

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

# activated

Vol 20 • Issue 10

## CHECK YOUR GAUGES

Running on empty

## You'll Find Me Running

The steady approach

## An Infinite Power Source

Escaping the load shedding



## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

### BALANCING ACT

Have you noticed that it's rare to find someone who honestly feels that their life is in good balance: their work, their family life, their spiritual life, their daily chores, and their personal needs?

We all want the kind of life that doesn't have us constantly trying to cram one more activity into an already overloaded day; a life that doesn't require explaining to the children, yet again, why we can't be with them right now. We want a life with time for family and friends, and time for God as well. We want to be able to do the things that are important without always feeling rushed and overwhelmed. Simply put, we want every area of our lives to receive the right amount of time and attention!

On the face of it, however, every aspect of our existence demands more of us than we have to give. Each of us could probably easily be a full-time parent and spouse, or spend every waking hour at our job or studies or other pursuits—and still feel that we're not up to snuff in any of those areas.

At the end of the day, life is all about the choices we make. Since there's only one of us to do what five of us would struggle to accomplish, we need to learn to prioritize the needs and demands on our time and energy.

The same goes for our health. In many cases, healthy living is a matter of consistently making the right choices as far as what we eat and how active we are. Here too, there's no way to be on top of every aspect of our health, but we can all work on doing a few key things to keep our bodies strong and our resistance high.

The good news is that God is on our side. He's given us bodies that are remarkably resilient, with built-in early warning and defense mechanisms. He's also given us common sense and the collective experience of men and women of science. And He can even give us personalized insight and ideas for our unique situations if we ask Him.

So let's get started.

For more information on *Activated*, visit our website or write to us.

Website: [activated.org](http://activated.org)

Email: [activated@activated.org](mailto:activated@activated.org)

Local contacts:

*South Africa:*

Tel: (082) 491 2583

Email: [sales@bigthought.co.za](mailto:sales@bigthought.co.za)

*India:*

Email: [activatedindia@activated.org](mailto:activatedindia@activated.org)

*Nigeria:*

Cell: +234 (0) 7036963333

Email: [activatednigeria@activated.org](mailto:activatednigeria@activated.org)

*Philippines:*

Cell: (0922) 8125326

Email: [activatedph@gmail.com](mailto:activatedph@gmail.com)

EDITOR Ronan Keane

DESIGN Gentian Suçi

© 2019 Activated. All Rights Reserved.

All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. Other Bible quotations are from the following sources: English Standard Version (ESV). Copyright © 2001 by Good News Publishers. Used by permission. New International Version (NIV). Copyright © 1978, 1984, 2011 by International Bible Society. Used by permission. Contemporary English Version (CEV). Copyright © 1995 by American Bible Society. Used by permission.

In every walk with nature one receives more than he seeks.

—John Muir (1838–1914)

Walking is man's best medicine.

—Hippocrates (c.460 BC – c.370 BC)

A photograph of a person from behind, walking through a field of tall, golden-brown grass. The person is wearing a black tank top, dark pants, and a brown leather backpack. The background is a soft-focus green field.

# THE BEST WORST THING

BY JOYCE SUTTIN

**I MET MY FRIEND LAURA WHEN I WAS 13 YEARS OLD,** when a neighbor brought her to our house. We exchanged home phone numbers and very quickly became best friends. Having a best friend was a new experience for me. I was thrilled that someone wanted to be *my* friend—not a family friend or my older sisters' friend or somebody I knew from church or school, but someone I could call and talk with and spend time with on the weekends.

At first, my mom agreed to drive me to her house. We'd spend Saturday together, often babysitting her younger brothers and sisters for a few hours, then we were free to hang out. I would sleep over and go to church with her family on Sunday and then go home with my parents.

After a few weeks of this, my Saturday morning plans fell through. Mom said she needed to spend the day deep cleaning and wouldn't be able to take me. I desperately wanted to go see my friend, but all my tears and pleas didn't work, and Mom finally told me that if I really wanted to go to Laura's, I could walk. I think she was surprised to see me pack a small bag and head up the hill, but by this point, I just wanted to get out of the house.

The morning air was fresh, and as I walked past our neighbors' farms one after the other, I began to notice all the wildflowers growing along the road, and the ways the clusters of trees outlined the pastures and fields. I suddenly realized that I'd forgotten about how angry and frustrated I was.

At the time, I thought that having to walk to my friend's house that Saturday morning was the “worst” thing. But in reality, it was the best thing that could have happened to me. In solving a problem that morning, I discovered a lifelong habit that has helped me deal with frustrations and concerns throughout my life. It has helped me turn my thoughts into a walking prayer vigil and has brought me tremendous peace—not to mention, free exercise. Through walking, my thoughts have become melodies, my worries have become prayers, and my silence has become a meditation.

