

THE A RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES
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“Nowing”
Those Who Wait
on Him



ON THE COVER

Storms come. It's unavoidable. How we handle them, though, is a choice waiting to be made. Waiting on Jesus helps us stay united in ministry!



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The Secret to *Satisfaction*

I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE outdoors while working in Minnesota. Canoeing, backpacking, and cross-country skiing were added to my childhood love of hiking, swimming, and biking. I dreamed of buying the newest equipment for my hobbies, but my nursing salary didn't allow luxuries.

Then I fell in love with Mike. We married and moved to Washington State. He was pursuing a theology major, while I worked as a nurse. I looked forward to ministering together in a church. But the more involved I became in my outside activities, the more I began to resent the thought of serving in churches. Ministry life wouldn't give me time to do the things I loved. My resentment began spilling over to my husband.

When I found out I was pregnant (surprise!) my life dramatically changed. Having a baby made me realize how self-centered my focus had been. Now I was somewhat more inclined to help in ministry, but I still didn't get involved much.

When my husband graduated, we first served a multichurch district. Or rather,

my husband did. To me, it was his work, not mine, so I never did much ministry with him. Tragically, he died when our son was two years old.

Later when I married Jerry, another pastor, I had the same attitude. Another son was born, and as our children grew older, I resumed my hiking and backpacking. But strangely, I wasn't happy.

My love for my sports and the latest equipment was consuming. No one paid me to assist my husband, and I resisted any attempts to get me involved. My primary focus was to find ways to earn money while being a stay-at-home mom.

And still I was unhappy. Bitterness crept into my life. I tried to spend time with God, but it was hard to be consistent, and it just didn't do much for me.

But then church members began praying for a baptism of the Holy Spirit in my life. I began to spend time reading the Bible every day. I learned to pray.

Amazing experiences followed. My depression and sadness evaporated. I felt God was calling me into ministry, so I challenged Him, "God, if this is from You, my husband, Jerry, will have to ask me to do ministry with him."

About a week later Jerry asked me to help him in ministry. Since then, I've been consistently involved in ministry, both with my husband and

in other areas. And I've never had so much peace and happiness. Yes, I get tired and discouraged. But I also have indescribable peace and joy.

The amazing thing is that for years I was working for free, with absolutely no pay. Years later, when I was getting paid, God led me to give the majority of my salary away. He has a wonderful sense of humor!

While consumed by my own selfish interests, I was unhappy and depressed. When I finally gave my heart to Jesus and chose to live focused on Him, I found happiness. Working for Him was exciting! My resentment melted away. Not only that, but as my children saw the change in me, they were inspired to get involved in ministry too.

God has made it possible for me to hike many high mountains. He's given us cars, furniture, and so much more. And my devotional time with God has become amazing! I no longer need to force myself to spend time with God. I live to spend time with Jesus. Giving over everything to my Savior, following His plans rather than mine, turned my life upside down.

I believe this is the way to be truly satisfied, and the only worthwhile way to spend my life. J

Janet Page serves as associate ministerial secretary for pastoral spouses, families, and prayer.

"Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart."

Psalm 37:4, NKJV



“Wowing”

Those Who Wait on Him

THE STORM

Late that day He said, “Let’s go across to the other side.” Other boats came along. It had been a busy day, and Jesus fell asleep as the boat glided through the water. A huge storm came up. Waves poured into the boat, threatening to sink it. Suddenly, as they bailed furiously in the blackness, a flash of lightning showed the disciples that Jesus was still there, in the stern, head on a pillow, sleeping!

Now they called to Him, almost in a rebuke, “Don’t You care? Why aren’t You helping us? Teacher, is it nothing to You that we’re going down?” And then, what a moment, imagine the look of love on Jesus’ face as He saw their fear. Awake now, He told the wind to calm itself and said to the sea, “Quiet! Settle down!” The wind ran out of breath; instantly the sea was like glass, and they were gliding over the water again.

And then a kind rebuke, so typical of Jesus, helped the disciples choose faith without excusing their fear. “Why are you such cowards? Don’t you have any faith at all?” They were in absolute awe, staggered. “Who is this, anyway?” they asked. “Wind and sea at His beck and call!” (Mark 4:35-41, paraphrased from *The Message*).

This story gives me goose bumps. Have you ever forgotten Jesus in the midst of your storm? I have. Have you seen the look of love on His face as you cry out to Him, “Lord, save me”? Have you seen the problem dissolve in front of your eyes? I have.

In today’s society we don’t travel on boats much, so maybe we aren’t physically on a lake when storms come, but we often face threats to our spiritual lives, and sometimes we find ourselves in literal life-threatening circumstances. In these crises, do we remember to call on Jesus and ask Him to quiet our storms?

It was 1993, and I was in Cape Town, South Africa. A terrorist attack on the St. James Church left 11 people dead and 58 wounded. Around 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 25, as the congregation of 1,400 listened to a hymn of worship, a group of gunmen burst into the church and opened fire with automatic weapons. I lived just a few miles away.

I felt numb. How could this happen, so close to me? I was deeply impressed, though, when I heard that some of the church’s other members were in a restaurant when they heard about the attack, and the first thing they did was fall on their knees and pray fervently. They didn’t let fear paralyze them. Although in public, they weren’t afraid of what people would think. *They prayed*, trusting God, hanging on to Him in the middle of their storm.

THE STILLNESS

How do we find a faith that won’t flounder in fear? It is said that the canary learns to sing in the dark. We also learn a life of faith when we are alone in the quiet, often in the dark times. In stillness before God, we learn to wait on Him.

In his book *Experiencing God*, Henry

“Let Him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on Him.”

Lam. 3:28, NIV

circumstances and asking God to interpret them by revealing to you His perspective” (p. 242).

Scripture translates the word *wait* also as *hope*, indicating that they may be interchangeable. When I wait on God I put my hope in Him, rather than in myself. The Psalmist says, “I wait for the Lord, my soul waits. . . . more than those who watch for the morning” (Ps. 130:5, 6, NKJV). How do night watchmen, or any people awake all night, feel as they wait for the sun to come up? Ambivalent? Casual, hopeless, despairing? Absolutely not! They are expectant, eager, confident. They are sure the sun *will* rise.

How do I wait on God in my devotional time? Do I eagerly, confidently believe He *will* meet me and bless me, show me His ways, and give me strength *right now*, today, and every day?

The Bible says a lot about being quiet, which is part of the discipline of waiting on God. “Let Him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on Him” (Lam. 3:28, NIV). “God is in heaven, and you are on earth, so let your words be few” (Eccl. 5:2, NIV). “Be still, and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10, NIV).

Ellen White writes, “When every other voice is hushed, and in quietness we wait before Him, the silence of the soul makes more distinct the voice of God” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 363).

