

for moms to get help? Our children LOVE to be Mommy's helpers! We really steal their blessings when we do not delegate to them. Even toddlers can help fold a load of laundry! Don't try to do it all by yourself! Delegate and you will find some of the stress dissipating!

♥ **Get enough rest!** Oh! This one is soooo tough for me! But, let's honestly look at what happens in our families when we get tired: don't get enough sleep>get cranky>don't enjoy life>not too great to be around> others get cranky> irritates you more>get more tired... Why not simply get that rest?? Sleep AND that rest in body, spirit, and soul!

♥ **Self-control!** Hummmm... Such a challenge! However, we will find ourselves constantly stressed out until we learn to say "NO" to those activities, commitments, all that stuff! Bit-by-bit, they wear us down. Saying, "NO" eliminates the whole threat of stress from the onset!

♥ **Keep it simple!** Don't overload! We already KNOW we cannot do everything, but we have to remember this when choices are there to be made! Always look at anything new, whether an activity or a possession, judging its importance by what you are willing to swap for it. This works for everything—shoes, books, activities, commitments. Keep it simple! You can't do or have everything, so go for the very best!

♥ **Give yourself a break!** Don't pick yourself to death NOR let others pick you to death either! It is so easy to focus on the negative, get overwhelmed by the weaknesses and inadequacies, and get frustrated about how far you have to go! Then, PEOPLE sure do not help! Let another person loose in your life with the license to

critique you or your situation and you will be ready for the nut-farm! Give yourself a break! See this thing as a process—you will not arrive until it is all over but the shoutin' so relax, enjoy life, and give yourself a break!

♥ **Find ways to fill your cup!** We are each wired so very different. Certain things stress some of us that do not bother others. Likewise, certain things just fill our cup! STOP! Step back! Shift into low gear - or reverse! Do what it takes to DE-STRESS! Rest! Relax! Rejuvenate! Renew! Refill! Whatever it takes, find those things that fill YOU back up! Oh! The benefits go beyond de-stressing and restoring balance—you finally have living water to pour forth into the lives of others!

♥ **Make the most of EVERY minute!** Cherish this time! Make sweet memories! Take time for the most important—the best things! Your husband! Your children! Your family life! Don't let life just slip by! Look at life and decide what you would do if this were your last year...last month...last week...last day? Would you go to the park to enjoy watching them play? Would you cuddle up and read a great book? Would you take off to the beach? Why not make those things YOUR thing? Oh, and probably find that education can be EASY along the way too!

De-stress! Crawl up into the great big comfy arms of our loving Heavenly Father! Let Him hold you during the most turbulent or trivial stresses of life! Let Him restore your spirit! What you are doing is vital! Your enemy wants you stressed out, overloaded, out of balance! He is defeated! When he snarls, throws forth his darts, and lies to you, just snuggle up closer to your Lord! Give Him the struggles! Give Him expectations! Give Him

every single burden! You won't be sorry!

### Get Back To the Main Thing! Relationships!

Remember Matthew 22: 37-40? Jesus was asked, "What IS the most important thing? The bottom line? The main thing?" I love Jesus' ability to summarize ALL of life in ONE response! He summed up the main thing in three commands: to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and body...to love others as ourselves...and obviously, to love ourselves! Do you see this? The MAIN THING...the BOTTOM LINE..THE most important thing was relationships! However, when we get overloaded, the very first thing that we skimp on is relationships!

Want to restore balance and get rid of all of that overload? Take a deep look at the MAIN THING! Anytime things are out of balance, take a look to see how relationships are doing? Are they being "put off" until the pressures go away? Are they quiet while the rest of the "stuff" screams, demands, and pulls you to pieces?

Ask God to constantly keep you attuned to relationships in which you are charged with ministry. Ask God to show you ways that you can love and minister to Him. Ask Him to quicken you all along the way with ideas and precious opportunities for ministering to those you are called to minister to—your husband, your children, your parents, your siblings, those that come within your sphere of influence. Cry out to Him to help you guard your time so moments do not slip away leaving a hole in this vital area of life!

### So...What Do You Think???

Ready to get out of this rat race? Ready to restore balance? Make life really count? Sit at the feet of Jesus! Snuggle up close! Listen for each beat of His heart! Let Him pull you back from that "stuff." Let Him show you how to let go of those GOOD things and grab onto the very best! Give Him a chance to restore balance and set us on the path to leaving a leg-



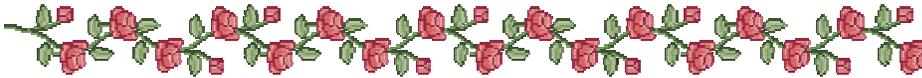
Thank you so much for the MEGA Book-o-Log! It's such a blessing! In the first few pages I have already found two or three answers to my prayers for Wisdom in living/teaching and I am working on walking in them. As I am reading through the rest of the Book-o-Log I am praying about how to spend my Christmas money this year. I think most of it will becoming your way in the form of book orders. :- ) Thank you so much for your ministry! Jennifer



