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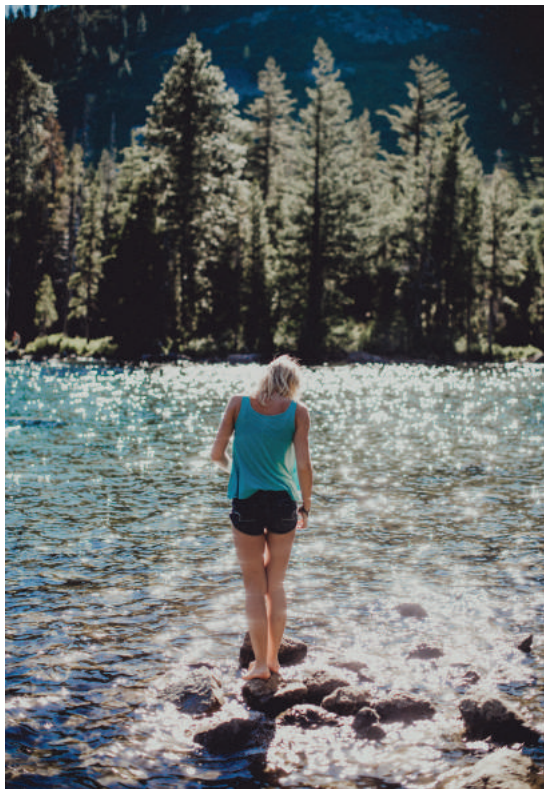
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Creative Director **Audrey Kramm**
Layout Designer **Amanda Denbeck**
Business Consultant **Alexis Asbe**
Sales Agent **Jim Gossett**

CONTRIBUTORS

Beni Johnson
Bonnie Mark
Cheryl Stansinowsky
Craig Lounsbrough
Dixie Lee Green
Dr. Fano
Dr. Bob Boyle
Hermelinda
Joy Fry
Karen Nurse
Kathleen Kohler
Renaë Tolbert
Sandy Tillary
Yvonne Martinez

For subscription inquiries or article submissions, please send to Cathy@JoyfulLivingMagazine.com, visit JoyfulLivingMagazine.com, or call (530) 247-7500. Published at Joyful Living Magazine, Redding, California.

STRESSED OUT

By Beni Johnson
Author of *Healthy and Free*



Lets face it—we all have stress. If you don't, you must live in a little cabin in the woods but even that isn't assurance that you will be free from stress. It is in all of our lives. The key is learning how to manage it.

Not all stress is bad. Sometimes stress can be motivating, pushing us to achieve important goals but it is vital that we learn to manage our stress rather than allowing stress to manage us.

TYPES OF STRESS

I want to discuss two types of stress in this article: acute and chronic. Acute stress is more of your day-to-day, short-term stress like the feeling of being caught in traffic, cooking dinner under a time pressure, hurrying to get to work on time, etc. Acute stress tends to come and go as the day goes on and in most cases it is fairly simple to manage.

Chronic stress is the type you want to avoid. Doctors Lyle H. Miller and Alma Dell Smith have stated, "Under long-term chronic stress, your body begins to think that it is being threatened and in response it begins to shut down your major organs, including your nervous and immune systems, endocrine system, and gastrointestinal system in order to preserve energy to fight off the attack against it. This, of course, can lead to sickness, memory loss, cancer, depression, insomnia, and a long list of other conditions".

Let's talk about how chronic stress can affect you gut. Growing up I had a relative that was always having stomach issues that included painful and sleepless nights and now I've learned why. That person lived a really stressful life.

In Dr. Josh Axe's book, *Eat Dirt* (which I highly recommend), he talks about the gut-brain-microbiota axis. To quote something he said: "There is a connection between you brain and your gut. There are bundles of nerves that run from the base of your brain along the spine connecting the hundred million neurons in the gut's enteric nervous system". Dr. Axe goes on to say that this connection is at the root of the "butterflies in your stomach" feeling we get when we're excited or like the "kick to the gut" feeling we get when we're stressed.

In addition to this gut-brain connection are millions of enteric nerves that are called our "second brain". There are a couple more components added to this that I won't go into now, but when chronic stress becomes a part of your life, it will change the balance in your gut and most people end up with what we call "leaky gut". Digestive problems begin to occur like constipation, diarrhea, upset stomach, candida, unwanted bacterial growth, and inflammation. Who knew that stress could play such a role in your gut health?

WHAT CAN WE DO TO NOT BE STRESSED OUT?

There are actually several ways to help deal with the stress we have in our daily lives and most of them are free. I have listed some below

1. Schedule the time you need to rest
2. Spend non-stressful times with family and friends
3. Focused exercise! Take a walk, get to the gym, or go on a bike ride
4. Meditation and prayer that focus on the goodness of God
5. Find a hobby or read a good book
6. Get a massage
7. Practice breathing deeply throughout the day
8. Stretch!
9. Take a good probiotic for your gut to restore. (The best are refrigerated and found in most health food stores.)
10. Grounding: Walking in sand, dirt, grass, or cement barefoot.
11. Take a hot Epsom salt bath and add a few drops of lavender essential oil.
12. Anti-stress supplements such as Ashwagandha (I personally take this one. It helps lower cortisol and balances the thyroid hormones. It also reduces anxiety and depression)

Others that are good: B-stress complex supplement, Gaba before bed (it rewires the neurotransmitters in your brain so your thinking calms down), and magnesium (helps relax muscles and aids in a good nights sleep).

13. Eating A LOT of plant based foods. Eat those veggies! This will bring healing to your whole body and not just your gut.

Living a stressed out life will never pay off. It will only case you harm. We must all learn to navigate our lives, take time to rest, and relax to bring healing to our body soul and spirit.

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Perfect IMPERFECT

By Dixie Lee Green
Author of *Healthy and Free*

It oppresses me when I hear that ill-fated question, "What will they think of me?" For it is not so much what we think of ourselves that determines how we carry our emotions, but it is what we believe *others* think of us.

If I just lose ten pounds my significant other would find me more attractive, or if I joined that club my friends would think I was trendy, or if I furthered my education my friends would respect me more. But on a more sorrowful level this same question often leads one down a destructive path, a path that inevitably ends with guilt and shame.

The world is but a shadow of condescending messages which stream through our phones, televisions, and computers, informing our fragile thoughts that we are not good enough that somehow we need to be more than we are. We need to be wiser, prettier, thinner, bolder, and then perhaps, more accepted? Why does society hinge on causing others to feel inferior?

For me, a defining moment came when I was a student in high school. I was studying fields in health care and for a semester my class worked in a nursing home. On one particular day my teacher was demonstrating how to make a hospital bed. I struggled to comprehend what she was saying. Tears had run freely down my face. "It's not rocket science," she had bellowed. "What's the matter with you? You can't be that stupid!" she had ferociously continued.

In that fraction of time she had defined my identity. I was stupid, worthless, and a waste of her time. I believed myself to be those qualities. I strived for acceptance through destructive behaviors, focused on outcomes of what others wanted me to be.

My heart sympathizes with the overweight adolescent who slides into anorexia, or the depressed mother, who reaches for pills to manage her day, or the father who bears a sense of inadequacy and kills himself.

We hunger to 'fit in,' so we conform to what the world shouts at us. We live by messages of condemnation commanding us to be something we are not. Can acceptance even be found in this world? For it takes more courage to be true to ourselves than it does to try and be something we are not.