When I was 21 I spent a year and a half in the Marshall Islands as a teacher. Having personal worship outside my apartment to the accompaniment of ocean waves, I was free to talk aloud to God. I poured out my heart to Jesus and

Blackaby says, “You may think of waiting as a passive, inactive time. Waiting on the Lord is anything but inactive. While you wait on Him, you will be praying with a passion to know Him, His purposes, and His ways. You will be watching



“The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else. If we come to Him in faith, He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Our hearts will often burn within us as One draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch.”

The Desire of Ages, p. 668

listened for what He would say to me. It was so exciting. Jesus was actually talking to *me*. Wow!

I still love to be outside to talk to God. Walking down our country lane, I sing, meditate, and talk over a few scripture verses with my Father. This is my sanctuary. I read a passage, confident that God has something to say to me through the Word.¹ As I think about what the verses might mean, I am led to confession, heart-searching, thanksgiving, or praise.

I wait for Him to speak and ask Him to bring to my mind His purpose for my day or the answer to a question. When I’m in His presence, and God is in control of my time with Him, I get to hear things I did not know (Jer. 33:3) and that I desperately need. Learning to wait on God has transformed my life.²

After all the drama of the storm, after the wind ran out of breath, how did the disciples respond?

In sheer awe. It’s like those times when you see God doing things, and you just stand in amazement saying, “Wow!”

THE SUMMARY

Jesus stilled the storm, and the Sea of Galilee was quiet. We too can carry this calmness while waiting on God and lingering in His presence, even during life-threatening circumstances, pain, sickness, or trauma. The Psalmist says, “On You I wait all the day” (Ps. 25:5, NKJV).

Why not take the time to wait on Him and let Him still your storm, today? ■

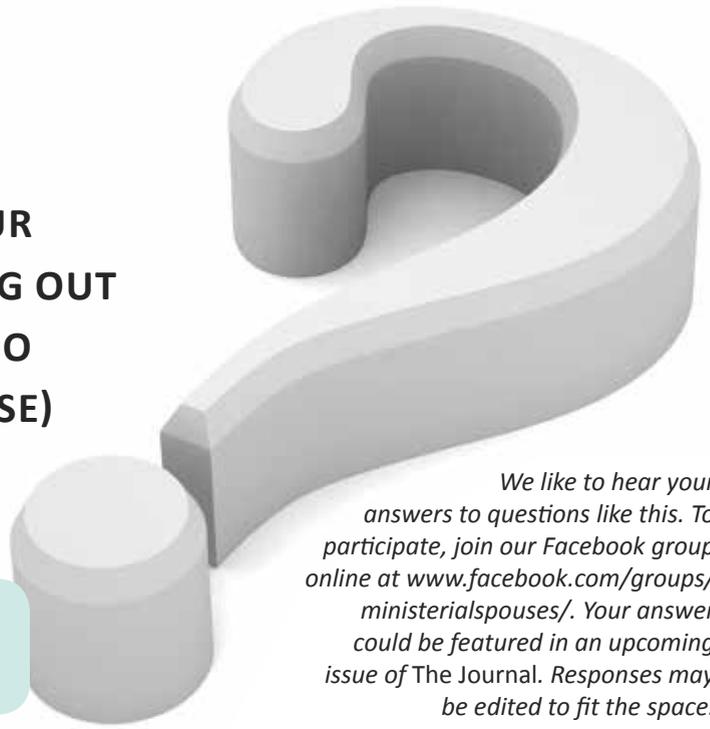
¹ For more about this way of waiting on God, see the pamphlet *Soul Nourishment First* by George Müller at www.ncs-az.net/m%c3%bcller.pdf.

² For a 30-day experience and simple instruction, read the book *Waiting on God* by Andrew Murray

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QUESTION AND ANSWER

WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL MOST UNITED IN MINISTRY WITH YOUR SPOUSE? WHEN YOU'RE FEELING OUT OF HARMONY, WHAT DO YOU DO (OUTSIDE OF PRAYER, OF COURSE) TO GET BACK ON TRACK?



We like to hear your answers to questions like this. To participate, join our Facebook group online at www.facebook.com/groups/ministerialspouses/. Your answer could be featured in an upcoming issue of The Journal. Responses may be edited to fit the space.

TAMI LE

I feel united when my husband asks me to preach a special sermon with him or to sing with him.

KARYL BAHR KRIEGER

I love doing hospital/member/interest visits with him. I feel we complement each other very well in those situations, and it satisfies me greatly to have contributed in that way. Out of harmony? Well, I take stock. Usually I have to stop nagging, apologize, and remember *he* is the pastor, not *I*! Going for a brisk walk together and talking it out usually helps.

ESTELLE FOO MEI JYE

I feel united when we plan and work in ministry: evangelistic camps or meetings, prayers, sermon series, etc. Praying together gets us back in harmony. Having time out together is great too: to enjoy each other's presence without thinking about church needs but focusing on each other's needs.

SHARON NORVELL LEUKERT

I'm most fulfilled when I do what God created me to do and when I can help my husband do what God has called him to do. When I only try to help him without being true to God's calling on my life, we get out of sync. When I just focus on my "calling," without reference to the wonderful man God has given me, I'm out of sync.

KIM DORN COVE

I love when I can add to his sermons with a special music that fits the sermon. And when he tells me how much I add to his ministry, just by being support and doing the background stuff, it makes me feel we are partners.

STEPHANIE J. MASON

When I sing with him in church, I feel united. I also like when we make hospital visits or home visits and I get to know God's people on a deeper level. I also love it when my hubby takes time away from the church and ministry to spend just with the family. . . . How do we get back on track when we're out of sync? I have yet to figure that one out! . . . We pray and ask God to provide the means and a place to retreat in order to drown out the world.

DENISE DARRETT-JOHNSON

I feel most united in ministry with my spouse when we are actively working together on evangelistic projects—preparing materials, talking, praying, and organizing together. When we are out of harmony, I ask him if there is anything I can do to help or to take the load off of him

Emotional Intelligence

A BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING



Those who are ultimately successful will not only tell each other the truth, but they will also be telling themselves the truth.

WHEN A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS was subjected to two sleepless nights, army researchers found that lack of sleep hindered participants' ability to make decisions in the face of emotionally-charged moral dilemmas.¹ Perhaps even more significant was the finding that some volunteers changed their views of what was morally acceptable in a state of sleep deprivation, although this was not universally the case. Volunteers who, at the beginning of the study, scored highly on a measure known as "emotional intelligence" did not waver on what they found morally appropriate. Do you think you might face an

emotionally-charged moral dilemma in your life? Actually, it is quite clear from Scripture, and as we look at the world around us, that we will all face such dilemmas in the near future (see Rev. 13:12-17).

