

Responding to Gods Bounty

"For everything God has created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude," - 1 Timothy 4:4

The Almighty Creator has made all foods for our good and marrying an attitude of gratitude to our healthy eating and physical activity will increase our chances of living longer healthier lives. Gratitude improves your mental health, enhances your relationships and can improve your eating habits¹. Persons who express gratitude and are mindful of what they eat are less likely to gain weight². Persons who do not spend time thinking about their food and being thankful of its origin are more likely to be anxious, overeat and develop obesity.

Tips for eating with gratitude³

1. Give God thanks for the food. Be thankful for the source of the food and those who have prepared it. Eat without distraction to help deepen the eating experience.
2. Serve food in modest portions. This helps avoid overeating and food wastage.
3. Savour small bites and chew thoroughly
4. Eat slowly to avoid overeating

Benefits of physical activity

Physical activity perfectly complements this series focusing

on healthy foods. Physical activity reduces a persons' risk of early death and decreases risk of heart attacks, diabetes breast and colon cancers. The Ministry of Health and Wellness in Jamaica launched the Jamaica Moves Campaign in 2017. They recognized at that time the critical role that the church can play in providing a physical space and safe zone for the community to engage in physical activity. Jamaica Moves includes many types of exercises (aerobic, flexibility and strength-training) and provides advice on how to best achieve this⁴.

AEROBIC

Also known as cardio activity involves movement of the large muscles in a rhythmic manner for a sustained period of time⁵.

FLEXIBILITY

These exercises enhance the ability of a joint to move through its full range of motion.

STRENGTH-TRAINING

This may include both bone and muscle strength training. This type of activity produces a tension force on the bones that promotes bone growth and strength.

¹ <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/in-praise-of-gratitude-201211215561>

² <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/mindful-eating/>

³ Hanh TN, Cheung L. Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life. HarperCollins Publishers. 2010.

⁴ <https://www.moh.gov.jm/physical-activity/>

⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK566047/#:~:text=Definition,running%2C%20swimming%2C%20and%20bicycling.>

Tips for lasting behavior change

1. Choose a change to your lifestyle habits that you really want to make.
2. Be specific about your goal. For example, saying “I would like to lose weight” is not sufficiently specific. Instead choose a particular food you would like to add or remove from your diet.
3. Your goal should be practical.
4. Choose a goal that you believe you can achieve. On a scale of one to ten, ask yourself about your level of confidence in achieving the goal, if it's less than 7, assess why you lack confidence and attempt to remove any barriers you foresee in your journey.
5. Divide your goals into smaller steps. Doing this can help you to achieve the goal faster.
6. Add a time element to your goal setting.
7. Write down your goals.
8. Be flexible with yourself and your goals.
9. Choose a friend or group and exercise together.
10. Reward yourself at various stages of the journey and plan a larger reward for the final step.

The combination of an attitude of gratitude and focus on God, increasing nutrition knowledge and enhanced physical activity supports a healthier body image and overall lifestyle change. Following the advice in this series can lead to a longer, healthier life.

ACTIVITY ONE

Let's talk about it

Create a list of foods that grow well in Jamaica and that the church may consider growing on the premises. To what extent should and foods sold during church events and food preparation techniques/recipes in church conform to healthy eating messages?

ACTIVITY TWO

Goal Setting

Using the goal setting tips in this session consider at least one change you would like to make in your eating or physical activity habits. You may already be doing really well- congratulate yourself! If you can find one area that requires improvement, then consider setting a goal to achieve that improvement. The table below helps us to use many of the components of goal setting.

What is my health goal?

TIP

You may consider a goal that helps you in any one of the 9 dimensions of wellness.

What will I do to achieve this goal?

TIP

Make small steps towards achieving the goal

When will I do it?

How often will I do it?

Who will help me?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident am I that I will achieve my goal?

How will I reward myself after I reach my goal?