

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

ACTIVATED

Vol 18 • Issue 2

SPEED UP, SLOW DOWN

How to de-stress

Blind Spot vs. Sweet Spot

Living a purposeful life

10 Tips for Excelling at Work

Refuse to be mediocre!





EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION WHAT IS SUCCESS?

For Christians, success cannot be measured simply by money. It's not about becoming the richest or most famous, but about using the talents God has given us to the best of our ability.¹ The person doing the most with what he's got is the one who is truly successful.

How do you do that? When King David was about to die, he gave his son, Solomon, the following advice: "Do what the Lord your God commands and follow his teachings. Obey everything written in the Law of Moses. Then you will be a success, no matter what you do or where you go."² David's formula for success was to follow God and obey Him, which required effort on Solomon's part.

Effort? It turns out that work is highly valued throughout the Bible. Genesis describes how in the very beginning, God worked for six days to create the world, and when He determined that He had done a good job, He took pleasure in the outcome.³ Jesus said that He had come to accomplish the works of His Father.⁴ And we're told that the work we do on earth will be tested and rewarded by God.⁵

So the harder you work, the more successful you'll be? Not guaranteed. But in any case, Jesus doesn't want our work to cause us to feel pressured or stressed. He said, "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid."⁶

What if we're already feeling stressed? He can help with that too! "The Lord gives strength to those who are weary. Even young people get tired, then stumble and fall. But those who trust the Lord will find new strength. They will be strong like eagles soaring upward on wings; they will walk and run without getting tired."⁷

The above questions and more are covered in the articles in this issue. I hope you enjoy reading them.

Samuel Keating
Executive Editor

1. See Matthew 25:14–30.
2. 1 Kings 2:3 CEV
3. See Genesis 1:31.
4. See John 9:4.

5. See 1 Corinthians 3:13–15.
6. John 14:27 NLT
7. Isaiah 40:29–31 CEV

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THE WAY OUT

BY KEITH PHILLIPS

IN A 1968 EPISODE OF THE ORIGINAL *STAR TREK*, the crew of the starship *Enterprise* encounters an intergalactic species whose lives are far more fast-paced than those of their human counterparts. But there is a price. “At this level, they are easily damaged,” Captain Kirk observes, “as if accelerated living burns them out.” *Star Trek*’s creators apparently were making an observation about where the mounting pace of modern life was taking us—and they may have been even righter than they realized.

Some years ago, the World Health Organization predicted that by the end of this decade, half of the top ten medical problems worldwide would be stress-related, and another study

found that 54% of people worldwide complain of stress at work. In Japan, the modern era has coined the new words *karoshi* and *karojisatsu*—“death from overwork” and “suicide from overwork.”

Stress is a very real problem that affects all of us to varying degrees. Perhaps the most daunting aspect of stress is the way it is self-perpetuating. Just thinking about how to get out from under it puts us under more stress.

There *is* a way out, though, a sure and simple way of escape. It’s so simple, in fact, that many people make the mistake of dismissing it before trying it, and therefore continue in their stressed-out state.

“Come to Me,” Jesus says, “and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is

light.”¹ When you are wearied with the strain of it all, you can fly to Jesus on the wings of prayer and faith and get the relief that He alone can give you. He knows what you need most of all: rest of body, mind, and spirit, fellowship with Him, and the spiritual strengthening that comes from reading and absorbing His Word. Just a few quiet moments with Jesus can melt away the tension, bring peace of mind and spirit, and put the situations that lead to stress in proper perspective. Can it really be as simple as that? You’ll never know what sweet relief awaits you till you try it!

KEITH PHILLIPS WAS *ACTIVATED*’S EDITOR-IN-CHIEF FOR 14 YEARS FROM 1999 TO 2013. HE AND HIS WIFE CARYN NOW WORK WITH THE HOMELESS IN THE U.S.A. ■

1. Matthew 11:28–30



JUST DO IT!

BY PETER AMSTERDAM, ADAPTED

EVERY DAY, when you step out the door to go to work or on an appointment, or to take the kids to school or the park, or when you're at home working or cooking or cleaning, if you're praying as you do so, you're going to "the market," so to speak, and you should take along a pretty big "basket" of faith and expectancy for God to work in and through your life to fulfill His purposes. Through our prayers we create a vacuum for God to work, and we should expect that He is going to respond according to His will.