JOYCE SUTTIN IS A RETIRED TEACHER AND WRITER AND LIVES IN SAN ANTONIO, USA. CHECK OUT HER BLOG AT [HTTPS://JOY4DAILYDEVOTIONALS.BLOGSPOT.COM/](https://joy4dailydevotionals.blogspot.com/). ■

BY PETER AMSTERDAM

# HEALTH and FITNESS

OUR BODIES ARE THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,<sup>1</sup> and God has commissioned us to care for them well and faithfully. Jesus paid the ultimate price to make us His own, so we should show our gratitude by investing in our health. Taking good care of our bodies and health is a natural outgrowth of loving ourselves and appreciating

1. See 1 Corinthians 3:16–17.
2. “Obesity quadruples to nearly one billion in developing world,” BBC News, 3 January 2014.
3. Galatians 6:9 ESV
4. This list is based on Rick Warren’s book, *The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 41.
5. *Ibid.*, 163, based on the following article: James Vlahos, “Is Sitting a Lethal Activity?” *The New York Times*, April 14, 2011.
6. Alexandra Sifferlin, “The Most Stressed-Out Generation? Young Adults,” *TIME*, Feb. 7, 2013.

the gift of life that God has given to us.

You might be tempted to feel that you can’t afford to tune in to these tips, either because it costs too much or takes too long. I feel that way sometimes too. But ultimately, working to *stay* in good health can prevent a breakdown in your health, which could be far more disruptive and costly.

Let’s look at five starting points for good health and fitness. Of course, there will always be differing opinions when it comes to health matters, and each of us must make our own decisions based on what works for us and our body, taking into account our particular circumstances and health needs.

## NUMBER 1. MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES.

One of the keys to maintaining health and fitness is the food you eat. There have been many popular diets and eating philosophies over the years, but with additional research,



some of the previous recommendations for healthy eating have been reconsidered. For example, there used to be a lot of emphasis on low-fat diets, which resulted in people eating a lot more sugar and processed foods and grains (such as bread, pasta, etc.), with poor overall results.

Generally speaking, if you want to make well-balanced food choices, you would:

- Eat a wide variety of foods that you or someone else prepared. This means avoiding processed foods and ready-made meals.
- Avoid sugar, high fructose corn syrup, and artificial sweeteners.
- Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, in a variety of colors.
- Eat healthy oils with omega-3s, such as those from nuts, seeds, and





you know it's a tough battle to fight. Being overweight is a far-reaching problem. According to a BBC report, worldwide obesity has quadrupled since 1980.<sup>2</sup>

Being overweight or obese is a major risk factor for cardiovascular diseases (mainly heart disease and stroke), diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders (especially osteoarthritis—a highly disabling degenerative disease of the joints), and some types of cancer.

Excess weight and obesity are largely preventable. Reversing these conditions isn't easy, but by God's grace and with His help, it is possible. The Bible promises, "Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."<sup>3</sup>

### **NUMBER 3. EXERCISE REGULARLY.**

Exercise is essential to keeping your weight at a healthy level—but it also builds health in many other ways. It increases energy; improves muscular strength, tone, and endurance; makes you feel happier; reduces stress, anxiety, and depression; helps you look and feel younger; decreases body fat and strengthens bones; sharpens focus, increases productivity, and stimulates creativity; promotes restful sleep;

enhances intimacy and relationships; enhances immune function; increases joint mobility; improves posture; and treats and prevents more than 40 chronic diseases.<sup>4</sup>

The key is to be active, to move, and to move often. "According to the Mayo Clinic, *sitting* is now the new smoking. Sitting too long, up to three or four hours at a time, is now equivalent to smoking up to a pack and a half of cigarettes a DAY."<sup>5</sup>

### **NUMBER 4. MINIMIZE STRESS.**

Stress enters our lives as a result of many different concerns, such as sickness, chronic pain, financial problems, work matters, relationship conflicts, parenting issues, and much more.

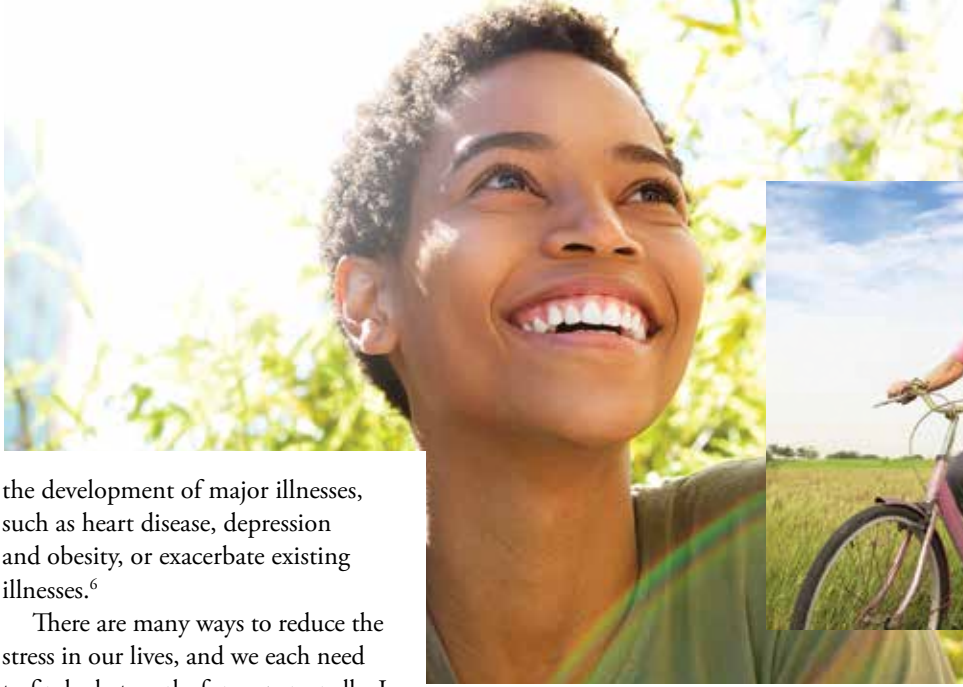
If untreated, consistently high stress could become a chronic condition, which can result in serious health problems including anxiety, insomnia, muscle pain, high blood pressure and a weakened immune system. Research shows that stress can even contribute to

avocados, as well as extra virgin olive oil and extra virgin coconut oil.