For years I wrestled with coping mechanisms searching for acceptance but I have realized through God's word and true friends that I am the "perfect imperfect," I was planned to be. The Bible clearly tells of how wonderful and valued each one of us are. Eph 2:10 reads, "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." Ps 139:14 states, "Thank-you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous-how well I know it." We are each an important piece of God's glorious painting, accepted and loved just the way we are.

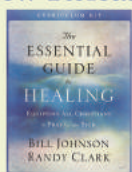
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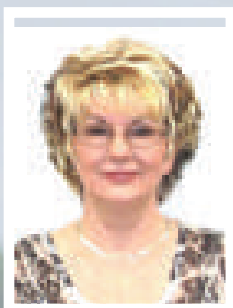


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EMPOWERING TEENS TO SELF-MANAGE IN HIGH RISK SITUATIONS

PART 1 | By Yvonne Martinez

Yvonne Martinez has nearly 30 years experience ministering God's power, healing and freedom. She is an ordained minister and serves as director, pastoral counselor and addictions specialist in the Transformation Center at Bethel Church in Redding, CA. For a personal ministry appointment with Yvonne, call Transformation Center (530) 229-7909.

Developmental changes occurring in the adolescent brain opens the door for exploration of personal identity for the first time in their lifespan. Questions that have never been considered before begin to arise about who they are as an individual, and lead to seeking information from places like their culture, family heritage, ethnicity, their religious or spiritual beliefs, social influences, their gifts, talents, interests, and their life experiences to provide reference and answers.

Without creating a space for teens to express themselves and without help processing emotions, teens can experience depression and isolation. As a way to cope with unresolved internal conflict, teens are often drawn toward high risk, self-destructive behaviors such as bullying, lying, stealing, self-injury, sexual promiscuity, drug/alcohol abuse, truancy, underachievement, wreckless driving, delinquent/criminal behavior, running away, and other behaviors.

Other contributing factors may include: Technology Society—texting surpasses verbal communication and more time is spent “doing” rather than “telling” or “saying”.

Immediate Gratification: emphasis on pleasure-seeking and quick fix solutions.

Brain Chemistry: emotional disconnection can lead to deficiencies in neurotransmitters such as serotonin (connected to self-esteem) and dopamine (connected to pleasure). High risk behavior is compelling as it temporarily raises the neurotransmitter levels to fill those voids.

Family Connection: single parenting, two working parents, blended families, and geographical disbursement of family connection increases vulnerability to loneliness.

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH TEENS AND HIGH RISK BEHAVIOR

1. Access compassion within yourself to show that you care about the teen and the pain they are experiencing
2. Give teens permission to talk about high risk behavior
3. Don't label teens by their behavior
4. Let teens know you recognize they have done the best they could to handle a difficult situation
5. Help teens retrace the sequence of events, thoughts, feelings, and actions that lead up to engaging in high risk behavior
6. Acknowledge that you understand that their behavior choice is where they go to relieve stress or to feel connected
7. Encourage teens to begin to look at the urge they have to engage in the high-risk behavior as clues that signal buried feelings or needs
8. Help teens build support networks
9. Avoid stopping the high risk behavior as the most important goal, but rather communicate that your desire is for their hearts to be healed
10. Celebrate progress, not perfection by recognizing each small step

Through awareness, knowledge, and strategies for helping manage high-risk situations, teens can access tools to identify and resolve inner emotional conflict, utilize affective communication, and replace high-risk behavior with self-management behavior alternatives.



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THE PRIVILEGE AND OPPORTUNITY OF TIME

By Craig D. Lounsborough, M.Div., LPC



Craig's background includes twenty-six years of experience as a counselor in a variety of treatment settings that include psychiatric hospitals, outpatient clinics, facilities for the blind, agencies that serve both the physically handicapped and developmentally disturbed, churches and various ministries. He also possesses ten years experience in pastoral ministry as a youth, associate and senior pastor. Craig spent two years broadcasting in radio and has published internationally. He is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Colorado, a Certified Life Coach and is also a member of the American Association of Christian Counselors. Craig has completed his coursework for a Doctor of Ministry degree in Marriage and Family Counseling.

Tom's passion was clocks. He collected them, repaired them, restored them and doted over them as something like a gentle father caring for pricelessly adored children. Indeed, clocks were his passion. He teased out of them something much more than simply the marking of time and passing hours celebrated with chimes and enchanting melodies; something so very much more.

Tom collected hundreds of clocks; clocks of every type, shape, color and design. The variety of clocks was indeed unimaginable. Some of them were wonderfully captivating, others were intriguing and curious, and yet others were simply mind boggling. Tom's home was filled to the brim with them as some sort of invasion of time pieces, each diligently marking the passing of time in their unique way.

Yet there was something magical in Tom's house. It wasn't simply the marking of time as it passed. It was much more the celebration of what time measured. Time simply marked the gift that we call life. In Tom's house it wasn't about time. It wasn't the clocks themselves, but the honor and respect that Tom lavished on what they measured. In Tom's house, life was a joy and a celebration. The passing of time as illustrated in the faces and displays of hundreds of clocks simply marked the celebration of life itself.

In Tom's house, time was not to be feared, fled from or watched with frustration. Time was not a thief that was bent on stealing away youth, robbing one of opportunities, or pilfering second chances because it left no time for them. Neither was it an adversary or sort of bully that flaunted the fact that it was invincible and couldn't be stopped even in the most desperate of situations. It simply gave us a means to track the gift of life.



HOW DO WE VIEW TIME?

In our culture, we have viewed time as that 'thing' that we work against, or more aptly, works against us. We don't appear to have identified what that 'thing' is other than it will not heed our control, we seem to have too little of it, it seems to slip right through our fingers and when it's gone there's no getting it back. We are in competition with time, cramming as much of anything and everything into it that we can. We can't control it's passing, but we can control how much we can cram into it as it passes. And cram we most certainly do.

Time as a Gift

We would do better to see time as marking the gift of life. Life is a gift. We are afforded this one opportunity that is itself filled with multiple opportunities. Life affords us both the space and the resources to make something of the life that we have been offered. Time provides a sturdy framework within which to accurately and consistently mark out life; to plan it, manage it, maximize it, and mark off seasons to celebrate it. Time gives us framework to wisely manage the gift of life.

Precious Means Limited

Because life is limited, time is also limited. Because it is, we shouldn't approach life with some sort of panic as we watch the minutes and hours of our lives tick themselves off. We abuse life by chasing it in some sort of panicked frenzy because it's limited. In those times of panic all we are doing is attempting to hoard the privilege of life; creating for ourselves some illusion that we can hold onto something that we can't hold onto.

As the Bible wisely says, "teach us to number our days aright, that we might gain a heart of wisdom." Use your time wisely, not by chasing or squandering it, but by recognizing the gift that it is. Use your time by recognizing that time grants equal space for work and play as well as sacrifice and slumber. Time affords us all that we need to be everything that we can be.

Tom himself died many years ago. However, his clocks tick on, reminding me of the preciousness of life which they measure; a space within which I can work, celebrate, play, ponder, dream and act on those dreams. Time is not your enemy. It simply marks the precious gift given to you.



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Does Exercise Make Your Child Smarter?

