

January Weighing In 2014

The Wonderful Joy of Extending Grace

As we begin the New Year we have so many people who want to restart the program. The phone has been ringing continuously over the last few weeks with people who want to come back or have heard about the program and want to become members. Every January, it's the same scenario.

I want you to take a minute and think about something called Grace.

That's right, Grace. We extend grace to those people who offend us; we extend grace to those people who are late. We say grace at every breakfast, lunch and dinner. Grace is that undeserved blessing God showers on us and we shower on ourselves and onto others. The Weigh Station extends grace to people come back multiple times, because they gained back 20, 30, 40 pounds by returning to their old eating habits.

They knew better, they admit. They knew that the power of their addiction to food such as sugars, sodas, and carbohydrates is unquenchable. They made every excuse in the book. But instead of telling them they can't restart, we extend to them grace. Your bank gives you a grace period for your checks to clear to keep you from having insufficient fund charges. That grace saves you money. What about the graces extended by The Weigh Station for those people who don't do what we ask of them and keep repeating the same failures over and over again? We extend to them an abundance of grace.

I was recently asked why I let people keep coming back who constantly are failing. Do I get tired of being a cheerleader for that certain section of people who make all kinds of promises but never fulfill them? I thought about that for a good while. I'm a failure, a sinner, a liar, a thief, a re-starter in living my life according to God's will. When I fall down and get back up, I'm known to fall and get back up once again. We all make repeated mistakes. So as you begin 2014, with all of the goals and aspirations that you have laid out in front of you, remember to extend to yourself grace—that undeserved forgiveness. Learning to walk by grace not only will help you, but will also help others. So when you look at your challenges of the obesity that you are haunted by, don't get discouraged. We are here to help you no matter what, because we are here to extend that grace that God talks about that's never-ending.

While pondering on extending grace, a particular lady comes to mind that had lost 206 pounds and then stalled for approximately 6 weeks.

But she kept coming. She never took her eye off the prize of reaching her goal. She wanted to reach it more than she was willing to give in to the scale. After six long weeks, she dropped 8 pounds and then continued to lose 2 to 4 pounds at each weigh-in. Once again the weight-loss stalled, but she never stopped working the program, knowing that as long as she kept coming and eating correctly the weight would eventually come off. She was a woman blessed with God's grace and perseverance. She was perfectly correct in her thinking and succeeded to reach her goal weight! She has maintained her entire loss for two years now!

Grace is something we do not deserve but receive in ways that are abundantly freeing. When we give someone grace who needs to be forgiven, we forgive them. When we offer grace to someone who can never pay us back, it is real. The blind or deaf offer us grace when we say something that may unknowingly be offensive and they understand and forgive. We should offer grace daily in the same way. Some people don't deserve it but that is what grace is; undeserved favor. Today, before you say an unkind word - think of someone who can't speak.

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Before you complain about the taste of your food - think of someone who has nothing to eat. Before you complain about your husband or wife

- think of someone who's crying out to God for a companion. Today before you complain about life - think of someone who left you too early to go to heaven. Before whining about the distance you drive - think of someone who has to walk the same distance. When you are tired and complain about your job - think of the unemployed, the disabled, and those who wish they had your job. And when depressing thoughts seem to get you down - put a smile on your face and think, I'm alive and still around. Life will change when you begin to embrace grace that abounds. You will grow through your days. When God sets His grace on us; He gives to us who do not deserve his divine attention. He drapes us with grace when we do not deserve it. He showers us with grace so that we might know the abundance of His spirit. God's grace never changes, he wants you to succeed in your struggle with your weight, your attitude, your job, your marriage, your family.

God is already fully giving, loving and forgiving you. He personally proves grace through the sacrifice of His son. The price has been paid. All is well with our souls when we accept that grace alone. It is personal, it is powerful, it is divine. We must admit that we aren't perfect; only He is.

Showing grace toward others is something we must diligently offer. Our direction should be, "How can I help the other person at the same time that I help myself?" Weigh Station Winners is a great place to start. This is a group of people who have struggled for years. Many of them are successful in keeping their weight off. When you need the support, it's offered here.

So this year start out with a pocket full of grace that you're going to give not only to yourself, but to others. Let's make it a great 2014 where everyone is successful.

Chuck Shaffer M.D.

Shrimp and Bok Choy Stir fry:

Ingredients:

1/4 C Approved Italian Dressing

1 tsp grated gingerroot

2 tsp Truvia

1 tbsp olive oil

1 red pepper, cut into strips

1/2 Onion, sliced

2 C baby bok choy (or spinach leaves) cut into 1 inch pieces

3/4 lb uncooked deveined peeled shrimp



Directions:

Mix 1st 3 ingredients until blended. Heat oil in large skillet on medium high heat. Add peppers and onions, stir-fry 2 minutes then add bok choy (or spinach), stir fry 1 minutes. Transfer to bowl and cover to keep warm. Add 1 tbsp dressing mix and shrimp to skillet, stir fry 2 minutes. Add veggies and remaining dressing. Stir-fry 1-2 minutes or until shrimp is pink and veggies are tender.

Eating too few calories and over exercising can slow weight loss efforts!

It's the new year and you're ready to give your weight loss efforts your all! You decide to join The Weigh Station, exercise and get healthy. But instead of following The Weigh Station diet to the tee, you decide to cut back on some of the recommended protein, fruit and or veggies to get ahead and at the same time, you increase your exercise thinking this will really get you ahead. So why is your weight stuck or even going in the wrong direction? As crazy as it sounds sometimes less is more when it comes to exercise and more is better when it comes to food!

The explanation is complicated and has to do with both metabolism and hormone regulation. Cortisol, one of our stress hormones is one major reason for the disruption. In some cases cortisol can be a good thing, in fact it is responsible for getting us up in the morning and also promotes fat mobilization at this time. However, a chronic elevation of cortisol (especially paired with insulin) can promote visceral fat storage (abdominal fat). The main way this occurs is through stress (and we all know the holidays can also be a source of added stress as well). When you already have stress and then begin doing copious amounts of cardio and restricting your calories it's like eating a cortisol sandwich, your stress levels sky rocket. Another side effect of elevated cortisol levels is water retention which can mask fat loss. When you raise your calories and limit your exercise, this water retention may subside because it allows your cortisol levels to fall.

Cortisol can also block leptin signals, a hormone that regulates hunger. One study showed that 6 hours of cardio/week paired with a low calorie diet caused leptin resistance and a decreased metabolic rate which was related to elevated cortisol levels.

Interesting enough, those who have the most trouble with this also seem to be the most stressed about their weight loss efforts! They feel like they HAVE TO LOSE FAT NOW!!!! They have the all or nothing mind set with little room for patience. When their fat loss stalls for just 1 week they stress out and want to cut calories and go do cardio. They have a "harder is better" mentality. This behavior is so counterproductive because it causes the body to over-secrete cortisol. Instead what they need to do is relax! Take a day off, focus on The Weigh Station's recommendations and take a walk instead of doing hard cardio! Remember everything in moderation. After all, your fat wasn't gained overnight and it won't be lost that way either. Make 2014 your year for health, many resolutions fail due to daunting goals that end in disappointment. Remember slow and steady win the race.

To good health! - Tricia Foley, MS, RD