

## ESCAPE FROM STRESS

Marcia, age four, was my Sunday morning commitment. Only by picking her up at her foster home before the worship service could I ensure her attending the church school that followed. Today Marcia had exhausted my surprise bag of coloring books and puzzles in the first seven minutes. Even the candy failed to hold her attention for more than thirty seconds.

I took Marcia's piquant face between my two hands. Looking into her eyes, I whispered, "What do you need to make you happy today?"

Returning my gaze, she whispered, "I need to sit on your lap!"

I took her in my arms. She nestled down until her soft cheek rested against the skin of my neck, and she barely stirred for the remainder of the hour.

I remember days when my own behavior was an adult version of Marcia's—I was restless, dissatisfied, impossible to please. When that happens again, I hope I will be as wise as Marcia and as honest about my needs. My restlessness melts away when I rest in Jesus.

—Author unknown



### Out in the Fields with God

By Elizabeth Barrett Browning

The little cares that fretted me,  
I lost them yesterday,  
Among the fields above the sea,  
Among the winds at play;  
Among the lowing of the herds,  
The rustling of the trees;  
Among the singing of the birds,  
The humming of the bees.

The foolish fears of what might happen,  
I cast them all away  
Among the clover-scented grass,  
Among the new-mown hay;  
Among the husking of the corn,  
Where drowsy poppies nod,  
Where ill thoughts die and good are  
born—  
Out in the fields with God!

## A Prayer for Relief from Stress

Jesus, when I feel weak, tired, or out of sorts, You're right there to put Your arms around me, to comfort me and tell me that everything is going to be okay. You reach down and soothe my ruffled nerves, melt away my worries and fears, and blow away the confusion that seeks to surround me.

Thank You for blessing me so! I'm so blessed to have Your peace. Thank You for delivering me from the worries of the world. Thank You for Your peace that passes all understanding.

Thank You that I don't have to take a pill to find relief from the stress of a busy schedule. All I have to do is take You. Thank You that I can just sit down for a few minutes with You and feel Your soothing touch that gives me strength to continue on in my busy day.

Thank You, wonderful, wonderful Jesus, for Your touches of love that melt away the mountains of obstacles and problems. And thank You, too, that when I feel good, You make me feel even better! I love You.