



TESS Newsletter

Accordance to Article 7
Section 3 of its Constitution

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Episode 113

“ Turning Possibilities into Realities ”

Building a Global Movement for Change [UNSG]: The Promise (part 45)



"Working Hard at Working Smart" (part LVI)

2014: Raising The Bar: The Benefits of Spirituality



Enlightened leadership is spiritual if we understand spirituality not as some kind of religious dogma or ideology but as the domain of awareness where we experience values like truth, goodness, beauty, love and compassion, and also intuition, creativity, insight and focused attention.

Deepak Chopra [A World Leading Mind Body Spirit Guru]

Author of The Seven Secrets Of The Seven Seas. Over 42 books published, selling over 20 millions copies.

The future we want: The Promise: The Force Beyond

Spirituality and Mental Health: Benefits of Spirituality

By Elizabeth Scott, M.S. - Stress Management Expert

While people use many different religions and paths to find God, research has shown that those who are more religious or spiritual, and use their spirituality to cope with life, experience many benefits to their health and well-being. For many, this news would come as no surprise; spirituality and religious activity have been a source of comfort and relief from stress for multitudes of people. In fact, according to a study from the University of Florida in Gainesville and Wayne State University in Detroit, older adults use prayer more than any other alternative therapy for health; 96% of study participants use prayer specifically to cope with **stress**. Here are just a few more of the many positive findings about **spirituality and its influence on physical and mental health**:

- Canadian college students who are involved with campus ministries **visited the doctor less**, scored higher on tests of **psychological well-being**, and **coped with stress** more effectively.
- Older women are more grateful to God than older men, and they receive greater **stress-buffering health effects** due to this gratitude.
- Those with an intrinsic religious orientation, regardless of gender, exhibited **less physiological reactivity toward stress** than those with an extrinsic religious orientation. They were also **less afraid of death** and had **greater feelings of well-being**. (Those who were intrinsically oriented dedicated their lives to God or a 'higher power,' while the extrinsically oriented ones used religion for external ends like making friends or increasing community social standing.)
- Prayer works for young and old alike. Prayer and spirituality have been linked to:
 - Better health
 - Less hypertension
 - Less stress, even during difficult times
 - More positive feelings
 - Less depression
 - Greater psychological well-being
 - Superior ability to handle stress

Whether this information inspires you to rediscover a forgotten spiritual path, reinforces your commitment to an already well-established one, or simply provides interesting food for thought, this is just a sample of all the encouraging research that's been done on the topic.

Spirituality is personal, and everyone's spiritual path may be unique. However, some spiritual stress relief strategies have been helpful to many, regardless of faith.

Use Spirituality for Stress Relief

While there are many paths people use to find God, research shows that those who have made the journey find greater relief from stress and enjoy better health and happier lives. While most people who are religious or spiritual find a religious community that supports their journey, there are specific ways that you can use your faith to reduce stress. The following are research-supported methods of stress relief that have a spiritual basis:

Difficulty: Easy

Time Required: Varies

Here's How:

Pray Often. Prayer can help you feel more connected with God, leaving you with a calmer, safer, more grounded feeling that can act as a buffer against stress. It can also bring benefits similar to the benefits of meditation, including lower blood pressure, increased immunity, and more.



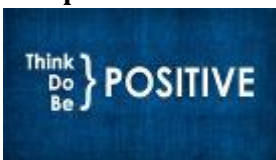
Express Gratitude. Although the benefits of gratitude toward God are more prevalent among older women than older men, gratitude toward God has been linked with improved health outcomes, and can reduce the experience of stress as well. One effective way to increase your gratitude level is to keep a **gratitude journal**, in which you record all for which you are grateful. Then, you're left with a list **that can act as a pick-me-up** when you're feeling down, and you get into the habit of noticing all that is good in your life as you write about it.



Be Intrinsic. Just as there are many different faiths, there are different ways to experience religion within a faith. Some people express their spirituality 'intrinsicly', or in a more personal way, dedicating their lives to God and to becoming a good person. Others use religious involvement 'extrinsicly', or to meet external needs like finding friends or developing greater standing in a community. **According to research, you experience greater benefits from being intrinsically oriented.**



Be Optimistic. There's a lot of value in the phrase, **When God closes a door, He opens a window.** (Those who have a greater trust in God may be more optimistic. Research shows many benefits to optimism, which you can read about here.) Having trust that there is always another option available can help you develop a more internal locus of control, which brings many benefits as well. **Trust your abilities, trust your situation, trust God.**



Find The Lesson. Those who are more spiritual have the benefit of seeing stressful situations as tests of strength, or even as valuable lessons from God. This can be a good distinction, as viewing a stressful event as a challenge can make the event itself feel less threatening. If you feel less threatened, you aren't as physically reactive to stress, and you may find more effective ways to cope, turning a difficult situation into a **path to a better life or greater personal growth.**



Making a Difference Make it a Priority

Use The Law of Attraction



There's been a lot of press about the Law of Attraction, but this principle has been studied for centuries. Simply put, what you focus on is what you attract; if you focus on your frustrations, these experiences will continue, whereas if you focus on what you want in life, you'll draw these positive things in.

And the need to have a more optimistic view of our world is now.

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The journey continues...