Cindy, Once again, you have packed a lot of encouragement and help into this issue. Thanks for all your efforts to obey God and encourage all of us. I so appreciate you and your work. It has blessed me, helped me, encouraged me and lit a fire under me (that was probably the Holy Spirit, but your words helped it along) more than I can express. This, and I haven't even read the entire thing. I pray for you, your family and the ministry that God has given you often asking him to give back many times the blessing and encouragement that you so freely give to others. Thanks, Brenda

# 67 Ways to Reduce Stress (NOT an exhaustive list!!)

By Christie Berry



Many of these ideas may help you reduce stress!

- ♥ Sit on a swing/porch swing and swing with a vengeance.
- ♥ Take a long bubble bath with candles and a good book.
- ♥ Get a massage.
- ♥ Chat on the phone with a friend.
- ♥ Write, keep a journal, poetry, email a friend.
- ♥ Go to a pool and swim laps.
- ♥ Read something funny—laughter is full of endorphins.
- ♥ Rock a child or baby.
- ♥ Tell the dog all about your stress! He listens intently and will lick you to make it better.
- ♥ Go to yard/garage sales, thrift stores, ebay!
- ♥ Make a gum wrapper chain (the kids usually have lots of wrappers).
- ♥ Do handwork: embroidery, crochet, tat, knit, hem something, etc.
- ♥ Clean your house with all your energy!
- ♥ Do laundry.
- ♥ Eat jello with your toddler—or with a teen only you have to feed each other with LARGE bites!
- ♥ Bake bread (kneading helps relieve stress)
- ♥ Work in the garden, pull weeds, talk to your plants (they don't talk back!!).
- ♥ Sit in the quiet of your garden.
- ♥ Sort papers, email, socks...
- ♥ Play music or a musical instrument—match your mood to your music, if you want to change your mood, change the music.
- ♥ Read email from friends, lists, message boards.
- ♥ Sing—LOUDLY!
- ♥ Strive for alone time.
- ♥ Put yourself in 'time-out' (lock yourself in your room for a few minutes or have your husband send you to your room if you need a break when he gets home).
- ♥ Any physical exercise: swim, jog, run, walk, hike, roller blade, yoga, join a gym, lift weights, aerobics, bike ride, running to the fridge!
- ♥ Eat stress food: chocolate, chewy (tootsie rolls), more chocolate!
- ♥ Go to the library.
- ♥ Relax after everyone else is in bed—cup of cocoa or tea, private stash of chocolate! (have a required bedtime no matter what our children's age...quiet time!)
- ♥ Go to the card section of the store and read the funny ones.
- ♥ Burn candles.
- ♥ Learn about and use aromatherapy.
- ♥ Play, be silly with the kids, or a friend!
- ♥ Find a hobby—painting, pottery, photography, scrapbooking, writing, cooking, refinishing furniture, ceramics, sewing quilting, making jewelry, candles, soap—the art of creation relieves stress and gives the feeling of accomplishment.
- ♥ Take a drive in the country—a Sunday

drive (not necessarily on Sunday!).

- ♥♥♥ Scream!!! (best to do this outside, or askd the kids to join you inside)
  - ♥ List all of the stressors in your life—see if there are any you can change or eliminate.
  - ♥ Declutter and organize your home—www.flylady.com
  - ♥ Go to the movies—a comedy or escape theme, popcorn, and chocolate!
  - ♥ Reconnect with old friends, family—write a letter, call or send an email.
  - ♥ Lay on floor and throw a temper tantrum with the kids!
  - ♥ Schedule in 'ME' time everyday at least for  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour—and a couple of times a month with a friend.
  - ♥ Go to Walmart at night by yourself when there are no crowds and walk through all the aisles window shopping (wear comfortable shoes).
  - ♥ Take time away from house to do something you enjoy.
  - ♥ Deep breathing.
  - ♥ Stimulate your mind: take a class, attend a discussion, do some research.
  - ♥ Do something with likeminded friends "When I really need to distress, I have to talk with someone who 'gets' what I'm going through" Emotional support.
  - ♥ Go on a date with hubby, get a sitter, and work on 'adults only relationships.'
  - ♥ Get enough sleep: declare a quiet time in the afternoon and take a short nap with toddlers (everyone else can read quietly in bed or watch a quiet movie on TV).
  - ♥ Watch mindless TV.
  - ♥ Find a support group (real life or on the internet).
  - ♥ Surf the web, look up things of interest or learn something new.
  - ♥ Hire help. Can't afford it?? Check again! Cleaning help once a week or share child care with another mom to get a break!
  - ♥ Start a girl's night out (or lunch).
  - ♥ Take a few days by yourself, a vacation, re-
- treat, visit a friend.
  - ♥ Do something with one of your children that is fun for both of you and doesn't take much planning (ice cream parlor, do a puzzle, play a game, chase each other around the house.
  - ♥ Find the family activities—parks, lake, camping, zoo, (away from the daily busyness).
  - ♥ Have a spa day with friends, do facials, foot soaks, manicures, (remember being a teen?).
  - ♥ Move, leave no forwarding address, become a hermit, join the convent, never return!
  - ♥ Think about choosing to have/adopt your children all over again, take comfort in knowing God makes NO MISTAKES!
  - ♥ Look for opportunities for respite care—churches, mom's day out, UCP clinic.
  - ♥ Find a marriage retreat weekend and a sitter!
  - ♥ Don't stress over the house cleaning, take time to lay on the floor and play with the kids.
  - ♥ Find a high school student that can come once a week and work with your special needs child or a mom whose children are in public school that wouldn't mind earning a little extra or helping out a few hours a week.
  - ♥ Create a loose schedule so that when things get off track you have something to look at and try to get back on track so you don't loose the whole day and feel that nothing got done.
  - ♥ Break problems into small manageable and solvable pieces.
  - ♥ Improve your nutrition.
  - ♥ Last, and of course not least, give it to God and let Him carry it. Have a quiet time each day. Include prayer, Scripture, and meditation.

