

## STRESS REDUCERS FOR CHRISTIANS

By Keith Phillips

While some of the tips below apply to everyone—getting sufficient exercise or eating the right kinds of foods, for example—others on this list can give Christians a special edge because they bring God into the equation in a very real and personal way.

Jesus is the Christian's counselor, coach, business manager, intercessor, executive secretary, personal trainer, confidant, and best friend. In short, He is everything the Christian needs to contend with the stress that has become part of modern living—and come through a winner!

- Pray.
- Go to bed on time.
- Get up on time so you can start the day unrushed.
- Say no to projects that won't fit into your time schedule, or that will compromise your mental health.
- Delegate tasks to others who are capable.
- Simplify and declutter your life.
- Less is more. (Although you may feel one is often not enough, two are often too many.)
- Allow extra time to do things and to get to places.
- Pace yourself. Spread out big changes and difficult projects over time; don't lump the hard things all together.
- Take one day at a time.
- Separate worries from concerns. If a situation is a valid concern, find out what God would have you do about it. If you're worried about something that you can't or shouldn't do anything about, then put it in His hands.
- Concentrate on things you have direct control over rather than on things that you have no control over. The main individual you have control over is yourself and your habits.
- Live within your budget; don't use credit cards for ordinary purchases.
- Have backups—an extra car key in your wallet, an extra house key buried in the garden, extra postage stamps, extra batteries for your flashlight, etc.
- Carry God's Word with you to read while waiting in line.
- Get enough exercise.
- Eat right.
- Get organized so everything has its place.
- Make Quiet Time with Jesus a daily habit.
- Use the time while driving or riding in your car to listen to audio tapes or CDs that can help improve your quality of life.
- Having problems? Talk to God on the spot. Try to nip small problems in the bud. Don't wait until it's time to go to bed to try and pray.
- Keep a folder of favorite Scriptures or inspirational readings on hand.
- Remember that the shortest bridge between despair and hope is often a hearty "Thank You, Jesus!"
- Laugh.
- Take your work seriously, but yourself not at all.
- Get enough sleep.
- Don't check for more email until you have answered at least some of the folks who you know are waiting for your reply.
- Develop a forgiving attitude. (Most people are doing the best they can.)
- Be kind to unkind people. (They probably need it the most.)
- Talk less; listen more.
- Slow down.
- Remind yourself that you are not the general manager of the universe.
- Every night before bed, think of at least one thing you're grateful for that came out of your day.
- Thank God for what's coming, because He won't send you anything that you and He can't handle together.