



Mark Your Time and You Will Minimize Stress in Your Life

Does anyone in town have stress in their life?

Stress = a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances.

“Christians are not immune to stress. We just handle it differently!”

Anonymous

Is it a better quote when we say, “Christians are not immune to stress. We should just know how to handle it differently!”

Name some things that cause stress:

- *Job pressure*
- *Peer pressure*
 - *“Keeping up with the Joneses”*
- *Health problems*
- *Family problems (mothers, fathers, kids, etc.)*
- *Financial problems*
- *Marriage problems*

Remember...stress has been around from the creation of man and so have the worldly methods of handling it.

Addictions...i.e. drinking, over-eating, over-shopping, over-accumulating, over-working, etc.

Song: Peggy Lee (1969)... Sung a song about handling stress the worldly way. She asked, “Is That All There Is?”...Chorus: If this is all there is, then let's keep dancing, let's break out the booze and have a ball.”

These worldly ways of handling stress didn't work in the Old Testament world (before Christ); they didn't work for the world while Christ was on the scene, and...they still do not work for the world today.

Jesus told his disciples exactly how to handle stress when he said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble...but take courage; I have overcome the world."

Everything Jesus did He did with the idea, knowledge and spiritual wisdom that no trial or trouble can win out because victory is in the Word.

Too often we are frantic to speed things up, determined to cram big things into small spaces, and forever trying to be everything to everyone, only to realize it's an impossible task, leaving us frustrated and stressed out.

When we study God's Word – reading it, meditating on it, getting it deep down in our hearts – it changes the way we think. This causes us to change the way we talk, which changes our attitudes, and then our behavior changes. At this point, the things around us – our circumstances – can't control us anymore.

Let's look at some principles of Christian emotional wellness.

Remind yourself... Isaiah 58:11, "The Lord will guide you always... You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail."

We are to lean on God in all things, as He will provide all of our needs. Instead of looking at today, tomorrow, and the rest of the year being full of "stress opportunities," try the following "stress reducers" suggested by some great Christian counselors.

But first, ADMIT YOU'RE STRESSED.

Don't fake it, don't lie to yourself about it, and don't think that your "spirituality" will keep you from ever getting it.

Now...

15 Important Ways to Help Relieve Stress

- 1. Pray often, multiple times a day... "You need a continual flow of His Grace and blessing."**
- 2. Make a list of stress items and then prioritize your list**
- 3. Practice saying "No"**

Burning the candle at both ends has become an acceptable pastime for all "Good Christians." But living a multiple-wick life leads to early burn out. Getting our priorities straight -- God, family, job, and other – will help in choosing which wicks to light. Just in case you're

asking, spending time at church every moment the doors are open does not fall under the “God” slot; it may be under your “job” slot if you’re a pastor or church secretary, but if not, it’s “other.”

4. Think about your use of time and learn to manage it

5. Make your daily resting-goal a minimum of seven hours of uninterrupted sleep.

We must be refreshed to be refreshment to others.

6. Learn to Delegate...and then Delegate.

Delegation makes others stronger. Sure, you can choose to make yourself solely responsible for every detail of life in your house, or you can delegate tasks to capable others; your strength is seen in your weakest link.

7. Simplify and downsize your life, office, and closets.

Keep, store, or give away – repeat every six months.

8. Plan for a rainy day.

Here are some ideas: crossword puzzles, board games, favorite family movies. Plans change, but if we plan ahead for those unexpected changes, we can redirect hurt feelings or bouts of disappointment.

9. “Oops” Items.

Carry an extra car key in your wallet or purse, hide an extra house key, keep extra stamps in the car, and make a photo copy of the credit cards you carry. Ask the family for ideas. What do we always seem not to have at the time we need it? What would we hate to lose? Making the list can be fun, and it will prevent stress-filled moments.

10. Do something just for fun at least once a week.

Movies, fishing, time with the grandkids, garage sales, date night, the zoo, painting furniture -- whatever works.

11. Incorporate at least 30 minutes of accumulated physical activity a day*.

Most Counselors believe stress can’t live in an active body.

12. Journal your thoughts. Use a journal to reflect, share, and recognize the positives God is doing daily in your life.

Stress can consume our thoughts with what if’s and why not’s. If we make a conscious effort to pen the positives, we can loose the grip of daily stress.

13. Laugh out loud!

Think of events in your life which were out-right funny and tell those to others. You must learn to laugh at yourself and sometimes...just

lose yourself in genuine laughter. Read some funny short stories or jokes (make it a scheduled event).

14. Talk less; listen more. We have two ears, one mouth – there’s a reason.

15. Keep God and His Word first.

Isaiah 40:29-31, “{God} gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

Allowing these simple changes to incorporate positive choices in your life will open doors of opportunity for you to shine as a child of the King. This is the year of change – embrace it!

And, may I remind you...make every moment, every minute and every memory melt deep inside your mind to give you spiritual energy to stimulate your faith to its maximum.

That is today’s M & M Lesson.

“Let faith melt in your heart, not in your head.”

James 1:2-4, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything”

John 14:27, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

Psalms 118:5-6, “When hard pressed, I cried to the Lord; he brought me into a spacious place. The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”

Romans 8:6, “The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.”

Philippians 4:6-7, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

**Have
Faith
in
GOD**