- Protect your healthy gut flora by avoiding excessive or unnecessary use of antibiotics and eating a balanced diet that is low in sugar and refined grains, and that includes natural probiotics (good bacteria), such as unsweetened yogurt and other fermented foods. This will keep your immune system strong.
- Drink plenty of pure water. Half your body weight in ounces each day is a good amount when living in a moderate climate.
- Limit caffeine and alcohol.
- And of course, don't smoke.

### **NUMBER 2. MAINTAIN PROPER WEIGHT.**

If you're someone who struggles with excessive weight or obesity, then



the development of major illnesses, such as heart disease, depression and obesity, or exacerbate existing illnesses.<sup>6</sup>

There are many ways to reduce the stress in our lives, and we each need to find what works for us personally. I often feel stressed when I've overextended myself, when I'm too busy, or if I've taken on too many appointments and obligations. When that happens, I try to make a conscious effort to slow down, to rest and relax more, to take more time with God. "Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you; he will never permit the righteous to be moved."<sup>7</sup>

#### **NUMBER 5. ENJOY LIFE, BE HAPPY, AND HAVE A POSITIVE OUTLOOK!**

Here is some interesting insight from an article titled "Happiness Is Key to Longer Life":

"Ruut Veenhoven, a professor from Rotterdam's Erasmus University [stated]: 'Happiness does not heal, but happiness protects against falling ill.' ...

"After reviewing 30 studies carried out worldwide over periods ranging

from one to 60 years, the Dutch professor said the effects of happiness on longevity were *comparable to that of smoking or not*.

"That special flair for feeling good, he said, could lengthen life by between 7.5 and 10 years. ...

"Happy people were more inclined to watch their weight, were more perceptive of symptoms of illness, tended to be more moderate with smoking and drinking, and generally lived healthier lives.

"They were also more active, more open to the world, more self-confident, made better choices and built more social networks."<sup>8</sup>

I'm going to close with a few lines from the first part of Rick Warren's book, *The Daniel Plan*:

"Health is about more than a program. Health comes from recognizing and using God's power in your life and treating your body and mind with the care that he intended.

"Where God guides, he provides. What he calls you to do, he equips

you to do. He doesn't need your strength and willpower, but he does need your commitment. He wants you to live an abundant life that includes a vibrant faith, a vibrant body and a vibrant mind. But you must rely on Jesus. ...

"You have to believe you can get healthy even if you can't see it yet. Hebrews 11:1 says, 'Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.' ...

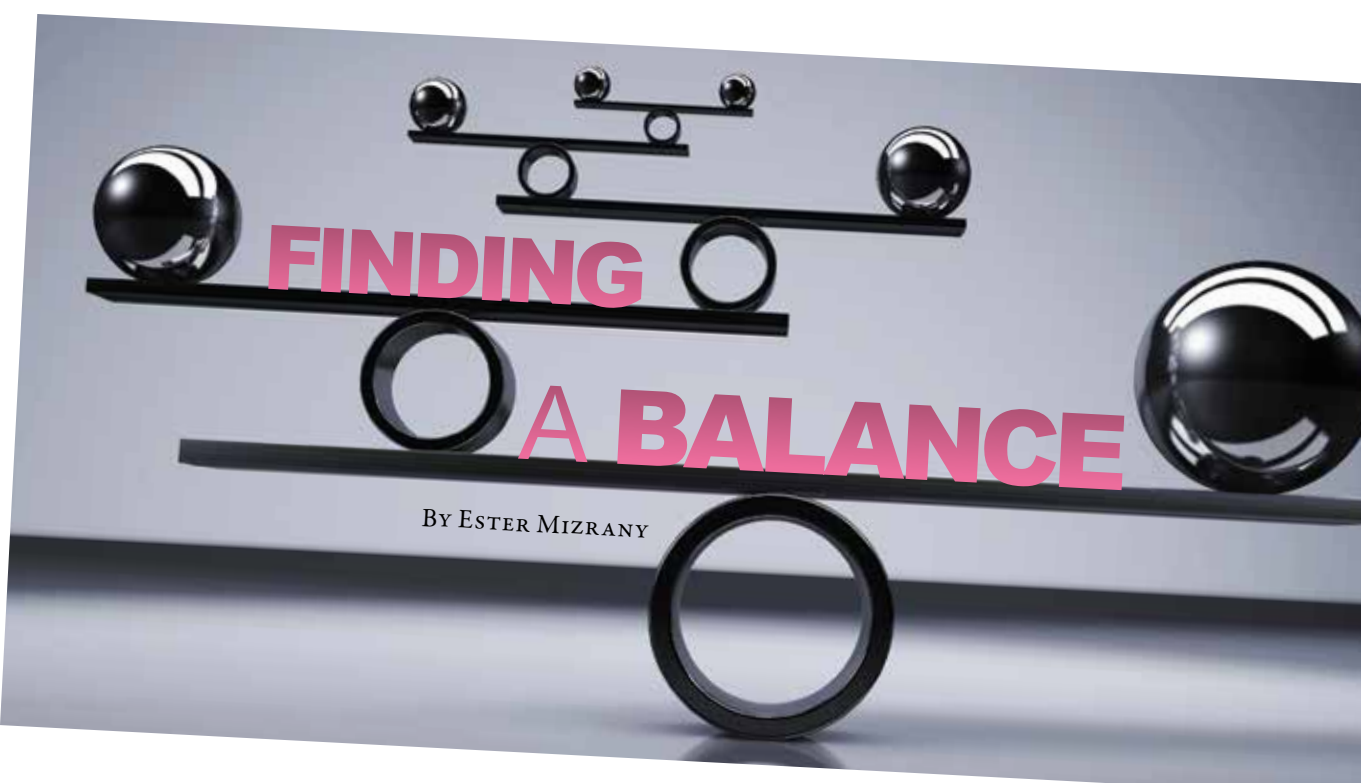
"You will never reach your optimum health without paying attention to the spiritual dimensions of your life. ... [The key] is not in psyching yourself up, but in relaxing in God's grace so that he can do through you what he desires to do."<sup>9</sup>

