

Bring in the Good

The Daniel Plan



So often we subscribe to the misguided notion that change requires deprivation—that transformation somehow requires avoiding certain things. We easily focus on what we can't have instead of the abundance of things we can enjoy.

But the truth is, change is much more sustainable when we focus on what we can have, rather than what we can't. For example, we have talked throughout this book about faith. Some people try to be more faithful only following a list of rules and things they need to stay away from. While it's important to honor God's commandments, making corresponding positive choices is what transforms us. Choices to joyfully worship God, to serve and love others, to focus on gratitude, to be kind—these choices lead to replenishing our spirit and growing our faith.

Similarly, when it comes to our physical health, if we focus only on what we can't eat or can't do, we won't be able to sustain the changes we want. But if we focus on bringing in the good and enjoying the abundance of what God has given us, our body, mind, and spirit will become stronger. We will begin to see that things like walking in the morning or reading our Bible and praying are not things we "have to" do, but opportunities we "get to take hold of" because they rejuvenate and restore us. We will cultivate a different relationship with food where we see eating healthfully as a way to be kind to ourselves, to lovingly care for our bodies.

This is how the perspective shift begins. We bring in the good not because we "should," but because we long for the benefits a healthy lifestyle brings.

It's really about self-discovery—trying something new and realizing that you actually enjoy it. It can be simpler than we think it is. You will discover that The Daniel Plan lifestyle is bathed in grace, a God-designed way of life that brings energy and passion into your very being.

Bringing in the good is about going to the grocery store or the farmer's market and finding new healthy foods that you enjoy. It's about learning to love foods that actually love you back. Or it might be about getting back on a bike—something you haven't done in a long time— or swimming for the first time since you were a kid and realizing how much fun it is.

As you do these things, your perspective shifts. Instead of telling yourself, "I can't do this, it's too hard," imagine yourself thinking, "Learning and trying new things is a blast, and I'm going to do more of this. Now life becomes an adventure with an unending list of opportunities to explore."

Each of us is in a different place with our health, but the five Essentials open the door to change. Enter in just as you are. Start with one thing, but start. Perhaps you will set a goal in faith to take time in God's Word and be refreshed by his promises. Or you may start by eating more real whole foods or walking with friends. The best place to start is wherever you are. As you focus on progress, not perfection, you will be equipped to run the race God's set for you.