

Happier and Healthier

Practical steps you can take now to improve your well-being

What is happiness?

Webster's Dictionary defines happiness as—wait for it . . . “the state of being happy.”[

Believers and unbelievers alike recognize that there's a negative form of happiness, which is all about self-gratification at others' expense.

Research indicates that there is “little correlation between the circumstances of people's lives and how happy they are.”[7]

Goldilocks syndrome: everything must be “just right,” or we're unhappy.

Some people purport that we are not supposed to be happy, we are to be holy. If holiness does not come with happiness, then heaven is not a happy place

Alcorn, Randy. Happiness . Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

Any pastor who tries to motivate people to stop seeking happiness, any parent who tries to make his or her child repent of being motivated by happiness, is fighting a losing battle. Neither will succeed, and both will do damage by distancing the gospel from the happiness everyone craves.

The Dictionary of Bible Themes gives a more biblical definition of happiness: “A state of pleasure or joy experienced both by people and by God. . . . True happiness derives from a secure and settled knowledge of God and a rejoicing in his works and covenant faithfulness.”

British preacher Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892) said, “Those who are ‘beloved of the Lord’ must be the most happy and joyful people to be found anywhere upon the face of the earth.”

Augustine, considered by many the most influential theologian in church history, wrote 1,600 years ago, “Every man, whatsoever his condition, desires to be happy.”

Evangelist George Whitefield (1714–1770) said, “Is it the end of religion to make men happy, and is it not every one's privilege to be as happy as he can?”[24] Whitefield asked an audience, “Does [Jesus] want your heart only for the same end as the devil does, to make you miserable? No, he only wants you to believe on him, that you might be saved. This, this, is all the dear Savior desires, to make you happy, that you may leave your sins, to sit down eternally with him.”

Here are a few verses that encourage us to be glad, happy, joyful....

Psalm 40:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ *But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation say continually, "Great is the LORD!"*

Proverbs 5:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ *Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth,*

Ecclesiastes 9:7 (ESV)

⁷ *Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do.*

Philippians 2:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ *Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.*

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (ESV)

¹⁶ *Rejoice always,* ¹⁷ *pray without ceasing,* ¹⁸ *give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

2 Corinthians 6:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ *as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.*

Isaiah 51:11 (ESV)

¹¹ *And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

Psalm 16:11 (ESV)

¹¹ *You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Philippians 4:4 (ESV)

⁴ *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.*

John 16:24 (ESV)

²⁴ *Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.*

Matthew 5:12 (ESV)

¹² *Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

In fact the beatitudes talk about being blessed... but the word is

μακάριος,

① ***pert. to being fortunate or happy because of circumstances,***

Isaiah 52:7 (ESV)

⁷ *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."*

The gospel is happiness!

Happiness is natural – but it is NOT automatic

So, how do we increase our happiness?

Our thinking and perceptions – optimistic through faith in Christ

Rest – chaotic lives can keep us unhappy – mainly because of the stress of it all

Also, when we rest and rejuvenate, we gain perspective – we have time to gather ourselves – access ourselves – let Holy Spirit access us

Discipline – It keeps us pursuing what we really want in life, what we were made for, our purpose, and our mission.

Making other people happy – not just “serving” in the church, but a dedication to bring joy and gladness to others

Enjoy when others win – It brings such joy to see others win and excel

Give – be generous toward others – whether it is Scrooge or Jesus (It is more blessed – happy – to give than to receive)

Gratitude – Being grateful and thankful creates more happiness

Rob Hawkins: When someone continually talks about how happy they are, I tend to doubt them; but when they talk about how grateful they are, I know

Health and Well-Being

Health is a state of well-being

Physical health is a state of well-being within your body

It is your body in a state of well-being that in turn will give you the optimal chance of emotional and mental well-being.

It endows you with the maximal advantage of fulfilling your destiny.

- Hormones balanced - happier
- Not starving - happier
- Well rested - happier
- Good friends - happier
- Brain chemicals balanced – happier
- Outdoor and in nature - happier
- Good food feeding your body the micronutrients it needs - happier
- Probiotics, prebiotics, and fiber feeding your gut Microbiome and creating balance - happier
- Active - happier - Lest you think... I like lying around. Your body is happier when active. The endorphins, the myokines, the hormones - the movement proves you are alive

There is no doubt to the fact that how you think, how you perceive the world around you, the amount of past you carry with you and especially STRESS have a huge role to play in your happiness, health and well-being.

- Let's also agree that heaven is a happy place.
- Let's also agree that we have to endure difficult things on this earth.
- Let's agree that we are not supposed to go around in a catatonic state of happiness.
- Let's agree that there are varying degrees of happiness.
- Let's agree that we are filled with joy through the Spirit and the Kingdom of God is joy, therefore we have the aptitude to display joy and rejoice.... Even when we are in jail.

