

Avoid Adrenal Fatigue

by Janet Maccaro, PH.D.

At a Glance

- * Go to bed early
- * Sleep in when possible
- * Listen to soothing, relaxing music
- * Spend time weekly with a friend
- * Eliminate energy vampires
- * Develop a grateful attitude
- * Make time for daily prayer.

Are you stressed out? Worried about the things you have not yet completed? Fearful of never catching up? You're not alone. Many people in our society are living in a continual state of bondage to things unaccomplished, goals not reached and expectations not met. They struggle with an inner restlessness that robs them of sleep, contentment, joy and, ultimately, their health.

Frustration and humiliation from failed attempts to accomplish too much take a heavy toll on us. It has been proved time and again that too much stress means less success personally and professionally.

If you've experienced the truth of this statement, I offer the following thought: God gives you no more work to do than He fully equips you to accomplish. Rest in that fact and be confident in it. What freedom it is to know that God gave you the desires of your heart and equipped you with everything you need to fulfill them according to His purpose!

Stress melts and tension slips away when you realize God is there in every situation. Yield yourself to Him.

On a physical level, the stress of trying to accomplish too much can affect the health of your adrenal glands. These glands help your body manage stress. They affect your energy

levels and ability to recover from illness and have an impact on every tissue, organ and gland in your body.

Adrenal fatigue has become a silent epidemic because of the lifestyle choices many people—especially those who tend to be perfectionists—make. They do not rest and relax enough to enjoy life, they are under constant pressure with few outlets for emotional release, they take in large amounts of caffeine and sugar just to keep going, their diets are high in refined and processed foods, and they stay up late even when they are exhausted.

Other factors that drain the adrenals are outside our control: severe emotional trauma, loss of a job, major surgery, divorce, death in the family, chronic illness, and relocation away from family or friends.

It is possible for people with adrenal fatigue to feel unwell for years. They typically have low blood pressure, low blood sugar, and food allergies or sensitivities. They also have a hard time getting up in the morning, experience foggy, fuzzy thinking and constantly feel run down.

If you suspect that you are suffering from adrenal fatigue, try this test to help you determine the severity of the condition: Lie down quietly and after 10 minutes take your blood pressure while still in the lying position. Then stand up and immediately take your blood pressure again.

Normally, blood pressure will rise 10-20 points when you stand up. If it drops instead, you may need to focus on your adrenal health. The more severe the drop, the more help your adrenals need.

Make sure you are well-hydrated on the day you perform the test. If not, you may get a false reading. If your adrenal function is low, you may also be dizzy or lightheaded when you stand.

The following products may help to boost adrenal function: vitamin C, vitamin E (mixed tocopherols), B complex, pantothenic acid, magnesium, calcium, licorice root, ginkgo biloba, adrenal glandular supplement (bovine) and progesterone cream (for women, especially during premenopausal years).

Lifestyle changes may help as well. Try to incorporate the following activities into your life:

- * Go to bed early
- * Sleep in when possible
- * Listen to soothing, relaxing music
- * Spend time weekly with a friend
- * Eliminate energy vampires
- * Develop a grateful attitude
- * Make time for daily prayer.

Finally, don't try to do all you have to do in one day! Remember, God “gives power to those who are tired and worn out; He offers strength to the weak. But those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint” (Is. 40:29,31, NLT).

Stop Worrying

by Joyce Meyer

Many, if not most, people struggle with worry and anxiety-a sure sign that they are not pursuing peace with God. God tells us in His Word that worry and anxiety are peace-stealers-total wastes of energy that never produce good results.

Worry has many negative side effects, including draining our energy, making us grouchy and even bringing on sickness. Yet

we continue to worry because we think we can solve our own problems if we dwell on them long enough.

Sometimes we worry because we are afraid things in our lives won't turn out the way we hope. Worry that results from fear is an indicator that we don't trust God.

Like most people, I resist things I don't like. One day the Lord said to me, "Joyce, learn to take life as it comes." I believe this is a lesson for all of us. God wasn't telling me to lie down and become a doormat for the devil and people who would abuse me; what He was saying was that I needed to stop fighting the things I could do nothing about.