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DC, MS, DGCSS



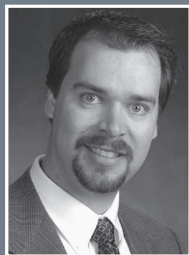
Dr. Bobby Fano, founder and lead doctor at Vertical Chiropractic, provides corrective Gonstead chiropractic care to the families of Redding, CA. He is a published author a peer-reviewed scientific journal researching pregnancy and chiropractic care and is passionate about helping families reach their God-given health potential. For more information, visit verticalchiroredding.com



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The new science is confirming that healthy movement patterns in our joints, specifically our spine, supercharges our brain activity, increases learning and development in children, and reduces stress hormones circulating through our bodies. John Ratey, MD, professor at Harvard Medical School and author of "Spark—The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain" has shown the research that proves exercise "turns on" our brains and conditions it for learning. For example, a landmark experiment conducted in a school located in Naperville, Illinois, involved school leaders turning their school cafeteria into a fitness studio. They found that test scores improved drastically due to their students spending the first class of the day exercising 45 minutes daily. These students became #1 in the world in math and science scores as a result of the experiment. Another school experienced an 83% drop in discipline problems because they switched on their brains through exercise.

When we exercise, all movements start with our core—which is our spine. Our brain tracks joint movement via mechanoreceptors. Because our spine contains the majority of mechanoreceptors in our body, proper alignment and motion within the spine is critical. This brain-body communication through mechanoreceptors act like wind to a windmill and stimulates brain activity through healthy joint movement. Spinal alignment increases pediatric development, learning, and reduces sympathetic stress to the body systems. Therefore, this balancing act promotes the rest and repair mechanism that our bodies need on a daily basis. Dr. Roger Sperry, Noble Prize Winner, states "90% of the stimulation and nutrition to the brain is generated by the movement of the spine." What this means for our kids is the more fit the child is, the better they learn. Exercise improves brain function, improves motivation, and it helps regulate emotional patterns.

On the other hand, spinal misalignment increases stress hormone release and combats sleep, adrenal function, and concentration. Below are some practical ways of getting your children to move by design this summer!

Find an open field: I take my family to Lima Ranch trails and turn them loose to run and explore. They love breathing in clean air, get their feet on living grass, and enjoy sunlight.

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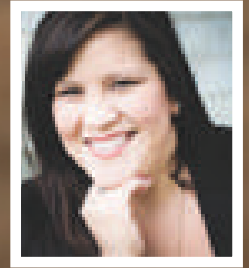
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Super Hero Mom...Not!



By Hermelinda Simon

I often get the question, Hermi, what are doing with your life now? You mean taking care of two children isn't enough? Some ask, we know you are a stay at home mom but what else are you doing? That is when I realized that as women we often get caught up in the labels that people put on us. I am much more than a mom, though that is one of my favorite roles. I am a wife, daughter, friend, and so much more. God continues to teach me every day to not get caught up in the labels that people place on me.

I have the privilege of being a mom to two beautiful children. God has brought me through so much and my desire is to help women be who God wants them to be, come alongside parents in raising their kids spiritually and building confidence that can only come from Christ. I can't believe that we are at the beginning of June and the end of the school year! If you are anything like my family your schedule is full of graduations, end of the year parties, play dates and anything else that comes along the way.

In the beginning of the school year our kids are filled with excitement and anticipation for what the coming year will hold but by the end they and us for that matter are tired, ready to be done and ready for the summer. The anxiety and stress are on an all time high and we are trying to get everything done. Well let me make you feel a little better about yourself with a little story. A couple weeks ago at my son's school was super hero dress up day. All the kids were supposed to be dressing up as their favorite super hero. Dressing up as their favorite super hero, what could be better than that?

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Super Hero Continued...

It was Friday morning and I was taking Peyton to school like I always do, but this day was going to be a very different day. As we pulled in the school none of the kids had their normal school clothes on. Why was I seeing Spider Man, Batman, and Wonder Women? Why were all the kids dressed up? I felt a huge lump in my throat, because Peyton didn't have his super hero costume on. Did I really forget that it was super hero day, the biggest and best day of the year!

I noticed my son looking at all the kids dressed up and looking at me with a sad face and saying, "Mom, is today super hero day?" Getting out of the car I felt like the worst mom on the planet. I knelt down and said, "Peyton, I am so sorry but Mommy forgot it was super hero day today. Do you want me to go home and get your costume?" He looked back and me with those sad eyes and didn't want to get the attention of the other kids and said, "No mom just leave." So, that's what I did I gave him a kiss and said good-bye. Now I know some of you are thinking it's really not that big of a deal but to this 4 1/2 year old it was a very big deal, and a day that he had been looking forward to all year.

As I got back in my car I was feeling so many emotions, frustration, sadness, discouragement. How could I forget! Why did I forget! As mom's we never want to disappoint our children. We think that they are supposed to have an unrealistic view of us as their moms. Mom's are always suppose to have everything together, we are supposed to do everything right and always have all the answers.

So, what if Peyton knows that I don't always have it together, that I do make mistakes and I am not a superhero mom? Is it really all the bad! There was a lot going on in my mind, heart and life that caused me to forget a very important event, and the root of it was that I was being anxious and not trusting in God for some very specific things in my life.

As I wrestled with all my emotions with God that morning He gave me a very familiar verse: "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." Phil 4:6-7

Because I was being anxious about other things in my life I didn't have the peace that God gives us but instead it was filled with worry and anxiety. I decided that from that moment on to give God those things and try not to worry about them anymore.

The great thing about children is that they forgive so easy. Though Peyton reminded me several times that I forgot super hero day, he also told me Mom, it's ok that you forgot and, I still love you.

I decided to turn a bad situation into something positive. We were planning on having a bbq on Memorial Day with some of my family and I told Peyton what if we have super hero day at the bbq? Let's all dress up as super heroes and take some fun pictures. He loved the idea and we all had a fun time with it too. It was a great memory for the whole family and a day that we will never forget.

So, whether you are a mom or a just overwhelmed with life what are you anxious about? What do you need to give God in order to receive His peace in your life?

We are not made to be super heroes but there is a God who is bigger and better than any super hero and He can give us all the strength that we need to get through each day. So, rest in his peace, accept his grace and know that you are loved. That is a lot better than what any super hero can give you any day!

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In 1996, Sadie Huffmaster Hess and Joanne McCarley were social workers and friends who were heartbroken to learn the agency they worked for were closing their branch. Sparked with a desire to see people have more freedom, Sadie and Joanne decided to start their own agency. Sadie was only 23 years old when they launched the organization! The women had dedication, hard work, and two thousand dollars when they leaped into the unknown.

From the beginning, the key ingredients in their organization is faith in God, hope and love. The last 20 years have been a wild ride with many twists and turns. Compass became two different agencies: Compass Shining Care and Compass SLS and ILS. A strategic move that gave Sadie and Joanne the chance to focus on their passion(s).

Both loving the name Compass so much, they decided it was only fair both have the name! Compass SLS and ILS serves adults with disabilities and Compass Shining Care works with seniors in Shasta County. Yes, people are confused all the time (Sadie probably gets at least one call per month for Joanne's organization), but they would rather explain than hurt their relationship.

While Sadie and Joanne remain very close friends, both businesses are leaving their mark in California! Sadie and her husband Eric have built Compass SLS & ILS into an agency that serves people with disabilities. With five offices, they are watching people in California find their dreams, direction and destiny. Joanne's organization just won non profit of the year at Redding Chamber of Commerce.