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is not related merely to decision-making. Studies show that while the job you get after college is related to your IQ, how far you advance in that job bears little relationship to IQ.² It is not even related to your grades in school.³ Rather, it is related to your EQ.⁴

Furthermore, your success and happiness in life are more closely associated with EQ than with any other form of intelligence.⁵

In a variety of scientific studies, increasing EQ has been shown to prevent or treat depression, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, anorexia, bulimia, and addictions such as alcoholism.^{6 7 8} The 12-step program used by Alcoholics Anonymous, for example, has led to remarkable success, but it is *four times more successful* if combined with a program to enhance emotional intelligence. What about persons who don't necessarily have an addiction or specific disease? Enhancing EQ has been shown to help these individuals think more clearly and communicate more effectively.⁹ It fosters unity in group settings, reduces polarizing statements, and promotes a happier life.¹⁰

INFLUENCES ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Influences on EQ have been well studied in the past ten years. Our genetic makeup has a small role to play. Our childhood experiences—how we were raised and what types of things happened to us—exert some influence.¹¹ Our current level of emotional support also plays a role.¹² However, these are not the most influential factors.

The most important influence on EQ is *what we believe*.¹³ This is because our emotions are largely framed by our beliefs—our evaluations of events, the way we think about problems, our silent (or sometimes, not-so-silent!) self-talk. It turns out that your beliefs have much more to do with how you feel than what is actually happening in your life.

Consider an example from the Bible. Paul and Silas were jailed without a fair trial, cruelly beaten, and tossed on a rough dirt floor, with their wrists and feet fastened in stocks (Acts 16:22-24). Do we find them weeping and crying? No, they were singing praises to God. Why? Because their thoughts were more powerful than what was actually happening in their lives.

Popular “psychology” would tell us that if we are in a circumstance like Paul and Silas, we just need to create a fantasy world in our mind. Imagine being on a beach in Hawaii instead of on that prison floor. If we tried that technique, it would work for about 1.2 seconds! An acute reminder of our circumstances would implode our Hawaiian fantasy. What did have lasting value for Paul and Silas were beliefs that went beyond their present circumstance to their priorities. And those true and accurate thoughts were so powerful that they could praise God.

The bottom line is that emotional intelligence can be learned. And since emotional intelligence is learned rather than merely inherited, it can be developed. How then can we not only safeguard but also effectively develop emotional intelligence? While there are many principles we might explore,¹⁴ let's illustrate three of these, each through a biblical example.

THE CASE OF SAUL

The first case of cognitive distortion is well illustrated by the life of Israel's first king. Saul was tall and stunningly handsome (1 Sam. 9:1, 2). He was also wealthy. Although he had these apparent advantages, negative thoughts began to develop in Saul's mind, thoughts that were gross distortions of reality. On the surface, these thoughts appeared valid, but underneath they represented irrational, twisted thinking.

We know of at least three causes of Saul's mental turmoil. The first cause, and the root of the others, was the cognitive distortion of *magnification and minimization*. In other words, Saul magnified things that were not important and minimized things that were truly significant.

How did Saul minimize? When confronted with his guilt, he blamed others and justified himself. Corrected by God's prophet and asked why he didn't follow divine instruction, Saul began to point out ways that he had followed the Lord's instructions (1 Sam. 5:20, 21). In essence, Saul complained to Samuel, “Why don't you just talk about what I did right? You are focusing on things I didn't do right, which, by the way, aren't such a big deal.” His problem was the minimization of his guilt. Ellen White notes, “If you have made mistakes, you certainly gain a victory if you see these mistakes and regard them as beacons of warning. Thus you turn defeat into victory, disappointing the enemy and honoring your Redeemer.”¹⁵

In Saul's case, we find a second problem: *dwelling on the unfairness of his life*. As a result of his guilt, Saul received a sentence, and he thought that the punishment outweighed the crime. Did it? While Samuel was the messenger, the verdict was actually issued by God Himself. So was it unfair? In reality, many people who describe their lives as unfair have actually been treated quite fairly.

“We should not allow our peace to be spoiled. However unjustly we may be treated, let not passion arise. By indulging a spirit of retaliation, we injure ourselves. We destroy our own confidence in God, and grieve the Holy Spirit.”

Having said that, we should acknowledge that no one is treated fairly 100 percent of the time. But when we dwell upon that unfairness and rehearse it, it will inevitably cause significant emotional problems. Speaking of frustration tolerance, Ellen White says, “We should not allow our peace to be spoiled. However unjustly we may be treated, let not passion arise. By indulging a spirit of retaliation, we injure ourselves. We destroy our own confidence in God, and grieve the Holy Spirit.”¹⁶

The third aspect of Saul’s distorted thinking, connected to magnification, was an *inordinate self-esteem* (1 Sam. 15:16-19). This inflated self-esteem was also the cause of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity—“Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?” (Dan. 4:30, KJV)—and of Lucifer’s downfall—“I will exalt my throne above the stars of God” (Isa. 14:13, 14, KJV). We can also call it pride, an inflated self-esteem that was easily wounded, in Saul’s case, by the people’s—and especially the women’s—obvious preference for another leader (1 Sam. 18:6-9).

Contrast Saul’s attitude with Christ’s: “Christ was never elated by applause, nor dejected by censure or disappointment.”¹⁷ The first clause is key to the second. If we are not elated by applause, if we have humility and not a distorted magnification of self, we will never be depressed by censure or disappointment.

The Bible reminds us, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves” (Phil. 2:3, KJV). “Lowliness of mind” doesn’t mean that you have a low sense of self-worth. We recognize that Christ would have died for just one soul, and that means we are of infinite value. But infinity is not greater than infinity. When we suddenly think that we are more valuable than the one sitting next to us, for whom Christ also died, we have crossed the line into arrogance and pride.

Saul underwent a recommended therapy

for depression, and he felt better again for a while (1 Sam. 16:23). However, in time, with the three causes still active, and the third cause, wounded pride, becoming even more prominent, Saul slipped back into deeper anxiety and darker depression. Although a man with wonderful potential, he continued to live a selfish life, never completely trusting and obeying God, and never giving up his pride for more than a few days. Finally, under tremendous stress and with his enemies closing in, Saul’s sad life ended in suicide.

THE CASE OF SOLOMON

CNN recently carried a report that said, in essence: The next time you are deciding between ice cream and cake, buying a car or taking a trip to Europe, accepting a new job or keeping your old one, you should remember two things. First, your decision is rooted in the desire to become happy, or at least happier than you are now. Second, there’s a good chance the decision you make will be wrong.¹⁸

This takes us to the second cognitive distortion: *emotional reasoning*. Emotional reasoning goes like this: “I feel like a failure, therefore, I am a failure. I feel overwhelmed and helpless, thus my problems are impossible to solve. I feel like I’m on top of world, therefore I am invincible. I am angry at you, and that proves that you’ve been cruel and insensitive to me.” One of the reasons why people get into the cycle of addiction is due to this type of emotional reasoning.

Depression is an epidemic in our society.¹⁹ ²⁰ Like Solomon, we tend to think that the more fun things we have and do, the less depression we may feel. The wise man wrote, “I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure. . . . And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart

from any joy” (Eccl. 2:1, 10, KJV). If pleasurable things could prevent or treat depression, we should see the lowest levels of depression. But that’s not the case.

