pilgrimage? What does your soul want to experience? Answer that question and plan.

**5. Become a mentor.** Success, mistakes, joy and heartbreak. Knowledge multiplies with experience. By midlife, it's time to

share. We can teach, volunteer, encourage and listen. The only skill necessary is the courage to step out.

**6. Discover a deeper purpose.** Sometimes life can grow stagnant, a repetitive loop in the same endless circle, disconnected and barely making do. Such thoughts can lead to depression, alcohol abuse, marital troubles and more. The first solution is to realize your need; that's the most difficult part. Once that happens, vigorously seek God's will.

**7. Avoid tragic mistakes.** There are many common pitfalls. Cheating, over-reaching financially, walking away from people or jobs we're invested in, giving in to despair. But nothing destroys like cheating. Don't even put yourself in a position to be tempted.

**8. Take leadership responsibility.** Wisdom comes with age and then the responsibility to share. There's a place that needs your leadership right now. Find it and step up.

**9. Gain appreciation.** We all fail when it comes to recognizing our blessings. In business, it's imperative to take stock. The same goes for our personal lives.

**10. The past is past.** We don't reach midlife without trauma. Life shapes us. It can build character or destroy it, leaving bitterness and heartache. The past is a resource, but the future is where hope lives.

***All Pro Dad** is Family First's innovative and unique program for every father. Their aim is to interlock the hearts of the fathers with their children and, as a byproduct, the hearts of the children with their dads. At , dads in any stage of fatherhood can find helpful resources to aid in their parenting. Resources include daily emails, blogs, Top 10 lists, articles, printable tools, videos and eBooks. From , fathers can join the highly engaged All Pro Dad social media communities on **Facebook, Twitter, YouTube** and **Instagram**.*

For the original article, visit .

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## 6 Reasons to Honor Thy Slumber

Guess what. Sleep is important. We've heard those words over and over again, but other than giving us a little more pep in our step, what's the big deal about sleep, anyway?

Are seven to nine hours of sleep really necessary? After all, there's so much to do every day and so little time! Isn't sleep deprivation why we have coffee in the morning and iced tea at lunch? We can sleep when we're dead, right? (Wrong. Read Revelation 21:3 and Revelation 22:5 if you think we'll just be kicking back on TempurPedic cloud mattresses in heaven.)

In case you've put "sufficient sleep" at the end of your priority list, here are six reasons given by the Harvard Women's Health Watch explaining why you should honor thy slumber:

**1. Learning and memory.** Sleep helps the brain commit new information to memory through a process called *memory consolidation*. In studies, people who'd slept after learning a task did better on tests later.

**2. Metabolism and weight.** Chronic sleep deprivation may cause weight gain by affecting the way our bodies process and store carbohydrates and by altering levels of hormones that affect our appetite.

**3. Safety.** Sleep debt contributes to a greater tendency to

fall asleep during the daytime. These lapses may cause falls and mistakes such as medical errors, air traffic mishaps and road accidents.

**4. Mood.** Sleep loss may result in irritability, impatience, inability to concentrate and moodiness. Too little sleep can also leave you too tired to do the things you like to do.

**5. Cardiovascular health.** Serious sleep disorders have been linked to hypertension, increased stress hormone levels and irregular heartbeat.

**6. Disease.** Sleep deprivation alters immune function, including the activity of the body's killer cells. Keeping up with sleep may also help fight cancer.

Perhaps you can relate to one or more of these statistics: A 2012 Centers for Disease Control study found that 40 million workers (30 percent of American adults) sleep fewer than six hours a day. In a separate study, 49.2 million people cited "concentrating on things" as the foremost reason why they experienced so much difficulty sleeping.

Worry, studies show, is one of the primary distractions keeping Americans up at night. Fears about tomorrow, anxiety about 10 years from now, regrets about yesterday or what we just ate for dinner—worrisome thoughts will crawl onto our pillowcases and try whispering into our ears throughout our lives. But thankfully, the Bible reveals how we can rid ourselves of these wretched bed bugs and welcome back our dreams.