We couldn't be more thrilled about reaching 20 years and are excited to see what the next 20 years hold for both organizations. While this a major milestone for Compass organizations, it is only the beginning. We believe in endless possibilities for each other because God is good and He is always on our side.

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FAMOUS Last Words

By Bonnie Mark

There it was, under a pile of old junk in the garage. I'd been looking for a burlap bag to use for a crafty creation, and this one was perfect. With giant lettering across the front, it would fit right into a project I had in mind. All it needed was a little dusting off, I thought to myself, so I'll just toss it into the dryer on fluff. Perfect.

About that time, my dear husband was there to offer his opinion. "Are you sure you want that thing in your dryer?" He asked dubiously. No sermon, no lecture, just a mere question to which I answered confidently, "Sure! No problem here. I won't use any heat; it'll be f-i-n-e, just fine."

Twenty minutes later, the dryer beeped that my bag was done, and I expectantly went to retrieve my treasure. Oh, the fun I'd have now making my unique décor, I thought with delight. As I opened the dryer door, a strange aroma filled my nostrils. Perhaps a cross between burnt hair and old shoes would describe it, but it nearly knocked me over. Dragging out the beast-of-a-bag, gritty dirt and debris clattered down into the dryer drum. The lint trap was completely jam-packed with a rat's nest of fiber left behind by my disintegrating bag.

Nervously looking over my shoulder to see if my husband was in sight, I hurriedly began cleaning up the mess. My husband's words seemed to echo in my mind like a Swiss Alps yodeler. Over and over again, "Are you sure you want that thing in your dryer, your dryer, your dryer?" the voice chided. "Are you sure?"

About that time, I spied an extra large chunk of the rat's nest farther down inside the lint trap. Being resourceful, I knew a fork could clean that out in a jiffy, so getting one from the kitchen, I began digging.

That's when a little voice in the back of my mind said, as plain as day, "Wait! This is one of your good forks; are you sure you want to chance losing that down the trap beyond reach?" Mulling over the warning, I continued to poke around. Why, I could almost reach the glob now. Almost. And then it happened. Out of my hand and down the trap, completely out of sight, my lovely fork was gone. Why, oh why, hadn't I listened to the voice of warning?

There was nothing left to do now, but come clean with my husband. I'd have to tell him that sure enough, he was right, and the bag had turned to smithereens, and now my good fork was lost down the rabbit hole of no return.

Fortunately, he took pity on me and didn't rub it in too badly that he was right all along. Though, I do suppose it would be a bit difficult to gloat, considering his head was now buried in the dismantled dryer to retrieve my lost fork. Bless his heart; I did get my fork back.

Never the less, I should have listened to my husband in the first place. "Pride (definitely) does go before a fall", the book of Proverbs warns us. Next time Lord, help me to humble myself and listen.



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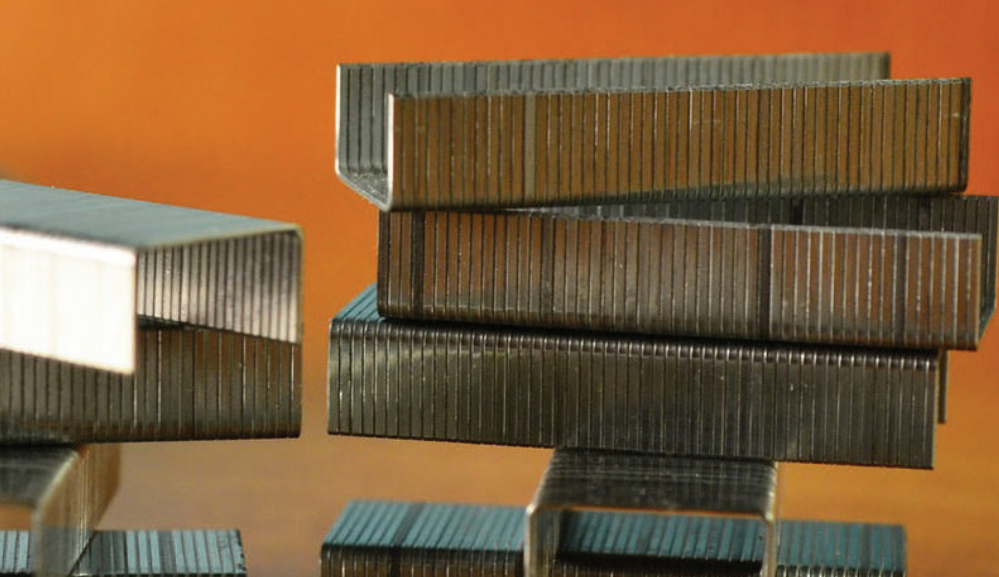
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A Gentle Answer

By Kathleen Kohler

"Hello," I said when Mr. Van Houten entered the small book and gift shop where I worked. Dressed in his usual navy peacoat, layered with cat hair, the eighty-year-old man ignored me. His rigid frame headed straight for the copy center which the store provided as a convenience.

In all the years he'd come to the store, he'd displayed a gruff, harsh exterior that I didn't understand. His corrosive attitude always directed at the unfortunate person nearest his path. Though I cringed when I'd see him walk through the door, after six years on the job I'd learned to ignore his crusty behavior. While he shuffled papers and made copies, I sorted a greeting card order at the main counter. He soon peered over the top of a gift display and mumbled something in my direction. Unable to make out his words, I asked him to repeat his question.

In a fit of frustration, he threw the stapler supplied for users of the copy machines. It skidded across the top of the copier, banged against a wooden table filled with paper supplies, and bounced to the carpeted floor. As the only employee working, I watched from the safe distance of the register. Emotions surged through my body: fear, shock, and anger.

From across the store his black eyes stared at me through narrow slits. His cheeks flashed red and his lips tightened to a flat line. Unsure what to do, I drew in a deep breath and paused to pray, "Lord, please help me know what to say. Show me how to respond."

I had hardly completed my prayer when God's wisdom answered. "Put on your biggest smile and use kind words." With a smile, I walked over and picked up the stapler. "I'm sorry, Mr. Van Houten. Sometimes I don't hear so well," I said. "Let me get you some more staples." The older man crumbled right in front of me. His shoulders fell and his chin quivered. "I'm so sorry," he said. "You didn't deserve that." I refilled the stapler and he completed his copies. He hesitated when he approached the counter to pay, and then held out his hands palms up. "See that," he said.

At first all I saw were weathered hands blotted by age. Then I noticed the deep scars that streaked his finger tips. "Those came from clinging to a jagged rock one night during World War II," he said with a grimace as he recalled a distant time and place. "I no longer have natural finger prints like other people. And there's a steel rod that holds my spine together. That's why I walk so stiff. I can hardly bear the constant pain." My heart flooded with compassion for Mr. Van Houten that melted away years of irritation. "I'm sorry for the pain you're in," I said with a lump in my throat. "I had no idea." He relaxed his defenses and told me more about himself.

Despite my own roar of emotions, because I chose to obey God's Word our relationship changed. After "the stapler incident" Mr. Van Houten acted pleasant, would crack half a smile, and made an effort to say something nice when he visited the store. Because of that experience, I learned the power of a kind word.



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CHANGE THE PAST

By Cheryl Stasinowsky



I stood there in shock as my husband, of four days, told me that he did not like roller coasters and did not have to ride them anymore. What? We dated for 4-1/2 years and we went on many roller coasters (I love them), and you went on them every time with me. How can you take me to an amusement park, on our honeymoon, and stand in line for a roller coaster ride and tell me that, then get out of line and watch me go on the ride? This moment years ago, we have been married over 34 years, turned my world upside down.