Most of the “fun things” in which people participate may spike the dopamine levels in our brains, creating a sense of pleasure. They also result in a subsequent dramatic drop, far below neutral. Furthermore, the more we do these things, the less they spike. Pretty soon, when we engage in our addiction of choice, it barely takes us up to neutral. In the in-between times, we feel a deep, overwhelming sense of sadness.

Solomon, for example, became involved in a life of extreme pleasure. It initially spiked his dopamine levels, but as this cycle was repeated, he says, “Therefore I hated life . . . for all is vanity and vexation of spirit. . . . Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair” (Eccl. 2:17, 20, KJV). Randomized controlled studies show that after exposure to pornography for six weeks, both men and women were less attracted to their partner if they had one, were more self-absorbed, and evidenced less empathy for others around them.²¹ In essence, they began to live in a very self-centered world and began to shut down emotionally.

Ellen White states, “Many envied the popularity and abundant glory of Solomon, thinking that of all men he must be the most happy.”²² He had the most power, wealth,

women, fame, and possessions. His contemporaries perhaps thought he was the happiest man. But Ellen White has this to say: “All the splendor about him is but to him mockery of the distress and anguish of his thoughts as he reviews his misspent life in seeking for happiness through indulgence and selfish gratification of every desire. . . . By his own bitter experience, Solomon learned the emptiness of a life that seeks in earthly things its highest good. . . . Gloomy and soul-harassing thoughts troubled him night and day. For him there was no longer any joy of life or peace of mind, and the future was dark with despair.”²³

One of the salient characteristics of virtually all depressed individuals, no matter what the underlying cause, is a significant decrease in the blood flow and activity of the frontal lobe of the brain.^{24 25} As we go against our conscience, frontal lobe function decreases. And when we repeatedly do so, the decline becomes dramatic. That is where Solomon was.

The wisest man on earth became the most depressed. He felt that he had nothing to look forward to, that all was vanity and vexation. But in his deep depression, as a result of a prophet coming to him and giving him counsel, Solomon turned his life around. And if Solomon’s dissipated life could be redirected, there’s hope for every one of us. We can each get on the pathway of Solomon’s recovery—listening to the words of the prophet, changing our lifestyle, and altering the way we feel in authentic, effective ways.

James wrote, “No one should say God tempts, because God doesn’t tempt anyone. Each one is tempted when he is dragged away and enticed by his own desires” (James 1:13, 14, paraphrase). The problem is, feelings can lie! When we experience feelings, we need to elevate them to our level of consciousness and evaluate whether they are based on truth or on distortions.

The world offers a false way of altering the way we feel—whether it is gambling, pornography, alcohol, drugs, or even a chocolate binge. The problem is that we can never get enough of what we don’t need. There are things we do need, and that we can have enough of—we can get enough vitamin D, we can get enough broccoli, we can get enough sleep, we can get enough exercise. But we can never get enough of what we don’t need, because what we don’t need will never satisfy us! Our life choices must be made on the basis of what is true and in harmony with God’s plan for our lives.

THE CASE OF ELIJAH

The last example is a short one. “But he himself went a day’s



The problem is, feelings can lie! When we experience feelings, we need to elevate them to our level of consciousness and evaluate whether they are based on truth or on distortions.

journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers!" (1 Kings 19:4, KJV). Did Elijah have a sense of inflated pride, like Saul? No, Elijah was a humble man. Was Elijah, like Solomon, engaging in a self-indulgent lifestyle to try to gain happiness? No, Elijah lived a simple life. Yet Elijah suffered from significant depression.

This highlights the fact that when we are having emotional problems, we need to find the precise cause, as it's not the same for everyone. Here is Elijah, a man who had always followed God's will. He had just experienced God's miraculous intervention on Mount Carmel. Yet within a day, someone informed him that he was about to lose his life, and Elijah panicked. Did Elijah have reason to fear Jezebel? He did, because she had killed all the other prophets of the Lord! But instead of waiting upon God, Elijah turned and ran. Thirty days later, Elijah was so depressed that he wanted to die.

God had to put Elijah on a depression-recovery program. Like many depressed people, Elijah wanted to be in the dark, in the cave. God had to send an earthquake and a whirlwind to get him out of the cave and into the light. After all of those things, however, God turned to what was most important to Elijah's recovery. God spoke and provided cognitive behavioral therapy to correct Elijah's distorted thoughts.

Elijah's distortion was *overgeneralization*—generalizing from too few instances. It is holding the hypothesis as a fact, rather than merely a hypothesis. High IQ people have a tendency to do that. Because they are able to readily generalize, they have a tendency to overgeneralize. What was Elijah's overgeneralization? "I am the only one who has not bowed down to Baal." The Lord let him get by with it the first time. But then Elijah repeated it, and the Lord couldn't let him continue any longer in his self-destructive overgeneralization. "Elijah," God said, "there are 7,000 others who haven't bowed to Baal." What Elijah should have said is, "Lord, I'm the only one I know of," but

instead he just *knew* he was the only one.

To help Elijah overcome his depression, God gave him a set of specific tasks to do—none of which, by the way, were activities that Elijah really wanted to do (1 Kings 19:15, 16). But Elijah did follow through on what the Lord asked him to do. Did Elijah recover? Not only did he recover, but also he was translated to heaven without seeing death (2 Kings 2:11).

SET FREE

The Psalmist says, "Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?" (Psalm 15:1, KJV). In essence, David is asking the question, "Who is going to be ultimately successful in life?" The answer is given, "He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart" (Psalm 15:2, NKJV). It is this third phrase that is of particular interest.

The Ten Commandments talk about telling each other the truth. Those who are ultimately successful, however, will not only tell each other the truth but will also tell *themselves* the truth. And isn't that really what we have to do in order to be accurate in telling others the truth? To speak the truth to others, we must first have thoughts of ourselves that are accurate and true.

Ellen White observes, "Even the thoughts must be brought into subjection to the will of God, and the feelings under the control of reason and religion. Our imagination was not given us to be allowed to run riot and have its own way, without any effort at restraint and discipline. If the thoughts are wrong, the feelings will be wrong; and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character."²⁶

Whenever there is a moral failure, it starts with a distorted thought. David, in

his psalm of repentance, writes, “Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom” (Ps. 51:6, KJV).

When David committed that disastrous act with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:2), instead of reminding himself of what was true and right and turning away from sin, he continued to focus on the stimulating event. He became involved in emotion-based reasoning, magnification, overgeneralization, and perhaps even inflated self-esteem, believing that he, as king, was above the law. Then he acted upon those distortions. Every sin that is committed begins with a distorted thought.

But the good news is that we are positively transformed by reconstructing our thinking. Paul says, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2, NKJV). We not only have to recognize distorted thoughts, but we must correct them and replace them with true and accurate thoughts—thoughts that find their source in God.

How, then, can emotional intelligence be safeguarded and improved? By avoiding cognitive distortions—self-magnification, emotion-based reasoning, overgeneralization, and others.²⁷ By filling our minds with accurate and true thoughts, thoughts derived from an understanding of God’s plan for our lives. Then, as Christ said, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32, NKJV). ■

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²⁷ Nedley.