Not long ago I was lying in bed, unable to sleep because I was, well, "concentrating on things." I was thinking of my family and how much I loved them, when out of the shadows, the notorious sleep-stealers, Dread and Fear, crept into my mind and commenced their assault on my peace.

I began to worry about everything, from my family's health to

how I could overhaul each of our diets to be as organic and toxin-free as possible. I began to imagine what would happen if I suddenly lost one of them, as I did my father a few years ago. Selfishly, I wanted to do everything I could to help them remain well so I wouldn't have to endure the grief and pain of an untimely death ever again. And selfishly, I thought I could extend their lives by singlehandedly changing the way they ate and exercised.

Then I thought about this verse describing Peter in prison:

"The night before Peter was to be placed on trial, he was asleep, fastened with two chains between two soldiers. Others stood guard at the prison gate" (Acts 12:6, NLT).

James, the brother of John, had just been slain with the sword, and his execution so pleased the people that King Herod Agrippa promptly had Peter arrested as well and placed under the watch of 16 armed guards. (Sixteen guards seems a bit excessive to me!)

One profound word describes Peter the night before the trial that could result in his violent death: *asleep*—a word that, in Greek, could also be translated as "be dead." Here, Peter is at the mercy of four squads of Roman soldiers, knowing that the dawn will likely usher in his final hours on earth, and he's sleeping like a rock—he's so calm that he appears dead!

But he isn't dead. He's slumbering soundly in a cradle of supernatural peace because he knows that His Father is sovereign, that He has a God-glorifying plan for Peter and that He's taking care of him until the end, whenever He ordains that end to be.

When the angel arrived to free Peter from prison, he had to strike Peter on the side to wake him. That is the kind of shatterproof peace I pine for. That is the kind of unbreakable confidence I desire. That is the kind of incomprehensible faith God yearns for us to end our days with as we soak up His

goodness and doze off into our dreams.

Yes, there are family feuds, work worries, predators, pathogens and a thousand other dangers that can upset our peace and disrupt our joy in a minute. But there is only *one* almighty God who is infinitely more powerful than any diagnosis, addiction, weapon or prison cell. And He loved you enough to send His only Son to shed His sinless blood for you.

Let Him take full control of your situation and put your fears to rest. Sleep soundly, and listen for the footsteps of angels as the Lord displays His faithfulness.

**Diana Anderson-Tyler** is the author of *Creation House's Fit for Faith: A Christian Woman's Guide to Total Fitness* and her latest book, *Perfect Fit: Weekly Wisdom and Workouts for Women of Faith and Fitness*. Her popular website can be found at [www.dianataylor.com](#), and she is the owner and a coach at *CrossFit 925*. Diana can be reached on *Twitter*.

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## Why Is Men's Discipleship So Urgent?

Here is a collection of some of my favorite reflections on men's discipleship that I've posted on Facebook:

### **Why Reaching Men Is So Urgent: An Example**

Recently, my father-in-law and I had lunch. Our waitress, Stephanie (disguised name), seemed a little down so I struck up a conversation. Her car wouldn't start and, not having much money, she was overwhelmed. She is 26 years old, a single mom with 6- and 8-year-old boys, and has no family in Orlando. The

father of her children isn't in the picture—he's a bad actor. So she's left to raise two sons without a father figure by earning tips. She has a younger brother who, without a positive father figure, is on the cusp of becoming a bad actor too. So I told her about the work we do with men and gave her a copy of *The Man in the Mirror* for him.

When we said grace over lunch, I invited her to join us. She did, and I sensed that God encouraged her heart. What a perfect example of why God wants us to disciple men. Experiences like this are why we can never, and will never, tire or lose our passion to help evangelize and disciple men. The mission of "men's discipleship" is for all of the broken people, like Stephanie and her sons, left in the wake of misguided men. Those men have no idea of the destructive forces they are setting in motion that will devastate multiple generations. That's why we must urgently help every church disciple every man.