# Making Time To Rest, Re-fill and Renew!

By Cindy Rushton



It always sneaks up on me. You know... Overcommitment. Busyness. Frustrations. Exhaustion. Well, just plain and simple... **STRESS!**

Oh, don't get me wrong. It doesn't happen overnight. For me, it doesn't happen from a set sequence of events. It does even happen over the same triggers from the past (that I am careful to avoid!). But, it does happen! It usually takes a few weeks, maybe a few months or even a few years. But, one day out-of-the-blue it hits me! I find almost every hour of your day filled with busyness. Battling exhaustion and weariness, I find myself overspent, overtaxed and overcommitted! There seems to be NO way out! My family needs me. My church needs me. Even strangers at the coffee shop need something! Been there? Done that?

The best good news is available at any time. You that our harried lifestyles are not a surprise to God. In fact, He expected this! He even made a provision for it. It's called rest. That renewal of the heart, soul, mind, and body. Anytime. Anywhere! We all have His invitation to enter into His rest.

What on earth am I talking about? Oh, beloved, I am talking about that rest that gets one-on-one, completely alone with God. Pouring forth our praise and worship...worries, fears, and heartaches. Alone hearing His heart. Taking time to ministering to His heart and hear His dreams, wishes, heartaches. Fully present. Completely abandoned. Coming away with a full cup... true rest...and complete renewal!

Doesn't your heart CRAVE that rest and renewal? It can be yours at a moment's heart-cry! It is

are! It meets YOUR deepest need—EVEN if you do not know what it is yourself! It is free! And, best of all, you can't get too much of it!

The only requirement is that YOU must make time for rest, re-filling, and renewal! No one else can do it for you. Only YOU can take that time apart. Trust me. If you are like me at all, I always think that I don't have a lot of extra time. Yet, what I find is that taking that time apart clarifies, simplifies, and transforms me AND my situation! So, want to know HOW to find time to rest, refill and renew?

## Quick Tips Just to Help You Make Time to Rest, Re-fill, and Renew!

- ♥ Realize that there are NO options! We ALL need rest. We all get dry and

parched. We all get lost in the blur. We all need to **MAKE** time or we will never **HAVE** time! Take a look at John 4:6. Here is the passage from the Amplified Bible: "So, Jesus, tired as **HE WAS** from His journey, sat down [**TO REST**] by the well. It was then about the sixth hour (about noon)." Oh, I don't know if this verse speaks to you as it does me, but this is one of the most life-transforming verses in the Bible for the busy, wore out mom! Reading this let me off the hook! I had always thought that I should be able to go on and on...help everyone on my path...and still have extra energy and time! **NOT!** Paul asks in Romans 2:21, "You who teach, do you not teach yourself?" We have little to pour forth unless we are being filled as we pour forth. There is no option. We all get tired along the way. Jesus did. We all will need time apart to rest, refill, and be renewed!

- ♥ **Purpose to fall in love with God deeper and deeper each day!** Notice the word **PURPOSE**? Yep, we can't tack on time for building our relationship with God onto a packed-out schedule and lifestyle. We must "date" Him regularly to draw closer and closer, learn about each other more intimately, and carry each other's burdens. Rest only comes in His presence. Satisfaction only comes as He pours forth and re-fills us afresh! Renewal only comes as we seek His

heart, mind, and will in our lives and circumstances. The only way to have this time in His presence is to **PURPOSE** to make time each day and for regular retreats alone with Him!