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TIPS TO ~~SURVIVE~~

THRIVE

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

Start recording your blessings.

Just like the popular Sabbath School song says,

Count your blessings,
name them one by one.

Count your many blessings,
see what God has done.¹

Feeling discouraged? Wondering if God really cares? Questioning whether He really answers prayer?

If you don't already keep a journal, start one dedicated to praising God and counting your blessings. If you already journal your prayer requests or record meaningful experiences with God, start a new list or online document specifically for recording praises, blessings, answers to prayer, and surprises from God.

Write each item on a separate line. Number it. Be specific. Don't be afraid to record small blessings from God, even if they seem insignificant.

Keep adding to your list weekly, or even daily. As you record your blessings, you'll notice more of them. As you recognize everything God does for you each day, you'll be constantly reminded of His love, protection, and favor. And you'll always have something fresh to share!

"If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would. . . . have more bestowed to praise Him for!"
(*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 317).

¹ Johnson Oatman, Jr., "Count Your Many Blessings," 1897.

Have a survival tip that someone shared with you once upon a time, or that you have learned along the way? Send it in to share here at: development.gc.ministerial@gmail.com.

Special Quotes

"We should pray in the family circle, and above all we must not neglect secret prayer, for this is the life of the soul. It is impossible for the soul to flourish while prayer is neglected."

Steps to Christ, p. 98

"When it is possible, let the minister and his wife go forth together. The wife can often labor by the side of her husband, accomplishing a noble work. She can visit the homes of the people and help the women in these families in a way that her husband cannot."

Evangelism, p. 491

"Keep on the track of souls. Show tact and skill when visiting families. Pray with them and for them. Bear the truth to them in great tenderness and love, and returns will surely come. If the minister and his wife can jointly engage in this work, they should do so."

Evangelism, p. 437



Food, Glorious Food!

*Oh food,
Wonderful food,
Marvelous food,
Glorious food.*

THESE WORDS FROM THE MUSICAL *Oliver Twist* express the longings of young boys living in an orphanage where there was never enough to eat. The boys became obsessed with visions of abundant food, such as “three banquets a day,” and “piled pies and cream, about six feet high.”

WHY DO WE EAT?



Hunger: The longing for food in *Oliver Twist* was driven by hunger. Hunger can be the most obvious—and sometimes the most driving—reason why people eat, but it certainly is *not* the only reason.

Health: People who eat for this reason value good nutrition as vital to overall health and longevity. Foods are carefully selected, prepared, and eaten at precise times. All perceived harmful elements are avoided.

Energy: For athletes, the energy from food is important for performance. Foods rich in carbohydrates are the choice for energy. Other important contributors to the making of a good athlete include foods that promote healthy bones, those rich in vitamin B12 to ward off

fatigue, and high-fiber foods which aid in extending endurance.

Habit: Routine and habits play an important role in our lives. Wake up: eat breakfast. Come home: eat dinner. Routine can also depend on other variables, including cultural background. In one country it is considered undesirable to retire for the night hungry; thus, the biggest meal of the day is eaten late at night before bed. For some, lifestyle values govern their routines. For instance, rather than taking time for a good breakfast in the morning before work, some perceive extra sleep as more important, so breakfast is skipped, eaten on the run, or made up for with snacks on the job.

Stress: Stress can drive people to eat too much, too little, the wrong foods, or not at all. Unhealthy eating interludes can become habits, resulting in either obesity or low body weight, both of which can lead to serious problems.



Addictive Behavior: Food addicts typically have little self-control over the amount of food they eat or when they eat. Often they eat too much of the wrong kind of food. They may be full but still cannot stop eating. They eat because of stress and anxiety, and as they gain weight and feel bloated and lousy, they become more stressed, which leads to more eating.

“Christ fought the battle upon the point of appetite, and came off victorious; and we also can conquer through strength derived from Him.”

Ellen G. White, Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 169

Social Interaction: Although eating is a biological act that sustains our physiological being, it also feeds our social and emotional well-being. Eating is usually more meaningful when shared with family and friends. It is usually a central part of special family and church events.

Trigger Environment: An environment can sometimes trigger emotional eating, or overeating. Such environments include celebrations where abundant food is served, all-you-can-eat buffet restaurants, or sports events where plentiful snacks are readily available.

Pleasure: Some eat for pleasure, simply enjoying the taste and texture of foods. Self-control varies with the individual.

Comfort: Feelings of sadness, loneliness, depression, or stress can lead to comfort eating. Foods with high sugar content, such as chocolate and other sweets, are very attractive since they produce temporary highs or sugar rushes which lift the spirits. Emotional eating doesn't fix emotional problems. Emotional hunger cannot be filled with food.

*“The more you eat, the less flavor;
the less you eat, the more flavor.”*
Chinese Proverb

WHERE AM I IN ALL OF THIS?

The list above can help us recognize our own problem areas. Better eating habits can lead to improved health, more energy, increased stamina, and improved resistance to disease. But this kind of change involves making a personal choice with firm resolve. Here are a few suggestions for getting started.

1. Keep a food journal, making sure to write down what you eat, when you eat, and where you eat. This will help you



understand the circumstances that act as triggers for eating problems.

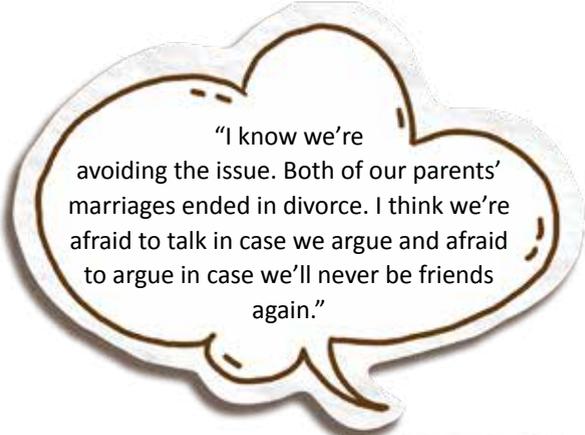
2. Recognize the symptoms that reveal emotional eating:
 - a. hunger which comes on suddenly
 - b. craving specific foods
 - c. periods of mindless eating
 - d. lack of satisfaction even when full
 - e. noticing the feeling of hunger is not in the stomach
 - f. feelings of regret, guilt, or shame after an episode of overeating
3. Try stress management. Give yourself a mini-vacation to get away from the stress for a while. Read a good book, listen to music, take a walk, meet with friends, wash the car, write a letter, and so on.
4. Drink water. Adequate water can help quench unnecessary cravings. Take your body weight in pounds, divide that number in half, and aim to drink about that many ounces of water each day.
5. Get enough sleep. Lack of sleep has a direct effect on your level of stress and ability to handle it. Therefore, fatigue can lead to food cravings, overeating, and weight gain.
6. Seek professional assistance if you have tried self-help options which are not working. Professional support can help you understand the motivations behind less-than-desirable eating habits and suggest helpful strategies.