### **Are We Trying to Solve the Wrong Problem?**

The "men problem" has become a crisis that is virtually out of control. The collateral damage among families is staggering. Men under 40 are especially vulnerable to an alien worldview that is gutting the institutions of marriage and family. Our government agencies, social sector organizations and businesses are overrun trying to cope with the downstream damage of an increasingly fatherless, angry and dysfunctional generation.

By all means, let's continue helping single moms, pregnant teenagers and fatherless boys. But we'll never solve these "symptomatic" problems without treating the underlying disease—the cause—that men don't understand biblical manhood. If you are trying to solve the wrong problem, you can only succeed by accident. Behind virtually every human tragedy, you will find the failure of a man. No problem we need to be working on is more important than men's discipleship.

## **The Cure for Everything Starts With Men**

When my mother was diagnosed with advanced stage 4 cancer, she decided to treat the pain but not the disease. In many ways, that's what we're doing with our mega-problems—like divorce, fatherlessness, domestic abuse, the explosion of pornography, metal detectors in schools, rampage shootings, Wall Street corruption and the normalization of sin on TV, to name a few.

However, behind virtually every sad story, you will find the failure of a man—and he hates himself for it. Can you think of anything that has more potential to solve the problems we face than getting men right through discipleship?

## **So Much Depends on Healthy Men**

- If you want to restore healthy marriages, restore healthy men.
- If you want to restore healthy families, restore healthy men.
- If you want to restore healthy churches, restore healthy men.
- If you want to restore healthy communities, restore healthy men.
- If you want to restore healthy men, take a man under your wing and disciple him into the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus.

Make sure you and your church are treating the underlying disease, not just the pain it causes.

## **Anything Less Than Discipling All Your Men Is a Moral Failure**

Along with my colleagues, I've spent 25 years studying how churches can disciple *all* their men—not just that small percentage who will participate in “men's only” activities. Where did we ever get the idea that any more than a small fraction of men would ever be interested in joining a men's only ministry? Perfectly executed, you might involve 25

percent of your men, tops. But what about men that are part of the worship team, teach middle school boys, park cars, drive the bus or usher? How do they become strong disciples?

Are they excluded because they're not part of the men's ministry? This is the big idea: However many men you have in your church, that's the size of your ministry to men. We call it "all-inclusive ministry to men."

How are men doing in your church? Do you need to shift your paradigm? Anything less than a plan to disciple all your men is a moral failure.

### **The Men God Wants Us to Engage**

You can see them sitting next to you at any traffic light in America. The pace has numbed their senses. They don't get enough rest. They're always on the fly. They rarely reflect. They do not often sense the presence of God.

Ironically, they spend decades getting what they want, only to find out it doesn't make them happy. They have success but no peace, things but no pleasure, meaningful work but no gratitude for it, money but no vision to serve others, and relationships but no time to enjoy them. They are unbalanced—unstable, actually—and a high risk to themselves and their families. These are men Jesus had in mind when He said, "Go and make disciples."

So, when you come across a man like this, reach out. I did this yesterday and offered a man a copy of *Is Christianity for You?* He thanked me profusely and said, "You know, this is timely. Recently I've been thinking about my own mortality and what's comes after. I really need this."

You just never know! God is right now preparing some of the men to whom you and I will speak to today. They are aching to find "the way."

## **We'll Never Disciple Men if We Don't Do This**

Jesus modeled a foolproof way to bring men to spiritual maturity. It's for already mature men to take men younger in their faith under their wings and show them the ropes.

Not long ago, I mentored a young man in his late 20s. As with so many younger guys, he grew up in a dysfunctional home, so he'd never seen "normal." On our fourth visit—long enough for him to size up whether or not he would trust me—he sat down and blurted out, "I have a mediocre business, a mediocre marriage and a mediocre relationship with God."

See why disciples cannot be mass-produced?