- ♥ **Schedule lots of rest and quiet into every day!** Find ways to have a quiet restful atmosphere in your day. Perhaps, it may be a nice, brisk prayer walk. Or perhaps you are an avid gardener—take time to enjoy the peacefulness of your garden. For me, I like getting up a bit earlier (or staying up a bit later!) to sit in our living room with the dim lights, a big cup of tea, a cozy quilt, and total silence—well, except on those days that all I hear is the patter of rain! **AWESOME!** Make time each and every day to experience rest and quiet!
- ♥ **Ask God to teach you how to really pull aside for a daily Quiet Time with Him!** Take steps to learn how to really rest—God's style! Consistently choose a time of real quiet to be with God each day. Only you can truly find that **QUIET TIME** with Him! Take that time to really listen to Him—pray and read the Bible. Listen to powerful worship music that can really speak your heart to Him and that He can use to speak His heart to **YOU!** Look for verses that God may be using to speak to you that day! Keep a Discipleship Journal to record your prayers, prayer requests and what He says to you. Besides

chronicling your journey, it will help you stay focused on Him and what He wants to pour into your heart.

- ♥ **Set Aside Your Sabbath!** I am not talking about going to church. I am not talking about "not working" on Sunday. Rather, observing the Sabbath is vital if we are to find rest, re-filling, and renewal! I just love the Old Testament definition of Sabbath! It means to "take a break, to celebrate, to allow the present to be imperfect." I don't know about you, but I NEED the weekly reminder that God, the Author and Finisher of our faith, is the One Who completes and perfects! It is NOT all up to US! We can pull apart for a day (or occasionally several days!) that He can give us a break from our intense labor so we can praise and worship him in celebration and allow for things to sit, without them having to be complete or perfect! Only taking this time (Remember! Our God did at the beginning as our model! How much more do we need to!) will rejuvenate our hearts, souls, minds and bodies!

- ♥ **Just say "no."** Perhaps the hardest thing of all! Look for ways to constantly declutter your calendar! Slow down! Evaluate and limit all appointments. Find out what any commitment, project, or even task truly involves. Seek God before committing your precious time to do anything! Time is so very pre-

cious! Perhaps you have this "down." What do you consider when evaluating a successful day...week, month, or year? For me, I have often felt like a failure for not completing all of my "to-do's" that I list for a certain day, week, or month. At the same time, usually if I am "on-key" (and honest!), I find that much DID get done, but that I may have overplanned. Or, even more convicting as I look back, I may have gotten nothing done from the whole list, but I did what was "needful" and in GOD'S plan for me! One of the lessons that God has been showing me in the last little bit is that it is good to plan...good to be organized...but BEST to be surrendered to Him and HIS plan for each moment of my life. That is truly success that makes saying NO easier!

So...what do you think? Frustrated being overcommitted...busy...frustrated... exhausted...STRESSED???

Been finding almost every hour of your days, weeks, and months filled with busy-ness. Battling exhaustion and weariness? Overspent, overtaxed and overcommitted with NO way out?

Why not rest? Why not renew your soul, mind, and body? Right now. Today! Right where you are! Enter into His rest! Get one-on-one, completely alone with God! Pour yourself out! Don't get up until you hear His heart. Taking time with Him! You are sure to come away with a full cup...true rest...and complete renewal!

# Slow Down...

By Betty Dickerson

*A Reprint from Volume 2  
Homeschooling The Easy Way Magazine*



My mom gave me a beautiful children's plaque for Christmas with the most precious poem on it. I want to share it with you all as it affirms, so well, the message to slow down. This has been a conviction in my heart. Even at home it is tempting for me to get too busy (especially when the laundry piles up!). My body may be home in a physical sense, but my heart may be far from it. What's interesting is that children can pick this up right away and what may seem like God's calling to slow down and enjoy the people in our lives over things and activities.

I am realizing that the most valuable times in a child's life are those close, snugly moments. Those times seem to impart more love and security to them than anything else we do. Those times are the "spoon-full of sugar" that helps the medicine (the disciplining and training) go down quite a bit smoother. (I learned quite a bit from watching Mary Poppins with my children!) But often we fill our

lives (and our own) with so much activity that we don't have time to sit and snuggle and share each other's hearts without making an appointment!! It is when we are sitting close and sharing that I am teaching my kids more than my words alone ever will. I must watch my life closely, so that my children will see that "Bible-time" is more than a just part of our day, but that it relates to my whole life. My life must speak and show that God is not hurried and short tempered, but loving and kind. He does have time for them and so must I! (I am writing this to myself more than to anybody else, for maintaining this perspective is a struggle for me). The activities and busyness that we fill our lives with didn't even exist years ago. Let us not allow the world to fit us into its mold and let us trust God for our children and their development. This busyness will not relay the love, secularly, and example that shapes children into adults of character, ready for God's work.

Now, to the poem! This is the request of a little girl to her Mommy, but it could easily be a request to any adult. Many times this is Alyssa's appeal to me, but now I see that it is also God calling me back to the most important things in my life--relationships. Enjoy!

