

Christian Woman's Weight Loss Guide to Overcoming Depression, Stress and Emotional Eating

by **Bonnie MeChelle**

Certified Fitness Trainer, Holistic Nutritionist,
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Victory Steps™
Christian Weight Loss Coaching Program
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Christian Woman's Weight Loss Guide to Overcoming Depression, Stress and Emotional Eating

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We live in a fast-paced world that is full of demands. Sometimes things happen in our lives such as trauma, disappointment and heartbreak that exhaust us physically, emotionally and spiritually. It sometimes seems like everyone is dealing with more stress than they can handle. The inability to face, deal with and overcome the heavy realities of life can, in some cases, lead to depression, weight gain and eventually poor health outcomes.

But there is hope for those who seek a natural, more spiritual approach to overcoming depression. Read on to discover how you can gain the victory over stress, and depression, lose weight and embrace a healthy, happy lifestyle.

What is depression?

Depression is a medical illness that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest.^[1] Depression has both emotional and physical manifestations. It's a chronic illness that will not simply go away on its own, and if left untreated can have significant consequences in the life of the person suffering with it as well as those around them.

What are the causes of depression?

Depression is a complex mental illness with a variety of causes and which occur in different people for different reasons. Depression may stem from several different causes ranging from a chemical imbalance in the brain, heredity, past abuse, death or loss of a loved one, or catastrophic life events. Doctors are still unsure about how to pinpoint the exact causes of depression. Researchers are still trying to get a better understanding of how the medications available today impact the complex biochemical processes involved in depression.

Depression can have many effects on the body such as:

- Pain/ Body aches
- Poor sleep
- Sexual problems/ low libido
- Heart disease
- Immune system problems
- Loss of appetite
- Overeating
- Digestive problems

Natural cures for depression

While natural cures for depression should not be looked upon a substitute for a proper diagnosis from a doctor, some people have found relief from using natural remedies to ease their depression symptoms. The Mayo Clinic lists the following natural depression remedies as ones that have shown promise in the treatment of depression symptoms:

St. John's Wort

This herbal remedy has not been approved by the FDA, and should be used with caution as it can interfere with medications you may be taking.

SAMe

This supplement is a synthetic form of a naturally occurring chemical in the body. It's not approved by the FDA, but it is used in Europe as a treatment for depression.

Omega-3 fatty-acids

These fish oil supplements are being studied as a treatment for depression.

Saffron

This flower extract might provide some relief. It is still being researched as a natural treatment for depression.

Matthew 11:28

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

1 Peter 5:7

Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Isaiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

What is stress?

Dictionary.com defines stress as, "A state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances."

Everyone experiences stress at one time or another, but what causes one person stress may not be perceived as stressful for another person. Being under stress for a long period of time can lead to depression and other diseases. It's best to deal with stress by finding ways to manage your response to it, or seeking the help of a professional.

Natural Stress Management Strategies

Stress is and always will be a part of being alive. What makes the difference is how you respond to or manage the stress in your life.

1John 4:18

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Here are a few natural stress management strategies that are good for your body:**Meditation**

Whether silent or guided, meditation is the practice of sitting still with eyes closed and quieting the mind while focusing on the breath.

Joshua 1:8

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

Psalm 1:2

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

Psalm 4:4

Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still.

Exercise

When you do vigorous exercises such as running, brisk walking, dancing, playing tennis, swimming, and bike riding you release endorphins into your bloodstream that will make you feel good, naturally. Adding in 30 minutes of exercise every day will do wonders for your health because you'll be burning excess calories, oxygenating your blood, boosting your metabolism, and making yourself feel more alive.

Proverbs 24:5

A wise man is full of strength, and a man of knowledge enhances his might,

Dietary changes

Simply changing the foods you eat can have a dramatic impact on your physical, mental and emotional health.

Adding more fresh vegetables, fruits, whole grains, clean water and lean protein to your diet helps you manage stress and live a healthier, more vibrant lifestyle.

1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

What causes weight gain?

For our purposes we are going to look at how depression and the inability to manage the stress in our lives can lead to weight gain. As human beings we need food on a daily basis in order to live normal, healthy lives. There are certain foods that provide lots of pleasure, but they have negative effects on our health. The challenge lies in the fact that if you are looking to quickly change your mental or emotional state, you can eat a particular food and within minutes feel exactly the way you want to feel. It's perfectly legal and available everywhere.

Yes, what I'm saying is that food can be looked upon just like a drug, and you can become addicted to the wrong foods. When you are feeling depressed or stressed, you know that eating a piece of chocolate cake will take the edge off and make you feel relaxed and if not happy at least relieved.