We can't just enroll men in a class or get them to attend our event and expect them to "get it." That's a good start, but not enough to complete the mission. No, we're also going to have to get our hands dirty—every mature guy. We're going to have to spend personal time with these men, one at a time, until they no longer have to guess at what normal looks like. You'll never actually make a mature disciple until you do this.

**Patrick Morley** is founder and CEO of *Man in the Mirror*. After building one of Florida's 100 largest privately held companies, in 1991, he founded *Man in the Mirror*, a nonprofit organization to help men find meaning and purpose in life. Dr. Morley is the best-selling author of *The Man in the Mirror*, *No Man Left Behind*, *Dad in the Mirror*, and *A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines*.

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# The 5-Minute Depression Cure

I was feeling down recently. My throat hurt from coughing, my nose was stuffy, and my head ached. I was dwelling on how bad I felt.

And then I looked over at my husband, Mike. He had been nursing me for the past couple of days, and I know he was tired too. I really appreciated what he had done for me. After I told him thank you, I said, "Being married to you makes me praise God more."

Instantly, my spirit lifted as I started thinking about all the other things for which I wanted to praise God. A psychiatrist once said that most people he had encountered with depressive and neurotic disorders almost always were faultfinders; their thoughts centered around what they've lost or what they lack.

But praising God and having an attitude of gratitude helps you focus on what you've gained and the abundance you have in Him. That's certainly a better place to live mentally, wouldn't you agree?

Here is a list of blessings God has given you in Christ Jesus, taken from Ephesians 1:

1. He has blessed you with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.
2. He has chosen you in Him before the foundation of the world, that you should be holy and without blame before Him in love.
3. He has adopted you as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself.
4. He has redeemed you through His blood.
5. He has forgiven you of sins.

6. He has given you the riches of His grace in all abundance and prudence.
7. He makes known to you the mystery of His will.
8. He has given you an inheritance.
9. He sealed you with the Holy Spirit as a guarantee.
10. He made you alive in Christ.
11. He has given you His peace.
12. He has given you access to Him in Christ.
13. He made you a fellow citizen with the saints and the household of God.

Meditating on the list above often should help lift your spirit, transporting you into God's presence. Depression is simply the spirit of heaviness, and God has given us the garment of praise for a heavy spirit. It's time to put it on!

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, Kimberly Taylor can testify to God's healing power to end binge eating. She is the creator of the new online course "How to Stop Binge Eating." Charisma readers can get a discount today with the coupon code: Charisma.*

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## **Your Children: Why You Shouldn't Mix Compliments**

# With Criticism

Several years ago, my son and I had a brief conversation that has really stuck with me. It went something like this:

My son: Were you there for the first quarter of my game, Dad?  
I started!

Me: I didn't get back into town and to the game until the second quarter ... but you did great!

My son: Oh.

Me: But you really need to start eating better.

My son: [Silence.]

So, what was wrong with what I said? Well, he understood my flight was late and so I missed the first quarter. And my compliment was good. The "but" was the problem. Instead of just praising him for his accomplishment, I criticized him for his eating habits. And that criticism crushed the compliment.

Looking back, I realize that the words I had spoken weren't the same words my son heard. The moment I said, "But you really need ... ," what my son heard was, "What you did was good, but not quite good enough."

So, what did I take away from this experience?

**First, I learned that compliments should be strong and specific.** Saying "Great job" or "Good work" is a good start when complimenting. But it's even better to say something like, "I'm so proud that you made the starting team. You persevered and worked really hard to get there."

**Second, I learned that criticism should not be mixed with a compliment.** Criticism can be so loud to the listener that he won't even hear a compliment when they are spoken at the same

time.

**Third, I learned that it's important to compliment exponentially more than criticize.** Mark Twain once said, "I can live for two months on a good compliment." Giving your child a strong compliment can greatly inspire and propel him forward. Criticizing your child, although necessary at times, can quickly take the wind out of his sail.

What is a compliment you can give to your child today? Please leave your ideas in a comment below.