We will have tribulations – it's a promise

John 16:33 (ESV)

³³ *I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."*

Θλίψις,

① **trouble that inflicts distress, oppression, affliction, tribulation**

My encouragement to everyone is that we have what it takes to endure and have peace – which is well-being (shalom) to the Jew.

If you are going through difficulties, you are going to get through it!

If everything is going well – don't wait for the other shoe to drop – enjoy life

If one part of your life is difficult – don't forget the rest of your life that is going well

What makes you happy? What brings a smile to your face?

What leaves you with a sense of happy well-being? Let's list everything we can think of.

Well-Being

Todo bien – it's all good – life is good

You look at life as a whole and think – it's going well

3 John 2 (ESV)

² *Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.*

What does that mean to you? ...Everything is going well.

The prayer of John – inspired by Holy Spirit – Good health (full stop)

If Jesus is healer --- then what does He heal us to?

Is it not health? Is it not a well-functioning body?

εὐοδῶ - Go along on a good road – your soul go along on a good road

For things to turn out well – to prosper – to succeed

A successful journey

3 John 2 (ESV)

² *Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.*

Can we let that sink in for a moment –
I give you permission to have things go well
Without waiting for the other shoe to drop

Let's talk about health - remember our definition -- Physical health is a state of well-being within your body

My philosophy of health –

How did God create it - do that.

What was living like for thousands of years of living?

Breathing – Breathing comes from God who created it

- He created a maximal way to breath
 - He breathed into man's nostrils
 - It seems natural, but we have re-trained ourselves to breath wrong
 - We take between 17,000-30,000 breaths a day and many of us do it wrong
 - Some experts believe that 50-80% of people have dysfunctional breathing patterns instance, the level of carbon dioxide in your body affects the pH level in your blood, which directly controls respiration rate;
 - The right nostril activates the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system, which is our fight-or-flight response. The left nostril tissue stimulates a feedback to the parasympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system, the one that affects our desire to rest or digest
 - Mouth breathing activates the flight-flight response – even in your sleep
1. Inside our sinus cavity is a seashell-like structure; the air entering our noses has to make its way through many twists and turns before it gets to the lungs.¹¹ This gives the air time to heat up and become moisturized. It also gives the millions of cilia (tiny hairs) in our nasal passages time to collect all the nasty germs and particulate that might be in the air we're breathing. This is what our lungs function optimally with—highly conditioned and clean air. Breathing through your nose also creates negative pressure in and positive pressure out, which helps tone the soft tissue in our nasal passages and throat, pulling it back and opening the airway up even further. This guards against the muscle and soft tissue atrophy that can lead straight to obstructive sleep apnea.¹²
 - a. On the other hand, when you open your mouth and inhale, there is no filter between what comes in and your lungs, and no negative/positive pressure being created.
 2. The second reason to breathe through your nose is because it increases your CO₂ tolerance, which increases your oxygen absorption and your physiological resilience. We all know that oxygen is important, but the real invisible hero of

functional breathing is carbon dioxide. And we all need more of it for optimal breathing. Blood chemistry is all about balance. It's not as simple as oxygen = good and CO2 = bad. Oxygen is what our cells use for fuel, but in order to make the best use of that fuel, we need the right amount of carbon dioxide in our bloodstream to make that oxygen bioavailable to our cells. For most people, the solution isn't breathing more to get more oxygen; it's breathing less and more slowly to build up CO2 in the bloodstream so you can make better use of the oxygen you've got.¹⁴

3. The third reason breathing through your nose gives you the most bang for your buck is nitric oxide. This wonder molecule is a biological messenger that is created in the sinus tissues when you breathe through your nose—but not your mouth. Nitric oxide increases vasodilation (circulation) helping to keep smooth muscles like your heart and arteries healthy, and it aids in delivery and absorption of oxygen to your cells.¹⁵ It's a little like adding the world's best immune booster to your air smoothie.

Breathing techniques

Mouth taping

Rejuvenation

Sleeping

According to the CDC, more than one-third of Americans don't get enough sleep.³ The outcomes of this chronic lack of sleep are devastating; it is making us overweight, sick, inflamed, and imbalanced. Over time, depriving your body of the sleep it needs is just as harmful as drunk driving, chronically overeating, or not exercising, and the consequences are much more serious than next-day drowsiness.

It removes toxins, regulates metabolism, and restores energy. Your body is literally growing muscles and consolidating memories. It regulates blood sugar and cholesterol and restores endocrine homeostasis.

Lack of sleep can contribute to an increase in mood swings, headaches, sexual dysfunction, and performance deficits at work and school. It greatly decreases your quality of life, as well as your attention span and memory.

Sleep Hacks

Circadian rhythm. Create a default circadian rhythm and stick to it. Going to bed, to sleep, and waking at approximately the same time every day and night. This goes for eating as well, especially dinner.

Sunlight. Upon waking, get 10 minutes of sunlight in your face to help set your circadian rhythm.