PETER AMSTERDAM AND HIS WIFE, MARIA FONTAINE, ARE DIRECTORS OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL, A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF FAITH. ADAPTED FROM THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE. ■

7. Psalm 55:22 ESV

8. "Happiness is key to longer life," AFP, August 14, 2008.

9. Warren, *The Daniel Plan*, 33–34,52.



# FINDING A BALANCE

BY ESTER MIZRANY

AT THE START OF THIS YEAR, I decided I was going to live a healthier lifestyle. You know, exercise more, eat healthier, and maybe even shed a couple of kilos.

I found out very quickly that with so much junk food available, it's very difficult to make healthy eating choices. Too often, the unhealthy choice is the simpler one (or looks like it'd be the tastier one). Sometimes, it's just easier to grab a pack of crisps or a premade sandwich off the store shelf than it is to make myself a salad or a healthier meal. In the long run, the healthy choice is worth it, but I find myself making wrong decisions along the way.

When taking all of this into consideration, I saw parallels with my spiritual life. Just like it's easy for me to make unhealthy eating choices, it's easy to lean to my lazy side and not

look after my spiritual life. Instead of taking a spare moment to pray or read a devotional article, I might browse

*Choose first...*

Natural juices over soft drinks.  
Outdoor games over virtual games.  
Natural ingredients over chemical additives.  
Stairs over elevators.  
Fresh produce over cans.  
The bicycle over the car.  
Sports over television.  
Nature walks over city streets.  
Excursions to the countryside over the mall.  
Home cooking over fast food.

—Gabriel and Sally García

Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.

—Hippocrates  
(c.460 BC – c.370 BC)

the internet, check the news, or just watch a movie or a TV episode. Those things aren't bad in themselves, but the trouble comes when I don't balance these activities with the fresh clean water of godly input.

We need to look after our spiritual diets as much as we look after our physical diets. "The body without the spirit is dead."<sup>1</sup> We can work to prevent spiritual sickness by exercising our faith and filling our minds with these balancing elements: God's Word, prayer, godly music, devotional books, uplifting conversation, and showing care for others.

The spiritual and practical coexist in our lives, and if we keep them both in their right proportions, we'll be a whole lot better off!

ESTER MIZRANY IS A TEACHER AND FULL-TIME MISSIONARY WITH HELPING HAND IN SOUTH AFRICA. ■

1. James 2:26



# YOU'LL FIND ME RUNNING

BY LILY NEVE

A FEW YEARS AGO IT DAWNED ON ME THAT I WAS SERIOUSLY OUT OF SHAPE. My work had become more sedentary, and I hadn't made up for that. I enjoyed exercise but never seemed to find the time or motivation to stick with it, day after day. Part of the problem was that I put accomplishments in my work ahead of my health.

Then I read a newspaper article about the local annual marathon. Perfect! There was a goal to strive for, a reason to exercise. I'd train hard and enter next year's marathon.

My "training program" consisted of running as hard as I could till I was completely breathless, walking till I caught my breath, and then running as hard as I could again. Over and over. When I could take it no more, I'd go home and collapse. It felt good to finally be getting some exercise, but I soon noticed that I wasn't making any progress.





I figured I needed some professional help, so I found a few websites dedicated to running. Some were informative, some overwhelming. Most encouraged me to invest in things that were out of my reach, such as expensive gear and gadgets or a personal trainer.

Even more daunting was the concept of consistent, long-term training. Expert after expert wrote, “Start slowly, build up slowly, but do something every day.” I’m more of a go-for-quick-results person. Long-term projects drive me nuts. Witnessing my own reaction to this approach to exercise helped me realize how that attitude affected other areas of my life. Important things were going undone, because they required small steps repeated over time.

