

2 Big Excuses That Could be Keeping You Fat

All of us know that being in good physical shape is important for a number of reasons that could easily compose an entire article. A few primary reasons health and fitness professionals encourage patients and clients to exercise regularly is because doing so reduces the risk of injury in daily activities, prevents certain cancers, reduces the risk of heart disease, promotes better sleep, reduces anxiety and depression, strengthens the bones and immune system, helps with weight loss and weight control, increases energy levels, and improves confidence.

And yet, while the benefits of working out are vast and indisputable, many Americans still maintain sedentary lifestyles, inconsistent exercise routines, and frankly, apathetic attitudes and an unwillingness to change. As Christians, this is purely unacceptable as **the Bible clearly commands us to honor our bodies as dwelling places of the Holy Spirit.**

First Corinthians 10:31 says:

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (NIV)

My aim over the next few weeks is to highlight some of the excuses I hear most often from people whose workout routines are infrequent, ineffective, or even nonexistent. (I’ll save the excuses people give for eating poorly for another series!)

In this article, I will be focusing on two excuses that I am classifying under the umbrella term, **“Personality Blame.”** Personality Blame encompasses those excuses that are derived from an individual’s perceived inherent and unchangeable aversion to exercise. It simply isn’t in their nature to work

out, and they see no reason to challenge the status quo.

While a predisposition to workout avoidance may certainly be legitimate, **it definitely isn't an obstacle too tough to conquer.**

Without further ado, here are the top two Personality Blame excuses I hear along with what I hope will be helpful suggestions for how you can overcome them ... *for good*:

1. "I've tried it. I always quit working out after a few sessions." This excuse comes mostly from people who have tried every form of exercise under the sun but haven't been consistent with anything. After committing to an activity only to give up on it time and again, people often begin to associate the word "exercise" with "failure." And **nobody wants to feel like a failure.**

If you can identify with this excuse, it's time to start thinking more optimistically! You may feel like you've tried and hated every type of workout, but either you are mistaken and need to give another class/gym/sport a shot, or you didn't stick to your previous routine long enough to reap results and begin to enjoy it. (Sometimes it takes time to learn to love exercise!)

Don't be so hard on yourself by saying "I'm a quitter." You just need to be a little more patient and devote some time to evaluating what it is you truly desire out of your workout, be it strength training-centered program, a dance or agility-based format, a team/community atmosphere, etc.

Write down one activity or routine you'd like to try, then commit to doing it for one month. Next, enlist your significant other, best friend, or someone else close to you to hold you accountable to your commitment. Ask them to send you a text or email everyday asking you if you've worked out yet.

Be sure you stick to your original activity. Give yourself time to get used to the environment, the movements, and the people. Give the program you're engaged in a chance to work for you, not only physically, but mentally and emotionally as well. You may be surprised one day to realize that attending your training session has become the highlight of your day!

2. "I'm just not that motivated." I love the quote from Zig Ziglar that says, "People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing, that's why we recommend it daily."

Many people wait until they have a wedding to slim down for, a beach trip to shape up for, or a ski trip to get fit for before they commit to a regular exercise schedule. But after the special occasion or vacation has passed, they revert back to their former workout-less ways.

We need to motivate ourselves daily, not occasionally.

In the opening paragraph of this article, I mentioned myriad physical reasons why we should exercise, reasons that will enhance, strengthen, and lengthen our lives if take them to heart. This list can indeed be a source of motivation, especially the older we get, but I don't believe it is the most effective source. As followers of Christ, I believe we are to look to the Word of God, the Bible, as our ultimate source of workout motivation.

Second Timothy 3:16 says:

"Every Scripture passage is inspired by God. All of them are useful for teaching, pointing out errors, correcting people, and training them for a life that has God's approval." (GOD'S WORD® Translation)

You may not need to lose weight. You may not want to build muscle or work on your cardiorespiratory fitness. You may feel peachy and see no pressing reason to start getting into better

shape. But the fact is, to quote Paul to the Corinthians, you are not your own.

As a child of God, you belong to Him, and as His child, you've been given the duty to represent Him, honor Him, and glorify Him through the way you treat and respect your body.

When we choose to neglect exercise, we choose to disobey the call to keep our bodies, our temples, tidy and strong. By forgoing exercise, we set ourselves up for a future of poor health and ultimately, a shorter life devoid of the strength, energy, focus, and confidence that work to advance God's kingdom.

If finding the motivation to work out is something you struggle with, I would urge you to dive into your Bible and extract key verses that will inspire you to put exercise high on your priority list each day. Here are a few of my favorites:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." (NIV)

3 John 1:2: "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well." (NIV)

Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things because Christ gives me the strength." (New Life Version)

Romans 12:1: "Christian brothers, I ask you from my heart to give your bodies to God because of His loving-kindness to us. Let your bodies be a living and holy gift given to God. He is pleased with this kind of gift. This is the true worship that you should give Him." (New Life Version)

Proverbs 31:17: "She girds herself with strength, and

strengthens her arms.” (NKJV)

Proverbs 24:5: “A wise man is strong. A man of much learning adds to his strength.” (New Life Version)

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