The key is *doing*. Staking out the land and catching the train of golden opportunities. Being flexible and willing to change as needed—whether that means changing

yourself, changing your plans, or changing your schedule.

Here are a few concrete actions we can take:

HAVE FAITH

Faith and trust in God and a willingness to follow where He leads. When we ask God for opportunities and open doors, He will not fail to bring them along in His time. Thank Him for them and then actively pursue them—even if they are new, different, or unexpected.

BEGIN

To follow in the direction God leads us, we've got to be willing to try new things and follow through. We have to show God that we mean

business and we're serious. If you do that, you can bet your bottom dollar that He is going to come through, sweep away the obstacles, and do over and above His part of the bargain.

RECOGNIZE OPPORTUNITY

Some of the opportunities that come your way won't pan out. Some of the risks you take won't bring forth any spectacular or visible fruit, at least not immediately. Sometimes you might have to keep going with something for quite a while before it blossoms.

Sometimes the risks you take might even cost you. Not every single venture or opportunity will be immediately successful. Some might not be successful at all. But it's better



The secret of success in life is for a man to be ready for his opportunity when it comes.—*Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1881)*

Often, the most extraordinary opportunities are hidden among the seemingly insignificant events of life. If we do not pay attention to these events, we can easily miss the opportunities.—*Jim Rohn (1930–2009)*

It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one than to have an opportunity and not be prepared.—*Whitney Young (1921–1971)*

Whenever you are asked if you can do a job, tell 'em, "Certainly I can!" And get busy and find out how to do it.—*Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919)*



to try something new and discover that it doesn't work than to never try anything different or outside the box. It's better to boldly seize an opportunity—even if you're not quite sure where or how it's going to go—than to play it so safe and walk with such hesitancy that you miss the open doors and setups that God wants to engineer.

If you jump at an opportunity and it doesn't seem to be working well, you can put it on pause and commit it to prayer. If something doesn't pan out, you can close the door and move on to something else. That's not failure. That's experience. That's trying the new. When opportunities come around, if you hesitate, you might not get a second chance. So don't be afraid to give new things a try.

Being willing to experiment and try new things is exactly what it takes to be in tune with the needs of today. You have to be able to endure a bit of failure too. Pioneers, explorers, inventors, and entrepreneurs often face setbacks and failures—sometimes many—before they hit their eureka moment. It's not a bad sign if you don't strike gold immediately. Finding out where it *isn't* can be just as valuable in some cases as finding out where it *is*!

SEIZE THE MOMENT

What if Lazarus' family had said to Jesus, "Well now, Jesus, we're not quite ready for Lazarus' resurrection! We haven't got his room ready yet, and we've got to get his clothes back

from the people we gave them to. Wait till tomorrow and we'll roll away the stone. You can come back tomorrow, Lord, and raise him from the dead." Jesus would probably have been far gone from there by that time, and it would have been too late.

The secret is following God and moving with His Spirit, which includes being ready to take advantage of His setups. And His setups sometimes defy human logic and earthly conventions, meaning they will happen on God's timetable, not ours.

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BLIND SPOT vs. SWEET SPOT



BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER

THAT BLIND SPOT! I'm not talking about the back of the retina where the optic nerve enters the eyeball, that place lacking cones or rods that causes us to lose vision at certain angles. I am talking about those unguarded moments when I miss something right in front of me. The other day, our event company calculated that we've lost over \$1,000 worth of equipment over the years due to leaving bags somewhere we shouldn't have. Then just the other day, while I was coming home from the gym, I forgot to zip up the side pocket of my backpack where my phone was, and ... you can guess what happened.

I started to wonder why I just don't get it. I imagine part of the solution would be to simply go slower, pray more, and remember to double-check things. It probably also has to do with living more in the moment. Life is made up of a lot of individual choices over the span of around 2.4 billion seconds in a lifetime of 78 years. Each of those decisions helps to determine what happens to

us or for us. It's a continual challenge to make the right choices, and we don't expect to succeed all the time. In baseball, if a batter hits the ball successfully over a third of the time, he is considered good.

The *sweet spot* is a term used in baseball for the best place on a bat to hit the ball, and also used generally in sports and the expressive arts for when someone is performing at optimum levels. I've had that feeling sometimes when playing squash, when my coordination, alertness, and swing all work together in perfect harmony and it seems nothing can go wrong.

