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# HEALTH & LIFESTYLE MANAGEMENT

taking care of God's amazing gift  
— a balancing act

*by Nancy Guebert, R.N.*

Participant's Outline

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## WHO IS IN CONTROL?

*I never ask “Why?” or “Why me?” I can’t see the whole picture. Only God sees that. I live one day at a time and thank God each day for His many blessings.*

Gina Boyle, Cancer Survivor

Melvin, an absent-minded monk, took a daily walk to read his breviary. Unfortunately Easter Sunday had extra Psalms to read and Melvin walked too far — right off a cliff. Fortunately, he felt something was amiss and grabbed a tree branch. As Melvin’s feet dangled over the canyon, he frantically shouted.

“Help!! Is anyone up there?”

Suddenly the clouds parted and a loud voice boomed.

“I will help you. Are you willing to do whatever I ask?”

“Of course, what do you want me to do?”

“Let go!”

“Who are you?”

“God.”

“Is anyone else up there?”

### DISCUSSION

When we experience sickness, aging, a disability or death, what should we do? To whom should we turn?

### TURN TO GOD ... HE IS IN CONTROL!!

## INTRODUCTION

Finding the way to health can be a balancing act. In our rapidly changing world, stress often leads to poor health, loss of energy, depression, and a host of other modern diseases, both physical and psychological.

### Some facts

- of all deaths, 50% are related to lifestyle choices.
- women suffer from depression more often than men.
- leading causes of death for men in Canada during 1996 were cancer, heart disease, accidental injury, lung disease and suicide.
- leading causes of death for women in Canada during 1996 were stroke, pneumonia/flu, diabetes and central nervous system disease.
- it costs at least \$2 billion a year to treat obese Canadians.
- one in four Canadians over the age of 65 has heart problems.

### DISCUSSION

What does “health” mean to me?

## WORDS FROM THE GREAT PHYSICIAN

*If we thrive on a busy (but not too busy) schedule and enjoy a fast-paced life, we should pursue it. If we're happier living more leisurely, we should do it. We have to discover the lifestyle that best suits us, then live it! To do otherwise — to go against our nature — would be stressful.*

Lifestyle Tips

### **Definition: health**

- being well: freedom from sickness; soundness of body
- the general condition of body or mind
- spiritual, moral, or mental soundness
- sound condition; well-being

### **Definition: lifestyle**

- a manner of living
- one's style of life

“Say to him, ‘Long life to you! Good health to you and your household! And good health to all that is yours’” (1 Samuel 25:6).

### **The benefits of wisdom**

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones (Proverbs 3:5-8).

“My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body” (Proverbs 4:20-22).

### **Emotional health**

“A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the bones” (Proverbs 15:30).

### **Through illness we find strength**

“Lord by such things men live; and my spirit finds life in them too. You restored me to health and let me live” (Isaiah 38:16).

### **God's promise**

“But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds declares the Lord, because you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares” (Jeremiah 30:17).

“Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security” (Jeremiah 33:6).

### **God's desire for his people**

“Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well” (3 John 2).

## IMPACTS ON OUR HEALTH

*Find activities you enjoy and you'll soon discover how easy it is to fit them into your day. You might even come to say, "Those weren't obstacles at all. I was just making excuses!"*

Lifestyle Tips

What impacts on my physical, emotional and spiritual health? *Body, Mind & Spirit*

Our bodies are adjusting constantly to the environment. Today we face more choices, new technology, information overload and research.

### Stressors which impact on our health and lifestyle

- change — there is a price for every change to which we must adapt.
- moving — when we move from one location to another, we must adjust to a new environment.
- increasing expectations.
- time pressure — more activities, deadlines. No longer are the deadlines we face weekly or daily, but “minute” deadlines.
- work pressure — changes and uncertainty within the work environment.
- loss of control.
- fear - due to insecurity, pressured deadlines, overloaded lives.
- relationships.
- competition.
- overload.
- illness and death - as we live longer we are more susceptible to illness. We are fearful of chronic illness and pain. Death of a family member or friend is a profound stressor.
- frustration and anger.