I grew up where my trust had been broken repeatedly. Promises had been broken, lies had been told, and so I had a trust issue (lots of un-forgiveness). So, when my new husband told me this truth, I felt betrayed, and he went into the untrustworthy box of my life. This was not a good way to begin a marriage. We were very young and did not know much about forgiveness. Little did I know that for much of our marriage, that moment was at the root of all my cross examinations of my husband. I did not trust him, and my actions, comments, questions, subtle looks, and my heart all were influenced by that moment.

What could I have done differently? I should have forgiven him on the spot. I should have asked the Lord to forgive him. I should have asked the Lord to forgive me, and I should have forgiven myself. This would have closed the door to always wondering what else he did not tell me or is lying about.

Because I didn't forgive in that moment, I opened a door to being critical, judgmental, and controlling. This created many issues in our marriage that could have been completely avoided by forgiving in that moment, and the next moment, and every moment after that. I will be completely honest, I am just realizing this after 34 years of marriage, and 10 years of working on and learning about forgiving.

I have to keep forgiving myself because I could have prevented so much heartach. But as I have been working on clearing out my un-forgiveness, I can see my part in all of it. Yes, he had a part in it as well, but I am accountable for mine and he is accountable for his. I'm just sad about it. I let the enemy win by choosing not to forgive in the moment.

When I forgave for that moment, the blame lifted, the thoughts of him being untrustworthy began to go away, and my perspective of life began to change completely. How can un-forgiveness have such strength that it can change a future? It is sad that the Bible is filled with teaching us to forgive, and yet, we seem to miss the value in forgiving.

Maybe you are like me, and have spent many years blaming and being critical, and you cannot figure out how to stop it, or you believe lies that it is their entire fault. I want to help you change your past so you think differently in your present, and then you are given to change in your future. What we do today will be our past tomorrow, so change your past today. When I forgive, my perspective and understanding of the past changes. I discovered this had happened with many people over the years and relationships got damaged on both sides from un-forgiveness. I am spending and plan to spend, the rest of my life forgiving the past, and forgiving quickly in the present. Maybe you are on the receiving end of it, like my husband was. The way I treated him affected him, but he began forgiving me, too.

We each have a past we bring into a relationship; forgiveness is the way through all of it. Teach your children to be good forgivers so they have a different future. You see, changing my past is changing my future and that of my future generations. Take some time changing your past, as I have changed mine. www.wordscribeministries.com

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DEAR YVONNE

By Yvonne Martinez

Dear Yvonne is a ministry to those needing help resolving issues of conflict. The Joyful Living editorial staff reserves the right to select questions for publication. Questions may be confidentially emailed to yvonnem@ibethel.org.

Yvonne Martinez has nearly 30 years experience ministering God's power, healing and freedom. She is an ordained minister and serves as director, pastoral counselor and addictions specialist in the Transformation Center at Bethel Church in Redding, CA. For a personal ministry appointment with Yvonne, call Transformation Center (530) 229-7909.

Q. What is considered a high risk behavior?

High risk behavior could be any activity that creates a surge in brain chemistry which produces relief from anxiety or a euphoric sense of well-being. Regularly engaging in high risk activity has the addictive potential of dependency, needing the brain chemistry changes just to feel normal.

Q. Is my teen's risky behavior just for attention?

In the sense that high risk behavior is a form of communication it could be considered seeking attention. But in and of itself high risk behavior isn't just for attention. It is often a way to cope with unresolved inner conflict and the need for connection. Your teen's feelings need to be explored and validated in a positive way that addresses them as a person instead of focusing on the behavior.

Q. Does over-protective parenting contribute to high risk behavior?

As parents, we want to protect our children from hurt and pain, but more importantly over-protecting gives the message that the teen is not trusted and needs to be managed. It is much more productive to teach teens how to self-manage amidst the inevitability of encountering negative emotions/situations/consequences.

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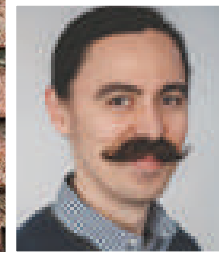
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OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

By Mike Maeshiro



Mike has built a solid and loyal social media following by posting daily thoughts and quotes of wisdom and inspiration via "The Mike Board." He also teaches on relational health, roommate life, and spiritual discernment at Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry. mikeclarkmaeshiro@gmail.com - mikemaeshiro.com

"Yeah, but you're not like other people." This is often the rebuttal I get when I share my thoughts on how to overcome obstacles in life. There is the temptation to feel punished for my success or disqualified because I'm "extraordinary." But the more I experience this type of conversation, the more evident it becomes that the issue is not how fantastic I am, the issue is how much lack people can grow accustomed to.

Whether it's finances, relationships, physical well-being, emotional health, or any other significant area of our lives, our prosperity is determined by our ability to embrace it within ourselves first.

Many people see what's wrong with their life, what prayer hasn't been answered, what difficulty or struggle still persists, what's missing and how they're not taken care of. This manifests in the form of complaining, it's a cancer of the soul and the epitome of poverty. Am I saying we should deny our experience or ignore our needs? Of course not. But what we focus on increases. And what we observe stimulates more of that observance so we can see it more clearly and more often.

This poverty invites comparison and competition. Turns our neighbor's success into a threat. We cannot celebrate when we're offended, we cannot agree when we're opposed. In our brokenness of thought, we fail to recognize the beauty of what is all around us. When we become calloused to our own blessings, we welcome the devourer to consume more of them.

Everyday, constantly, there is an energy available to us to charge our lives with purpose and fulfillment. This energy is a conductor and through it we are opened to receive beauty in this life.

When we give in to the nature of this energy, it takes anything around us and turns it into a portal through which we are transported to the real us. We can touch the divine and enjoy infinity in a moment, limitless possibility, the assurance of our provision, the fulfillment of our desires; we touch God. This energy manifests in the form of gratitude.

Every single one of us has the means to let the vitality that comes from gratitude flow through us. Waking up in the morning, the house we live in, the fact that we can read this...the air in our lungs. We are not lacking in materials to stoke the fires of thankfulness. It's not enough to refrain from complaining, we must cherish the goodness in our lives. When we stop expressing the humility of appreciation and thankfulness, we stop our hearts from recognizing gratitude altogether. When we honor gratefulness within us, it allows us to experience more gratitude.

What good is acquiring and advancing if we can't enjoy what we have when we have it? Our lack of energy, lack of motivation, lack of hope and vision for tomorrow comes from our lack of appreciation for what is ours now. When we are thankful for our life, our life becomes a life worth being thankful for. It's not just that our perspective changes, our life actually gets better. Gratitude is stewardship.

We are most like ourselves and most capable of being us with a grateful spirit. Thankfulness is a posture of humility which acknowledges that our wellbeing is not our own doing and celebrates the benevolence of a good Father. We get to enjoy our lives more completely when we take inventory of our blessing and allow it to move us to a place of delight. He intended us for pleasure, may we fulfill our purpose and be what this world deserves.