When the sun goes down, your body begins to change to prepare you for sleep. Cooperate with the sun and slow down when the sun goes down.

Bedtime routine. Develop a bedtime routine that signals your body 1-3 hours before sleep to relax. This could be an herbal tea like chamomile, breathing exercises, a warm bath, or whatever would put you into a relaxed state.

Stretching. A stretching routine before bed can be helpful when coupled with breathing exercises to reduce stress and relax you. When you are restless at night, you can also use static stretching (30-second hold on the stretches) to calm your muscles and allow you to lie still enough to fall back asleep.

Detox thoughts. Write down everything you are thinking about, including your next day's tasks. Also, practicing gratitude helps your brain go into homeostasis.

Breathing. Breathing exercises that reduce stress and relax the body and brain include six count inhale with a eight count exhale (through the nose). Do this right as you get into bed or just before.

Work. Stop working at least three hours before bed. This will allow your brain to slow down and not focus on tasks or responsibilities.

Reduce blue light. Wear blue blocker glasses. After sundown, reduce your exposure to blue light by wearing blue blocker glasses. This will increase melatonin production and reduce cortisol, which signals your body to sleep.

Lighting. Replace your LED lights with dimmable yellow hue lights.

Baths. Some people find that a cool bath is what they need to prepare for sleep, while others benefit from a warm bath to relax.

Stimulation. Reduce any nighttime heart-pounding screen time. You don't want to stimulate your body with high-action, argumentative, bad news, or failed videos.

Screens. Eliminate screen time at least an hour before bed.

Night Mode. If you are going to look at your device, switch to night mode. Also, Kindle has a better night mode than the iPad, in my opinion, so read from that or a dim, yellow reading light with blue blocker glasses.

Eating. Stop eating at least three hours before bedtime.

Eat a high-protein and low-carb dinner.

Stop consuming caffeine 10 hours before bedtime.

Stop drinking alcohol at least three hours before bedtime.

Hydration. This critical aspect of health cannot be overlooked when trying to get a good night's sleep. If you drink too much too late, you will wake up to urinate. If you don't drink enough, your body won't rest well because it is dehydrated. Avoid drinking water alone before bed, and use a little quality salt (3-4 grains) with your water to help your body absorb it.

Nicotine. This substance is a stimulant. Often, smokers will wake up because their brain needs the nicotine. Having a "smoke" before bed may be a relaxing pattern, but it still stimulates the body.

Bedroom atmosphere.

Make your bedroom a space for relaxation. That means you don't work there, so declutter it and create a spa-like feel. You can add an essential oil diffuser with lavender or other relaxing oils.

Make your bedroom completely dark.

Set your thermostat to 65 degrees. It is the optimal sleep temperature.

Use a cooling pad on your bed like Sleep 8 or Chilipad.

Use a mattress and bedding that is organic or natural.

Use the right pillow. The more organic or natural, the better. It should give some support but not raise your head in an unnatural position, whether lying on your back or your side. Some people also like a body pillow for comfort and a natural side position.

Put soft music on low.

Minimize the radio frequencies. Charge your phone away from your bed or in another room, and turn off your home wifi.

Supplements. Some are useful, and some that are a waste of money. I like valerian root and magnesium. Others, like Qualia Night, have a host of vitamin, mineral, amino, and herbal ingredients.

Take a nighttime magnesium supplement. **Magnesium Glycinate**, magnesium citrate, and even magnesium carbonate can work well. They are in pill form or in a powder to drink before bedtime.

Exercise. Exercise daily, including a post-dinner walk or some form of mild movement.

The absence of exercise can cause all kinds of problems, including sleep. Working late at night can raise the naturally declining cortisol levels, keep you awake, and ruin your sleep.

Touch. Create opportunities for an oxytocin release. This includes hugging, kissing, and being intimate. It helps you sleep.

Tracking. You can track your sleep with devices that tell you things like body temp, which you can adjust with some of the hacks above. They may also help you see if what you ate, drank, watched, and made a visible difference in your sleep. The problem is that if these devices are transmitting, so you are sleeping with EMFs nearby. That's bad.

The Oura ring only emits EMFs when it is syncing with your phone. I have found wearing it to help me see what lifestyle choices positively and negatively affect my sleep. It also helps me see how much total sleep I got compared to how much time I had in bed, as well as REM and Deep sleep.

Mouth taping. It sounds weird, but this hack forces you to breathe through your nose, which is how we are designed to breathe at rest. It also helps with snoring for some! Don't use duct tape. You can purchase mouth tape from Amazon.

Napping. Avoid napping in the evening, but a quick nap (15-27 minutes) in the early afternoon is normal and helpful.

Alarm clocks. Our bodies can be trained to wake up at a particular time or first light, but I suggest using an alarm clock to go to bed.