Please take my hand.  
The world's rushing by me  
So busy, so planned...  
Would you walk with me slowly  
At the end of the day?  
I love when you're with me  
And take time to play.  
I love reading together  
Under the covers at night.  
I love when you teach me  
What's wrong and what's right.  
I'm watching you Mommy  
What you do and you say,  
And when I grow up, Mommy  
I'm going to be just the same way.  
I love you so much, Mommy  
Let's snuggle close as we can.  
I know you love me too,  
Mommy  
Can you please hold my hand?

by Audrey Jeanne Roberts

# Just Too Busy!

By Cindy Rushton



Excerpted from *Time for Tea Magazine*—Don't forget! Subscribe to our E-zine Today! Email us at [cindy@cindyrushton.com](mailto:cindy@cindyrushton.com) with your request or sign up at our website: <http://www.cindyrushton.com/subscribe.html>



**"Through skillful and godly wisdom is a house (a life, a home, a family) built, and by understanding it is established [on a sound and good foundation], and by knowledge shall its chambers [of every area] be filled with all precious and pleasant riches."**

**Proverbs 24: 3-4**

Isn't this our heart? We want to BUILD a godly home...but, oh, uh, we are just SO busy! How do we slow down in a very busy world? How do we save more time so we can truly build into our family? Here are some ideas that I pray will help you in this VERY busy season!

## Too Much In A Day...

Yep! This is one of my greatest struggles. I am one of those people who hopelessly plan too much into a life! I want to DO IT ALL! And, the sad thing is that I try to! This past summer one of my

personal studies has been (don't laugh!), "How to Manage My Time." Why? Well, because I want to eliminate any possible hindrance so I can do MORE!! Hehe! I know motives may not necessarily be great here. Actually, they may signal a blaring warning that tells you that this is one area that I *personally* struggle in NOW. True, but I have to share

some of what I am finding (and applying) in my study. Who knows? It may help you to tame your schedule so you can busy doing the things that God has called you to do too! For one thing, it really helps to sit down and really look at your day. What DOES get done in a typical day? I have found that I do get a lot done in a day. I will never be

accused of being idle. In fact, I am writing this article while my husband runs errands (see the next section of this article about that!). I really do seize every moment I can. But, at the end of most days, I still

have the same complaint, "I need MORE hours in my day!" We are only allotted 24 hours a day. One prayer request that we can be sure WON'T be answered is the request for 85 hours in a day! Why? Because it would still not be enough for people like me! So, how do we make more hours in our day?

Make that list of what IS being done in a day. Make another list of what you would REALLY like to see included that you are not getting around to. See if what you are doing and if what you would like to do fits into what God has placed on your heart as your priorities. Make sure that they help you to reach toward the "mark." For me, when we began homeschooling I struggled for a while with distractions and hindrances that are so common in a busy home. After, well, a whole year (I am very slow on some things!) the Lord showed me

the value in looking over my typical day to see that was accomplished. No wonder there was a how I could fit in the things that were most feeling of frustration! We are geared to do important and those little things that are more than just work day-in-day-out. So, what always going to pop up. I found that there to do?

were categories that most everything could fit into: Quiet Times, Chores, Table Time, Family Time, Productive Free Time, Ministry/Business, and Family Read Alouds. Actually this is the basic order for every day. It is possible at home. It is possible on the road. It is possible when we have company. It is possible when things go a bit hay-wire! These are the priorities for the day, but there are still things even with ME that never seem to get done unless they are part of the schedule for the day.

For example, this past summer, my doctor prescribed that I go to the Wellness Center for exercise daily. I had wanted more time to actually get around to exercising. But, it just seemed that if I had another 55 hours in my day that then I could have time to devote to exercise!

#### **Making a List, Checking it Twice (or FIFTEEN TIMES!!)...**

I made my list. Then, it was easier to see the holes in my life that were not being filled. Sure, I was accomplishing a lot with my children, our ministry, and even my marriage relationship. But, there were still glaring holes and condemnation! Yes, I wanted to exercise. I have stacks of wonderful audio tapes that I would love to hear. I want more time to sit back and relax, even if it is occasionally! I wanted more time to make memories with the children. Of course, I also wanted to be more productive. Those are the things that seem to give me the "feeling" that I am not accomplishing as much in my day as I really wanted. Of course, I was accomplishing the "work" in each day. On many days that was ALL

that was accomplished. No wonder there was a feeling of frustration! We are geared to do more than just work day-in-day-out. So, what to do?

#### **Look At Your Typical Day...**

First, I had to take an honest look at all those things that were included in a typical day. Many were right down the line with the vision God has placed in my heart. Yet, there were still things that God had placed on my heart that were not ever making it into my days. Plus, there were other things that were very questionable. I had to look at every single thing in my day to see if there were things that could be combined so I could accomplish more tasks at one time, that delegated to others so I could have more time for things that only I could do, or eliminated because they were really not that essential to what we were about. This has helped tremendously!