Meanwhile, the only people who actually ran marathons or became fit or reached their life goals were those who worked up to it slowly, day after day, over time. I determined to make that change, starting with my exercise. I began slow, tried to pace myself, and told that ugly voice in my mind to pipe down when it said, *What good could this little bit possibly do?*

About that time I also read a fantastic article on healthy living that emphasized bringing spiritual power

into the health and fitness equation. I started praying more, asking God not only for His help to make progress in my running, but also for His guidance in going about it.

At first, I ran at a slower pace than before and not for as long as I would have liked, but I tried to do it every day. Each day I could run a little farther in the allotted time, and I began to really enjoy it. I also found that I had more energy.

At one point a flu knocked me for a loop. Even after the fever left, the fatigue remained for several weeks. When I was finally strong enough to resume my daily runs, I figured that the level of fitness I had worked up to in the previous months had been undone completely. All that time and effort lost! I didn’t even want to try. Maybe tomorrow.

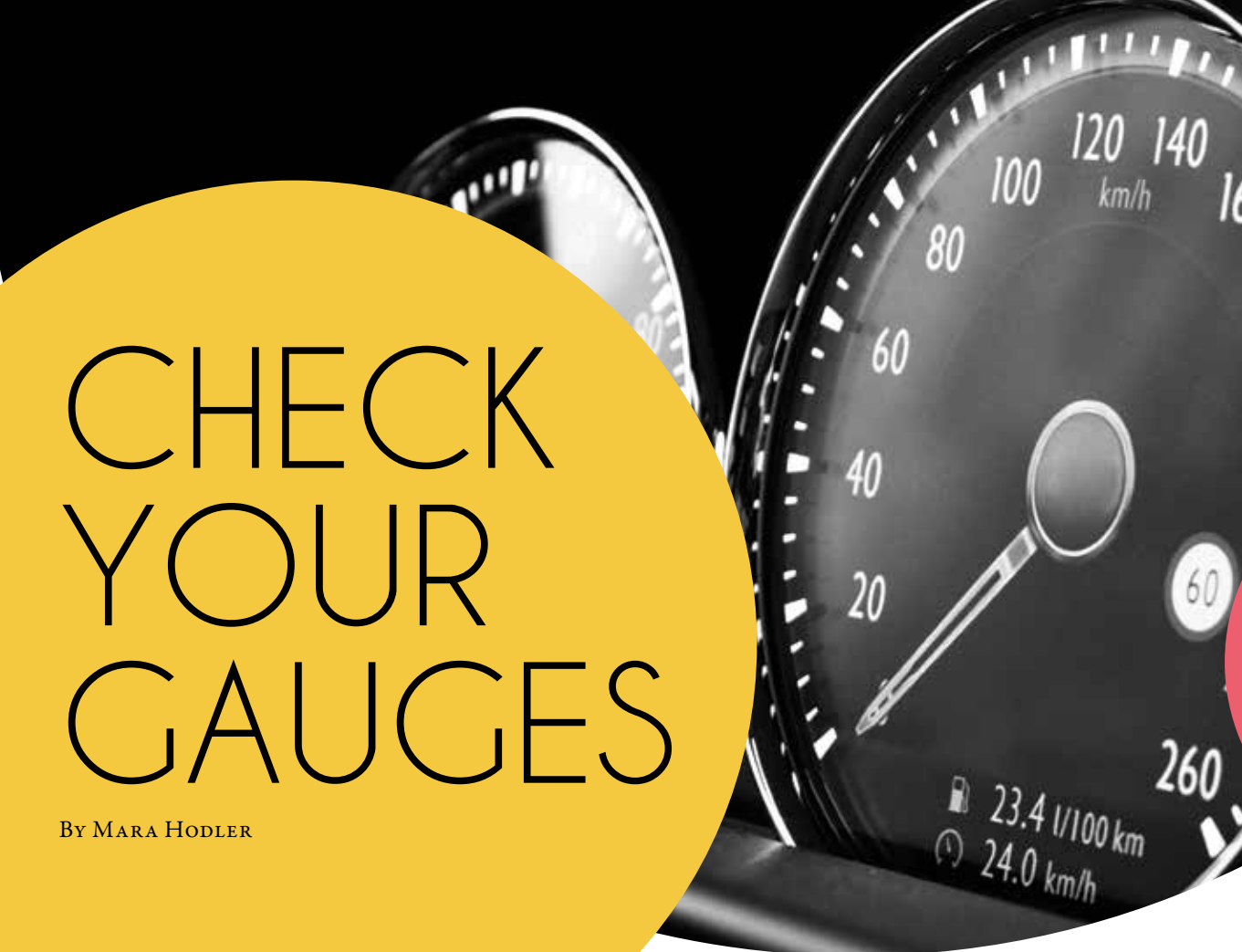
One day I tossed my excuses out the window. I would just take it slow and easy, and see how far I got. To my surprise, I was at about 75% compared to what I’d been able to do before my illness. All my hard work hadn’t been in vain. What’s more, as I ran, I started to feel better. Breathing deeply, running through the fields surrounding my home, was invigorating. I think that was the day I realized I loved running. Fitness

was a worthwhile goal, and the thought of running in a marathon had given me the incentive to get started, but the day-to-day doing was great fun in itself.