Laying awake in bed. If you find yourself frustrated because you are not sleeping, get up and do something. Put on your blue blocker glasses and be productive, watch something funny, or write down what is racing around in your mind. Making your bed a place of frustration is not good for the psyche.

Grounding. Some swear by it, but no actual data on sleeping exists. There are pads you can put under your sheets, or you can ground yourself barefoot on the earth before bed.

Medications. Research your medications, and if sleep issues are an unintended effect of the medication, talk to your doctor about switching.

Sleep disorders. If you have or suspect you have a sleep disorder, such as insomnia, Somnambulism, Sleep apnea, or other issues that prevent a good night's sleep, you should see a professional.

Resting and relaxing

According to research at UC Davis

Research has documented **many health benefits of regular meditation practice**. Here are 10 of them:

1. Reduced stress: Meditation may decrease stress. It can also improve symptoms of stress-related conditions, including **irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)**, **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** and **fibromyalgia**.
2. Improved memory: Better focus through regular meditation may increase memory and mental clarity. These benefits can help fight **age-related memory loss and dementia**.
3. Increased attention: Meditation helps with attention span, allowing you to stay focused longer.
4. Enhanced willpower: Meditation develops the mental discipline needed to avoid unhelpful habits.
5. Better sleep: Meditation can shorten the time it takes to fall asleep and improve sleep quality.
6. Less pain: Meditation can reduce pain and boost emotion regulation. Together with medical care, this may help treat chronic pain.
7. Lower blood pressure: **Blood pressure decreases** during meditation and over time in people who meditate regularly. This can reduce strain on the heart and blood vessels and help prevent **heart disease**.
8. Less anxiety: Regular meditation helps reduce anxiety. It can also help with mental health issues like social anxiety, fears and **obsessive-compulsive behaviors**.
9. Less depression: Meditation can help reduce the occurrence of **depression**.
10. Greater compassion: Meditation can help you better understand yourself, find your best self, and increase positive feelings and actions toward others.

Sabbath –

We are made for it....

It's a gift.

We need it

Karoshi in Japanese means death by overwork. Due to an excessive work ethic, one in five workers in Japan is at risk from dying or committing suicide due to work pressures.

Vacationing –

American workers are notorious for being workaholics. Since March of 2020, an overwhelming majority of U.S. employees have shortened, postponed or canceled their

vacation time, according to one survey. Another recent study found that 26% of respondents had never taken two weeks of vacation at one time. And The Center for Economic and Policy Research has gone so far as to call the U.S. the “No Vacation Nation.”

But leaving vacation time on the table is taking its toll on employees. A recent study by the World Health Organization (WHO) found that 745,000 people died in 2016 from heart disease and stroke due to long hours and said the trend might worsen due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The research found that working 55 hours or more a week was associated with a 35% higher risk of stroke and a 17% higher risk of dying from heart disease than a workweek of 35 to 40 hours.

Taking vacation time is essential to employee survival. That’s because time off from work is integral to well-being, sustained productivity and high performance. Here are some additional reasons to start planning your next getaway.

Vacation time increases mindfulness

Vacation time improves heart health

Taking regular vacations could help reduce the risk for metabolic syndrome—a cluster of health issues including high blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess belly fat and abnormal cholesterol levels. All of these symptoms raise the risk for heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes. In one study, researchers found that those who vacationed more frequently were less likely to meet the criteria for a diagnosis of metabolic syndrome. Notably, the risk went down by a quarter with each additional vacation taken. Another nine-year study followed more than 12,000 middle-aged men at high risk for heart disease. In the end, those who took more yearly vacations were less likely to die from any cause, including heart attacks and other cardiovascular problems.

Vacation time reduces stress

Stress raises levels of certain hormones, such as cortisol and adrenaline. In the short term, this can be helpful, triggering the “fight or flight” response that helps you deal with immediate threats. But over time, chronic stress can increase your risk for health issues, including heart disease. [A study released by the American Psychological Association](#) concluded that time off helps to reduce stress by removing people from the activities and environments that they associate with anxiety. Are you thinking of heading to the beach or going camping this summer? [Another scientific report](#) highlights that spending at least 120 minutes a week in natural environments (such as parks, woodlands and beaches) is associated with good health and well-being.

Vacation time boosts brainpower

Taking time off improves the capacity to learn. When your brain is completely relaxed, it consolidates knowledge and brainpower. “Neuroscience is so clear, through PET scans and MRIs, that the ‘aha’ moment comes when you’re in a relaxed state of mind,” says [Brigid Schulte, author of *Overwhelmed: Work, Love and Play When No One Has the Time*](#). That's why you have your best ideas on a walk, in the shower or on vacation. Adam Galinsky, professor and chair of the management division at Columbia Business School, has conducted numerous studies drawing a link between travel and creativity. “Foreign experiences increase both cognitive flexibility and depth and integrativeness of thought, the ability to make deep connections between disparate forms,” [Galinsky stated](#). In one study, Galinsky found that creative directors of high-end fashion houses who lived overseas produced more consistently creative fashion lines as determined by a panel of trade journalists and independent buyers. “The key, critical process is multicultural engagement, immersion, and adaptation, says Galinsky. Someone who lives abroad and doesn’t engage with the local culture will likely get less of a creative boost than someone who travels abroad and really engages in the local environment.”