How do we find that sweet spot in our lives where everything is humming and oiled by God's Spirit? One diagram suggests we find it where our talent, personality, and experiences meet our spiritual gifts and our core values.¹

The sweet spot is a great place to live. Though we may sometimes "strike out" or miss the ball, we keep playing the game. Each time we come up to bat, we can pray, *Help me to find the sweet spot and hit a home run!*

1. See <http://www.christiancoachinstitute.com/coaching-sweet-spot>.
2. <http://elixirmime.com>

CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER IS A SCRIPTWRITER AND MIME ARTIST² IN GERMANY. ■



SPEED UP, SLOW DOWN

BY CHRIS HUNT

THE BOOKS ON THE SHELF have similar titles: *Slowing Down Modern Life*, *The Rush Culture*, *Putting a Price on Speed* ... Most everyone agrees that contemporary life is lived in the fast lane, and we're battling the consequences in the form of stress and other maladies. It might seem as though life was much simpler a hundred years ago, but even changes taking place back then were a cause for concern for people at the time, as illustrated in the following extracts:

The cause of the ... increase in nervous disease is increased demand made by the conditions of modern life. ... Everything is done in a hurry. We talk across a continent, telegraph across an ocean, take a trip to Chicago for an hour's talk. ... What wonder if the pressure is almost more than our

nerves can bear.—*G. Shradly (from P.C. Knapp), "Are Nervous Diseases Increasing?" Medical Record, 1896*

With the advent of cheap newspapers and superior means of locomotion ... the dreamy quiet old days are over. ... Men now live, think, and work at express speed. They have their *Mercury* or *Post* laid on their breakfast table in the early morning, and if they are too hurried to snatch from it the news during that meal, they carry it off, to be sulkily read as they travel ... leaving them no time to talk with the friend who may share the compartment with them. ... The hurry and bustle of modern life ... lacks the quiet and repose of the period when our forefathers, the day's work done, took their ease.—*Morley William Smith in Ancient and Modern, 1886*

If it was seen as that bad well over a century ago, when horses were still the main means of transportation, landline phones were a rarity, and the internet had not even been dreamed of, what hope is there for us today? Perhaps the answer is that no matter the circumstances of the world around us, we can slow down, take time to talk with a friend, to notice the daisies at our feet, to savor our food. We can lift up our eyes to the heavens and discover that the stars are still silently twinkling. De-stressing is a matter of the mind and heart.

CHRIS HUNT LIVES IN GREAT BRITAIN AND HAS BEEN READING *ACTIVATED* SINCE IT WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1999. ■



TIPS

for

EXCELLING

at

WORK

BY TINA KAPP

WE BUILD OUR WORK WITH OUR ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS DAY BY DAY. Here are some thoughts to keep in mind if we want to excel in our jobs.

1 VOLUNTEER. In the old folk tale of the Little Red Hen, she wanted to bake a loaf of bread, so she asked the animals in the barnyard to help her gather the wheat, but everyone was suddenly too busy and unavailable, so she did it herself. Later, she asked who would help her grind the wheat into flour, but everyone was too busy. Then she asked who could help her sift the flour and mix the ingredients; again, everyone was too busy to help. After requesting help several times, she ended up doing all the work herself. As a result, though, the animals missed out on the reward of enjoying the loaf.

Let's not be like them. If your boss and coworkers know you can be counted on to take the extra step when the need arises, they'll come to depend on your reliability and willingness to get things done. Showing initiative leads to increased trust, rewards, and responsibility.

In the Bible, David volunteered to fight the giant Goliath, which saved the day and gained him favor with King Saul. Another example is Isaiah volunteering to be a messenger for God by saying, "Here am I. Send me!"¹

2 GET THE DETAILS RIGHT. Attention to detail says a lot about a person. If you can't be bothered to spell a word (or a name) correctly or get your facts right, those around you will assume you can't be bothered to get other things right

1. Isaiah 6:8
2. Luke 16:10 NIV
3. Proverbs 10:4 NLT
4. Ephesians 4:29 NIV
5. 2 Thessalonians 3:11–12 NIV
6. See 1 Kings 11:28.



RK

either. Jesus said: “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much.”²

If you go into a bathroom in a restaurant and it’s dirty, it might make you worry that the kitchen is also dirty, and you may decide to eat somewhere else instead. Even if it just happened to be a sloppy job that one day, it can still have a bad effect on the business’ reputation.

Regardless of the task, personal attention to detail shows that people can rely on you to get things done correctly and that you’ll go the extra mile to do it right.