If we are traveling somewhere and suddenly find ourselves in heavy traffic due to an accident or bad weather, it doesn't do any good to resist it. Only time or God's supernatural intervention will change the situation. Why not relax and try to find some way to enjoy the time?

God has equipped us to handle life as it comes, but if we spend today worrying about tomorrow, we will become tired and frustrated. Each day has enough for us to consider, so we don't need to anticipate tomorrow's situations while we are still trying to live out today's.

Jesus said, "Do not worry or be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries and anxieties of its own. Sufficient for each day is its own trouble" (Matt.6:34, The Amplified Bible). This is good advice for those who allow worries to steal their peace.

Worrying adds to the problem rather than solving it. Most of the things we worry about are solved in time. Somehow an answer comes, and we realize that all the time we spent worrying was a total waste.

I believe that worry is rooted in selfishness, just like so

many other sins. Worry is a sin because it is not faith, and Romans 14:23 states that "whatever does not originate and proceed from faith is sin."

Usually when we worry, our concern comes from our fear of what people will think of us, what people will say about us, what will happen to us or what we are going to do. Sometimes we worry about other people and what they will do or what may happen to them.

But we can do less about them than we can about ourselves. If we can't control our own destinies, how can we hope to control someone else's?

There is always something we could worry about; we must consciously choose not to. Peace and worry do not cohabit, so if you intend to enjoy a life of peace, worry is one thing you will have to give up.

It is God's will that we live our lives free from all anxiety and distressing care. He wants us to be free to serve Him without being "drawn in diverging directions" (1 Cor. 7:34). We must not allow the worries of this world to divert us from His purpose for our lives.

Seeking to keep our lives as simple as possible will help us have fewer temptations to worry. The more we are involved in, the more we have to be concerned about.

For many years I wanted to be in on everything, but now I would much rather have peace. I have learned that keeping life as simple as possible brings peace and frees me to better serve the Lord.

The only solution to worry is total abandonment to God and His plan. Even when unpleasant things happen, He can make them work out for good. So I encourage you to enjoy the peace of God that comes from keeping your life simple, trusting God and taking life as it comes.

Press Past Your Pain

by Joyce Meyer

The world today is full of people who are suffering from emotional pain. The cause is often abuse, rejection, abandonment, betrayal, disappointment, judgment, criticism or other negative behavior by others. This emotional pain can be more devastating than physical pain because people feel that they have to hide it and pretend it isn't real.

They know that many people find it easier to be understanding and sympathetic about physical ailments than emotional ones. But the truth is that our emotions are part of our makeup, and they can become sick like any other part of us.

If you have an emotional wound in your life, you need to know that Jesus wants to heal you. Don't make the mistake of thinking He is interested only in your spiritual life. Jesus wants to heal you everywhere you hurt!

The Bible teaches that He came to heal our wounds, to bind up and heal our broken hearts, and to give us beauty instead of ashes and the oil of joy instead of mourning (see Is. 61:1-3).

Though it is true that Jesus wants to help us, we must do our part, even while we are still hurting. God's Word shows us how we can be free, but getting there requires making choices that may not be easy or seem fair.

For example, being good to someone who has hurt us in the past is emotionally and mentally painful. And we often have to do the right thing for a long time before we begin seeing results. If someone has hurt us, and we are bitter about it, that person is still causing us pain.

Bitterness is a negative attitude that steals our joy and peace. It is difficult and painful, but if we are willing to press past the pain by doing right and making a decision to forgive, healing will eventually come, and we will begin to experience freedom.

God is not glorified by our suffering, but He is glorified when we have a good attitude during our suffering. When someone has hurt us, choosing to do what's right is not easy, but it contributes to ending our pain. As long as we stay angry, we keep our pain.

Why would we choose to remain bitter, angry and wounded while those who have hurt us are not even aware that we are hurting? A better choice is to forgive. When we are willing to pray for and bless those who have hurt us, the pain is swallowed up in love.

If you are overwhelmed by painful feelings, I encourage you to run to the one who can help—His name is Jesus! You have to need Him more than you need anything else. When it seems that your pain is more than you can stand, run quickly to the Lord for help and healing.

Go to His Word and find the promises that will strengthen, encourage and enable you to do the right thing. God's Word is powerful, and when you release your faith in His Word, that power is released in your life to help you. You should also pray regularly and specifically for strength to stand firm in the will of God.