Vacation time improves sleep

Restless nights are a common complaint—often stemming from the fact that we have too much on our minds. Researchers say that time off from work can help interrupt the habits that disrupt sleep, like working late into the night or checking your cell phone before bed. Another reason your sleep improves while on holiday and extends after your return is that a new bed helps you dissociate from your negative sleep patterns back home. A study conducted by New Zealand Air asked participants on vacation to wear a wrist device that would monitor their quality of sleep starting three days before their holiday until three days after their return. They also kept a sleep diary and were measured for reaction times before, during and after their trip. Researchers found that after two to three days of vacation, the participants averaged an hour more of good quality sleep and experienced an 80% improvement in their reaction times. When they returned home, they were still sleeping close to an hour more, and their reaction time was 30% to 40% higher than before the trip

Sabbatical

Harvard Business Review - Our rigorous study of professionals who took a sabbatical found that people largely experienced significant, positive changes in their work and life. They propose that this reduces burnout and employee turnover.

In a study of 129 faculty members who had completed a sabbatical, matched with 129 faculty members who had not, those who had taken time off reported a greater sense of well being.

With the exception of vacations, God created all of these. Vacations just puts a rhythm of rest into our year.

Movement and activity –

Our body is designed to move – a lot.

Our muscles will shrink and waste if not used (sarcopenia)

We signal our bodies to be stronger or weaker through activity

1. Exercise can make you feel happier

Exercise has been shown to improve your mood and decrease feelings of depression, anxiety, and stress.

The authors of a 2019 review found that 10–30 minutes of exercise is enough to improve your mood.

Exercise may increase brain sensitivity to serotonin and norepinephrine. These hormones relieve feelings of depression. It may also increase the production of endorphins, which help produce positive feelings and reduce the perception of pain.

Stopping to exercise may also affect your mood. A 2017 review found that active people who stopped exercising regularly experienced significant increases in symptoms of depression and anxiety, even after only a few weeks.

2. Exercise can help with weight management

Inactivity may play a major factor in weight gain and obesity, which may lead to health complications. Exercise can help you manage your weight by helping with energy expenditure, also known as spending.

Your body spends energy in three ways:

- digesting food
- exercising
- maintaining body functions, like your heartbeat and breathing

A reduced calorie intake may lower your metabolic rate, which can temporarily delay weight loss. However, regular exercise may increase your metabolic rate. This can burn more calories and help you manage your weight.

Combining aerobic exercise with resistance training may also maximize fat loss and muscle mass maintenance. This could help you manage weight, maintain lean muscle, and reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.

3. Exercise is good for your muscles and bones

Exercise plays a vital role in building and maintaining strong muscles and bones.

As people age, they tend to lose muscle mass, strength, and function. This leads to an increased risk of injury. Practicing regular physical activity is essential to reducing muscle loss and maintaining strength as you age.

Exercise also helps build bone density. The authors of a 2022 review found that regular exercise significantly improved bone density in the lumbar spine, neck, and hip bones. This may help prevent osteoporosis later in life.

Impact exercises like gymnastics, running, or soccer may help promote higher bone density than no-impact sports like swimming and cycling.

4. Exercise can increase your energy levels

Exercise can help boost your energy levels while helping to reduce fatigue. This may help as a treatment method if you have certain health conditions, such as cancer.

Aerobic exercise boosts your cardiovascular system and improves lung health, which may help with energy levels.

Your heart pumps more blood as you move, delivering more oxygen to your working muscles. With regular exercise, your heart becomes more efficient at moving oxygen into your blood.

Over time, exercise results in less demand on your lungs. This is one of the reasons why you may find yourself getting less and less out of breath during exercise, according to the [American Lung Association](#).

5. Exercise can reduce your risk of chronic disease

Regular physical activity is a [key factor](#) in reducing your risk of chronic diseases, such as:

- [type 2 diabetes](#)
- [heart disease](#) Trusted Source
- [cancer](#), such as breast, colorectal, lung, and liver cancer, among other types
- [high LDL cholesterol](#)
- [hypertension](#)

- **6. Exercise can help skin health**

Your skin can be affected by the amount of oxidative stress in your body.

Oxidative stress occurs when your body's antioxidant defenses cannot completely repair the cell damage caused by compounds known as free radicals. This can damage the structure of the cells and negatively impact your skin.

Intense and exhaustive physical activity may contribute to oxidative damage. However, a [2018 review](#) suggests that regular moderate exercise may actually help alleviate the stress caused by free radicals.