The book of Proverbs says, “Lazy people are soon poor; hard workers get rich.”³

3 **AVOID GOSSIP.**

Paul warned the Ephesians, “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”⁴

Gossiping may seem innocent, but words have a way of coming back to bite you. If you wouldn’t say something to someone’s face, it’s probably not a good idea to say it to others. The classical Greek philosopher Socrates, credited as one of the founders of Western philosophy, reportedly said: “Great minds discuss ideas, average minds discuss events, and small minds discuss people.”



4 **BE RELIABLE.** Your boss is counting on you, and unless you’re actually sick, playing hooky to skip out on work will let him and your coworkers down. You might get away with pretending to be sick to get off work, but people will come to see you as someone who often drops the ball, leaving them to pick up the pieces.

Paul said to the Thessalonians, “We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge ... to settle down and earn the food they eat.”⁵ According to one reference, the original Greek translation of “disruptive” meant playing hooky.

5 **NEVER DO NOTHING.** Rather than wasting time when you’ve finished your task, take a look around at what else needs to be done.

Jeroboam in the Bible was a shining example of this. When King Solomon saw how well the young man did his work, he put him in charge of the whole labor force of the house of Joseph.⁶ You can bet that didn’t come from him sitting around and slacking off every chance he got.

6 **BE NICE.** This is a huge topic, and some aspects may seem obvious, but it covers everything

from having good manners to being polite to the janitor or that slightly annoying coworker. The way you treat others will affect the way people see you. People who are polite and easy to work with end up with more references, contacts, and friends.

It also majorly impacts your ability to do business. Dale Carnegie's book *How to Win Friends and Influence People* explains how kindness and showing genuine interest in others have often been the keys to business success. His book has a great collection of stories about successful people who were interested in others and used kindness in business.

One of my favorites is about a businessman named Mr. Duvernoy, who wanted to be the bread supplier to a certain New York hotel. He tried to get an appointment to present his products to the manager every week for years, but was unsuccessful even with that.

After learning about positive human relations, he decided to put them to the test. He found out that the manager was part of the Hotel Greeters of America Society and was so passionate about it that he attended every convention and event and even ran for its presidency.

The next time Mr. Duvernoy met the hotel manager, he brought up this society. The manager, who obviously loved the subject, spent half an hour talking about it. "In the meantime, I had said nothing about

bread," recalled Mr. Duvernoy. "But a few days later, the steward of his hotel phoned me to come over with samples and prices. 'I don't know what you did to the old boy,' the steward greeted me, 'but he sure is sold on you!'"

Carnegie said, "You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you."

7 ASK FOR FEEDBACK.

In an article I read, there was a suggestion to check in with your boss or team every so often about how you're doing and ask how you could improve. This shows you're focused and take your work seriously.

If the apostle Paul were writing today, he would probably say something like, "Employees, obey your earthly bosses with respect and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ."⁷ The way you conduct yourself, your interactions with coworkers and your boss, says a lot about you as a person and affects your example as a Christian.

King David of the Bible was always praying about ways he could improve. In Psalms he says, "Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me."⁸

Moses also checked in with God regularly: "If you are pleased with



7. Ephesians 6:5, paraphrased

8. Psalm 25:4–5 NIV

9. Exodus 33:13 NIV

10. 1 Samuel 16:7 CEV

11. www.just1thing.com

me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you.”⁹

8 DON'T RUSH INTO OFFICE ROMANCES.

This is not a hard-and-fast rule—although different companies have their own policies, so it's important to know and follow them—but experts often recommend keeping romance away from the workplace.

Relationships and friendships are wonderful, but always keep your goals in mind, and don't let other things distract you.

9 LOOK PROFESSIONAL.

How you look and dress reflects either well or poorly on the company you work for or the service you perform. Some jobs have a dress code; if yours doesn't, take cues from respected individuals at your work. Imagine getting stuck in the elevator with the company's CEO, and dress for that possibility every single day. This is even more important when at a job interview, as first impressions are so important.

While the Bible is clear that God is more interested in what is in our hearts, it also cautions us that “people judge others by what they look like.”¹⁰ Make sure your appearance serves you well and shows respect for the position you have or want.

10 SHOW APPRECIATION.

If someone does their job well, say so. If someone helps you out, thank them. Saying nice things about others behind their back is also a wonderful thing to do, because if it gets back to the person, it often means more than the nice things you could say directly to them.

With the fast pace of today's world, it's easy to forget the value of a few simple words. Just taking a few minutes to acknowledge those you work with and their contributions will go a long way in making them feel appreciated.