#### **Combine Tasks...**

It may help you too. See if there can be things that can be combined. For me, exercise and listening to those teaching tapes gets two things done. Neither fit into my schedule before because I felt that exercise was just frivolous (looking at this body OBVIOUSLY shows I was not right!). Listening to my teaching tapes seemed to always not fit in—I had to concentrate when I write or answer email, my family did not really appreciate hearing my tapes, and there was really no time other than that! However, fitting them together is the perfect answer! That 30 minutes a day is life-giving. It makes the other 23 hours and 30 minutes a whole lot better! Another thing that I decided to continue doing, but expand was my morning breakfast with my husband. For the last two years, Harold and I have been getting up earlier than the children to go to breakfast,

have a devotion, and pow-wow. We kept this time in our day, but also added planning for our ministry and business (We are making a transition to bring him home from working for the State, but it takes much planning and fore-thought to be sure we are completely ready for the change.) this helps to actually work in yet another thing that seemed to never have a special time in the schedule. There were many other adjustments and changes. Not too easy, but definitely helpful! Things like cooking in the crockpot overnight so we are at home while it is cooking, but not having to stand over a stove during the day... going through the mail as we walk back from the mailbox and dumping the junk-mail into the trash before we walk in the house (our can is right outside the door!) rather than do a big clean-out during the year... Doing more things at one time really helps to use the time to the fullest!

### Delegate! OUCH!

Delegate! Yep! That is another toughie for me! The first time I ever delegated stands out in my mind as a turning point for me. My children were 7 and 4 at the time. We were living in our camper in Selma, AL while Harold was in the State Trooper Academy there. Living in the camper was probably one of my most life-changing experiences because I learned how much of my life at that time was "fluff" and wasted. Living in the camper forced me to only have my most essential belongings with me. (still have not unpacked many of the boxes we had stored away—now 10 years ago!!!) We made more memories than ever. Each day we had plenty of time for me to just mother, keep my home, homeschool, and even play games at the end of the day! Life was simple. Homemaking was easy. I made easy meals. Cleanup of the whole camper was usually 5-10 minutes or at most 25 minutes (big change from my 10-12 hour cleaning days before!) The hardest part was the small space and taking laundry OUT to the laundromat every few days. The good part was that in Selma the laundromat was AT THE POOL! The children could play and I could enjoy watching over them while I read, did laundry AND tanned! (had the best tan and read more that 6 months than ever in my life!) However, in the midst of this EASIER life there were STILL struggles! How could it be? Well, I could clean up, but while I was cleaning my children were idle—arguing (yep, these PERFECT children were acting like other children!), messing up the other side of the room (EEK!), and dirtying up their clothes (EVERY DAY!). One day in particular, a Monday (Could I find a better word to give you a "picture" of this scene?) to be completely accurate, I had so much pressing in that day. I was standing at my 1 ft X 1ft X 4inch deep sink (it still felt like Mt. Everest!) full of dishes. The children were behind me just finishing their breakfast. And, they had the audacity to begin fussing over WHO could watch their movie (and WE homeschool!). The quarreling was getting ON MY NERVES—the really touchy ones! There I was...washing dishes...the laundry was there needing for me to fold it...the toilets needed cleaning...we needed to begin our lessons for the day...my husband was gone for another week at the academy, leaving me with my PERFECT little morons, I mean children, lambs, beloved little ones...and here they were ARGUING! I snapped. I admit it! I simply snapped. I told them, actually screamed at them, to stop arguing and just fold those clothes if they had that much energy. Still washing my dishes...silence permeated the room for several minutes until giggly-giggles took over. I turned around to find that almost ALL of the laundry was folded and they were LIKING IT! Tears filled my eyes. The Lord spoke to my heart. I did not have to do it all

myself! MY children COULD help me!

Oh yea! And so can your children! What CAN be delegated? Anything! Everything, well, there are a few things that only YOU can do. Find them and delegate the rest! Oh, it may not immediately be the same standard that you do things yourself, but who looks in the dresser anyway? (only sick people, if you ask me!) Plus, think of how valuable it is for children to learn from an early age to pitch in and be a "part" of the family. So, take a look at your list of things that YOU are doing each day. Look at what can be delegated. Then, delegate to your little ones!

### Eliminate!!

Finally, go back to your trusty list. What can be eliminated? This is where you may experience anxiety. But, really look at all you do in a day. Are those things really important? Can they be done in another way that can give you more time? Let me take you home with me again. I love to have healthy, homemade meals. But, reality says that if I want to save time, this was one of those areas that really could be simplified down so much that much of the time spent in the kitchen on a daily basis could actually be eliminated. Gasping? Well, so did I...at first!

