

Why You Won't Lose Weight From Eating Less, Exercising

My heart is hurting today. It's not that anything out of the ordinary happened. It's not that anyone close to me passed away. It's that I have this great burden for those who are caught in the overwhelming stress of life that leads them down the path of continual weight gain. Everyone is looking for answers, but almost no one wants the real answer.

I got an email recently. Essentially it said, "I'm reading your book and I am confused. You say you've been on low-carb diets and gained the weight back again. Now you're on a low-carb diet and losing the weight and keeping it off. What changed?"

What Is the Problem?

In my response, I put on the coach's hat and said, "Obviously, it's not about what we eat." Then I told her reread *Sweet Grace* and look for the hidden keys. "They are not so hidden."

We always go to what we eat as the cause of the angst we feel over our weight loss. Doctors will tell you what they always use to tell me, eat less and move more. Let me tell you, when I had over 250 pounds to lose, that sounded like Charlie Brown's teacher. Wah Wah Wah!

It is true on a very basic level, but it doesn't get at the core of why we eat. Without going to that deep place, we will always eat more than we should and continue to gain weight.

We Are Complex

Changing our mindsets is vital. However, in order to do that, we have to go to the root of why we eat when we are not physically hungry. It is head hunger, plain and simple. Part

of it is physical if I eat foods which are addictive to me, but the reason I eat those foods is out of an emotional need.

We are very complex human beings. We know we need to change. We have good intentions and then something goes haywire when we try to implement it. There are many layers to this, but it starts with acknowledging we have a problem that goes deeper than sticking to an eating plan.

Stress from working long hours, stress from bills, stress from relationships, stress from not eating right, stress from not working out, stress from not being spiritual enough, stress from giving in to temptation, stress from not doing our daily devotions ... stress, stress, stress is a major culprit. We eat to stave off stress and then we get more stressed because it shows on the scale.

Live Freely and Lightly

Here's what God has to say about that. "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to Me. Get away with Me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with Me and work with Me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with Me, and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."¹

Wouldn't that be awesome to live freely and lightly? These verses tell us it is possible to stop the spinning for a minute and let God lead. I'm not saying to do forced Bible study, though studying the Bible is great.

Let God Minister to You

I'm saying to allow God to minister to you as only He can. Running to food when we are stressed does not hold a candle to running to the only One who can really comfort us, the precious Holy Spirit, the Comforter Himself.

When is the last time you took even five minutes to soak in His presence, focusing only on Him and asked Him, “Holy Spirit, what do you want me to know today? I invite You to lead me every step of the way today. I invite You fully into each moment. Speak to me.”

We do not have to worry. His yoke is “easy”² because we are joined in this battle with Him. We don’t have to pull alone. He’s pulling with us. As long as we are going His direction, “the yoke is easy to bear, and the burden is light.”²

I Am Weak

It’s OK that I am weak. God delights in my weakness. Losing 260 pounds has been the easiest hard thing I’ve ever done because I surrendered my weakness to Him.

He says, “My grace is enough. It’s all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness.” His grace is all the power I need to take the next step out of overwhelming difficulty and heaviness into living freely and lightly.

Are You Weak?

Are you weak today? That’s awesome, because when you let Christ take over, the weaker you get, the stronger you become.⁴ Stop doing this in your own strength. Stop trying to bear your burdens alone. He’s ready to shoulder them if you just take your hands off. {eoa}

¹ Matthew 11:28-30, MSG

² Matthew 11:28-30, NLT

³ 2 Cor. 12:9, MSG

⁴ 2 Cor. 12:10

Teresa Shields Parker is a spiritual coach, speaker and author of three books. Her newest is Sweet Freedom: Losing Weight and Keeping It Off with God's Help. Her first book, Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds is still number in Christian Weight Loss Memoirs on Amazon. Free Chapters of all her books, as well as a FREE 10-video Course #KickSugar are available on her website, .