

Self-Care Without the Guilt ***Be Focused, Not Frazzled!***

July 2019

“Are you weary, carrying a heavy burden? Then come to me. I will refresh your life, for I am your oasis. Simply join your life with mine. Learn my ways and you’ll discover that I’m gentle, humble, easy to please. You will find refreshment and rest in me. For all that I require of you will be pleasant and easy to bear.” Matthew 11:28-30, The Passion Translation

Do you often feel stressed, overwhelmed, and exhausted? If you are like most women, you generously serve everyone else in your family, workplace, and community with little attention to your own well-being. A good word for this is “frazzled.”

The traditional definition of frazzled from Webster’s dictionary is “a state of extreme physical or nervous fatigue.” The *Cambridge English Dictionary* defines frazzled as “tired and nervous or anxious, often because of having to deal with too many things at the same time.” And my favorite is from the online *Urban Dictionary*, which is “to be feeling a bit brain-fried; lost and confused; not functioning properly; slightly stressed; all over the place.”

Can I get an AMEN? Do you sometimes feel a bit brain-fried and all over the place? Maybe you’re even frazzled on a daily basis.

Self-care should be one of our highest priorities, as we have been entrusted with God’s most magnificent creation. As the scriptures say, we are His temple, bought with a priceless sacrifice, and we should love ourselves as He loves us. A focused and joy-filled life honors our Creator and helps us shine brightly as a reflection of His deep love for humanity.

We women are the worst about putting ourselves at the bottom of our to-do lists. Busyness has become the norm, stealing contentment and joy from our lives. Our priorities have been turned upside down, and we jump out of bed in the morning, charging ahead instead of starting the day with God. Instead of creating time for refreshment in our schedules, we allow our full calendars to define our worth, taking care of everyone else’s needs before our own. We feel guilty about pampering ourselves from time to time, though we’ll buy a massage for a friend in a heartbeat. Most days, we are so exhausted at night that we are too tired to do anything but fall into bed.

Rest is biblical; allowing yourself to become stressed is not. From the very beginning, God worked for six days creating the universe and rested on the seventh. For centuries, the Sabbath was honored as a time of rest and renewal. Somewhere along the way the reverence for rest has been lost.

Jesus was the ultimate example of living a focused life, living out the purpose God put Him on earth to fulfill, but doing it at a pace that allowed Him to be fully present with those around Him. He knew His calling and lived it out so beautifully, never allowing others to derail Him from the journey God placed Him on, especially Satan and his constant attacks. He served, He taught, He healed, and He rested alone with His Father to quench His human needs.



And Jesus invites you to rest with Him. In the words of Matthew 11:28-30, He is your oasis and provides refreshment for your soul. He is waiting for you to spend time with Him in prayer and meditation so He can fill your cup, but if you are frazzled, you'll miss out on the gift He is offering.

To live a flourishing life, you must take good care of yourself. The success you achieve in every area of your life is highly dependent on good eating habits, regular exercise, reducing stress, rest, fun, and love. If you are overworked and overwhelmed, you will be less productive, more resentful, and unmotivated. If you are energetic and focused, you will thrive. Focusing on your own self-care can mean the difference between being irritable and depressed or being content with a joyful, positive attitude.

Be focused, not frazzled, with these things in mind.

Fill your own cup first. This may seem backwards, as we tend to focus on the needs of others before our own. But you cannot give away what you don't have, so fill your own cup to overflowing and give what runs over to the saucer to others. A healthy, rested body will give you the energy you need to accomplish your goals; a healthy mind will keep you sharp and focused; and a healthy spiritual life will provide wisdom and direction. Proper nourishment in each of these areas will provide abundant energy to share in your personal and professional lives. This mindset is a gift to yourself and to others who depend on you.

Overcome self-sabotage. Don't let negative beliefs permeate your thoughts, draining your energy and joy. Let go of perfectionism—you'll never reach it, but you'll wear yourself out and waste valuable time trying. Embrace "good is good enough!" Say "no more" to fear which can cause stress, anxiety and insomnia. Stop procrastinating and get moving so you won't always feel like you're behind. You are enough, just as you are!

Cut the tether to technology. Studies have shown that we spend an average of 23 hours a week with technology platforms, resulting in lower productivity, lower self-esteem and higher brain stimulation, making it hard to unwind and relax. A Google study revealed that 2/3 of us cannot draw boundaries between work and home, especially regarding email. Put down the phone and take a break from social media and email, then be present with those you are with. Replace technology time with quiet time and refresh your soul. Instead of depending on Alexa for information, seek God first.

Unleash the power of saying "No!" by drawing healthy boundaries. Don't say yes out of obligation or guilt. Remember, every time you say yes to one thing, you are automatically saying no to another. If your schedule is filled with things you'd rather not be doing (which end up draining you), you will have no time to say yes when an opportunity you would love to do arises. Remember, your no is a gift to someone who truly wants to say yes!

Say YIPPEE every day! Look for the positive things and don't dwell on the negative ones, being more focused on your blessings and less conscious of your struggles. Find at least one thing every day to say "Yippee!" about, and let those things feed your spirit, releasing the worry as you embrace the delights of your life. Praise God for the gifts of family, friends, pets, air, water, flowers, sunshine...the list goes on and on. A grateful heart does wonders for emotional, spiritual and physical health, so say Yippee about life every day!

Discussion Questions

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “super focused” and 10 being “totally frazzled,” how would you rate your life today? What is causing you to be frazzled too often? How is being frazzled affecting your relationships and your work?
2. Do you have a regular self-care routine? Do you exercise regularly, eat right, get enough sleep and prioritize some “me time” on your calendar? What is lacking and how can you change it?
3. If you had a day off with no responsibilities—no work, no family obligations, no one at all expecting you to do something for them—what would you do to refresh your mind, body and spirit? What impact would it have on your life if you would take time for a day of renewal on a regular basis?
4. *“Have you forgotten that your body is now the sacred temple of the Spirit of Holiness, who lives in you? You don’t belong to yourself any longer, for the gift of God, the Holy Spirit, lives inside your sanctuary. You were God’s expensive purchase, paid for with tears of blood so by all means, then, use your body to bring glory to God!” 1 Cor 6:19-10 TPT*

When you think of your body as a magnificent temple, a beautiful sanctuary described in the passage above, does it change how you view the importance of self-care?

5. Share your favorite self-care tip with your group. Listen for new ideas to apply to your life!

Growth Opportunity

Imagine this...you have an entire week off. No work, no to-do list, no grocery shopping or errands to run. The only requirement to preserve this “week of bliss” is that you do only things that refresh and recharge your mind, body and soul. What would you do? Make a list of the things that give you both rest and renewed energy, then commit to doing at least one of them every week in the coming month. Be prepared to share with your group how your new focus on self-care has impacted your life, and if you have moved the needle more toward 1 on your “frazzle meter.”