

# 4 Signs Your Workout Needs a Facelift

There's this little thing called entropy at work in the universe, a pesky law of physics whereby everything gradually declines into a state of chaos and disarray. Until the cosmos is restored and made perfect once again—as Acts 3:21 and Revelation 21:1 tell us—we will be laboring to maintain order in every area of our lives.

Children need disciplining. Our spirits need refreshing. Our bodies need healing. Our minds need renewing. Our relationships need rekindling. And let's not forget the furniture that needs dusting, the lawn that needs mowing and the hair that needs cutting (or coloring!). And, like it or not, workouts need revamping ... which brings me to today's post.

Two years ago, I knew my workout routine needed a makeover. I'd been doing the same old thing for eight years: spending 80 minutes in the gym either attached to some swanky machine, pumping out rep after rep, or running or cycling indoors with my iPod or a magazine blocking out the world. The initial infatuation I'd felt for fitness in high school was fading fast.

I remember thinking: *Will this be how every workout will be for the rest of my life? I don't think I can keep this up forever!* I'm so thankful I was introduced to CrossFit. It was exactly what I needed to renovate my routine and recharge my fitness batteries, not to mention make me my fittest.

Today I want to share a few of the signs that helped me realize I needed to make a change before I came down with an affliction informally known as Workout Burnout. If you find that you're experiencing these so-called "symptoms," I don't

necessarily want you to believe that I'm prescribing CrossFit classes as your remedy.

I *do*, however, encourage you to think outside the box and be open to exercise activities that perhaps you've never tried, even the ones that seem "too intense," "too challenging," or "too scary." Such an endeavor might be just what your body needs.

### **Sign No. 1: You're Bored**

Stressing out during squats by thinking of what's next on your to-do list after your sweat session is over is definitely a sign that your workout fire needs stoking. Even innocuous thoughts regarding what you'll cook for dinner or what your weekend plans are shouldn't be occupying your mind, at least not for long. Instead, you should be focusing on proper form and technique, as well as your breathing. In addition, if you're constantly looking at the clock or your phone or scouring magazines for something to keep your mind off the tedium of your routine, you need to kick the intensity up a notch or try something altogether new.

### **Sign No. 2: You Talk Too Much**

Are you working hard or hardly working? Merely going through the curling, pressing, pushing, rowing and running motions does not guarantee that you're getting a good workout. When on your preferred cardio machine, be it a recumbent bike or a hilly road, you can use the "talk test" to determine if you are in the aerobic zone or if you're just ... zoned out.

To determine if you're actually challenging and strengthening your heart, you should be able to say a short sentence, catch your breath and then say a few more words. And you should be sweating! Working out in the aerobic zone will improve your heart's ability to pump blood and will increase your lung capacity, which in turn lowers your heart rate.

When you circuit train or do high-intensity training such as CrossFit, you want to be in the anaerobic or “performance” zone. You want to perform your exercises at 80-90 percent of your maximum heart rate, which you can easily estimate by subtracting your age from 220. If you’re able to converse and breathe as you would in a quiet cafe, you’re definitely not in the anaerobic zone.

Interval training at this level will increase your V02 max, which is the maximal oxygen uptake, or the maximum volume of oxygen that can be utilized in one minute during maximal or exhaustive exercise. It is measured as milliliters of oxygen used in one minute per kilogram of body weight. Those who are fit have higher V02 max values and can exercise more intensely than those who are not as well conditioned. Numerous studies show that you can increase your V02 max by working out at an intensity that raises your heart rate to between 65 and 85 percent of its maximum for at least 20 minutes three to five times a week.

I will mention that talking comfortably isn’t an absolute no-no, but to ensure you’re pushing your body to grow and adapt to become stronger and fitter, you need to put the phone away or tell your workout partner you can chat after your session over a protein shake or wheat grass shot.

### **Sign No. 3: You’re Sitting Too Much**

Whether sitting at the pec deck to perform rear delt flys or reclining at the incline leg press to work the quads, I’m of the opinion that people sit too much during their workouts. These seated exercise generally target just one muscle group at a time, unlike more dynamic, multi-joint, *compound* exercises that hit multiple muscles at once. A great example of a compound exercise is the squat, which engages many muscles in the lower body and core, including the quadriceps, the hamstrings, the calves and the glutes.

Isolation exercises, as the name implies, isolate one muscle group at a time.

Examples include bicep curls, tricep extensions and hamstring curls. These exercises are frequently used in physical therapy clinics and rehab centers in order to correct a specific muscle weakness or imbalance that often occurs after surgery, illness or injury.

Compound exercises are generally preferred and recommended for healthy individuals who want to get the most out of a training program. Here are a few reasons why:

- More calories burned during exercise
- Simulates real-world exercises and activities
- Allows you to get a total body workout in less time
- Improves coordination, reaction time and balance
- Improves joint stability
- Decreases the risk of injury during sports
- Keeps your heart rate up and provides cardiovascular benefits
- Allows you to exercise longer with less muscle fatigue
- Allows you to lift heavier loads and build more strength

#### **Sign No. 4: You're Not Getting Stronger or Looking Fitter**

This really could go without saying, but if you're eating properly, working out consistently and still not getting stronger or looking fitter, it's time for a makeover. I had been using the same weight loads and had the same so-so stamina and endurance for years before I checked out of the gym and into a CrossFit box. Now I'm stronger than ever and have achieved better muscular balance throughout my body.

I hope this has been helpful to you. Don't be discouraged if you identify with one or all of these signs—there is a cure! I'll be back soon with suggestions for how you can makeover your workout and climb out of your fitness rut.

If you have any questions or would like some feedback on your current training regimen or tips for starting a new one, please contact me through my website, , or send me a tweet @Dianafit4faith. If you have time, please check out my Blog Talk Radio program on this topic here.

Stay fit. Stay faithful.

---

**Diana Anderson-Tyler** is the author of Creation House's Fit for Faith: A Christian Woman's Guide to Total Fitness. Her popular website can be found at , and she is the owner and a coach at CrossFit 925. Diana can be reached on Twitter.

For the original article, visit .