*Mark Merrill is the president of Family First. For the original article, visit .*

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## **Is Stephen Harper's Canada Israel's New Best Friend?**

With the Middle East in turmoil, Europe moving backward and the United States fatigued from years of war and recession, Canada has emerged as a staunch supporter of Israel. At a time when Israel is routinely singled out for condemnation, Canada has been at the forefront of those defending Israel and criticizing its enemies.

This outspokenness comes amid the growing economic and political clout of Canada, a country that is traditionally accustomed to keeping a low profile internationally. While Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper embarked on his first trip to Israel, from Jan. 19-22, the Jewish state rolled out the red carpet for him. Has Israel found a new best friend?

"[Harper] really understands the importance and moral

justification for a Jewish state. He gets it," Rabbi Philip Scheim of Toronto's Beth David Synagogue, who is traveling as part of Harper's delegation to Israel, told .

Since World War II, Canada's foreign policy has centered on multilateralism and participation in international organizations. But Harper has moved beyond those traditional corridors and has focused on a stronger and more independent Canadian foreign policy.

Part of this new independent foreign policy has been supporting Israel, an often-unpopular position around the world. Immediately upon taking office in 2006, Harper bucked world opinion and supported Israel in its war against the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah. This outward support has continued in every military engagement Israel has been involved in since.

Canada has also supported Israel in the U.N., joining only a handful of small nations and the U.S. in voting against upgrading the Palestinians to nonmember observer state status in 2012 and repeatedly voting against resolutions condemning Israel.

On Iran, Harper has aligned more closely with Israel's position than with the positions of some of its allies in Europe and the U.S. In 2012, Harper cut diplomatic ties with Iran and expelled Iranian diplomats from Ottawa, Canada's capital. More recently, Canadian Foreign Minister John Baird said he was "deeply skeptical" of the interim nuclear deal with Iran and reaffirmed that Canada would maintain its sanctions against Iran.

These positions have come with some costs for Canada. In a shocking outcome in 2010, Canada lost a bid for a seat on the U.N. Security Council. Some speculated that Harper's strong pro-Israel stance might have played a role in straining relations with the U.N.'s large Islamic bloc.

“This is really something we have not seen before, a prime minister of Canada taking a really strong position at a great political cost. He knows that this could really hurt him in some areas, but he doesn’t care, because this is what he really believes,” Scheim told .

Harper, an evangelical Christian who belongs to the Colorado-based Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, has also come under fire from critics who claim that his faith influences his foreign policy.

“My sense is that there may be an element of religious connection [to Israel]. But that is certainly not all of it; I think it also has to do with his sense of the world, his sense of justice and understanding of history, especially Jewish history,” Scheim said.

But Canada, like its American and European allies, still has a vocal anti-Israel movement within the country, particularly on college campuses and in certain media outlets.

In 2005, Toronto’s York University became the first school to host “Israel Apartheid Week” (IAW), and its student union, the largest in Canada, voted last year to divest from Israel. IAW events have also spread to other Canadian universities.

Harper’s recent selection of Vivian Bercovici, who is Jewish and has been a vocal supporter of Israel, to be Canada’s next ambassador to Israel has also drawn some criticism in the Canadian media. In an interview with Baird, CBC anchor Evan Solomon questioned whether it is appropriate to appoint a pro-Israel Jew to be the ambassador to Israel.

“Vivian Bercovici is Jewish, so there are going to be some questions. Why not appoint someone who doesn’t even have the perception of any kind of bias [in favor of Israel]?” Solomon asked.

Yet despite the criticism of Harper’s pro-Israel stance,

Shimon Fogel, CEO of Canada's Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, credits Harper for making support for Israel a mainstream position in Canada.

"Adopting those positions on Israel is what a mainstream party should look like in the eyes of most of the Canadian electorate today," Fogel told .

This support has shown itself in the positions of the leaders of Canada's two main opposition parties, the centrist Liberal Party and the center-left New Democratic Party (NDP).

"Yes, the Liberal Party will have Israel's back—but not because it's in our political interests to do so at home, but because it is the right thing to do on the world stage," Liberal Party leader Justin Trudeau recently told a crowd of 500 people at Beth Tikvah Synagogue in Toronto, the *Jewish Tribune* of Toronto reported.