As I ran, I thought about other things that I’d been putting off because they required the same planning and pacing, plugging away day by day. The joy was in the running, in doing what I could each day to keep fit and healthy, to stay connected with family and loved ones, and to make progress in my work.

I also learned to use those times of relative solitude while I was running to not only think things over, but to pray about them. Now, as I run, I tell Jesus about whatever challenges I’m facing. Sometimes He gives me solutions I hadn’t thought of myself and probably never would have. But other times, just telling Him about my problems helps relieve the stress. I also use that time to pray for other people and situations, which is another thing I’ve felt the need to do more of but couldn’t find the time for. By the time I get home, the weights seem to have been left along the road somewhere.

I may never run that marathon, but toward the end of each day, you’ll find me running. ■



# CHECK YOUR GAUGES

BY MARA HODLER

**I KILLED OUR VAN.** I was driving along at the peak of summer—and also at the peak of rush hour—completely lost. In the middle of crawling traffic, my air conditioner stopped working. I thought it was just bad luck that I was stuck in traffic *and* my car had no AC, so I did what I often do when things are going wrong: I powered through.

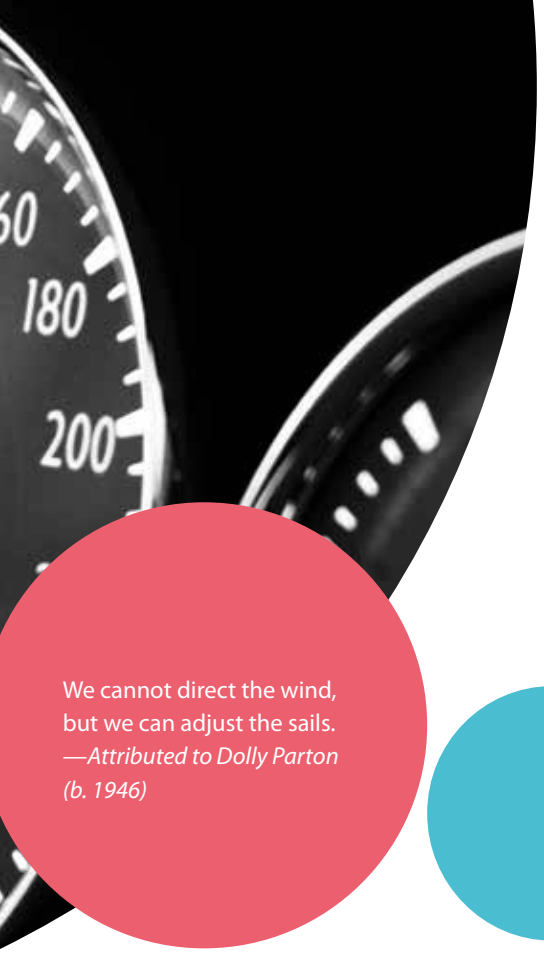
I finally got my GPS to work, finally got to where I needed to pick up my kids, and started driving home with the windows open. On the last bit of my drive home, I started hearing a strange sound. It was the kind of sound even someone ignorant about cars *knows* is bad. It was already dark, and we were on a country road. I knew there was a gas station about two miles ahead, so

I pushed on to the gas station. By the time we pulled in, the billows of oil-laced smoke announced our arrival to everyone around.

Within minutes, I was surrounded by several guys who had taken notice of my obvious “damsel in distress” situation. It didn’t take them a second to figure out that the radiator was dry, the car seriously overheated, and very likely the engine cracked.

That’s when one of the guys showed me this little thing on the dash called the heat gauge. It was stuck to the high end, indicating that the engine was *way* too hot. I learned that night that the heat gauge was probably indicating the problem to me long before I pushed the overheated car to run for 60 miles in the middle of a Texas summer. Or, in the words of my husband, “This whole thing could have been prevented.”

1. Matthew 11:28–30 NIV
2. [www.just1thing.com](http://www.just1thing.com)



We cannot direct the wind,  
but we can adjust the sails.  
—Attributed to Dolly Parton  
(b. 1946)

See, the AC had shut down because the car was overheating, and it was eliminating functions that weren't absolutely necessary. That should have been an indication to me that the car was in need of some attention. If I'd thought to glance at the heat gauge, I would have noticed that it was getting too hot. I could have pulled over and gotten some help to add some fluid to the radiator. That simple little action would have saved our car. Ah, hindsight!

Each of us has gauges that tell us what we need—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. For example, I know that whenever I get overtired, I get an earache. When I start to feel like I'm totally worn and in need of some nurturing, I know I need to carve out some *me-time* to replenish my spirit. When I feel like yelling at everyone, I know I need to stop and address whatever's bothering me.

Learning what your gauges are and how to read them can help you prevent some serious problems and complications. In our fast-paced world, we're used to things like email, streaming, texting, and googling—all of which put information and communication at our fingertips in a matter of seconds. We have fast food, fast entertainment, and fast computers. Our transportation is faster than ever. But our bodies, minds, and spirits still need to recharge.

