

# Pastoral Ministry Support

13<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Hello,  
I hope this correspondence finds you well.



We all have experienced stress at some time during our life – and for some of us many times during our life. It's not always a bad thing but it helps when we are aware of stress and can manage how we cope during times of stress. Here are a few tips.

Take care and go gently,  
Wishing you God's continuous blessings.

Much love,  
*Paulineke*

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## 10 Easy Ways to Ease Stress *By Michele Meiché*

### 1. **Breathe!**

Many of us breathe shallowly, which means we breathe only into our chest. It is more calming, relaxing and healthy to breathe fully into our abdomen using the diaphragm.

### 2. **During long periods of concentrated activity, take frequent breaks.**

When working, writing, studying, typing on the computer, or any other focused activity, take a break for at least 1 minute per 1 hour of activity. You can stretch, take in a couple of deep breaths, walk around, get a drink of water, or simply go outside. Fresh air is wonderful for the body's circulation. The main point is to allow the body a change of pace and recovery time.

### 3. **Exercise and get plenty of fresh air.**

Exercise is not only good for our body, but also our mind. Exercising our brain produces and activates the hormonal substance endorphins which has a sedating, calming, euphoric effect on body and mind creating a mental state of a natural high and feeling 'up with life'. Cardiovascular exercise also releases, in a healthy positive way, pent up tension, frustration and anger, which can be a natural by product of life... so do something beneficial with it!

### 4. **Balanced diet.**

Get plenty of green vegetables, and whole grains. These foods act as 'stress buffers' cleansing, toning, and balancing the body. Also, if you are taking vitamin supplements they need to have food present in the body to be of benefit. Vitamins work synergistically with food. Also a balanced diet allows the body to be consistently fuelled and nourished.

### 5. **Drink plenty of water.**

Research has shown that there is no better liquid for the body.

### 6. **Balanced lifestyle. Time for leisure, rest and rejuvenation.**

A balanced lifestyle includes activities to enhance, harmonize, relax, and integrate mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically.

### 7. **Have a creative outlet.**

A hobby; some activity that does not have to generate income. This can be painting, drawing, sewing, fishing, crafts, reading, writing, journal keeping, writing poetry, or perhaps meeting with friends for a philosophical conversation. A hobby can turn into a business, however that is not the main focus. It is enjoyment and creativity in and of itself.

### 8. **Supportive friends, family; an association with like-minded Individuals.**

It is important for us all to have someone we can share and talk with on an intimate level. This communication and understanding sometimes comes from family members, however most often it comes from friends we develop a bond with because of similar interests and life situations.

### 9. **A program or outlet that allows you to grow and expand.**

Studies have shown in the elderly that those that used their mind beneficially did not usually develop Alzheimer's disease. Keep exploring and enjoying that precious gift called 'you'.

## 10. **Laughter.**

Laughter is still the best age-old medicine. In fact there are many clinics and cancer therapies that include this in their treatment. Laugh at yourself, laugh with others.



### **Meditation, Reflection and Prayer...**

As Christians, we have a relationship with God so it's important to make time to spend with God in prayer; to be thankful for being alive, to reflect positively on our life in the presence of God. Take time to be still and to offer our worries and cares to God; to share our brokenness and our joys. Find a quiet place or a comfortable corner or a spot in the sun or shade and be still.

## **The Thing About Stress** *Extracts by Liz Babbs*

- Life is not a race to the finish, it is a journey. So don't worry and hurry your way through. Take your time and enjoy it. What is most important is how we live and not where we end up.
- Don't run yourself ragged by trying to do everything yourself. It is not your responsibility to carry your burdens alone. ASK FOR HELP and give people the opportunity to lend a hand, troubles were meant to be shared. Asking for help is a sign of wisdom not weakness.
- When you value your leisure time as much as your work time, you'll be surprised by the difference it makes. Don't ever feel guilty for wanting to take time out for yourself. You deserve it and it's important to nurture your own spirit and to spend enough time resting and recharging your batteries.
- Don't rush to eat your lunch. Eating is one of life's pleasures. Sit down, relax, and enjoy it.
- Live in the present and don't dwell on the past or the future. The past cannot be undone, so one must learn and then let go. Deal with tomorrow when it comes and only in that moment.
- The greatest cause of overload is the inability to say no. Respect your health and don't be a people pleaser.
- Avoid taking your work home with you. Relaxation and recreation are important too.
- As pressure at work increases, you have a choice: learn to manage it, or let it manage you!
- It's not the problem that's the issue; it's how you handle the problem. It has been said that life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you respond.
- Don't compare yourself with other people. Set realistic but challenging personal goals instead.
- Words are containers of power, so watch negative self-talk. The more you say something to yourself the more you believe it. Make sure you aren't putting yourself down or devaluing your worth.
- Don't worry about your problems. Problems are only solutions waiting to happen. The problems we encounter are our greatest opportunity for growth.
- Accept change as a challenge, not as a threat. Discuss your feelings openly with others, and try to maximize potential gains.
- Confront your fears and they will lose their power. Ask yourself 'What is the worst thing that could happen?'
- Stress can seriously damage your health, so take it seriously.
- Laughter is a great medicine: it promotes healing and reduces stress.
- Exhaustion is a great place to learn your limitations and the need to pace yourself.
- Stress leads to shallow breathing. Relaxed breathing is slow and stomach-centred, using the diaphragm. Try to recognise when your breathing is shallow, adjust your posture and breathe in deeply and slowly.
- A balanced diet will give you more energy, strengthen your immune system and lift your mood.
- Exercise is a great way to release anger and frustration. It also increases the production of feel-good endorphins.
- Cultivate silence. It will heighten your awareness and appreciation of everything around you.
- Have a quiet day. Switch your phone off, don't answer the door, forget the chores and enjoy silence and solitude – it's deeply healing.
- Nothing is more important than the people you love. Don't let your busyness take you away from your loved ones.
- Beauty really does come from within, so guard your heart – it affects everything you say, think and do.