

Eat, Pray, Sweat: How to Strengthen Your Marriage From the Inside Out

It's a very exciting time for my husband Ben and me. This past weekend, our CrossFit gym moved locations to a larger, much more suitable space where we'll be over the next few months while we build.

Unfortunately, I was out of town celebrating my mom's recent engagement (another exciting event!!) and couldn't be there to witness our incredible community coming together with muscles, tools, trucks, and trailers to help move and organize us in just a few days (definitely putting their fitness to use)! On top of that, Ben and I are preparing to release my latest Christ-centered fitness book, one we wrote together specifically for couples striving to grow stronger together in body, soul, and spirit!

For this week's post, I wanted to give you a glimpse of the book by sharing an excerpt from one of the devotionals, as well as one of its 24 partner workouts! I pray it's a blessing to you and your significant other! Please feel free to tweet me or snapchat me at @dandersontyler with any questions or comments!

"For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable in all things, holding promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (1 Timothy 4:8, MEV).

Being healthy as a couple is amazing. You're both more energized, less cranky, you sleep better, you're motivated, and you're even strangely excited about training again tomorrow or trying that new kale and cucumber smoothie or cauliflower oats recipe plucked from Pinterest. After we've stuck with eating well and exercising long enough to turn

experimental health kicks into habits, we often wonder what took us so long to start!

I saw a quote online recently that said most of us have no idea how good our bodies were designed to feel, and I couldn't agree more!

These warm, fuzzy, fitness-related feelings are an example, I believe, of one-way discipline that produces a "peaceful harvest," as Hebrews says. When we commit to a workout schedule despite our excuses, and prepare healthy foods despite the inconvenience, we're rewarded with an inner peace and a soul-deep satisfaction that accompanies God-honoring discipline.

But physical training isn't the be-all and end-all of a healthy marriage. Far from it.

Today's verse makes it clear that it is *godliness* that carries the most value. After all, there are plenty of couples out there with killer physiques and enviable work ethics who exercise for the sole purpose of bringing honor and glory to themselves, not to God. As Christians, everything we do is to be done "heartily as to the Lord."

To be married couples who are thriving, and not merely surviving, we need to be fit all the way around: mentally, emotionally, physically, but most of all, *spiritually*. Our bodies are simply the vessels God has molded to house the immortal part of us, our souls. It is our souls, comprised of our mind, will, and emotions, that will remain with us throughout eternity. Our bodies will return to dust and be replaced with glorified ones that won't ever need to step foot in a gym or go on a diet, hallelujah! While the Lord desires, and has commanded, that we honor Him by how we take care of our bodies, such obedience is shortsighted if we neglect to grow closer to Him, and to our spouse, outside of the gym.

Today, make it a point to pray with your spouse. Read and

meditate on a chapter in Psalms or a parable in the Gospels with them. Read this or another Christian devotional together and talk about how you can apply what it says to your life as individuals and as “one flesh” joined to be a picture of Christ and His bride within your marriage covenant.

“If you have a Bible that’s falling apart, you’ll have a life that’s not.” – Adrian Rogers

Warm Up

30 Walking Lunges with Twist Over Lunging Leg (15 each leg)

30 Air Squats

10 Walk-Out/Walk-Ins

30 Jumping Jacks

15 Jump Squats

400-Meter Run (miles)

Workout

Set a timer for 15 minutes and perform as many rounds as you can of the following circuit:

- 10 Partner Push-Ups with reach
- 10 Jump Squats, alternating with your partner each rep
- 20 Stationary Lunges, alternating with your partner each rep
- 10 Right Side Plank Hip Dips, alternating with your partner each rep
- 10 Left Side Plank Hip Dips, alternating with your partner each rep

Exercise Instructions (in the order given):

Air Squats

1. Stand with your feet spread apart at a distance slightly wider than the shoulders. Position your feet so that your toes angle out. This angle varies from person to person, but should be about 30 degrees. Keep your weight on the heels to prevent yourself from rolling up onto the balls of your feet.
2. Keep your chest up, shoulders back, head up. This helps promote a nice, safe, intact lumbar curve.
3. Place arms straight out in front of your chest. The arms should be in a comfortable position as they act as counter balance to the motion of the exercise.
4. Bend your knees as you lower yourself down. Pretend there is a chair behind you that you're reaching back to sit on. Your knees should track over your feet and never jut out over them. In other words, your knees should be pointing in the same direction as your toes. If you find your knees starting to cave in, focus on pushing them out. A good way to achieve this is by imagining you are tearing the floor apart with your feet.
5. The push back up should be generated from your hamstrings and glutes. Your chest and head should remain pointing straight forward. As you rise, your arms will probably lower back to your sides naturally. Make sure your knees keep tracking with your toes and do not begin to buckle inwards. Also be sure to keep your lumbar curve intact (curved). Generally speaking, if you have your chest and head up, your lumbar curve will be in the correct position.

Walk-Out/Walk-Ins

1. Begin in a standing position. Bend over to touch your toes and walk your hands out until you are in a plank position.
2. Walk the hands back in to your feet keeping legs as straight as possible, and repeat for the given number of repetitions.

Jumping Jacks

1. Begin by standing feet together with arms at your sides.
2. Bend your knees and jump, moving your feet apart until they are wider than shoulder width. (You should be on the balls of your feet.) At the same time, raise your arms all the way overhead.
3. Maintain a slight bend in your knees as you jump your feet back together and return your arms to your sides. Repeat for the given number of reps.

Jump Squats

1. Refer to the "Air Squat" description.
2. Jump explosively to rise out of the squatting position.
3. With control, land in a squat position to complete one rep.

NOTE: Remember not to let your knees jut over your toes or let them cave inward as you jump.

Partner Push-Ups with Reach

1. Face your spouse in your preferred push-up position (see below for instructions on modified and traditional push-ups).
2. Perform a push-up at the same time as your spouse.
3. At the top of the push-up, rotate your torso to the right while bringing your right hand off the floor. Lift your right arm up to the ceiling, feeling a stretch through your chest as you gaze toward your fingertips. Hold for 3 seconds, then return your hand to the floor to complete another repetition.
4. Repeat on the opposite side.

Stationary Lunges

1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, torso upright with

arms hanging straight at your sides.

2. Take a slow, controlled lunge forward with one foot. As you lunge, lower your body and allow the lunging knee to bend until your thigh is parallel to the ground.

Push explosively off the lunging foot to return to the starting position. If performing walking lunges, push through the heel of the lunging foot to bring the back foot to meet it.

Side Plank Hip Dips

1. Lie on your left side with your knees straight.

2. Prop your upper body up on your left elbow and forearm.

3. Lift your hips until your body forms a straight line from your ankles to your shoulders. Feet are stacked on top of each another.

4. Pull your bellybutton in and keep your chest high and hip lifting toward the ceiling.

5. Extend top arm straight up into the air.

6. Slowly lower your hip until it barely grazes the floor.

7. Shoot the hip back up to the start position.

NOTE: To make this movement easier, you can place the top foot a few inches in front of the bottom one, or drop to your knees and place them on top of each other. Make sure your hips don't sag!

Our Christ-centered fitness book, *Perfect Fit*, is available for pre-order until Friday. [Click here.](#)

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