Another part of the healing process is to set your mind, and keep it set, on things above, not on things of the earth (see Col. 3:2). You must be armed with right thinking, or you will give up during hard times.

Set your mind and be fully aware that moving from being a victim to being a victor will not be a quick process. It will take time, but your experience will make you stronger and

enable you to help others who are facing similar battles.

Get started today! Don't allow the painful feelings of your past to ruin your future. Press through to victory.

Get excited about your future and realize that "going through" something means that you will come out on the other side with a victory that cannot be taken away from you.

Be determined! Stop wishing things were different and do your part to make them different. You cannot do anything apart from God, but by cooperating with Him you can overcome the pain of past feelings and have a victorious life—now and in the future.

The Question Every Woman Asks

Let me just tell you right from the beginning, I know that you've tried. And you know that you've tried.

Lord knows that you have scratched your head in wonder and profound confusion when it comes to the woman that you love. You've tried to hear and understand. You want to give and respond.

Ten fabulous dates. Seven promises. Five love languages. Three counselors. Anything. Everything. But whatever you do, it's never enough. The target of her desire moves and you can't seem to hit the bull's-eye.

You've tried; we both know it. But the truth is that you can't.

Judging by Appearances

by Linda S. Mintle, Ph.D.

Fifty years ago, famous novelist Ralph Ellison wrote about being black: "I am ... because people refuse to see they approach me, they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination—indeed, everything and anything except me." His description applies equally well to those single people who believe they are disenfranchised because they are unattractive.

In today's world, beauty is a highly desired commodity. Even though most of us don't measure up to media standards for great looks, we believe physical beauty brings happiness. Despite the efforts of feminists, women still define themselves based on physical appearance. Those who don't score high on the cultural beauty scale deal with rejection more than those who do.

Beauty is an advantage in our society. That's why people spend billions of dollars on plastic surgery. But what happens when you, like most of us, aren't one of the "beautiful people"?

A reader from Utah expresses this dilemma. "I am an unmarried Christian woman with a female roommate. People often misjudge me based on my looks and living arrangement. I am not very pretty. I wear thick glasses that don't lend to contacts. I would like to be married, but so far there is no one interested in me. Would it be wrong to ask God to make me prettier? And how do I handle the unkind comments people make?"

People inside and outside the church do make judgments based on looks and marital status. Early on girls learn the lesson

that appearance matters. Women internalize messages from magazines and other media that often lead to a preoccupation with beauty and attaining the perfect body. But asking God to make you prettier isn't the answer.

My advice to you and others in similar situations is to take the following steps.

Maximize what God has given you. Get a stylish haircut and eyeglass frames. Use makeup to enhance your skin and facial features. Dress in ways that flatter your shape and frame.

Exercise and keep your weight within a healthy range. Do all of this for you, not some potential boyfriend. You will feel more confident and more attractive.

Avoid comparing yourself with others. This is very hard to do when bombarded by nonstop images of glamour. But remember that pictures of models and movie stars are often computer-altered and airbrushed. Most women have to learn to accept the body they were given—imperfect as it is.

Concentrate on character. As trite as it sounds, inner beauty is more important in the long run than outer beauty. Physical beauty fades, but godly character makes people beautiful. It is not uncommon to hear couples talk about attractions that grew over time because of the inner beauty they saw in each other.

Realize that your self-worth comes from God. If you know how God sees you, it matters less what other people think. Your identity must be grounded in Him regardless of appearance. To Him, you are beautiful. He did not make a mistake when He made you. You are a result of His handiwork (see Eph. 2:10). You are wonderfully made (see Ps. 139:14). He loves you just as you are (see John 3:16). You are His child (see John 1:12).

Practice being assertive. When people make hurtful comments, let them know their words hurt. Speak up in a gentle but

assertive manner. For example, the next time someone insinuates you are gay because you are unmarried and live with another single woman, say, "That insinuation hurts" or "Please don't judge me. You don't even know me. Instead, ask how you can pray for me."

A woman who is pretty does have an initial advantage meeting men, but beauty does not guarantee relationship success, high self-esteem or an interesting personality. Those things must be cultivated over time.

