



Week 2: Stress and our Spirits

Prayer: Gracious God, we thank you for gathering us again. Help us to be present to your Spirit and to one another. In Christ's name, Amen.

Scripture: Philippians 4.4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Quote: Amit Ray

"If you want to conquer the anxiety of life, live in the moment, live in the breath."

Something to Think About

We live in a stress-filled world, whether you fight the traffic on a busy freeway and bite your nails because you are going to be late for work, or you live in the province and worry about not having enough money to pay for the medicine your child needs to get well. The factors causing stress may be different, but stress is everybody's problem today.

The stock antidote to stress is "stop smoking, eat well, and exercise." Those things are well and good but not enough. Loneliness, anger, sadness and fear also factor into the stress formula.

Let's share about stress and how we deal with it in our spirits. What role does faith play in our stress? How can community help us combat it or at least manage it?

How does the scripture listed above encourage or help you?





moms

mothers offering mothers support



Discussion Questions:

- ❖ What's something that you find stressful that others find relaxing (examples: shopping, camping, cooking, etc.)? We are all wired differently – what one person finds relaxing can stress out someone else.
- ❖ What was one of the most recent stressful times/days in your life?
- ❖ What was a long-ago stressful time in your life? What is your perspective on that time now?
- ❖ What are your go-to ways to deal with stress?
- ❖ What's stressing you out right now? What are ways of coping that are working or not working? Which of these below are helpful? What would you add?

SIX WAYS TO TURN DOWN STRESS

1. **Simplify.** Appointments, tasks, meetings, commitments...trimming the list reduces stress and opens up room to imagine, play, and enjoy life. You can't do it all; so do what matters most.
2. **Live in the present.** Worried about tomorrow? Replaying what happened yesterday? Today is what you have. Today is what you can impact. (*"So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today."* Matthew 6.34)
3. **Visit your "happy place."** Calming mental vacations are as easy as recalling that trip to the beach or hike through the mountains. Close your eyes and recall every detail. Try meditation or meditation apps. Get outside. Go to your special chair.
4. **Treat yourself well.** You're a mom – you know this stuff! Eat healthy foods. Drink enough water. Get needed sleep. Exercise. Care for your body and forgive yourself. (*"In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, O Lord, will keep me safe."* Psalm 4.8)
5. **Think positively.** Be intentional about filling your life with what's uplifting. What you feed, grows – including cynicism and stress. So feed joy, gratitude. (*"Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise."* Phil. 4.8)
6. **Share the load.** With family, with God, with friends, share what's troubling you. Let others know you're stressed and be open to receiving their care and concern.

Sharing Prayer

- ❖ Close with this prayer or another you have: *Gracious God, we pray for encouragement for each of us and the stresses in our lives. Lift our hearts to your presence and peace that is beyond our understanding. Amen.*
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