The authors of a [2021 review](#) concluded that regular exercise may help delay the appearance of skin aging, prevent psoriasis, and improve venous leg ulcers.

7. Exercise can help your brain health and memory

Exercise can improve brain function and protect your memory and thinking skills.

To begin with, exercise increases your heart rate. This promotes the flow of blood and oxygen to your brain. It can also stimulate the production of hormones that enhance the growth of brain cells.

For example, exercise has been shown to cause the hippocampus to grow in size, which may help improve mental function. This is part of the brain that's vital for memory and learning.

Regular physical activity is important in older adults because it can help slow down the physiological effects of aging in your brain. It may also help reduce changes in the brain that can contribute to conditions like Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

8. Exercise can help with relaxation and sleep quality

Regular exercise can help you relax and sleep better.

It may help improve your sleep quality because the energy loss that occurs during exercise stimulates restorative processes during sleep.

Also, the increase in your body temperature during exercise may help it drop during sleep, which could promote better sleep.

A 2018 study conducted over 4 months in people with chronic insomnia found that both stretching and resistance exercise helped improve sleep quality and duration while decreasing the amount of time it takes to fall asleep.

9. Exercise can reduce pain

Chronic pain can be debilitating. For many years, the recommendation for treating chronic pain was rest and inactivity.

However, the authors of a [2021 review](#) suggest that aerobic exercise may serve as a natural treatment option to provide pain relief and improve quality of life.

One way that exercise may help prevent or reduce chronic pain is because it [increases your pain tolerance](#) over time.

Exercise may also help you [control pain](#) associated with various health conditions, including:

- chronic low back pain
- fibromyalgia
- chronic soft tissue shoulder disorder

Friendships

We are created for relationship

We are created to live in true community

To encourage others and to be encouraged

Blue Zone constant

A review of 38 studies found that adult friendships, especially high-quality ones that provide social support and companionship, significantly predict well-being and can protect against mental health issues such as depression and anxiety—and those benefits persist across the life span ([Pezirkianidis, C., et al., *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol. 14, 2023](#); [Blieszner, R., et al., *Innovation in Aging*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2019](#)).

People with no friends or poor-quality friendships are twice as likely to die prematurely, according to Holt-Lunstad's meta-analysis of more than 308,000 people—a risk factor even greater than the effects of smoking 20 cigarettes per day ([PLOS Medicine](#), Vol. 7, No. 7, 2010).

Purpose

An eleven-year study led by Robert Butler, MD, and funded by the NIH showed that people between the ages of sixty-five and ninety-two who had clear goals and purpose lived longer and had a better quality of life than those who didn't.¹⁸ And yet, according to an article in the New York Times, only a quarter of Americans understand their own purpose.¹⁹

- We are created for purpose
- We are given a destiny to attain
- We are given a personal mission to fulfill and live
- We long for significant
- God created work for us and created us for the work
- Affecting something bigger than you
 - In our case it is the Kingdom focused

Nature

Recent studies – 15 minutes in a forest reduces anxiety 31%

3% increase in greenery boosts children's IQ by 2.6 points

It fortifies our circulatory, respiratory, endocrine, and immune systems and improves our quality of life.

We are inside way too much

- The air is up to 40% more toxic
- No natural sunlight
- Nothing bigger than you – no vastness
- No awe and spectacle
- No delighting in His creation – He does!

Sunlight

Studies in the past decade indicate that insufficient sun exposure may be responsible for 340,000 deaths in the United States and 480,000 deaths in Europe per year, and an increased incidence of breast cancer, colorectal cancer, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, autism, asthma, type 1 diabetes and myopia.

Most of that is due to a vitamin D deficiency – which is a hormone –

Vitamin D has long been considered the principal mediator of beneficial effects of sun exposure. However, oral vitamin D supplementation has not been convincingly shown to prevent the above conditions; thus, serum 25(OH)D as an indicator of vitamin D status may be a proxy for and not a mediator of beneficial effects of sun exposure. New candidate mechanisms include the release of nitric oxide from the skin and direct effects of ultraviolet radiation (UVR) on peripheral blood cells. Collectively, this evidence indicates it would be wise for people living outside the tropics to ensure they expose their skin sufficiently to the sun.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32668607/>

It gives us the light our bodies need to arise and set our circadian rhythm

Laughing

Stress relief from laughter

A good sense of humor can't cure all ailments, but data is mounting about the positive things laughter can do.