### Why do we mismanage our health and lifestyle?

We are ...

- more active.
- exposed to more change.
- over committed....we can't say no.
- faced with more competition.
- making more decisions with less time.
- in a hurry. We walk fast, talk fast, and eat fast!
- overloaded with more information. We buy more books, read more newspapers, receive e-information.
- exposed to more noise, more pollution, more people.

We have ...

- more fatigue. We are a tired society.
- have more debt.
- more possessions per person. Our closets are full!
- more gadgets, a result of technology.

How much education do we really need?

- We solve one problem only to create another one!

## RESTORING THE BALANCE IN OUR LIVES

*“God is not a blurry power living somewhere in the sky, not an abstraction like the Greeks proposed, not a sensual superhuman like the Romans worshipped, and definitely not the absentee Watchmaker of the Deists. God is “personal.” He enters into people’s lives, messes with families, shows up in unexpected places, chooses unlikely leaders, calls people to account. Most of all, God loves.”* Philip Yancey, Christianity Today, January 11, 1999.

- Cultivate a nurturing support system: friends, family, community, church.
- Reconcile relationships.
- Serve one another.
- Rest.
- Laugh-humour is medicine. Laughter is a gift from God.
- Cry. A study indicated that those who cry more get sick less often. “Laughter lifts and crying cleanses.”
- Offer thanks.
- Be rich in faith.
- Don’t feel guilty when you say ‘no.’ Take time for yourself.
- Hope. “Hope is the essential ingredient to make it through life. It is the anchor of the soul. Those without Christ may see only a hopeless end, but the Christian rejoices in an endless hope.”

“Christ Jesus is our hope.” Because of our faith in God, Christian hope survives. “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance character; and character hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us” (Romans 5:1-5).

### **Hope and faith; through the eyes of a child**

“Two things you need to get through all the things that happen in the course of having cancer are faith and hope. Trust me, it will be hard going through life with cancer. But it will even be tougher to get through without hope and faith. In fact, those are the two things I depend on the most. When I learned that a tumor had started to grow again, I thought I would never be able to get through life. But I knew that I had to have faith in the Lord. So, as I did before, I handed my thoughts to the Lord. I have to admit, sometimes I start to wonder if He’s really helping me. Then my mom reminds me of the things He has done for me. Then I realize that He really is helping me. So, if you start to feel run-down, think of the Lord and of all the things He is doing and all He has done to help you”

- Love. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:14

## EVERYDAY STRATEGIES

- Take responsibility.
- Change habits.
- Be realistic.
- Stick with it.
- Sleep. Sleep is God's idea. "In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat -for He grants sleep to those He love" (Psalm 127:2). Value sleep. Develop healthy sleep patterns. Insomnia can be "talk time" with God. Don't oversleep.
- Exercise — for sounder sleep, for improved appetite, to reduce weight, for muscles, for flexibility, for mind and spirit.
- Diet — Drink water, reduce fat intake, replace processed snacks with fruit, avoid overeating, have a balanced diet, "garden direct or buy direct — God's way or the factory way," "McStay at Home!"
- Time — personal, family, sharing, and God

## MAINTAINING OUR HEALTH

- physical rest
- emotional rest
- spiritual rest

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

- Gain control over our lives.
- Place God at the centre of all things.
- Rest and renewal: thinking time, Bible study, prayer.
- God is the great physician: Thank God, repent, do some surgery-takeaway the "time cancers" and the "energy tumors." Heed God's direction for He is the road to health.

### A HEALTHY BALANCE

#### STOP

putting ourselves in jeopardy

apologizing for what we are not

wishing others were more thoughtful

#### START

taking care of ourselves

rejoicing in everything we are

asking for what we want and

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or helpful

need

agonizing over how things should be

making the best use of the world “as is”

believing in magic

believing in God

### **Hymn: What a friend we have in Jesus**

What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!  
O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear  
All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged — take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness — take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Saviour still our refuge take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do your friends despise, forsake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In His arms He'll take a shield you, you will find a solace there.