Focus on the things you can control, and work on those. And remember, inner joy and peace always are reflected outwardly. Confidence shines when you truly know who you are in Christ. In today's world, nothing could be more attractive.

Fasting for Good Health

by Dr. Donald Colbert, M.D.

Q. I would like to do some fasting, primarily for health reasons. Is there a particular method that you recommend?

J.T., Echo Park, California

A. Fasting, in general, is controversial. Some popular fasting techniques are good; others can be downright dangerous. I'm convinced, however, of one method of fasting that will start you on a path to healthier living.

Many believe the only true form of fasting is the total fast—not eating or drinking anything—but I consider this method unsafe. Your body must always have at least two quarts of water a day to sustain your life.

The kind of fasting most of us think of is liquid-only:

avoiding all solid foods and consuming liquids for a selected period of time. The strictest, most severe of these is a water-only fast. I don't usually recommend this type either, except for people with certain autoimmune diseases or severe coronary-artery disease.

If you are considering a water-only fast, be prepared to devote several days to doing little more than fasting. For most people this method so weakens the body that it's hardly possible to work a full-time job or stay alert through a full day of school while fasting.

If you don't have the diseases I just mentioned, the best fasting method for cleansing and detoxification is juice fasting. This type of fast may take more time to achieve the same benefits of a water-only fast, but it spares you from the unpleasant weakness and hunger.

It also is much less strenuous since it results in detoxification, alkalizes the body and supports the liver. Not only will you probably avoid the weakness or hunger, but you also may experience tremendous energy during the fast.

Doing it occasionally—every one, three or six months—gives your gastrointestinal system a much-needed rest. I believe it is far healthier to go on a series of short juice fasts than on one long fast. This allows your body time to recuperate and rebuild.

Prepared correctly, juice can provide the nutrients, amino acids and fuel that your liver requires to detoxify. For this type, you will need lots of fresh fruits and vegetables and a juicer.

Many fasting programs are so physically challenging that you can be left feeling completely wiped out with little or no energy to function. A properly balanced juice-fasting program is designed to keep you energized enough to work, play and enjoy your daily activities.

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Joyce Meyer: Why You Should Start Confessing Supernatural Favor

When I first began my **ministry**, I was scared. In those days, women were not as widely accepted in the pulpit as they are today. Afraid of being rejected, I bent over backward to behave in the way I thought would please people. The only problem was that I was trying to earn approval, and it didn't work.

At the time, I knew nothing about **supernatural favor**. I didn't realize that favor is a part of grace. In fact, in the New Testament the words grace and favor both are translated from the Greek word **charis**.

The **grace of God** is the favor of God. And the grace of God causes good things to happen in our lives through the channel of faith. It is not by human power or might but through **God's Spirit** of grace that we find favor with God and man.

There is a distinction between natural favor and **supernatural favor**. Natural favor must be earned, but supernatural favor is a gift. Natural favor says, If you work hard enough and long enough, some people will like you some of the time.

But that acceptance must be maintained, and having to say and do all the right things becomes a form of **bondage**. God doesn't expect us to run around trying to earn favor with Him or with others. He wants us only to do His will—whether it is popular or not. Just do your best and leave the results to God.

From childhood, Jesus walked in the **supernatural favor** of God and men. In fact, He was so popular He could hardly find time alone to pray and fellowship with His heavenly Father. Even those who did not believe in Him recognized that He enjoyed the favor of God.

The guards sent by the Pharisees to arrest Jesus returned saying, "Never has a man talked as this Man talks!" (John 7:46, The Amplified Bible). Right up to the end of His life, even on the cross, that **special favor** was recognized (see Luke 23:47-48).

Psalms 8:5-6 says: "You have made him but a little lower than God [or heavenly beings], and You have crowned him with **glory** and **honor**. You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet." In these verses, honor and favor have the same meaning. We might say that God has crowned man with glory and favor, giving him

dominion over the works of His hands and placing all things under his feet.

We must never forget that no matter what happens, we can have favor with God and with other people (see Luke 2:52). But like so many good things in life, just because something is available to us does not mean that we will partake of it. The Lord makes many things available that we never receive and enjoy because we don't **activate our faith** in that area.

For example, if we go to a job interview confessing **fear** and **failure**, we can be almost certain we won't get the job. On the other hand, even if we apply for a job we aren't fully qualified for, we can still go in **confidence**, knowing that God will give us **favor** in every situation that is His will.