Short-term benefits

A good laugh has great short-term effects. When you start to laugh, it doesn't just lighten your load mentally, it actually induces physical changes in your body. Laughter can:

- **Stimulate many organs.** Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain.
- **Activate and relieve your stress response.** A rollicking laugh fires up and then cools down your stress response, and it can increase and then decrease your heart rate and blood pressure. The result? A good, relaxed feeling.
- **Soothe tension.** Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation, both of which can help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

Long-term effects

Laughter isn't just a quick pick-me-up, though. It's also good for you over the long term. Laughter may:

- **Improve your immune system.** Negative thoughts manifest into chemical reactions that can affect your body by bringing more stress into your system and decreasing your immunity. By contrast, positive thoughts can actually release neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially more-serious illnesses.
- **Relieve pain.** Laughter may ease pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers.
- **Increase personal satisfaction.** Laughter can also make it easier to cope with difficult situations. It also helps you connect with other people.
- **Improve your mood.** Many people experience depression, sometimes due to chronic illnesses. Laughter can help lessen your stress, depression and anxiety and may make you feel happier. It can also improve your self-esteem.

Proverbs 17:22 (ESV)

²² *A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*

Eating/drinking

This is the number one controversial subject about health

Every body system is kept alive by nutrients

Our body needs nutrients to be healthy

That is the main reason we eat – nutrition for life
Eat real food
Shop the borders of the grocery store

Church bulletin bloopers

- 1. For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery down stairs.**
- 2. The eighth graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the church basement on Friday at 7 pm. The congregation is invited to attend the tragedy.**
- 3. This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the alter.**
- 4. The preacher will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing, "Break Forth With Joy".**
- 5. Thursday night: Potluck Supper - Prayer and medication will follow.**
- 6. Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.**
- 7. The outreach committee has enlisted 25 visitors to make calls on people who are not afflicted with any church.**
- 8. Evening massage - 6 p.m.**
- 9. The Pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday morning.**
- 10. The audience is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.**
- 11. Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 to 8:30 p.m. Please use the back door.**
- 12. Ushers will eat latecomers.**
- 13. The third verse of Blessed Assurance will be sung without musical accomplishment.**
- 14. The Rev. Merriweather spoke briefly, much to the delight of the audience.**

15. During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J. F. Stubbs supplied our pulpit.

16. Next Sunday Mrs. Vinson will be soloist for the morning service. The pastor will then speak on "It's a Terrible Experience."

17. Due to the Rector's illness, Wednesday's healing services will be discontinued until further notice.

18. Stewardship Offertory: "Jesus Paid It All"

19. The music for today's service was all composed by George Friedrich Handel in celebration of the 300th anniversary of his birth.

20. Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

21. The concert held in Fellowship Hall was a great success. Special thanks are due to the minister's daughter, who labored the whole evening at the piano, which as usual fell upon her.

22. 22 members were present at the church meeting held at the home of Mrs. Marsha Crutchfield last evening. Mrs. Crutchfield and Mrs. Rankin sang a duet, The Lord Knows Why.

23. A song fest was held at the Methodist church Wednesday.

24. Today's Sermon: HOW MUCH CAN A MAN DRINK? with hymns from a full choir.

**25. Hymn 43: "Great God, what do I see here?" Preacher: The Rev. Horace Blodgett -
Hymn 47: "Hark! an awful voice is sounding"**

26. On a church bulletin during the minister's illness: GOD IS GOOD - Dr. Hargreaves is better.

27. Don't let worry kill you off - let the church help.

28. The 1997 Spring Council Retreat will be held May 10 and 11.

29. Pastor is on vacation. Messages can be given to church secretary.

30. The rosebud on the altar this morning is to announce the birth of David Alan Belzer, the son of Rev. and Mrs. Julius Belzer.

31. This afternoon there will be a meeting in the South and North ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends.

32. Tuesday at 4:00 PM there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.

33. Wednesday the Ladies' Liturgy Group will meet. Mrs. Johnson will sing, "Put Me in My Little Bed" accompanied by the Pastor.

34. Thursday at 5:00 PM, there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All ladies wishing to be "Little Mothers" will meet with the Pastor in his private study.

35. The service will close with, "Little Drops of Water." One of the ladies will start quietly and the rest of the congregation will join in.

36. The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They can be seen in the church basement Saturday.

37. A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.

38. At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.

39. Tuesday at 4 p.m. there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.

40. Next Sunday, a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the new carpet will come forward and get a piece of paper.

41. Weight Watchers will meet at 7 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

42. Eight new choir robes are currently needed, due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

43. Mrs. Johnson will be entering the hospital this week for testes.

44. The Senior Choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.

45. Please join us as we show our support for Amy and Alan who is preparing for the girth of their first child.

- 46. The Lutheran Men's group will meet at 6 p.m. Steak, mashed potatoes, green beans, bread and dessert will be served for a nominal fee.**
- 47. Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.**
- 48. Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.**
- 49. The pastor will preach his farewell message, after which the choir will sing, "Break Forth into Joy."**
- 50. The Associate Minister unveiled the church's new tithing campaign slogan last Sunday: "I upped My Pledge----Up Yours."**
- 51. Our next song is "Angels We Have Heard Get High."**
- 52. The church is glad to have with us today as our guest minister the Rev. Shirley Green, who has Mrs. Green with him. After the service we request that all remain in the sanctuary for the Hanging of the Greens.**
- 53. The third verse of Blessed Assurance will be sung without musical accomplishment.**
- 54. The choir will meet at the Larsen house for fun and sinning.**
- 55. Miss Charlene Mason sang, "I Will Not Pass This Way Again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.**
- 56. Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It is a good chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.**
- 57. Next Sunday is the family hayride and bonfire at the Fowlers. Bring your own hot dogs and guns. Friends are welcome! Everyone come for a fun time.**
- 58. "Wise Up, O Men of God". Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.**
- 59. The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been canceled due to a conflict.**
- 60. The sermon this morning: Jesus Walks on the Water. The sermon tonight: Searching for Jesus**