We too can “crack,” just like the engine of my car, if we don't learn how to read our gauges and adjust our pace accordingly. That leads to unwanted problems, accidents, ruined friendships, and even debilitating stress-related illness.

Jesus understood how we humans work. He knew we would try to show off how we could lift our own “heavy burdens.” His advice to us? “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”<sup>1</sup>

According to Jesus, we aren't always supposed to be feeling like we need to power through. When we feel weighed down, overburdened, overwhelmed, or stressed, we're supposed to go to Him and He will give us rest. Just like putting some fluid in the car's radiator would have saved the engine from cracking, the rest Jesus gives can save us from losing it.

THIS ARTICLE WAS ADAPTED FROM A PODCAST ON JUST1THING,<sup>2</sup> A CHRISTIAN CHARACTER-BUILDING WEBSITE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. ■



# THE WONDERS OF OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

BY CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER

**SOMETIMES WE GET SICK**, but most of the time we can stay healthy in spite of constantly being under attack from a myriad of harmful viruses and bacteria. For that daily miracle, we can thank God, who created our immune system.

The immune system is our front line of defense in an amazing war taking place in our bodies every day. Like a modern army, our immune system is made up of many “soldiers” doing specific jobs. White blood cells search for specific invaders that they have been taught to recognize and destroy. Some cells envelop, some shoot, and others eat invaders. Some white blood cells produce the needed weapons, some command, some police, and some carry messages, but all work together in synchronized harmony to protect us. If we didn’t have these internal soldiers to protect us from the mass of enemy invaders, we wouldn’t survive for long. This is one more proof of God’s design and care of His creation.

Researchers have found that the brain contains messenger molecules that are produced by the immune system, enabling the brain and the immune system to “talk” to each other.

This may help explain why our physical condition is closely related to our mental and emotional state. If we’re happy and free from stress, our immune system is boosted and is better able to fight sickness. Studies have shown that subjects exposed to stress have sharply increased rates of infection. On the other hand, a pleasurable experience a day can keep the doctor away. Positive feelings have been found to have at least three health-enhancing side effects:

- Enjoyment, even in small doses, can cause an increase in antibodies and thereby boost the body’s protective immune system for hours.
- Positive feelings also stimulate the spleen, producing an increase in red blood cells and a corresponding increase in the number of cancer-fighting cells. Amazingly, these

---

1. <http://elixirmime.com>



cells can destroy cancer cells one by one, leaving normal tissue untouched—unlike chemotherapy, which cannot distinguish between normal and malignant cells.

- Certain types of pleasure also increase the levels of a compound in the body called immunoglobulin A (IgA), which binds to bacteria and triggers the immune system to destroy them. IgA is the first line of defense against colds and flu.

We can help the immune system ward off invaders by living a healthy lifestyle—by eating, sleeping, and exercising right.

What we eat greatly affects our health. Our immune system is a hungry army that needs quality fuel to run well. Give your immune system a boost by decreasing your intake of sugar and refined carbohydrates and by increasing your intake of garlic, onions, red fruits, red and green vegetables, and live-culture yogurt. These contain natural antibiotics, antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals—all of which are important to immune system functioning. Food rich in Omega-3 fatty acids help protect against a long string of diseases.

Researchers found that depriving healthy men of sleep for four hours, from 3 a.m. to 7 a.m., caused an average 28% drop in killer cell activity, a key marker of immune-system strength. The levels only returned to normal after a full night's sleep.

Exercise is another great way to bolster your immune system. There is evidence that people who get a good workout almost daily can add nearly four years to their life spans. Exercise improves sleep, the ability to handle stress, and mental outlook.

And in addition to the big three—eat right, sleep right, and exercise right—laughter, sunshine, melodic music, and giving and receiving love all give us energy and strengthen our immune system.

Sometimes we can't avoid sickness, but other times ill health is caused by our own carelessness or neglect. Give God and your immune system some cooperation. Take care of your body by making wise lifestyle choices, and you'll be healthier and live longer.

CURTIS PETER VAN GORDER IS A SCRIPTWRITER AND MIME ARTIST<sup>1</sup> IN GERMANY. ■



## “EAT RIGHT” MADE SIMPLE

Have a balanced diet—carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins, minerals, and fiber, in the correct proportions.

Eat lots of fresh fruit and vegetables, including raw vegetables.

Eat whole grains, rather than refined ones (brown rice or foods made from whole wheat flour, for example, as opposed to polished rice and foods made from white flour).

Get protein from a variety of sources, such as beans, whole grains, nuts, fish, eggs, dairy, poultry, and meat. (Meat and poultry are often not as healthy as they used to be, due to how livestock and poultry are being raised.)

Prepare your food in a healthy way. Some general guidelines are: Keep foods as close to their natural state as possible, and minimize the use of processed additives.

Choose natural, fresh, whole foods over refined, processed, and artificially enhanced foods, when possible.

Severely limit intake of sugar, and avoid white sugar and sugar substitutes. Use (or choose products that use) raw sugar (unbleached/unrefined) or honey. ■



# AN INFINITE POWER SOURCE

BY CHRIS MIZRANY

**OUR CITY IN SOUTH AFRICA REGULARLY EXPERIENCES MAJOR POWER ISSUES**, with up to five hours of what they call “loadshedding” daily. Due to over-demand and undersupply, the electric company must cut back and shut off the electricity intermittently. During these periods, industry grinds to a halt, stores close, traffic booms, fans and fridges turn off, and everyone suffers. There’s only so much you can do without power.

