

Seven Secrets of Stress Management

by Rick Warren

Then Jesus said, "Let's get away from the crowds for a while and rest." There were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't even have time to eat. (Mark 6:31, NLT)

Jesus experienced enormous stress and pressure, yet it didn't seem to disturb his peace of mind. In spite of opposition, constant demands, and little privacy, his life reflected a calm sense of balance. What was his secret?

1. **IDENTIFICATION: Know who you are (John 8:12)**

18 times Jesus publicly defined himself. There was no doubt in his mind as to who he was. If you are unsure of your identity, you'll allow others to pressure you into their molds. Trying to be someone you're not causes stress!

2. **DEDICATION: Know who you want to please (John 5:30)**

You can't please everyone. Even God can't do that. Just about the time you get Crowd A happy, Crowd B will be upset with you. Jesus never let fear of rejection manipulate him. No one can pressure you without your permission.

3. **ORGANIZATION: Set clear goals (John 8:14)**

Jesus said, "I know where I came from and where I am going." Preparation prevents pressure but procrastination produces it. You work by either priorities or pressures.

4. **CONCENTRATION: Focus on one thing at a time (Luke 4:42-44)**

You can't chase two rabbits at the same time! Jesus knew how to handle interruptions without being distracted from his primary goal.

5. **DELEGATION: Don't try to do everything yourself (Mark 3:14)**

We get tense when we feel it all depends on us. Jesus enlisted 12 disciples. Don't allow perfectionism or the fear that others may do a better job keep you from involving others in the task.

6. **MEDITATION: Make a habit of prayer (Mark 1:35)**

No matter how busy Jesus got, he found time to get alone to pray every day. A daily quiet time is a great stress decompression chamber. Use this time to talk to God about your pressures and problems, evaluate your priorities, and discover the rules for successful living by reading the Bible.

7. **RELAXATION: Take time to enjoy life (Mark 6:30-31)**

Balance is the key to stress management. Work must be balanced with fun and worship.

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