Or, you might instead crave a salty, crunchy bag of potato chips to calm your jangled nerves or keep you company when you are feeling lonely.

If you are a person who turns to food for comfort, companionship or a simple diversion, this might be the root cause of your weight gain if you indulge in this habit daily. If you come from a family that tends to use unhealthy foods in this way, you can be assured that if you continue down that path your body will begin to resemble the bodies of those around you—heavy and unhealthy.

How to transition to a whole food diet

In order to transition to a whole food diet you need just two things: commitment and determination. You must develop a sense of commitment to making healthy food choices, and you must be determined to stay the course and not give in to the temptation to turn back to your unhealthy habits.

The first step in transitioning to a healthy, whole foods diet is to educate yourself about nutrition and healthy eating habits. Buy some healthy cook books. Take a class in vegetarian cuisine. While you don't need to become a strict vegetarian, you will learn how to prepare a wide variety of vegetables and whole grains and make delicious recipes that everyone in your family will enjoy.

Genesis 1:29

And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.

Please go easy on yourself. Don't think you're going to switch in one day from eating junk food to a sparkling clean diet. Take small, but meaningful steps to transition your lifestyle and your palate away from the heavy, rich, sugary, salty, fatty, fried foods to learning how to enjoy lighter, healthier foods that will make you feel clear, calm and strong as opposed to over-full, sleepy and lethargic.

Spiritual principles to overcome depression, stress and weight gain

Those who believe in the power of the Word of God can always turn to scripture to learn about how to overcome depression, manage stress and mend their relationship with food. God's Word says, "But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." (2 Corinthians 12:9 NIV) According to God's Word, it's OK to feel weak at times as long as we lean on Him and allow His power to rest on us and work in our lives.

The spiritual principles you will need to overcome depression are the same that you would use to overcome any adversity in your life and they include:

• Prayer

In, 1 Thessalonians 5, we learn that we must, “Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” (1 Thess. 5:17-18) This means that a prayer should always be on your lips as you go through your day. Remain mindful of God and His place in your life. Give Him thanks and praise at every opportunity, confess your sin, ask for forgiveness, and pray for those around you.

Pray for healing from depression. Pray for a peaceful heart and mind as a way to ease the stress response. Pray for the strength to resist temptation when you want to reach for food to comfort you instead of turning to God to meet all of your needs.

• Read God’s Word daily

John 15: 4-5, which are the words of Christ, reminds us that we are to, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” We abide in Him when we study and meditate upon the Word, when we are obedient to the Word and to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and when we live a life that brings him glory, honor and praise despite our human shortcomings.

• Fellowship with other believers

When you spend time with others who share your faith you can gain strength and encouragement for the challenges ahead. Hebrews 10: 24-25 says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:24-25)

As you make progress in your journey to overcoming depression, and when you have had some success with managing your stress and losing weight you will be able to support and encourage those who are just starting along this difficult path. As the Rev. T.D. Jakes said, “Your ministry is in your misery.”

Since one of the primary symptoms of depression is lack of motivation, you might be unable to sustain the life changes necessary without support. A Christian weight loss coach can lovingly, but firmly support you in making the lifestyle changes, getting over the hurdles of transitioning from an unhealthy diet to a healthier one, and encouraging you to stay on course when you get discouraged by

the setbacks that will occur whenever you try to change your life for the better.

You are welcome to visit, <http://www.VictorySteps.net/> today to discover how easy it is to get started with Christian life coaching!



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Victory Steps Body and Life Transformation Program® A Christian Weight Loss Program for Help and Support

If you are reading this free white paper about Christian weight loss, chances are this is not your first attempt at trying to lose weight.

Do you find it fascinating that every year the diet and weight loss industry gets bigger along with the waistlines that they are supposed to be helping to trim down? Does this give you a hint that maybe what they are selling is not working?

As a Christian you understand how important the fellowship of other believers is in strengthening your faith and adhering to your Christian walk. Weight loss is a life challenge that you really should not try to take on alone. If you think back on all of those times in the past when you tried to lose weight and failed, there was probably one common component to all of those attempts—you tried to do it alone.

When you have a Christian weight loss mentor, you have the support of a fellow Christian who both understands the challenges of losing weight and keeping it off, but they also understand how important it is to honor God with our bodies even as we are trying to honor him with our lives.

In the Bible, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says, “Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.” (NLT)

If you are ready to let go of the struggle of trying to lose weight all alone, then you are welcome to visit, www.VictorySteps.net to learn more about the Victory Steps Body and Life Transformation Program® that can support you in achieving the healthy body that you deserve and that will glorify God.

[1] Depression (major depression) - MayoClinic.com