Dale Carnegie wrote: “You don't have to wait . . . before you use this philosophy of appreciation. You can work magic with it almost every day.”

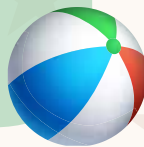
Making your colleagues feel appreciated and important is the key to success and everyone working together happily. It may seem to be a small thing, but it gets big results.

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WHEN WORK IS PLAY

BY CATHERINE NEVE



BELIEVE IT OR NOT, young children *like* to help out. It's true! Children actually enjoy and take pride in being helpful until they are "taught" otherwise. It's only when they hear their parents or older siblings grumbling about "having to do" this or that around the house that helping out becomes a chore.

If approached positively, helping out can seem more like play. It can also help build self-esteem, self-discipline, initiative, diligence, perseverance, self-reliance, and responsibility—all qualities that are useful in life.

There is at least one educational system that uses this "work as play" principle in a big way. Departing from traditional teaching methods in favor of capitalizing on a child's natural interests, Maria Montessori (1870–1952) gentled some of the most undisciplined preschool

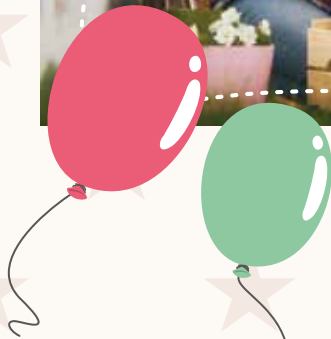
children in Naples, Italy, into highly motivated, creative, and accomplished students. One facet of Montessori schooling called "practical life" involves teaching children the basic skills they will need in everyday life, such as dressing, hygiene, and food preparation. Two-year-olds, with their "I can do it myself" attitude, are at the perfect age for practical life training, but there are plenty of practical life challenges for every age and stage of development.

As a busy mother, I usually found it quicker and easier to do the little jobs myself than to teach my little ones to help. But I soon realized that I was being shortsighted. I needed help, and my children needed opportunities to learn and feel "grown up." Later, I found that even rascally children were usually happy to channel their energy into doing little jobs for me if I approached them right.

Preschoolers can help with simple meal prep, beginning with washing vegetables, spreading peanut butter onto sandwiches, or mixing cookie dough or pancake batter. Young children enjoy sweeping, wiping spills, and sorting silverware. If you keep it fun and reward them with praise and recognition, they will be thrilled each time they "graduate" to a new job.

This does not need to end when your children reach school age. It was a milestone for my children when they were considered old and responsible enough to use the vacuum cleaner. Some children like to clean bathroom sinks and change the hand towels. Others like to rake leaves or mow grass or help wash the car. The list is endless—just look around!

Assigning game names to household jobs is good "marketing strategy." The first such game I taught my children was "ant hill." They



pretended they were ants and scurried around, taking every toy, block, or stuffed animal left out back to the “ant hill” (where it belonged). Even babies can learn to play this game, sitting in your lap or next to you as the two of you take turns putting blocks or other small toys into a box—then you make sure to lavish them with praise.

Some possible pitfalls and how to avoid them:

It can be frustrating for both of you if the job is beyond their ability or attention span, so don't expect too much.

Make it easy for your children to succeed by making sure they understand the job and how to best go about it.

Make helping out voluntary or give your children a choice between jobs, when possible. If you've succeeded in keeping it fun, your children will be quick to volunteer.

It helps, especially when the job may seem daunting or tedious to the child, to talk about something fun as you tackle the job together. Be their coach, teammate, and cheering section.

Don't wait till the job has gotten too big or your child is too tired to tackle it cheerfully.

Teach your children to put away one thing before getting out another and to clean up as they go, whenever possible.

If you leave your child alone to do a job, don't be surprised if you come back and find he or she has gotten busy with something else. Children get distracted easily without supervision. Don't wait till time is up to find out how it's going.

Be careful how you express disappointment and always try to counter it with words of encouragement and reassurance. Stay positive!

There are so many benefits to making work fun for children. Not only do they learn practical skills and develop character, but also teamwork and appreciation for how much you and others do for them.

Finally, if you want your children to get into the habit of helping cheerfully, then get in the habit of thanking and praising them. Thank them on the spot. Reward them with hugs and the occasional special treat. Sing their praises to your spouse, family members, and friends—preferably within your children's earshot. Nothing builds self-esteem like praise and appreciation from those we love most!