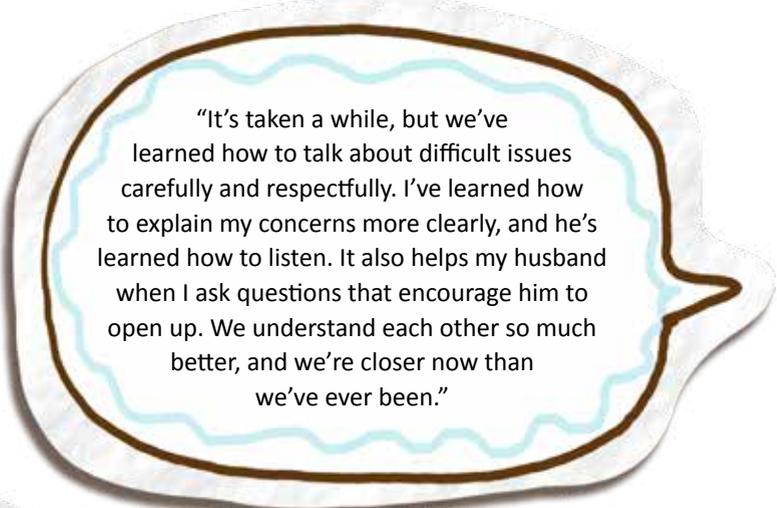
7. Talk to your heavenly Father. Tell Him about your desires and struggles. No one loves you more than He does, and His promises of help are true and faithful. 7

Rae Lee Cooper is a registered nurse. She and her husband, Lowell, have two adult married children and three adorable grandchildren. She spent most of her childhood in the Far East and then worked as a missionary with her husband in India for 16 years. She enjoys music, creative arts, cooking, and reading.

Talking Grows Togetherness



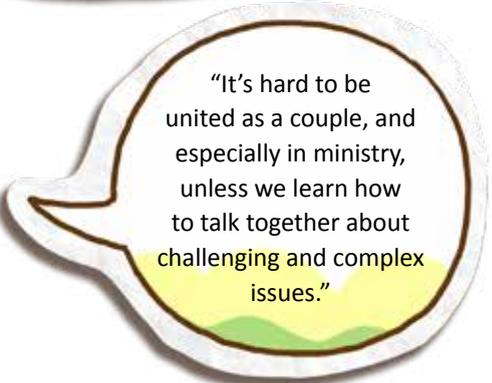
"I know we're avoiding the issue. Both of our parents' marriages ended in divorce. I think we're afraid to talk in case we argue and afraid to argue in case we'll never be friends again."



"It's taken a while, but we've learned how to talk about difficult issues carefully and respectfully. I've learned how to explain my concerns more clearly, and he's learned how to listen. It also helps my husband when I ask questions that encourage him to open up. We understand each other so much better, and we're closer now than we've ever been."



"Almost every time we talk about this, we fight. So we've stopped talking, but now I feel angry instead."



"It's hard to be united as a couple, and especially in ministry, unless we learn how to talk together about challenging and complex issues."

WHY IS IT SO HARD TO TALK?

Dozens of factors make it hard to talk about the things that matter to us. Sometimes we can't find the right words.

Perhaps our past experiences prevent us from talking openly. Maybe we're afraid that talking will make matters worse or that we'll say the wrong thing. Maybe it's hard to talk because our powerful emotions obscure what we really want to say, or we're afraid that we'll be misunderstood. Maybe we never saw people having deep and constructive conversations about their differences, so we have no idea how to talk about the difficult stuff. Or maybe it's just hard to find the space to talk because our lives are so busy.

GOD CARES

When you need to talk about something difficult together, pray that God will help you to understand the other person, to feel His love for them, and to find the best words to share your thoughts with them (Prov. 25:11; James 1:5, 19). Take time to sit quietly with God and listen to the helpful thoughts and wisdom He brings to your mind. Then explore a few of the following ideas.

NOT SURE WHERE TO START

When something is bothering you, and you're not sure how to talk about it, try this: Pull out a sheet of paper and pen. Draw a small oval in the middle of the page. Inside the oval write a rough sentence describing what you think you're most concerned about. Then divide the paper into six sections radiating out from the oval. In each section write one of the following sentence starters:

- The effect this concern is having on me right now is . . .
- The feelings I have in relation to this issue are . . . (I feel angry because . . . I feel sad because . . . I feel frustrated because . . . I feel disappointed because . . . I feel afraid because . . . I feel anxious because . . .)
- My past experiences, which may be coloring how I'm feeling about this concern today, are . . .
- On a scale of 0-10, where 0 means that I am not at all concerned and where 10 means that I am extremely concerned, I would rate this current issue at . . .
- My hopes for talking about this issue together are . . .
- The best possible outcome for me is . . . Other possible options are . . .

Writing things down in this structured way will help you to sort out your thoughts and feelings so you can talk about them more confidently. Keep the sheet of paper in front of you during the conversation so you don't forget any important



information. Or rewrite what you want to say, once you've captured all your ideas, and give it to your husband or wife to read.

Try having both partners fill out these sheets. Writing can be simpler than talking because it helps prevent us from getting stuck in unhelpful patterns of conversation. Swap your sheets and read them carefully with prayerful hearts. Write any questions on sticky notes, attach them to the paper, and pass the sheet back to your partner for more explanation if needed.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Or think about your conversation this way:

- What's the most important thing I need my partner to understand? How can I say this in the simplest and clearest way?
- Why do I want to say it? What do I hope will be different once I've talked about this?
- What effect might this conversation have on my partner? What might they think and feel about what I have to say? How can I say what I need to say in a way that my partner will find easiest to receive and understand?
- When would be a good time to talk? Plan your deeper conversations for a time when you both have the space and energy to talk and listen. It's difficult to focus on

important conversations when you're tired, hungry, stressed, or distracted.

- One useful framework for explanation: "When this happens . . . in this specific context . . . I feel . . . , and it would really help me if you could . . . , and then I could help you by . . ."

ARE YOU REALLY LISTENING?

Many important conversations break down because one or both people aren't listening with their full attention. Take notes to remind yourself of what your partner is saying, or draw a mind-map if you prefer. Or pause after a few sentences and let your partner sum up what they've heard you say. Then both of you can check that you've been clearly understood.

GROUND RULES

Some couples create ground rules to help them talk about difficult issues. Here are some of their tips:

- Listen to each other speak for five minutes on the topic without interrupting or commenting. Then sum up the speaker's key points.



If one of you gets distressed or angry during the conversation, take a break for a while.