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APPETITE TO DESTRUCTION

By Karen Nurse

Life Coach/Writer/Transformer -Mother to a Prince. My counsel is this; to live freely, animated and motivated by the Spirit within. Then I won't feed the compulsions of selfishness. Like the one that gave Him-self for all humanity, I desire to live a life of Sacrifice. A sacrifice of Love. Find her on Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/karen.nurse.10>



Although I embrace love when it evokes feelings of joy, happiness and pleasure, I hide from it when it hurts, disappoints or causes fear. I had become afraid of feeling rejected, sad or angry so I exchanged my ability to feel with the desire to eat; replacing whatever was tormenting my soul to food which tormented my body.

Emotional eating stems from something greater than just the desire to eat; it is a symptom of a deeper root issue. That's why I can't tell you when all of this began. Perhaps after my son's father left, or my mother died, or when my family started to fall apart. All I know is that I've been battling this for years while believing it was a result of poor discipline.

The weight gain appears minimal at first until I'm fighting to get my favorite jeans up over my thighs. Seeing that my thighs were winning, I'd bow my head in defeat and wonder, "How did I let this happen, again?" The truth is, Life happened; a loss of a job, a move away, or going back to college would lead me right back to the struggle of drowning my feelings in food.

Rather than contributing the repeated reaction to a major change or traumatic experience, I thought something was wrong with me. There was; I was stuck in my emotions. I'm a fitness instructor and trainer so I believed restriction was the answer. Physical fitness is my passion for Heaven's sake! I know what it takes to work hard, push beyond pain and move into that mental realm where I can beat my body into submission. So I'd overcome the binging, lose the weight and get back on track. What I was not able to overcome, was the reality of my own emotions. When feelings threatened my composer, I would eat with reckless abandonment in order to obtain a false sense of security.

Replacing feelings with food was where I found solace. I had created an appetite for destruction. I feared rejection, loneliness, failure, and even death. Each fear was fought with food, which allowed me to "not feel." In fact, I did this for so long, it was instinctive. I had put on a fat suit fashioned from fear, isolating me from the world.

I thought if I stood in my feelings, walked through my emotions, consciously embraced the physical sensation of them, I would die. Little did I know I was dying a little already every day. It was stealing my joy, my creativity, my sense of adventure, my dreams, and my zest for life. By associating love with negative outcomes, I became scared; inadvertently enacting a cycle of self-loathing. We all want to sense the joy of being loved, but the reciprocating requirement is that we also endure the pain, hurt, and sadness. Numbing ourselves from this is not the answer. There is an easier way to embrace these painful emotions. Understanding when I'm feeling alone, kindness when I'm feeling sad, gentleness when I'm feeling angry, warmth and security when I'm feeling afraid, love and patience when I'm shedding tears. It's the same compassion I would give my son or a friend when they are going through these emotions. Why wouldn't I do the same for myself?

If we try to love without embracing all of our emotions, we deny ourselves the opportunity to fully live. We become bound by fear, immobilized from walking into the fullness of who God has created us to be. It's not easy but I am learning to ask God to help me live in the moment, and not deny myself any emotion because in it all... is love. How I grow, how I live, how I become: "The old has passed away, behold the new has come. Do not seek the dead among the living. For I am doing a new thing do you not perceive it."

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VISION

By Julie Winter



Julie Winter is a Nurse Practitioner. She serves on the board of Advance Redding, her local professional organization and is a member of the City of Redding Community Development Advisory Committee. Julie is running for Redding City Council.

It is said that we are limited not by our abilities but by our vision. When you have vision you can “see” the end goal. A gentleman once interviewed some workers at a construction site. When he approached the first worker, he asked him what he was doing. The man replied, “Can’t you see? I am laying bricks.” He then asked another the same question. The second worker said, “I am building a wall.” He then went to another and this man replied, “I am building a cathedral.” All three were doing the same thing, but only one had the vision to see the purpose and goal of his work. Without vision, there is no way to measure effectiveness, as the target is not defined. We toil, but to what purpose?

Solomon stated, “Where there is no vision, the people perish...” (Proverbs 29:18). Vision is different than problem-solving. Problem-solving is what you do to remove barriers that keep you from fulfilling your vision.

As I talk to people about their vision for Redding, the response typically is to problem-solve around ways to reduce crime, homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health issues. These are real problems that need valid solutions, but they do not speak to vision. These problems are symptoms of a chronic economic malaise, brought about by a lack of vision. What do we want our city to look like in five, ten, or twenty years? If we can answer that question, we will be able to create a strategy around our assets to fulfill the vision.

What do I see for the future of our city? I see a city that creates a vibrant economy where businesses thrive, and pathways are established to move people out of generational poverty. I see a city that values its talented and creative entrepreneurs. I see a city that understands and stewards its assets.

What have we been given as a city? Let’s be faithful to multiply our talents, not burying what we’ve been given out of fear. Our assets lie in our quality of life, the God-given natural beauty of the land. Redding is unusually gifted with a wild, scenic river, mountains, trails, forests, lakes, and every outdoor activity imaginable. The location of our city on I-5, plentiful sunshine, water, reasonable cost of living, airfare, and proximity to the Bay area are other tremendous assets. Many cities have done much more with much less.

I am inspired by San Antonio, whose leaders had the courage to take a slough, and turn it into an economic driver that is known as the San Antonio river walk. They were rewarded for their faithfulness in stewarding what they had. Can we say the same about Redding? Just imagine what we could do with our spectacular riverfront.

Another key asset is the talented and creative people who live here. There is an increase in creativity that has launched at least 50 new start-ups in the past year or two. This is incredible and something to be celebrated. The Shasta Venture Hub, an incubator that helps mentor and launch these new start-ups, began less than a year ago. The momentum in this community is growing.

There is an old proverb that says, “A vision without a plan is just a dream. A plan without a vision is just drudgery. But a vision with a plan can change the world.”

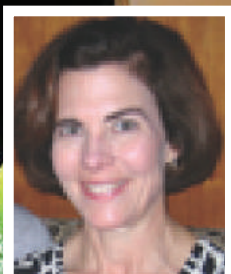
My intent is not to minimize the importance of public safety and the social issues we face. I applaud those who are working diligently to come up with a community plan for public safety issues and address the social needs in our community. But, ultimately we must come back to the core issue, What do we want our city to become? What is our vision for the future of our city? Let’s focus on that goal, and create a strategy to make it happen. Problem-solving will occur as we keep our eye on the end goal.

As we set measurable goals of reducing our unemployment rate from 7.5% to 5% and raise our median income from \$44K to the national average in 10 years or less, we will be forced to not only create, but implement a strategy. I see a city that connects our educational system to our emerging businesses. I see a city that promotes its quality of life to attract the skilled professionals and entrepreneurs needed for our local businesses to grow.

The story of Redding is not finished. I am filled with hope for a city where my children and grandchildren will make their dreams come true. There are too many people who believe this to be true, for it not to happen. Our best days lie ahead.

INGREDIENTS FOR JOY-FILLED LIVING

By Joy Fry



Recently our pastor shared the ingredients for his favorite pecan pralines recipe. He even brought the sweet treat for us to enjoy after worship. I thought to myself, do I have any special family recipes to share? I began to reflect on the recipe I use for experiencing daily joy. I discovered four main ingredients.

First, add a cup of giving and a cup of serving others. I am still amazed. When I stop focusing on myself and instead serve others, I experience an overflowing sense of well-being. I now take action when a name pops into my thoughts. I consider whether I should phone the person, send a card, or make a personal visit. Then I make it happen. No more analyzing or putting the item on my to-do list. Often, a family member or friend will tell me later my encouraging word was what they needed. There are many ways to serve. I prefer to have ongoing relationships with those I help. One example is a friend of mine who can't drive. I take her out for lunch or for a walk in a local park at least once a month. I also look after my neighbors' houses and pick up their mail and packages when they travel.