Meanwhile, NDP leader Thomas Mulcair has strong Jewish ties. Mulcair's wife is a French Sephardic Jew whose parents are Holocaust survivors, and his children are being raised Jewish. Mulcair has described himself as an "ardent support of Israel in all instances."

Adding to their credentials, both Trudeau and Mulcair have also visited Israel before.

"The opposition parties are very close to the position of the Conservative government [on Israel]. But it has to be recognized that this government [Harper's Conservative Party] established that benchmark," Fogel told .

Amid the political implications, one aspect of Harper's trip that may be overlooked is the economic component. Like Israel, Canada has successfully weathered the global economic crisis over the past five years and has invested heavily in high-tech areas.

“One of the things we have done over the last decade has tried to broaden the base of support for Israel. We have spent a lot of time to helping foster interest and engagement of the private sector in seeing Israel as a high-tech destination. There has been a ton of partnerships and investments from the private sector,” Fogel said.

Joining Harper on the trip to Israel are 30 of Canada’s top business executives, including billionaire real estate and media moguls David Asper and Albert Reichmann, as well as Air Canada CEO Calin Rovinescu.

Upon touching down in Israel for the first time, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu greeted Harper and praised him as “a great friend of Israel and the Jewish people.”

“I think he has taken a moral stand worthy of admiration, and I welcome him on behalf of the Israeli government and on behalf of all the citizens of Israel,” Netanyahu said, the *Jerusalem Post* reported.

At a time when few countries around the world come to Israel’s defense, Rabbi Scheim believes the trip is an opportunity for Israel to finally express its appreciation for Harper.

“He is very well-known in Israel,” Scheim told . “You go to the U.S., nobody knows who the prime minister of Canada is, but in Israel, the whole country knows him, and I am very proud to identify with him.”

*For the original article, visit .*

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# A Complicated Matter: America's Support for Israel

A retired Army general and former high-ranking official in the Obama administration recently spoke at a well-known American university. During the questions following his remarks, he was asked by a student why 25 percent of U.S. foreign aid goes to **Israel**.

The general stumbled around and gave no real answer other than, "It's complicated."

What he did not say was that the premise of the question was wrong to start with because the percentage of U.S. foreign aid to **Israel** is nowhere near 25 percent. He also failed to list the numerous reasons that America's financial assistance to **Israel** is important not only to Israel, but to the USA. As a result of his lack of response, the students left the auditorium thinking that 25 percent of U.S. foreign aid goes to Israel and that there is no good explanation for it.

Whether the general's less-than-positive response was deliberate or not, this exchange is a perfect example of the effect of misinformation. One student in attendance was deeply troubled by the exchange and the reality that he, too, did not know how to adequately answer the question. He immediately began preparing himself to be able to explain the importance of American support for Israel in the future.

The fact is that only 6 percent of U.S. foreign aid goes to Israel. By law, 75 percent of that money is spent in the United States, thus creating jobs and boosting America's defense industry.

In return for the remaining foreign aid that is not spent in the U.S., one could argue that the United States' military, intelligence and homeland defense benefit in substantial ways.

Israeli battlefield innovations have helped the United States dramatically improve both its equipment and tactics. Increasingly, U.S. homeland security and military agencies are turning to Israeli technology to solve some of their most vexing technical problems. Israel has also provided invaluable intelligence and training to U.S. forces in the region.

### **A Stable Ally in a Turbulent Region**

Some skeptics might ask why Israel has this special relationship with the U.S. and not some other country in the **Middle East**. The answer is simple: No other country in the Middle East advances America's interests like Israel. While the rest of the Middle East vacillates between dictatorships and revolution, Israel has proven to be our most stable and vital ally in the region.