- Maintain eye contact or physical contact while your partner is speaking.
- Give yourselves space to reflect on what's been said before expecting a response. "OK, this is a very important matter. I'd like to give it some serious thought. Please can we talk about it for an hour after dinner?"
- Make appointments to talk about important things so that you both keep the time free.
- If one of you gets distressed or angry during the conversation, take a break for a while. It's almost impossible to think and talk rationally when your emotions are running high.
- Check that you're speaking the same "language." It doesn't help if one of you is discussing the topic at a deeply emotional level and the other is discussing it in a rational way. Strong

emotions need empathy and soothing *before* the brain is ready to talk at a more rational level.

- Don't try to problem-solve until you fully understand what your partner thinks and feels about an issue.
- One reason that challenging conversations can be difficult is that we haven't seen other adults talk about their differences in a respectful and useful way. Try having some well-managed conversations when your older children are around. This will help them learn how to talk about their own complex issues.
- Don't give up on having challenging conversations about your differences. The more you talk, the easier it will probably become. The more you welcome and accept your partner's thoughts and feelings, the more confidence they'll have to talk about the things that bother them. J

Karen Holford is a family therapist who helps families talk about difficult issues in Edinburgh, Scotland.

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Let's Work Together!

Below is a list of people who worked together in different ways. Match the people to things they did together.

PEOPLE WHO WORKED TOGETHER

Noah and his sons

Jesus and a little boy

Moses' mother and Miriam

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego

Craftsmen and weavers

Ruth and Naomi

Moses and Aaron

Paul and Silas

Priscilla and Aquila

Adam and Eve

Esther and Mordecai

WHAT THEY DID TOGETHER

visited Pharaoh together

looked after a garden together

traveled and preached together

made tents together

traveled and lived together

stood up for right together

fed 5,000 people together

prayed together for Jews to be safe

built the ark together

worked together to create the tabernacle

worked together to keep Baby Moses safe



2 HANDS ARE BETTER THAN 1

Many things are easier to do, and more fun, when we have someone to help us. Most jobs are also easier when we have two hands. Challenge your family to try doing these activities with one hand. See who can do it the fastest!

- Tie a shoelace or tie a knot in a piece of string
- Make a sandwich or your favorite snack
- Fold a piece of paper and put it into an envelope
- Peel and slice a banana or another kind of fruit
- Put a sock on your foot
- Draw a circle and cut it out

Now ask someone to blindfold you with a soft scarf. Try doing the same things without being able to see.



1 body

—lots of parts

Paul talks about people in the church being like different parts of the same body. Everyone is different, and everyone has a special job to do, so we all need to work together, just like the parts of your body, or just like your family. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 in your favorite Bible version. Count how many times Paul mentions the following words:



eye



hand



foot



ear



body

Working together

Lots of chores are easier and more fun when you do them together. Circle all the chores that you could do with someone else. Circle the chore twice if you have done it in the past week.



Help prepare dinner



Tidy up your toys



Water the plants



Set the table for dinner



Sweep leaves in the yard

Make a bed



Empty the trash



Wash the dishes or fill the dishwasher

Hang up the laundry to dry

Let's Work Together!

My Helping Diary



- Take a plain sheet of paper and fold it in half lengthways.
- Unfold, then fold it in half the other way, and then fold it again in the same direction.
- Open the paper out flat. You should have a sheet of paper with eight rectangles.
- In the top left rectangle write, "My Helping Diary."
- Label the other seven rectangles with the days of the week.
- Each day of the week, use a blue pen to write down all the ways you helped others.
- Each day use a red pen to write down the ways other people helped you.
- At the end of the week, thank God for everyone who helped you, and thank Him that you can help others too. How can you help more people next week?

It's more beautiful together

Inside this picture frame draw or write about a time when you worked together with someone to do something special. Or you might draw a bigger picture on another piece of paper.



We need each other!

Jesus knows that we all need friends to be there for us. As He was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, He really wanted His friends to be with Him. He needed them to comfort Him, encourage Him, and pray for Him. So He was very sad when they left Him alone and went off to sleep under a bush. But we can help our friends and family in many different ways. Let's see what the Bible has to say about how we can help each other. (All verses taken from the New International Version.)

_____ for each other. James 5:16

_____ one another. John 13:34, 35

_____ one another. Gal. 5:13

_____ one another. Rom. 15:7

_____ () one another above yourselves. Rom. 12:10
(extra letter needed in some English-speaking countries)

_____ with one another.
Rom. 12:16

_____ with those who _____.
Rom. 12:15

_____ with those who _____. Rom. 12:15

_____ each other's _____. Gal. 6:2

Be _____ and _____
to one another. Eph. 4:32

Find all the answers. Then work together with your family to think of how you can put these Bible verses into action.

- List 10 ways you can pray for family members.
- List 10 ways you can pray for other people.
- List 10 ways to show love to each other.
- List 10 ways you can serve each other.
- List 10 ways to be kind and caring to the people in your community.
- List 10 ways to show respect and honor to people older, younger, and the same age as you.
- List 10 ways to show acceptance to people who are different from you, to people who have hurt you, or to those who have made mistakes.
- List 10 ways to live in harmony or peacefully with other people.
- List 10 ways to comfort people who are sad.
- List 10 ways to celebrate with people who are happy.
- List 10 ways you can work together to "carry a burden" or share each other's chores.

Karen Holford writes from Scotland. She enjoys working with her friends to help homeless people.

Checking In

I REMEMBER THE SCENE VERY CLEARLY. My then-boyfriend and I were traveling on a bus filled with students from our university, on a study tour. It was evening, and we had only been dating perhaps three months. In the twilight, he turned to me and asked, “So, how are we doing?”



Huh? What do you mean, *How are we doing?* I wasn’t sure how to answer. We hadn’t had any arguments or misunderstandings. I didn’t feel we were communicating poorly. I’m not sure what I told him, something like, “Um, we’re fine. Why? Is something wrong?”

He went on to explain what he meant. Instead of waiting until we had something to disagree over and then discovering other frustrations festering under the surface, he wanted us to form a habit of checking in with each other during calm, happy moments.

A year later, that boyfriend became my husband. Thirteen more years and two children down the road, we still have regular check-in conversations. It gives us a chance to share the little things that bother us or weigh us down, in an atmosphere of support, rather than when tensions are high and tempers run hot. This way, it is easier to listen attentively and express our feelings clearly.

I won’t pretend that this strategy has saved us from ever disagreeing or arguing or misunderstanding each other. And it is definitely not a substitute for communicating well in other situations. But it is a

way to know that you have a safe zone where you can hear what is in each other’s hearts—the stuff you don’t dig down and share on a daily basis.

If you’ve never had a “check-in conversation” in your marriage, or you aren’t in the habit of non-confrontational transparent communication, it might feel a bit odd at first, but that’s OK.

Talk to your spouse about the idea, and maybe have them read this article so they understand. Then pick a time when you’re not stressed, rushed, or already irritated with each other. Here are a few practice questions to get you started, in no particular order:

How are we doing?

Am I meeting your needs well lately?

What are a couple of things I could do to lighten your load this week?

What’s on your heart right now?

Is there anything I’ve done that hurt your feelings this week? How can I make it better?

If we could do one thing together to make you feel that we are united, what would it be?