Second, pour in two tablespoons of giving thanks every day. When I find myself focusing on what I don't have, I give thanks instead. I prepare a list of what I am thankful for. Frequently the items include answered prayers for family and friends, my good health, and the natural beauty surrounding my home. Preparing the list brings a smile to my face and reminds me of God's faithfulness.

Third, sprinkle in a pinch of laughter. My husband and dog continually surprise me with their funny antics. For example, my dog, Jody, likes to chase the upright vacuum cleaner and tries to take bites of the vacuum bag. She growls and races around the vacuum. Since Jody is a gentle and sweet dog, this playful behavior makes cleaning day lots of fun. Then, while I am doing floor exercises, my husband often surprises me by dancing around the room while he plays my favorite Abba song, "Dancing Queen". Then, I get up and we both laugh and swing to the music.

Do you want more joy in your daily living? How about trying my recipe? Mix together the four ingredients above and add a couple of your own. This recipe is guaranteed to bring refreshment!



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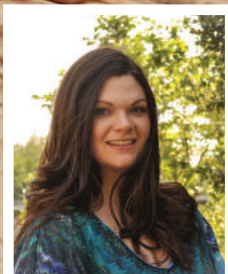


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" R Customers R Warm Friends"



By Jenna Ingebretsen

Working wife, mother of two tiny tots, cultural explorer, and story enthusiast.

ASPARAGUS, SPINACH, & FETA STUFFED CHICKEN

Prep: 20 min **Bake:** 20min **Done:** 45min

Ingredients

- 2 Boneless skinless chicken breast halves
- 1 Bundle of Asparagus (6-10 spears for stuffing, others for roasting)
- 1 Garlic clove (crushed/minced)
- 1 tsp Olive Oil
- 1 cup Fresh Spinach leaves
- 1/4 cup Feta cheese (more or less to taste)
- 1 tbsp Fresh Rosemary and/or Dried Oregano (chopped finely)
- 1 tbsp cold butter (optional)
- Salt & pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 °

Rinse chicken breasts and pat dry with a paper towel. Using the palm of your hand, press gently on the top of the chicken breast. Careful to leave about 1/8" of meat connected on the opposite side of the breast, slice it in half horizontally. Unfold the breast like a butterfly. Sprinkle salt and pepper on all sides, then place in an ungreased baking pan.

Wash the asparagus and pat dry with a paper towel. Snap the cut-ends of the asparagus off (my kids love helping with this part). Asparagus breaks easily where it is ready and ripe, leaving you with less tough, stringy asparagus for your meal. (If you save the ends in the freezer, you can use them for a veggie stock or soup on another day.) Place 3-5 asparagus stalks (depending on size) on one side of each butterflied chicken breast.



PESTO QUINOA WITH SPINACH

Prep: 5-10 min **Cook:** 20min **Done:** 25-30min

Ingredients

- 1 cups Dry Quinoa, white or multicolor
- 2 cups Water or Chicken stock (for added flavor)
- 2-3 Garlic cloves, crushed/minced
- 1 tbsp Olive Oil
- 1 cup Fresh Spinach
- 3-4tbsp Pesto Sauce (your favorite store bought, or homemade)
- 1 tbsp Parmesan cheese (optional)
- 5-10 Grape Tomatoes or Grapes, sliced (optional)

Directions

Prep: Rinse quinoa in a cheesecloth or fine-mesh strainer until no bubbles come from quinoa. This thorough rinse gets the bitter film coating off the grain and allows for the full protein and nutritional value to be accessed during digestion. If using a cheesecloth, squeeze excess water from the quinoa - if not, allow time to drain.

Cook: Over medium heat, add olive oil and garlic to a medium saucepan (2Qt) and sauté for a minute. Add the quinoa to the pan and toast the quinoa for a few minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in your water or chicken stock, and bring to a boil. Quinoa cooks fairly quickly, and will be done in 12-15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

When quinoa is done cooking, add in your spinach and pesto sauce (more or less to personal preference), stirring frequently. Your Pesto Quinoa with Spinach is ready to serve when the spinach is wilted and pesto is combined.

After plating, sprinkle grated parmesan cheese over top for added flavor and aesthetics. Adding sliced grape tomatoes and/or grapes, will add texture, flavor, and color to the palette as well.



ALMOND PESTO SAUCE

Prep: 5 min

Ingredients

- 2 cups Fresh Basil
- 2-3 Garlic cloves (crushed/minced)
- 1/2 cup Olive Oil
- 1/4 cup Almonds
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 1/8 tsp Pepper
- 1/2 cup Grated Parmesan cheese

Directions

In a food processor, combine basil, garlic, and almonds. Pulse a few times to start. When you see the mixture is integrating, slowly pour in your olive oil and process until smooth. Stir in your salt and pepper, and grated parmesan cheese.

It is now ready to serve immediately, or you can transfer it to a jar or container and keep in your fridge for your next pesto recipe!

On medium heat, add olive oil and crushed garlic to a large skillet. Sauté for a minute to infuse the oil with the garlic flavor. Add spinach, and let cook for 2 minutes. Add feta, stir to combine, then remove from heat. Spoon the mixture over the asparagus, then fold the chicken breast over and weave a toothpick through the edges to seal. Rub cold butter on top of the chicken breast, which will make the chicken golden brown. Sprinkle chopped rosemary and/or oregano over the top to finish.

If you have additional asparagus, place them around the chicken breasts and sprinkle a pinch of salt and pepper, the juices of the chicken will provide the oils and flavor during the bake.

Bake uncovered in the oven at 400° for about 20 minutes, or until your meat thermometer reads 160°. When done cooking, remove from oven and let sit for a few minutes to cool. At that time, it is ready to serve as-is, or slice. Slices are presentable and are smaller portions for kids!

WOMEN NEED WOMEN

By Sandie Tillery

Sandie Tillery has lived with husband, John, in Shasta County for 42 years, raised three children and spends quality time with six grandchildren. She has been a foster parent, teacher, administrative assistant, freelance writer, and has served in a variety of church leadership positions at Valley Christian Fellowship in Redding. Sandie speaks and writes passionately about the role of older women as mentors for younger women.



Older women can be so influential in teaching younger women how to live life successfully and grow old gracefully. Grandmas and aunts used to be the go-to "other mothers." It's a high calling and a lost art in our fractured, impersonal world. Talk swirls today about the differences in generations. Gen-Xers think and work and play and order their lives differently than Baby Boomers. Millennials don't like to be labeled and tend to have very distinct conversational styles that involve technology in a way even Generation-Xers don't fully comprehend. How to connect and become effective coaches and mentors stymies many of us. But there are ways.

My own story set the stage for me to fully comprehend the glory of an older woman pouring herself out as a love offering to me. Judith patted my pregnant tummy and looked me in the eye as we gathered in small groups after a Sunday School service in the public school where we met. Judith and her husband had undertaken a missionary venture to bring the knowledge of Christ to our small mountain community. My husband and I both had church backgrounds, but had not been regular churchgoers since we'd married two years earlier. We had come from the city to the mountains to work at a ranch school for at-risk teens. The little Sunday School meeting seemed like a good idea for the boys we were trying to tame.

