

Your Spirit-Powered Secret for Crushing the Common Crankiness Virus

Cranky. Yup. I was cranky!

We were flying home from Abu Dhabi. The 15-hour-long flight was packed, so Steve and I couldn't get seats together. Thankfully, I was able to get an aisle seat (I'm a bit claustrophobic).

The flight was progressing well until the man next to me fell asleep and spread out to make himself more comfortable. Leaning into me, he practically had his head on my shoulder. To make matters worse, he was snoring and sniffing. He had hung his leather jacket on the seat back in front of him and that meant it hung into my personal space and kept falling on me. Normally, I'm a kind and patient person. I did well for the first few hours, hoping for a change, but then I felt agitation and crankiness rising up in me. Honestly, (I'm confessing only to you, my friends) I wanted to pop him one to get him to move over. Knowing that wasn't the best idea, I got up and decided to walk up and down the aisle for a few minutes.

As I was walking, I began to pray. *Jesus, I need more of you! I'm frustrated and cranky with this man who is so tired he probably doesn't even know he keeps leaning on me. You love Him. Please help me to offer him grace. And, Jesus, help me to change my attitude!*

Each of us, at one time or another, is going to feel cranky. Crankiness is like a virus similar to the common cold. If left unattended, it gets worse. Just like we treat a cold virus, we have to have a plan for crankiness. So here are a few tips for the next time you feel cranky:

Recognize your need for more of Jesus. Crankiness is a symptom of our humanness, but it can awaken in our hearts a deeper need for Jesus. Jesus is the high priest who was tempted in every way like us, and consequently He is able to sympathize with our every weakness (Heb. 4:15). The next time you feel crankiness rising in you, ask for more of Jesus. He will empower you to change your attitude and move forward with joy that comes only from His Spirit.

Worship Jesus for loving those who are difficult to love. After I walked the aisle for a bit, I returned to my seat, put in my earphones, and turned on some worship music. As I began shifting my focus to Jesus, the man next to me seemed less annoying, and because of the worship music, I was less aware of his snoring. As I worshipped Jesus, my attitude began to shift, and I found myself praying for the man next to me, that he would know the love of Christ and that He would find Jesus as His Savior. Hebrews 13:15-16 reminds us to continually offer up a sacrifice of praise. As we praise Jesus Christ, our attitude naturally shifts. Gradually, we begin to adopt His attitude toward the very person who is annoying us.

Acknowledge that crankiness is often a symptom of tiredness. On the flight back from Abu Dhabi, I was exhausted. Steve and I had been traveling and ministering almost nonstop for the past few weeks. When I was so annoyed with the man next to me, I knew that because of my exhaustion, I had lost perspective. I began to plan how I would get some rest and revive before the next ministry trip. Our bodies, souls and spirits need rest and renewal, or crankiness will become a common occurrence in our lives. The next time you feel cranky, ask yourself, "Am I getting enough rest? Or, do I feel pushed to the limit?" Then plan accordingly for a time of rest and renewal in the presence of Jesus. Follow His pattern of withdrawing for time alone with the Father to regain perspective (Luke 5:16).

Friend, the truth is that as long as we live in our human

bodies, we're going to have moments of crankiness. Don't let them take over your life and become a general pattern. Try these three cures and see if your attitude doesn't improve.
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This article originally appeared at .