First Samuel 2:7 says, "The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and He lifts up." A perfect example of this is found in the life of **Esther**. God raised her up out of obscurity to become the queen of the entire land. He gave her favor with everyone she met, including the king.

Esther drew upon that **favor** to save herself and her people from being murdered by the evil Haman. She may have been afraid to go to the king and ask him to intervene, but Esther knew she had favor with God and pressed on with complete **confidence** in Him.

We don't have nearly as much fun with the Lord as we should. We should have more **freedom** and liberty and less fear and legalism. Regardless of the circumstances that come into your life, believe God for supernatural favor.

Despite how hopeless things may seem, God can lift you up. If your life is in His hands, the light of the Lord shines upon you. It is time we believe the words of our Father: "You are the apple of My eye. You are My favorite child" (see Deut. 32:10, NKJV).

Loosen Up and Reach Out

by Scott Hinkle

Recently I was asked to speak at a conference and address the topic of “being relevant” to the needs of this generation. The more I thought about it, the more distracted I became. Relevant has become a buzzword, and buzzwords can be a nuisance because they draw our attention from the crux of an issue to the “buzz” surrounding it.

Being able to relate to people calls for more than having trendy clothes, hair and language. Whereas change, even on the surface, sometimes might be helpful, to be effective in our witness we must go deeper.

The apostle Paul's words about this are classic. “To the weak I became weak, to win the weak,” he writes. “I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel that I might share its blessings” (1 Cor. 9:22-23, NIV).

Keep this passage in mind while we take a look at what I call flashpoints—or what Webster calls points “at which someone bursts suddenly into action.” The following igniters will spark you “into action”—they'll connect you with people outside your own social, cultural, ethnic, generational or religious sphere.

Pray for a desire. In reading through Paul's letters it appears quite clear he was interested in reaching anyone and

everyone with the gospel. Whether or not the people he reached were like him made no difference to him. Without a desire propelling us to reach others, we may as well stop now. I have found that the Holy Spirit will cultivate a desire in us if we ask Him.

Refuse to fear. Do not be intimidated by the buzz of buzzwords—such as postmodern; Gen-X, -Y, -Z or -G (for Geriatric); Muslim, Jew, drug addict, culture; and so on. Remember, all of us have similar basic needs because we all were made the same—in the image of God.

Never forget the gospel is the power of God to all people (see Rom. 1:16) and that the power of the Holy Spirit can supercede our polished apologetics if necessary. Always refuse to allow fear to restrain you from reaching out to people you know nothing about.

Value what God values. This one's simple. It's all about people. More than ideals, philosophy or style, God values people. He wants none to perish. After all, God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son for the world (see John 3:16).

Loosen up. Ever heard, “Blessed are the flexible, for they won't get bent out of shape”? Paul was willing to stretch and be stretched—for the weak, for his fellow Jews, for religious people who strictly obeyed Moses' law—so that he might win some for Christ. He left us a good example.

Tommy Barnett, the great soul-winner who pastors Phoenix (Arizona) First Assembly of God, always says: “It's the message that's sacred, not the method.” If we value what God values, then we should be willing to give of ourselves and to stretch and be stretched. I had to learn this truth after

growing up in a New Jersey neighborhood where everyone was Jewish, Catholic or religiously weird. When I moved to the Bible Belt, I had to learn to connect with people who grew up in church.

Stretching includes rethinking our way of communicating. I absolutely believe it is possible to be uncompromising yet relevant.

Get around people on their turf. Jesus said for us to "'go into all the world'" (see Mark 16:15). To do this, we have to connect with people where they live—in their environment—and break out of the Christian bubble. Serving people and helping to meet evident needs they have can often build a bridge between you and them and will help you relate to someone who seems different from you.

Yes, some folks have gone to extremes in their stated attempt to "win some" to Christ—to the point of losing credibility as His witness. But my question is, Are you winning some? Any? Are you getting close to winning some?

If not, you should take some time to rethink the Great Commission.

Surely Jesus would never have given us that commandment if He knew we could not fulfill it.

So, come on, let's go tell someone—anyone—about Jesus.

OVERCOMING Addiction to Pornography