Though America clearly faces a tough budgetary environment, America's foreign aid to **Israel** helps us to confront major threats abroad. It is vital in helping Israel meet the growing challenges of a region in turmoil, a potential nuclear Iran, Hamas rocket attacks from Gaza, and a resurgent Hezbollah in Lebanon armed with more than 55,000 rockets and missiles. These growing challenges are also threats to the United States, another sworn enemy of the radical elements seeking Israel's destruction.

America also supports **Israel** because of the two nations' shared values. Commitment to democracy and human rights, the rule of law, freedom of religion, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly are all fundamental values shared by the two countries. Like the United States, Israel has an independent judicial system that safeguards the rights of individuals. No other Middle Eastern country has that degree of democracy and freedom.

And last but not least, the people of Israel love and support the United States. They weep with us when we weep, and they

celebrate our achievements. This stands in strong contrast to the rejoicing that took place in many Arab streets on 9/11 and the pronouncements of judgment on America as the “big Satan” when disasters strike.

The case for American support for Israel is strong. But it does not stop with geopolitical arguments.

### **Spiritual Blessings**

When God initiated His plan of world redemption, the first thing He did was to establish a people through whom He would carry out His plan and through whom He would bless “all the families” of the world. This nation was created miraculously, as Sarah was well beyond childbearing years, and would be His special people, chosen to be the vehicle of His redemptive plan.

For that reason, God promised Abraham that He would bless those who blessed this chosen people. He knew that if we blessed the people of Israel, we were siding with God and His plan.

To oppose them was to oppose God Himself.

We can be certain that the United States has been blessed because of its financial assistance and close partnership with Israel. This blessing is at risk, due to some actions and policies by the current American administration. But the real challenge is how the next generation of American leaders will come to understand the strategic, financial and spiritual benefits of our support of Israel, given the misinformation on many college campuses.

It will only happen if someone gives them the answer before the question is asked.

**Susan Michael** is the U.S. director for the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem and creator of the online resource

at .

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# The Secrets to Losing Stubborn Fat

Muffin top, saddlebags, trouble areas? Every woman (and even some men) know and dread these terms.

No matter how much exercise, how many diets or how many magic pills people try, certain areas have stubborn fat that always seems to prevail. That is because this fat is, in fact, biologically different.

Meet beta and alpha receptors. While there are many different substrates of these receptors, we will only focus on one. The one concerning the trouble areas contain a higher concentration of alpha-2 receptors. Simply speaking, epinephrine is the hormone that stimulates lipolysis (the breaking down of fat for use as free fatty acids). Epinephrine does this by binding to receptors on cells.

Beta-receptors are responsible for binding with epinephrine, resulting in lipolysis. However, alpha-2 receptors are responsible for inhibiting lipolysis. Typically, women have higher percentages of these receptors in their lower body region than men. Since excess estrogen can cause higher amounts of these alpha-2 receptors, getting the body's hormones under control can be an effective way of controlling those stubborn fat areas.

Let me make it clear that estrogen is not in itself bad. When functioning properly, it in fact can help with fat metabolism. For example, estrogen has been shown to enhance the production

of epinephrine, which can increase the activity of HSL (hormone sensitive lipase) which is the hormone responsible for fat tissue breaking down for fuel. However, hormones are always in a delicate balance and one must remember the body is always fighting for a state of homeostasis (perfect balance).

Therefore, if one could keep the hormones in balance, there would be the healthy amount of fat storage in the needed areas. Some ways to do this are by trying to limit the amount of estrogenic substances found in food supplies, such as petroleum, a chemical-based fertilizer. Be aware of things such as birth control pills or the BPA found in some plastics that can act as estrogen. Try to locate grass-fed beef and poultry to avoid the hormones that are often fed to our livestock and found in our food supply. Of course, a balanced diet and exercise always has a healthy affect on our hormonal system, so keep practicing a healthy lifestyle as well.

In addition, poor blood flow has also been shown to make those stubborn areas harder to reach. This is basically because poor blood flow doesn't allow for the needed hormones to successfully get to the fat or to transport the mobilized fat away from the fat cell so it can be used elsewhere. Therefore, during exercise keep blood flow in the target area by working a complete muscle group before moving on to the next one.