Some businesses or individuals have gotten generators or massive backup batteries in an attempt to cope with the crisis. However, even these only last so long.

For example, the mobile networks do have backup power supplies, but those can only supply enough for a

few hours. At the rate load shedding occurs, we can end up without any cell phone signal for a few hours every day.

While extremely unpleasant and even a little frightening, this crisis has taught me something—not to try to push things through in my own strength. I may make a little progress, but nothing compared to when I have the Power. God has promised to be my light, my salvation, and the source of my strength. Sure sounds better than blundering along myself.

If I insist on running off on my own momentum, I can only last so long. I have a rechargeable soul, though, and can find refreshment and refilling through God and His Word. I can do anything in His strength—but not alone.

I’ve found that preparing for the dark days by “charging” my spiritual

If you haven’t yet met the One who has the power to make you happy and whole in body, mind, and spirit, you can right now by praying the following prayer.

*Dear Jesus, thank You for giving Your life for me. Please forgive me for the wrong things I’ve done, come into my heart, and give me Your gift of eternal life. Teach me more about Your love, and fill me with Your joy. Amen.*

batteries through godly music and articles, and memorizing Scripture is of inestimable value when all else fails. *Then* I have something dependable to fall back on when I experience a “power failure.” I know I can’t make it on my own. Only Jesus can do it!

We can never overdraw His supply of power or exhaust His reserves. Even when all around us may be in moral darkness, we have His light within us. And our faith is lived out in everyday normality. It may not often be magnificently arrayed, but it resonates truth, care, and sincerity. When we connect to the Source, we become as cities set on a hill, shining with His light and love.<sup>1</sup>

CHRIS MIZRANY IS A MISSIONARY, PHOTOGRAPHER, AND WEB DESIGNER WITH HELPING HAND IN CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA. ■

1. See Matthew 5:14.



BY MARIE ALVERO

# THE TIGHTROPE

**DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE YOU’RE UNICYCLING ON A TIGHTROPE,** while juggling five flaming torches and being chased by a tightrope master with a laser gun? I do! Life is balancing and juggling and trying to keep everyone alive, all at the same time, all the time. I’m tired, and I bet you are too.

Sometimes balance and sanity seem like a mirage—a wonderful and beautiful thing that’s always just beyond my reach. Recently, my life felt like that, and I felt like I was going to lose my mind—which made me think that I must not be doing life God’s way. After all, His Word has things to say about life:

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.”<sup>1</sup>

1. Ecclesiastes 3:1 NIV
2. Matthew 11:28 NIV
3. See Exodus 18:17.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”<sup>2</sup>

In Exodus, God uses Moses’ father-in-law, Jethro, to tell him that he will wear out if he tries to do everything.<sup>3</sup> Of course, if Moses was like me, he probably thought that’s easier said than done. The first thing I had to realize is that to properly juggle, you sometimes have to let go of some of the balls.

Let me share a few tips that have helped me gain a little hope for a less frazzled future.

1) Learn what a “healthy you” needs to thrive. For me, that means getting enough sleep, working out a few times a week, getting some quiet time with God on a daily basis, and having a bit of quality *me-time*. If I cut any of these things out too often, I pay the price.

2) Choose progress over perfection. If you want a balanced life, you have to let go of the idea that

everything and everyone and every situation and every event needs to be perfect all the time.

3) Allot some time each week for nagging tasks. These are the little things like paying a bill, calling the bank, organizing the shoe cabinet—that pile up in my brain and cause me anxiety and frustration, because I can’t possibly get to all of them. But now I set aside two hours each week to knock out as many of these tasks as possible. The rest wait for the next window of time, but I know I don’t need to worry about them because their time will come.

While there are countless books written on the topic of a balanced life, these tips changed my life and have made that tightrope much less scary.

MARIE ALVERO IS A FORMER MISSIONARY TO AFRICA AND MEXICO. SHE CURRENTLY LIVES A HAPPY, BUSY LIFE WITH HER HUSBAND AND CHILDREN IN CENTRAL TEXAS, USA. ■



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

# ABUNDANT HEALTH

The human body is a very versatile, adaptable, durable, intricate, and highly developed creation, made to encase the yet more beautiful and durable spirit inside. The apostle Paul called your body the “temple of God,”<sup>1</sup> and so it is.

You have a part to play in keeping your body strong and healthy. The biblical principle that you reap what you sow very much applies to your health. It’s easy when you’re young to dismiss this fact, to feel that it isn’t really important to take care of yourself. You may be able to get by for a time with that attitude without feeling its effects, but sooner or later, there is always a price to pay for such neglect. Those who are wise strive to stay in optimum health and give their body the best care they can, so it will run well and last as long as possible.

As I told My first disciples, “I came so that everyone would have life, and have it in its fullest.”<sup>2</sup> Part of the fullness I want you to have is the blessing of a strong, healthy body. It is a gift, but it also requires your cooperation to maintain your body, mind, and spirit in good health.

---

1. 1 Corinthians 3:16

2. John 10:10 CEV