



Careletter

Encouragement for TREK Wives | WEEK 11

Verse of the Week

Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about you.

1 Peter 5:7 NLT

A Note from Melissa

Our second child was born with a congenital heart defect and had open-heart surgery when he was five-months old. He was in ICU for a couple of days, intermediate care for a day, and then they moved him to a regular hospital room. On the fifth day after surgery, they told me they were discharging him. I told them, “No, You can’t. I’m not ready!” The panic was real. They were going to send him home with me instead of keeping him safe in the care of experts. What if something went wrong?

This is the same kind of panic I often hear wives talk about when I call to check in before their husband discharges. The anxiety is real. Trust me, your husband is feeling it too. HopeQuest is a bubble—a respite from the chaos of the real world with all its triggers and temptations. Both of you have been able to breathe a sigh of relief because of the safety of the program and the environment.

But whether or not you feel ready, the time has come. Your husband will be discharged from treatment, hopefully having achieved the program, and carrying with him a backpack full of insights, tools, and healing experiences. While he won’t be “fixed,” he will have resources to use to help him during the adjustment back to the real world.

Take some time this week to jot down things you want to talk about or share with him about your own journey of healing. Write down questions you want to ask him about what he has learned. Talk about your anxiety with your therapist and your friends. Ask people to pray for you and your husband. Most of all, take time to give all your worries to God. As our verse of the week reminds us, He cares about you.

Asking God to give you peace, Melissa

TREK Program Information

One of the exercises we teach the clients is the practice of Christian mindfulness. Sometimes, believers are skeptical of practices that seem to come from other sources than God and His Word. The truth is, however, the enemy of mankind always twists things God created for good. God is actually the one who prescribed mindfulness and meditation for the human soul. “Be still, and know that I am God,” He tells us. All throughout the psalms, David talks about meditating on God’s Word and His promises. It is in the quiet, reflective moments that we can hear God’s voice as we turn our focus inward to notice His Spirit dwelling within us.

Mindfulness is simply the practice of pressing pause and noticing what is happening in your body and in your soul. Men who struggle with addiction are terrified of their feelings, so they routinely ignore what is happening inside of them and medicate it when distressing feelings come up. Helping men pause to notice what they are feeling, stay present to it, be honest with themselves about it, and invite Jesus into it helps them learn God’s strategy for regulating overwhelming emotions. There is no greater example of this than Jesus pausing in the Garden of Gethsemane to be honest with His Father about what He was feeling, pouring out His anguish and fear. In so doing, He received the strength He needed to follow God’s will for His life—to love others instead of protecting Himself.



Help For Healing

Many years ago, before I ever heard the word “mindfulness,” I discovered that if I sat down with Jesus early in the morning before anyone else was awake and talked with him about what was happening in my mind and heart, His peace would follow me through the day. I would be emotionally resilient, calm in the presence of challenges and unexpected glitches. If I missed that time with Him, I would feel frazzled, anxious, and irritable. Centering myself in His presence each morning became a priority. It wasn’t about checking a spiritual task off my list so that I could feel like a good Christian. It was about needing Him to survive the day.

If you haven’t practiced being still with Jesus, it can feel awkward and frustrating. Your mind wants to run to all the worries and cares of the day. That is natural, and Jesus knows. Don’t get frustrated with yourself. Instead, just bring your focus back to Him, as if He is sitting in the room with you.

Be honest with Him. Often my conversations start something like this. “Good morning, Jesus, I need to drink my coffee before we talk, okay?” He’ll reply, “Take your time, dear. We’ve got all of eternity together, you know.”

As I sit quietly, I do a scan of my body—anything hurting or sore? What is my body telling me about me? Then I do a scan of my heart. Is there any unfinished business burdening my heart? What am I anxious about as I face this day?

I tell Jesus all that I am thinking and feeling. Then I wait silently, focusing my attention on Him and the bond we share. Sometimes He brings a verse of Scripture to mind or helps me understand something that is bugging me. Sometimes we just sit quietly together, enjoying each other's presence.

If you want some help in learning how to be still with Jesus, I love The Pause App, created by John Eldredge. The time you spend centering yourself in His love and peace is helpful, no matter how brief, so give yourself grace to enjoy a few moments with Him each morning.



Self-Care Strategies

Maintaining a lifestyle of healthy self-care is a gift to yourself and others. Try some of these self-care strategies this week.

- **Go to bed 30 minutes earlier than usual.** Most adults need seven hours of sleep each night. Start your nighttime routine earlier and unplug from electronics at least an hour before bedtime to give your brain a break from blue light.
- **Stretch when you wake up.** Take 5 minutes and stretch the different muscles in your body before you start your day.
- **Work a puzzle.** Give your emotional brain a break and do a crossword, sudoku, jigsaw or other kind of puzzle.
- **Take a prayer walk.** You can walk through your house, praying over each room. You can go walking with Jesus and pray for yourself and others as you walk with Him.
- **Eat breakfast for supper.** On busy days when there isn't much time to make a meal, end the day with breakfast food and gratitude for the ways God has loved you through the day.
- **Share some IFAB's with God, a friend, or your husband.** Being authentic and vulnerable with others is the only way to feel connected.
- **Have a technology free day.** Find other ways to fill your time and have fun.