

## Biblical Methods for Handling Stress

These biblical methods are not novel or groundbreaking. Instead, they are steadfast tools that help us re-center our hearts on the Lord.

**Worship:** Stress often comes from uncertainty or pressure, which can cause us to angrily blame God or ignore him when things aren't working as we want them to. It's hard to be angry or ignore God as we worship him, and he is *always worthy of all our praise*. If you can't find the words, pray through scripture to help you worship your creator. (Heb. 12:28; Ps. 95; Ps. 100)

**Pray:** This one seems obvious, but sometimes it's harder than it seems. Praying through stress requires us to focus on the Lord. It re-routes our primary attention from an earthly issue to our heavenly father. (1 Thess. 5:17; Jer. 29:11-14; 1 John 5:14-15)

**Ask for help:** Stress can be a signal that we are overloaded with too much on our plate. It's a humbling reminder that we're finite and fallible. If you're under a load of stress, it may be time to ask for help from family, friends, or co-workers. If you are experiencing acute physical, mental, or emotional stress resulting from trauma, seek help immediately. (Rom. 12:4-5; Prov. 11:2; Ex. 18:14-15)

**Seek community:** It's easy to give up community when we're stressed about anything from a to-do list to family trauma or a work nightmare. The body of Christ is meant to strengthen us when we're weak, help us in times of need, support us during difficulties, and celebrate God's faithfulness with us. Resist the urge to walk away from the body of Christ when you feel overwhelmed. Even a simple prayer request over text message keeps you plugged in to people who care about you. (Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Cor. 12:25-27)

**Read scripture:** God's word repeatedly reminds us why worry and anxiety do not come from God. Meditate on the truth of scripture and invite the Holy Spirit to work in your heart. (2 Tim. 3:16; Ps. 119:105; Matt. 4:4; Joshua 1:8)

**Examine your load:** Galatians 6 exhorts believers to share burdens as part of loving our neighbors and encouraging Christ-likeness. The Apostle Paul also, however, reinforces responsibility for ourselves. You are responsible for what's on your plate. Too much prolonged stress may mean it is time to draw some boundaries, start saying "no," and lightening your own load.

These biblical practices help recalibrate our spiritual response to stressors that disrupt equilibrium in our lives. Remembering that we serve a mighty, all-powerful God who reigns over every inch of our lives and promises to work all things for the good of those who love him helps rightly align our perspective.

## Stress and Your Relationship with God

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*Editor's Note: On "Flashback Friday," we take a look at some of IFWE's former posts that are worth revisiting. This post was previously published on Mar. 30, 2016*