

Tips for Leaders *Handling Stress*

The dictionary defines stress as tension, strain, pressure, anxiety, and frustration. In today's fast-paced world, stress is deadlines, traffic jams, family crises, and trying to do it all. In ministry, its having a talk to prepare for, hosting a shower, attending a funeral, providing special music, counseling a woman in pain, nursing sick kids, and keeping a doctor's appointment ... all in the same week! How do you handle times like these?

Lower Your Expectations

You need to realize that your house can't be in perfect order especially if you've had extra responsibilities at church that particular week. Let someone else in your household prepare dinner, or sandwiches are okay if you have to be out for the evening.

Exercise

Just leaving the house and walking briskly or going for a run can help to relieve pressure. Being away from all the demands and the phone can be renewing. A brief time exercising can help you pick up the load again.

Read

Take some time off — spend an afternoon at your local library. Browse through the myriad of books — be it novels, cooking, travel, even watch a video. There are some excellent biographies that have been written about godly women, the Internet can help you here. Let your imagination take you on a journey away from the “hum drum” of daily chores — enjoy your time!

Find A Friend Outside The Church

If you don't have one, start by praying for one. This can provide a safe place for you to

share the stresses on your heart. It is especially wonderful to have a friend like this where your identity isn't all about being in ministry.

Learn To Say No

It's so easy to feel obligated to do things just because you're asked, but you cannot do everything. If your calendar is full, find a listening ear, share your concerns with a friend or loved one, they may be able to take some of the pressure from you. This can be God's way of protecting you from overloading your day or week.