I took an honest look at our meals. We could eliminate so much that I could gain HOURS each week. How? Well, I decided to do more bulk cooking, buy more "ready-made" meals, like Lasagna from Sam's, Baked Chicken (heat and serve) from Sam's, Pizza (yep, and my children LOVE it!), and even Heavenly Ham! Yep, Heavenly Ham (should be getting a percentage here, huh?). What may seem like an extravagance is really a great way to save precious TIME and have great meals whether using the Ham as the meat for a meal or as sandwich meat. One big ham lasts our family

for several weeks. In addition to tasting great and saving me time cooking and preparing the ham, we also cut at least an hour of cooking each day for lunch for those two weeks. All I have to do is add vegetables (we have a freezer full of vegetables from the garden that just have to be de-frosted and warmed!) and bread! A typical meal can come together in 15-30 minutes! We can also use food like the Heavenly Ham for lunch. We just make sandwiches and either eat just the sandwich or have a sandwich and homemade soup, that also can be made in a big pot! Easy. Saves time for other more important things in my schedule—like enjoying the family I am feeding!!

Now, you may not feel that cooking can be eliminated in your daily schedule. Each of our families are so very different. This is where only God can help you to decide what can be combined, delegated, eliminated OR done by you each day! Hear HIM and He is guaranteed not to fail you!

### Too Much Going...

Hummm...well, here we get a little personal, huh? This is an area that God RESTRICTED for me. It was just not as clear-cut as DO, COMBINE, DELEGATE, OR ELIMINATE. Instead, my "going" has to be a daily time with God. Each instance must be thrown up on that altar for God to classify for us! What about you? What are we to do? Beloved, first slow down! Watch out for too much going! Oh, it may not even be for "bad" stuff! It just keeps us from having what we really want! Think about it...Is this a hindrance for you? Let's get a little more personal. Do you go so much (even for good things) that you sometimes find that you cannot truly enjoy your home? When was the last time you had TIME to leisurely relax and enjoy your home? For me, this is a constant struggle. A daily struggle! There are so many "to-do's" that press in that I get too

busy, going too many directions before I even know it!

Oh! But This is GOOD!

### Testing...

I have had a test for years that I periodically do to evaluate my lifestyle and schedule. I ask myself, "Can I spend *one entire week* at home without feeling as though I am not getting to do all I *need* to do?" (Yep, I am wiggling a bit here too!) "Is my home supplied well enough that I can stay home without having to "run" to get more things that I "need" to cook, teach my children, manage my home?" (Gasp! EEK!) "Is a quiet, peaceful homelife impossible because I am too busy going to activities?" (OUCH!) "Are all those activities truly God's will?" (Sniff, sniff!) "Would all those same activities go on just as well without ME?" (Well, uh, how would I know if I am not there?) "What CAN I eliminate to give us more time at home as a family?" (Ok...OK!) "Does my husband feel that all I am doing is essential? God's will?" (Well, uh...)

It is amazing how much CAN GO! Just last week, Harold and I got a great big laugh when we both shared what had been on our hearts, at the same time! I had noticed that we were losing time with errands on almost a daily basis. Oh, and almost the SAME errands every single day! My reasons were simple, I wanted for to be a good steward of the money, not buying anything that could go to waste. But, as a result, our time was being wasted...gas going and coming was being wasted...I was not as prepared for each day as I could have been...and the atmosphere of our home was interrupted every day with "to-do's."

This is not the only area that gets out of control easy at our home. Our schedule is just as wild! I must manage our outside activities or very quickly we become THEIR

We travel on a weekly basis throughout the whole year. Because of this, as we decided to travel this much, we had to eliminate many GOOD things from our schedule. Naturally, I am just as much of a "clutter-bug" with our TIME as I am with books, papers, etc.! Loosening my grip on those good things is so, SO hard! Yet, there is no way to truly do exactly what God has called us to do, except to prune! Oh, yea! That hard word!

Cutting back. Slowing down. Getting back to the core. Keeping only what is bearing fruit, so all of the nutrients (energy) can go into bearing MORE fruit! Truly, the person was "right on" who said that if satan can't get us to do WRONG things, then he will keep us busy doing a lot of GOOD things which ultimately hinder us from doing God's VERY BEST. That person must have been JUST like me! What about you?

Too busy "going" to BUILD your home? Slow down. Slow down to enjoy your home. Slow down to make your home special, a fortress.

But! How \*DO\* Ya SLOW DOWN???

Have no idea how to begin slowing down? Have no idea what you could let go? Is it just too confusing? Afraid you or your family will miss something? Go to God with your schedule. Place all activities on the altar. Wait on Him. Share your heart with your husband. Let your husband set your schedule. Look over activities very carefully, evaluating them honestly. Do they work toward the call that God has for your family? Are they necessary? Do they compete for "down-time" that your family

really needs to fellowship, rest, and develop precious "plants," our children! We have to a lifestyle of learning? Commit to finding constantly make sure to have time with God, God's plan for your day! Listen to your time with our husbands, time with our children, sweet husband. Look objectively at those time within our homes, time to minister to tempting activities! Reach for the very, those within our sphere of influence, and time very best use of your day! Then, you will left so we can take care of ourselves!

find God pulling you back into a pace that you can continue the journey till the end!