- 61. Next Thursday, there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.**
- 62. The agenda was adopted...the minutes were approved... the financial secretary gave a grief report.**
- 63. Barbara C. remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Jack's sermons.**
- 64. The 'Over 60s Choir' will be disbanded for the summer with the thanks of the entire church.**
- 65. Missionary from Africa speaking at Calvary Memorial Church in Racine. Name: Bertha Belch. Announcement: Come tonight and hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa".**
- 66. Announcement in a church bulletin for a National Prayer & Fasting Conference: "The cost for attending the Fasting & Prayer conference includes meals".**
- 67. The Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.**
- 68. Our youth basketball team is back in action Wednesday at 8 pm in the recreation hall. Come out and watch us kill Christ the King.**
- 69. Jean will be leading a weight-management series Wednesday nights. She's used the program herself and has been growing like crazy!**
- 70. Today... Christian Youth Fellowship Sexuality Course, 8 p.m. Please park in the rear parking lot for this activity.**
- 71. The audience is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.**
- 72. If you are going to be hospitalized for an operation, contact the pastor. Special prayer also for those who are seriously sick by request.**
- 73. Don't miss this Saturday's exhibit by Christian Martian Arts...**
- 74. We have received word of sudden passing of Rev. Smith this morning during the worship service. Now let's sing "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."**
- 75. This Sunday morning following services we will have our monthly fellowship.**

76. This blooper showed up on the main page of the Internet web site for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada: "In a show of near anonymity, the convention approved full communion with the Anglican Church of Canada."

77. Lift up our Messianic brothers and sisters in Israel who are suffering during our prayer time.

78. Glory of God to all and peace to his people on earth.

79. Applications are now being accepted for 2 year-old nursery workers.

80. Brother Lamar has gone on to be the Lord.

81. The pastor will light his candle from the altar candles.

The ushers will light their candle from the pastor's candle.

The ushers will turn and light each worshipper in the first pew.

82. Song Lyrics: What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear. [No doubt, a lawyer wrote that one. And in fact, Jesus does bear our legal briefs before the Father, right?]

83. Church sign: Jesus Saves!

Safeway sign across the street: Safeway saves you more!

84. (For the group of ladies called Moms Who Care and pray for the children in school). When their meeting was cancelled one week: "There will be no Moms who care this week."

85. This one I said myself during the congregational prayer when leading prayer for our unsaved loved ones:

Father, we just want to pray for our unloved saved ones.

86. Please welcome Pastor Don, a caring individual who loves hurting people.

87. Men's Prayer Breakfast. No charge, but your damnation will be gratefully accepted.

88. Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

89. Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person(s) you want remembered.

90. Attend and you will hear an excellent speaker and have a healthy lunch.

91. The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hospitality.

92. If you choose to leave during the Postlude, please do so quietly.

93. There will not be any Women Worth Watching this week.

94. The Honeymooners are now having bible studies each Tuesday evening at 7:30 p.m.

95. I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, even though he dies, yet shall be live.

96. On a church postcard: I have received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I would like a personal call.

97. This week's saints include a French woman (Teresa, the Little Flower), a Swedish woman (Bridget), an Italian man (Francis of Assisi), a German man (Bruno), a Jewess from the Holy Land (Mary, God's Mother). They include single people and married people. Bridget was a wife and mother. Mary was a virgin and virgin mother. If they could do it, so can we.

98. A song listed in the Church Bulletin at the Nazarene Church in Little Rock, Arkansas; in connection with a sermon on God's mantle..."Let's God Mangle Fall on Me."

99. A new loudspeaker system has been installed in the church. It was given by one of our members in honor of his wife.

100. The outreach committee has enlisted 25 visitors to make calls on people who are not afflicted with any church.

101. The "Over 60's Choir" will be disbanded for the summer with thanks.

Proverbs 15:13 (ESV)

¹³ A glad heart makes a cheerful face, but by sorrow of heart the spirit is crushed.

Proverbs 15:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ All the days of the afflicted are evil, but the cheerful of heart has a continual feast.

Proverbs 15:30 (ESV)

³⁰ The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and good news refreshes the bones.

Proverbs 17:22 (ESV)

²² A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.