

Swearing can make you physically stronger

8th May, 2017



Researchers have discovered that swearing and using bad or profane language can increase one's physical strength. The researchers are from Keele University in England. They

conducted tests on 81 people to see the effect swearing had on their physical performance. In one test, participants did a short, intense workout on an exercise bike. Some people were asked to swear as much as they could before they started their workout, while others were told to be quiet. In another test, participants were told to grip the bike's handlebars as tightly as they could. The researchers found that the groups who swore a lot, cycled or gripped three to four per cent more powerfully than the tight-lipped group.

Past research also shows that swearing helps to increase our tolerance to pain. A 2009 study discovered that swearing led to an increased heart rate and higher levels of adrenaline - these help to numb pain. This perhaps explains why so many of us swear when we hurt ourselves. Another study found that swearing was a sign of honesty because people who swear frequently are believed to be better at self-expression. Dr. Richard Stephens, lead researcher of the Keele study, said he was at a loss to explain why swearing affects the body. He said: "Quite why it is that swearing has these effects on strength and pain tolerance remains to be discovered. We have yet to understand the power of swearing fully."

Sources: observer.com / medicaily.com / techtimes.com

Writing

Is it OK to swear and use bad language? From what age might it be OK?

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

researchers / bad language / tests / physical / performance / exercise / swear / group / tolerance / pain / heart rate / adrenaline / numb / hurt / honesty / at a loss / strength

True / False

- a) Researchers said using profane language can increase your strength. T / F
- b) Researchers conducted tests on 810 people. T / F
- c) Test participants had to grip their hands as tightly as they could. T / F
- d) A group that swore before exercise improved their performance by 30%. T / F
- e) Earlier research showed that swearing increased our tolerance to pain. T / F
- f) Other research suggested swearing was a sign of dishonesty. T / F
- g) A researcher was at a loss as to why swearing affected the body. T / F
- h) The researcher said we don't understand the power of swearing. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 1. profane | a. impact |
| 2. conducted | b. deaden |
| 3. effect | c. silent |
| 4. grip | d. entirely |
| 5. tight-lipped | e. grasp |
| 6. tolerance | f. foul |
| 7. numb | g. puzzled |
| 8. frequently | h. acceptance |
| 9. at a loss | i. carried out |
| 10. fully | j. regularly |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of swearing?
- b) Do you think swearing can increase your physical strength?
- c) When do you swear?
- d) How bad is swearing?
- e) How bad is it that children swear?
- f) Will you now swear a lot before you exercise?
- g) Is it important to know the swear words in English?
- h) Are the swear words in your country really bad?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. swearing and using bad or | a. to pain |
| 2. increase one's physical | b. an exercise bike |
| 3. They conducted tests | c. pain |
| 4. a short, intense workout on | d. strength |
| 5. the tight- | e. expression |
| 6. increase our tolerance | f. rate |
| 7. an increased heart | g. profane language |
| 8. these help to numb | h. lipped group |
| 9. better at self- | i. loss to explain why |
| 10. he was at a | j. on 81 people |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Does swearing help when you are in great pain?
- Is swearing becoming more acceptable these days?
- Are there different swear words for men and women?
- Have you been upset or shocked because someone swore?
- Who would you never want to hear using bad language?
- Are people who swear a lot more honest?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- using bad or raoepnf language
- increase one's ilchpays strength
- nnsieet workout
- nptpiasctira were told to grip
- the groups who serwo a lot
- the tight-lpiedp group
- increase our nretceaol to pain
- higher levels of lrdaeeann
- these help to nbum pain
- people who swear yqfneurtel
- be better at self-ssexeroinp
- mrenisa to be discovered

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. a	4. e	5. c
6. h	7. b	8. j	9. g	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Swearing

You think swearing is the best thing to help you exercise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): water, meditation or stretching.

Role B – Water

You think water is the best thing to help you exercise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): swearing, meditation or stretching.

Role C – Meditation

You think meditation is the best thing to help you exercise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): water, swearing or stretching.

Role D – Stretching

You think stretching is the best thing to help you exercise. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): water, meditation or swearing.

Speaking – Exercise

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to help exercise at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| • swearing | • protein |
| • water | • steroids |
| • sleep | • meditation |
| • stretching | • good shoes |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.