**Just Busy...**

I know that I am writing this (and you should read this now) during the holiday season, the busiest season of the entire year. But, I write this knowing that we are not just busy at this time of the year alone! We are busy all of the time! How do we guard against "BUSYness" all throughout the year? Well, let's take a look at Proverbs 29:18... "Where there is no vision the people perish." You know, I have one problem with this verse. My problem is that this is not something you get ONCE and for all! We must constantly guard our home. We must constantly evaluate whether our homes are in conformity with the vision God has given us for our family. We must constantly check our "gardens" and uproot any weeds or overgrown plants that hinder the growth of our most

The Bible says that there are works set from the foundation of the world. Be faithful in YOUR works! Seek God's wisdom for EVEN your lifestyle and schedule! Don't let the enemy distract you by what is "out there" somewhere! Don't feel guilty about letting great things go! Do ALL you can to preserve that home atmosphere from ALL distractions that are out there! Don't get too busy to build your home for truly you have much to look forward to—just look again at Proverbs 24: 3-4:

**"Through skillful and godly wisdom is a house (a life, a home, a family) built, and by understanding it is established [on a sound and good foundation], and by knowledge shall its chambers [of every area] be filled with all precious and pleasant riches."**  
**Proverbs 24: 3-4**



Cindy,

Oh my!! I had no idea what I was signing up for when I requested this magazine! It's MUCH more than I imagined. I had no idea there would be so many wonderful articles. The articles on fine arts are exactly what I need right now. I have been struggling with how to "do" picture study with my children. I'll be printing these articles (reading so much on the screen tires my eyes) and reading them before putting them in my notebook (imagine that!), so I can re-read them (I'm sure I'll need to). Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Recently, in my frustration with trying to convert to a CM education, I prayed "God, is this what I'm supposed to be doing? I think it is, but I need HELP!" Then entered this magazine. . . not only that, but I received the MEGA catalog/book thing. ;) Isn't God good! I have so much adjusting yet to do, but I'm on my way, and very excited about it! (I bet you couldn't tell ;) . . . I hope the children will catch the enthusiasm. :)

Katrina

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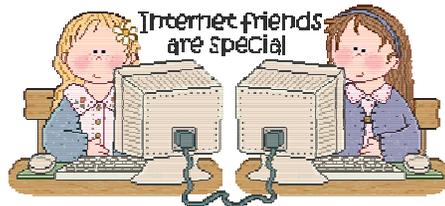
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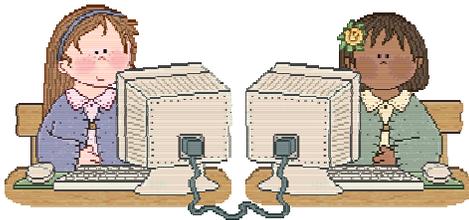
Want to come over for a TIME FOR TEA??? Bring your cup---well, if you know us, you will want to bring a POT OF TEA-- settle in for a nice afternoon (or evening!) friend-to-friend!

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Needless to say, we are ELATED! For sooo long we have waned for our site to get a good re-vamp! Thanks to Heidi (Need a website or "about me" page on Ebay? See her at <http://www.kaetherkreations.com>) we have found a Christian Homeschool Mom/Web Designer who believes in our vision and can help to put our HEART AND HOME online!

Soooo, we have JUST moved into our "remodeled" HOME ON THE WEB. Take a peek...DON'T FORGET your tea...AND...don't forget to pass the word to ALL of your friends!

With Love,  
The Rushtons  
Harold, Cindy, Matthew, Elisabeth...AND Harley the homeschooled bird...AND Pooh,  
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## Our Mom-2-Mom Discussion Board..

### Mom-2-Mom Discussion Board Is Online and Hopping!!

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Your hostess is the Cindy Rushton, noted Author and Editor of the popular magazines *Time For Tea* and *Homeschooling The Easy Way*. Conversation, companionship, and encouragement are the topics here. Questions AND answers are shared woman-to-woman on anything from how to live as a virtuous woman to homeschooling with a lifestyle of learning. Come join us for this little treat in each day...our Time for Tea!

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Our prayer is that when you join us during that quiet moment of your day, you will be encouraged and fed in your soul, mind, and spirit!. Our greatest desire is that you will be encouraged by ALL of our resources to seek to follow the Lord as a godly wife and mother! Grab a copy (AND your cup of tea!) today! Until then...we hope you have a wonderful holiday!

With Love, The Rushton Family...Harold, Cindy, Matthew, Elisabeth, Pooh (the homeschool puppy!) and Harley (the book-bird!)



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