Check-in conversations are one of the best ways to stay united in the constant demanding bustle of ministry life. Pair these open, honest dialogues with daily prayer time together, and your marriage can become unbreakable. ■

Sarah K. Asaftei ministers alongside her husband in Florida, raising two high-energy kids and running her own business for media & branding. Connect with her on Twitter @sarahKasaftei.

Dear Abigail,

I am struggling with the feeling that my spouse's call is his own, and I wonder whether I have to be—or even should be—part of his ministry identity. The church doesn't hire or pay me, so why should I bother doing extra?

Wanting My Own Identity



Dear Wanting,

Every pastoral couple ministers in different ways. It's true that ministry spouses aren't usually paid for the expectations placed upon them. However, look at things objectively: many spouses of great leaders face extraordinary outside expectations and aren't paid for them either. Spouses of doctors, for example, are expected to share the doctor with all of his or her patients, no matter the time of night or day. Those married to politicians, CEOs, and public speakers—all have distinct obligations that come with the position of their prominent spouses. Few, if any, are paid for their time spent hosting events, talking to people, or attending functions.

Marrying a leader—pastors included—automatically brings a set of obligations that can become a joy if you view them as a partnership and as a service to others. Of course, every spouse needs to create that partnership in ways that are authentic to their own personality and gifts.

Here's a good way to think about it: how involved and supportive do you wish "regular" church members would be of your spouse's leadership, events, plans, evangelistic efforts, and so on? Start with setting an example of involvement at a level you wish others would show, and then take it up a notch or two.

Many blessings as you pursue marital unity in ministry!

Abigail

The Angry Lady

I'LL NEVER FORGET answering the phone that day.

I was filling in for the secretary at our church office while she was away on vacation. Most calls I received were simple inquiries, easy to answer. But this call was different.

“Who made that stupid bulletin?” groused the lady on the other end. “It was dumb, hard to read, nobody liked it!”



“I did,” I gulped in response. She was taken back a bit.

“Oh,” she replied. “Well, I don’t know why anyone would do that. It was totally new. Nobody liked it. It was really dumb.”

Don’t know why someone would do something so stupid!”

By this time I was almost glad I had answered the phone. *Really?* I thought. *All this over a new bulletin design?*

Conveniently, the senior pastor was available, and I asked if she’d like to speak to him about it. He had encouraged me to work on an updated design, which had been very well received by many church members earlier that week.

The angry lady gave him no mercy. She vehemently proclaimed how much she disliked it. When he asked what exactly it was she didn’t like, she couldn’t pinpoint anything in particular . . . just that it was dumb. He generously talked to her, suggesting that she take a detailed look and bring back any specifics we could improve for the following week. She never found anything, and we never heard about it again. However, my feelings toward this woman lingered. *How could she call and chew me out like that? Why would she be so harsh?*

A week or two later, my husband and I were looking for a place to sit at the potluck lunch after church. As I scanned the room looking for seats, I saw the angry lady. Sure enough, she had two seats available at her table. I’ll admit my feelings were not all positive, but I glanced at my husband, he nodded, and we headed to her table. We sat

down, made friendly conversation, asked about her life and family, and surprisingly enjoyed our meal.

In the following weeks I decided to continue being friendly toward her, even though she had been anything but friendly to me. When I saw her, I'd greet her with a hug and smile and try to make conversation.

Several weeks later, I had the opportunity to preach at our church. After the service I made my way to the back of the church to greet everyone. As people shook my hand, the angry lady approached me—this time with tears in her eyes.

"I just want to apologize for what I've done. I'm so sorry for how I treated you, and I need to go find the pastor before I leave so I can apologize to him too."

At that moment I was so glad I hadn't retaliated, snubbed, ignored, or avoided her. I might have had every right to, but her change of heart proved what kindness, prayer, and compassion can do.

Later I learned that the new bulletin design was hardly the reason behind her lashing out. It was just something to hide behind as she reacted to feeling hurt by another church member. The saying is true: "Hurt people—hurt people."

It may not be easy, it may be undeserved, but it's my prayer that God will help me and each of us to love, to extend kindness, to show understanding, and to pray for those who need it most.

Who knows? It may make all the difference! ■

"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven."

Matt. 5:44, 45a, NKJV

Leah Page lives in California and has the privilege of working alongside her husband at their church doing children's ministries, giving Bible studies, and coordinating the weekly worship service. She is passionate about ministry and enjoys quality time with family and friends.

FROM THE FIELD

Inter-American Division

In November 2014 IAD held their second Shepherdess congress for pastors' spouses. Cecilia Iglesias, IAD Women's Ministries director, presented a seminar, along with Heather-Dawn Small, General Conference Women's Ministries director.

Field Shepherdess leaders: center right is Cecilia Iglesias, IAD Women's Ministries director, and on her left is Betty Pacheco, Shepherdess coordinator for the union.



IAD holds a congress for Shepherdesses in November 2014.

Inter-European Division



Austrian PKs share time together at the ministerial family retreat in Bogenhofen.



Seminary spouses meet together for dinner during the October Week of Prayer by Jerry and Janet Page at Bogenhofen Seminary in Austria.



Ministerial families gather at Bogenhofen.

North American Division

Erika Laughton reports that about fifteen pastors' wives met in January 2014 at Camp Hope, British Columbia, to share their stories, experiences, hopes, passions, and prayer requests. Some of their ministry success stories:

- One church has forged great community connections by working with others at the local food bank.
- Another congregation put up a bulletin board to share prayer requests and praise. This connects church members with each other and provides a conversation starter for people who don't know each other.
- Another idea is to start a bulk organic food order for community members (orders can be picked up at the church).
- One congregation provides government-sponsored programs at their church, such as Food Safe and training for flag jobs on highway projects.
- And one church remodeled an old trailer and abandoned porch to provide a livable home for a needy person.

Spouses left the meeting humbled, inspired, and praising God for His work in British Columbia



Ministry spouses from British Columbia Conference meet together during camp meeting.

Northern Asia-Pacific Division

The Korean Union Conference spouses training pilot program held a graduation for 25 participants in July 2014. One spouse shared that her pastor-husband had been discouraged and planning to quit. She shared with him what she learned in class about positive attitudes during difficult trials. On a recent Sabbath he shared with his congregation how his wife had helped him. Praise the Lord!

Another spouse shared how she had struggled with insomnia and discouragement. She learned skills to help sleep better and have more joy in her life.

Hong Kong-Macau Conference held meetings for pastoral spouses in July. Choy Leng, Hong Kon-Macau Shepherdess coordinator, led a time of fellowship, learning, and prayer. Attendees learned how to positively approach the difficulties and joys of being a pastoral spouse, how to understand their own characters, and how to work effectively with different personalities.



Korean spouses graduate from training program in July 2014.

Trans-European Division

Pastors' spouses from Serbia met for a retreat in July 2014. This was their first retreat, so they were excited about getting together.



Serbia pastors' wives.

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