As frustrating as stubborn fat is, know that there are some steps you can take to help eliminate it, even though it seems nature is against it. Always remember that consistency is the key to successful, long-term fat loss.

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For the original article, visit .

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# 7 Ground Rules to Becoming Fathers of the Future

Parenting children is such a mammoth responsibility. From infant through adulthood, children rely on their parents in more ways than the pocketbook. While no one is the perfect parent, certain parenting behaviors have serious negative effects on children.

For example, studies show poor parenting can lead to higher risk for psychological disorders, academic performance problems, depression and low self-esteem, violence and behavior problems, failure to thrive, problems with the law, and poor social adjustment.

Gulp.

I would add that absent fathers leave girls and boys without a role model for how the family unit is supposed to work, how to have a healthy loving marriage, and how a man lives out his faith in good times and bad. This has devastating impact on our economy.

The kids are watching ... waiting ... learning. The question is how, what, when and where should you be teaching them?

Here are the 7 ground rules to becoming fathers of the future:

**1. Be a good shepherd.** First, for a baseline understanding of fathering, let's look at John 10:11-13, where Jesus teaches a powerful parenting concept comparing the "good shepherd" and the "hired hand."

*"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life*

*for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.”(John 10:11-13)*

From this metaphor, there are at least two major thoughts we can apply to fathering:

- **Accept responsibility and be available.** Don't act like a hired hand and be absent when they need you the most. Jesus said the good shepherd is willing to lay down his life for his sheep. If you act like a hired-hand, your children will be vulnerable to danger.
- **Look out for your children.** A good shepherd, or father, is on the lookout for danger, sharing his experience while the sheep are grazing unaware of the worldly enemy.

**2. Be a role model.** Remember “wysiwyg” (what you see is what you get)? The same goes with your kids. One doctor I know says the key to getting your kid to do anything is to do it yourself. Want your kids to eat healthy? Eat healthy. Want them to lead a life of faith? Show them. Start by living it in your own life so your kids can see it in action. Demonstrate your commitment and the value you place in an ongoing relationship with God.

**3. Set the stage.** Throughout your child's life, your parenting will go through phases, morphing according their age and stage in life. These are the parenting stages and associated roles:

- **Infant = Servant.** Your primary role is to be a servant while your children grow from infant through young childhood.
- **Youth = Trainers.** You will teach and train your child from a young age through adolescents about how life works, the family system, biblical and academics.

- **Teenager = Coach.** You become more of a coach around the teenage years, mentoring instead of force-feeding.
- **Adult = Friend.** If all goes well, after your child leaves the home, they will look to you as a friend, and capable advisor.

**4. Build relational capital.** If you invest *time, talk, and touch* throughout your parenting, you will make deposits into a relational bank account with your children. This relational capital gives children the freedom to communicate openly about issues, be honest about problems and trust your parenting.

- **Time**—Make time to spend with your kids.
- **Talk**—Talking often involves the practice of listening more than speaking.
- **Touch**—Your kids need to “feel your presence.”

**5. How should you teach?** Do you punish or parent? I suggest parenting through explaining your experience with consequences. With proper warning, discipline when appropriate. But don't be the heavy hand that dishes out punishment. Discipline guides and corrects. Punishment penalizes and rejects.

- “Fathers, do not provoke your **children** to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:3)
- “Fathers, do not exasperate your **children**, so that they will not lose heart.” – (Col. 3:21)

**6. What should you teach them?**

- **The Bible.** You need to know the scriptures that apply to daily living, and so do your kids. 2 Timothy 3:16 says “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...”
- **What's important.** The most important commandment is found in Deuteronomy 6: 5-7, “Love the Lord your God

with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children.”

**7. When and where should you teach them?** The Bible specifically tells us to teach our kids about God during four times and locations: when you wake up, when you go to sleep, when you're at home, and when you're traveling. These are four times when we are not busy with work or school, play time or with friends.

*“Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”(Deut. 6:7-8)*