Her simple questions hit my heart with a tender unleashing power. My parents were divorced, my mother not available or able to nurture me in those early days of young adulthood. Judith became my "other mother." As she poured into my new-found faith, she also helped me prepare for the arrival of my first child. For two years, until Judith and her husband moved away, Judith wrapped me into the warmth of her tender affections at that critical time in my life.

Many young women today yearn for someone to help them navigate the unknowns as they look to life after high school and college, launch into new careers, begin new marriages, and welcome newborns. Professional women have much to offer younger women who are learning how to establish themselves competently. Stay-at-home moms who've been at it awhile can speak to those new moms who want to know how to bathe their babies and when to start them on solid food and how to carve out "me" time. Twenty-somethings can speak the same language to teens who want someone to champion them as they discover who they are and where they're going.

The best way to enter into a mentoring partnership is to respond to a need. If younger women feel reluctant to ask, older women must present themselves as willing and available. It doesn't have to be another time-consuming commitment, but a mutually agreed-upon schedule of meetings that fit into both busy lives. There are mentoring programs, but there are also opportunities in front of our faces.

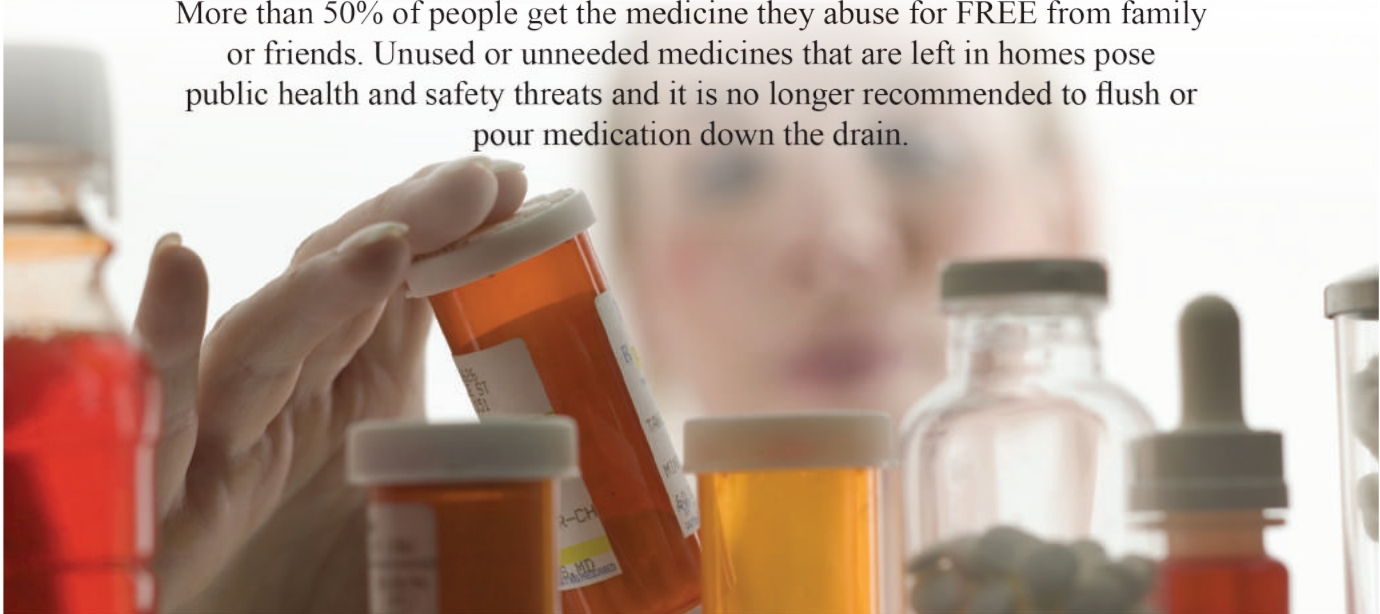
Generational differences don't change our deep spiritual, soulful need to be connected and loved and nurtured. There are ways to bridge the generations, to find common ground. Often the best gift is time. Intentional listening, good questioning, gentle encouragement, a wise word... who can resist such a gift?

Step out in boldness, you well-seasoned women. Be blessed as you bless. Paul writes in Colossians 2:2-3 (NIV), "My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

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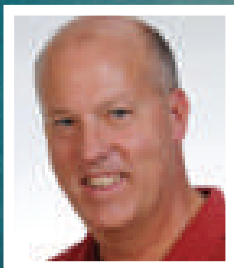
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HOW TO LISTEN SO THAT OTHERS WILL TALK

By Dr. Bob Boyle



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"What did you say?"

"Could you repeat that—I wasn't listening?"

"Sorry for the interruption—could you run that by me again?"

If you are like me, you have probably found yourself repeating these words all too frequently. Effective listening is an underutilized business skill. Whether it's a business meeting with colleagues, a performance review between manager and employee, or a sales pitch between salesperson and customer—being able to effectively listen gets results. The bad news is most of us have deficient listening skills. The good news is listening effectively is a skill, and therefore can be taught and learned.

In order to understand what effective listening is, we must first strive to understand what effective listening *is not*. If we are able to accurately discriminate between ineffective and effective listening, then we are on the way to becoming effective listeners.

What is *not* effective listening?

- incessant talking
- thinking, planning, and rehearsing what you will say next
- disinterest, as evidenced by: yawning, feeling tired, boredom
- being easily distracted
- passivity
- non-involvement and hyper-objectivity
- focusing on oneself instead of the speaker



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What are the results of ineffective listening?

The list is long and painful, and carries with it the net result of damaging our relationships with others and our business:

- feeling misunderstood
- frustration and anger
- depression
- lowered motivation and initiative
- lowered productivity
- lowered compliance
- the employee/customer looking elsewhere to be listened to

What are some characteristics of an effective listener?

Although this is not an exhaustive list, here are some things to consider:

1. Stopping

In order to listen effectively, the listener must, first of all, stop what he or she is doing. A shift in focus needs to occur—shifting from ourselves to the other person.

2. Body language

We should be relaxed and open. Anxious body language halts the listening process. There should be no physical obstacles between us and the speaker. We should maintain a moderate amount of eye contact.

3. Attention

Our attention should be sustained, focused, and without distraction. We should be taking care of ourselves (nutrition, exercise, rest, social supports, spirituality) to maintain our focus.

4. Content vs. Process

Content is what we say; process is how we say it. Both are important in listening, although process should be a primary emphasis.

5. Paraphrasing and reflecting

This is the ability to sum up what the other has said. This technique can be useful when we need to get “back on track”.

6. Clarification

Asking pertinent questions is an indication of interest. People enjoy talking about themselves. Try this with your employees (wife, children) sometime and observe the results.

7. Be tentative

Don't claim to be divinely guided and understand *all* of what another is saying. If you are tentative, others will correct you if you are wrong. I find this happens quite frequently in marriage!

8. Boyle principle of listening

“When in doubt, shut up and listen further.” I wished that I could consistently follow my own advice here.

What are the beneficial results of effective listening?

- feeling understood
- feeling connected with others
- increased respect and collegiality
- increased involvement
- increased teamwork and sense of community
- increased productivity
- increased compliance (both employees and customers)
- “stay at home effect” - employee or customer will remain loyal

By focusing our efforts on developing this underutilized, yet potentially effective business/people skill—you will find yourself becoming more successful in both the management of others in your organization, as well as in your personal relationships.

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