CATHERINE NEVE (1951–2003)
WORKED AS A VOLUNTEER WITH THE
FAMILY INTERNATIONAL FOR 31 YEARS
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CHILDREN OF HER OWN AND TEACHING
SCORES MORE ALONG THE WAY. ■



The COUNSELOR

BY IRENA ŽABIČKOVÁ

I'M A PERFECTIONIST. I like to do things well and thoroughly, no matter how much time it takes. In my decision-making, I've come to recognize that my main motivation is avoiding making mistakes. I try to make sure that my work and personal decisions are as right as they can possibly be.

Oh, the agony and stress of the whole process! Almost any decision had to be perfect—from what shampoo to buy to which seat to choose on a bus. Everything had to be well thought through, all options and possibilities considered. I didn't realize how much stress I was bringing into my life!

When I came to know Jesus and began involving Him in my life, I found that things could be much

easier and that He could help me in my decision-making—after all, who knows better than the all-knowing One? So I began asking for His guidance. Sometimes He would give me specific guidance. Other times He didn't indicate a clear course of action, leaving it in my court to search His Word and make godly decisions based on its precepts.

However, the best and most reassuring consequence of involving God is that He loves me so much that even if I make a wrong choice, He continues to work with me and my decisions. He doesn't hold it against me when I make a mistake or let selfishness or fear guide my choices. He takes me where I'm at and helps me to grow into making better choices.

I am still a perfectionist to some extent, even after so many years of walking with Jesus, but finding Him has made my life so much easier and

happier. Having Him to counsel with and count on has helped to take the stress out of my decision-making, because I know that although I may make mistakes, He can work even those for my good.¹

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Jesus can counsel you too. In fact, He'd love to be involved. Just ask Him:

Dear Jesus, I want to include You in my daily decisions. Please come into my life and start giving me Your guidance and insight to help me make the choices that You know will work out best.

1. See Romans 8:28.

2. <http://www.perunmondomigliore.org>



FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS, I've been with the same team running an NGO in the former Yugoslavia. "A marriage!" some people have commented. Yes, in a way it is. It has required many of the attributes and choices that a marriage calls for.

When we first started, we were, well, much younger. The excitement of the challenge, the great need in front of us, and the novelty of the job were all predominant factors. Even though we had distinct personalities, during that early phase we were so busy that we didn't have time to elaborate on clashes or nurse our wounds.

Later on, though, we did experience what most marriages and relationships do: familiarity, difficulty

in communication, stress, and so on. More than once we were tempted to quit. So many times we plainly just couldn't stand one another!

Accepting and facing our limitations and differences is what eventually helped us continue to focus on our goals and not get discouraged and distracted when we faced difficult interactions or took steps backwards in our work.

Granted, it has taken a lot of forgiving, patience, and understanding. We also learned to accept each other's low times and periods of lesser output. After all, we are human, and even though we dedicate most of our time to a good cause and we try to be idealistic and selfless, we certainly will never attain perfection.

Our own perception at times can also be skewed, and once I learned

a great lesson on that. I was discussing with a coworker how one of our volunteers seemed to lack motivation of late and I wondered if he would soon drop out. Later, my mind was still clouded by my negativity toward him when I checked my email and found the following message:

It was raining outside and my heart was also raining tears of sadness and despair when one of your colleagues walked into my office. His smile and kind words were like a rainbow in my soul. I felt like an angel had just walked in.

You guessed it. It was that same volunteer.

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1. <http://www.perunmondomigliore.org>



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

TAKING BACK CONTROL

There's so much that you need to do each day, so much that you want to do, and so much that others expect of you. You feel pulled in all directions. Pressure. Tension. Anxiety. Will it ever stop?

It won't stop on its own, but you can break the cycle. You don't have to remain entangled in the unending struggle to do more and have more. Life doesn't have to be a daily crisis. You don't have to be the prisoner of unrealistic expectations. Let Me help you regain control of your life.

The root of the problem is simple: You try to do too much, more than is humanly possible, and you put your mind, body, and spirit under pressure you were never meant to handle. It's time to reassess. Determine what things mean the most and will have lasting value—your primary long-term goals and responsibilities. Channel your energies into those, and let go of the rest. Once you've done this, the pressures that once seemed unbearable will start to dissipate.

Do you want a new lease on life? You can have one, but you have to be willing to let go of the self-imposed pressures that drive you now.