

How God Helped Me Do What I Couldn't in My Weight-Loss Journey

One of the first concepts I learned when I started my lifestyle-change journey was that instead of going on another diet to lose weight, I needed to learn how to change my habits. I needed to choose one bad habit to stop and one good habit to start.

It was when I started to think about what was the best habit I could start that God mentioned what had become a bad word to me: exercise.

For habit change to work, I had to put firm boundaries around the bad habit I wanted to stop. It wasn't something I was stopping temporarily until I got the weight off. It was a habit I would work on discarding completely.

Filling the Void

Stopping the bad habit would leave a void, so this meant I needed to start a good habit in its place. I would use all the energy I had been putting towards the thing I've just stopped to fuel this new and better habit which would help me lose weight.

I wanted to stop all sugar, but I knew this was not a doable stop for me. My stop had to be simpler so I would have success. I chose to stop eating candy. I knew what it was. I couldn't fool myself into saying I could eat it. Knowing it was childish would make it an easier thing for me to eliminate for the rest of my life.

The start was more challenging. This is when God dropped the bombshell and told me to start exercising. I argued with Him.

I told Him I hated exercise. I told Him I got hurt exercising, so how could it be good for me?

“Have you ever gotten hurt exercising in the water?” He asked. I would go every once in a while to the water aerobics class at our community pool. I hadn’t been a regular, but I’d never gotten hurt in the water. The more I thought about it, the more I knew that at my size, exercising in the water would be the best way for me to start moving more. God knew that too. That’s why He presented that option.

Stronghold Revealed

I didn’t understand I had a stronghold where exercise was concerned. I thought I was just clumsy, accident-prone and not good at sports, but God helped me see moving is an integral part of working on my physical body, which is the very home of the Holy Spirit.

“Haven’t you yet learned that your body is the home of the Holy Spirit God gave you, and that he lives within you?” (1 Cor. 6:19a, TLB).

My body is a place of importance because it’s where the Holy Spirit lives. He doesn’t want it filled with junk-food wrappers. He wants to live in a fit and healthy body so together we can reach others with the message of His love.

More Than Exercise

Although in the beginning, I went to the pool for exercise, God has shown me my pool time does a lot more for me than exercise. It revives and refreshes me in a way I never dreamed possible. I love to go in the mornings when it’s just God and me jogging in the water. It’s a time I look forward to. God knows He has my undivided attention when I’m there.

I started going three days a week for 30 minutes. As I stopped additional sugary things, I added additional days and more

time to exercise. It's become a habit I don't want to miss.

I no longer hate exercise. I dearly love it. God addressed this lie I believed and turned it around simply by showing me the exercise that fits my lifestyle and helps me the most.

How God Helped Me

There are days when I don't want to go exercise because I don't feel like it, I have too much to do, the weather is bad or any number of reasons. On those days, I am reminded of what God said to me about my journey.

"Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:1-2 NKJV).

This is great encouragement because I do want to lay aside every weight that holds me back. This race is a journey with Jesus as our guide. Sometimes life gets hard. It even got hard for Jesus, but I love that He didn't look at the pain or the shame of what was happening in the moment. He was always looking at the joy He knew awaited Him.

God helped me in an area I didn't even know I needed help in. He's good at that. He knows us so much better than we know ourselves. "This plan of Mine is not what you would work out, neither are My thoughts the same as yours! For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than yours, and My thoughts than yours" (Isa. 55:8-9, TLB).

I'm so glad I have a God who shares His thoughts and plans with me. His wisdom is what guides me on my journey.

For more on this topic, go to episode 129 of the *Sweet Grace*

for Your Journey podcast, God Will Help Me. {eoa}

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