

3 Fun Ways to Blast Stress and Strengthen Your Spirit

Did you know that stress can have a serious impact on your weight loss results? It's true.

When you are under chronic stress, your body releases a hormone called cortisol that ultimately causes you to store more fat.

Here's how it works: cortisol helps your body mobilize energy in case you need to fight or flee to handle danger. But cortisol also raises your blood sugar level, which prompts the release of another hormone, called insulin. One of the side effects of insulin is that it can cause you to store more fat, in particular around your belly.

So you need to do everything possible to manage your stress so you can minimize these effects.

Here are three things you can do to stress less:

1. Meditate on the Person of Jesus Christ: I used this technique just yesterday in a slow-moving grocery store line. I could feel myself getting frustrated, but I stopped myself and just thought "Lord, I appreciate this opportunity to stand in this line and use this time to reflect on how good You have been to me."

Then, I started thinking about how grateful I am that Jesus saved me from my sins, how that relationship grants me complete access to God's throne of grace, and how I am being transformed into the image of Christ from glory to glory.

As I focused my attention on Jesus, my problem faded into the background and by the time I got to the cash register, I was smiling and my heart was full of joy. Since I had to endure

the time waiting anyway, how much better to spend it thinking about my dear Savior rather than murmuring and complaining to myself.

2. Make Exercise a Regular Game: Wow, I can hear the groans right now, but hear me out. Exercise is one of the best ways to relieve stress. But here is the key: To relieve stress, you have to make it a game. If you make it a chore, it just adds stress.

When you were a kid, nobody had to make you want to play. You naturally ran, skipped, hopped, rolled, spun, danced and just generally enjoyed living in your body. To relieve stress, get back in touch with that kid. I have a hula hoop and I love to use that to exercise because it is fun and doesn't feel like "exercise."

I received a wonderful poem from a reader named Cindy who expressed what it feels like to have joy in movement. It's called "On the Go for God." I hope it inspires you to get moving!

Ha, ha—I just had to get up and do a Wonder Woman spin after reading that again. Can you imagine the looks you would get if you skipped around your neighborhood or spun around in your front yard? Wouldn't it be fun to find out?

3. Listen to Inspirational Music: Remember how in the Bible, David was summoned to play music for Saul when a distressing spirit was upon him (See 1 Sam. 16:23.) You can use the same tactic to help you stay peaceful during stressful times. Check out , iTunes or other sites for inspirational music that can relieve your stress and renew your spirit.

Now I admit, many of these tips aren't new, and you might be saying "I already know that." But knowing something and doing something are different things.

Nothing changes until you *do*.

Pick at least one of the tips today and do it. And I guarantee you will stress less. {eoa}

Once 240 pounds and a size 22, Kimberly Taylor can testify of God's healing power to end binge eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.

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