



# Careletter

## Encouragement for TREK Wives | WEEK 7

### Verse of the Week

**The LORD says, “I will  
guide you along the best  
pathway for your life.**

**I will advise you and  
watch over you.”**

Psalm 32:8 NLT

### A Note from Melissa

As your husband is entering his second half of the TREK program this week, you may be feeling many different things. You may have been through a disclosure session and are now working on expressing your feelings in an impact letter. You may be encouraged to hear how your husband is learning and growing on the weekly update calls. Or your nervous system may just be settling into a new normal, and now you are wondering if you really want him to come home. Whatever you are feeling, your job is to make sure you are talking about it with God, your therapist, and safe people in your life.

Focusing on your recovery and well-being is a great way to spend the last six weeks your husband is away. Think about things you want to change about yourself-after all, that's all we really have any control over anyway. I know in my own journey of recovery I had to make intentional choices to let other people into my life and heart. I was used to being self-reliant. Asking for help was humbling and uncomfortable, but what I discovered is that I felt far more connected to people than I had ever felt before. Instead of feeling weak and needy, I felt loved and seen. God used His people to show me how much He loved me, and that was a beautiful gift for my soul.

Perhaps you struggle with setting limits, over-extending yourself, or staying busy to distract yourself from your feelings. Maybe you run away from your feelings by watching television, shopping, playing video games, or drinking a little too much wine in the evenings. Now is a great time to develop new and healthier habits for yourself that help you feel more connected to yourself, God, and others.

Praying for your continued growth and healing, Melissa

## TREK Program Information

One of the areas we focus on in the TREK program at HopeQuest is personal growth and character development. Most men who struggle with addiction have never been taught or had modeled for them the cardinal virtues of **Prudence**, **Justice**, **Fortitude**, and **Temperance**, and the Christian virtues of **Faith**, **Hope**, and **Love**.

**Prudence** is concerned with the intellect. It is having both the wisdom to discern what is right or wrong and the humility to lean on the counsel of others to check our thinking and conclusions before acting. **Justice** is concerned with the will. It is choosing to treat everyone with respect and to repay what we owe to others, even if we don't like them. **Fortitude** is developing the ability to contain our fears so that we can act according to our values, while **Temperance** is developing the ability to restrain our desires and passions so that they don't cause us to betray ourselves. **Faith**, **Hope**, and **Love** are provided to us by God as we connect with Him and enable us to experience authentic, life-giving relationships with ourselves, God, and others.

Your husband is being challenged to think about the presence of these characteristics in his life and evaluate his strengths and weaknesses in each area. He is then given opportunities to develop and practice these virtues in his relationships with others.



## Help For Healing

Recovering from trauma takes time, and sometimes spouses get impatient with the healing process. I often tell wives that what is true for the body is true for the soul. If you break your leg, the doctor can set the bone and put your leg in a cast, but nothing you can do will speed up the healing process. You can slow down your recovery by not following the doctor's orders, but the reality is, your bone needs time to repair itself.

Your heart will heal in time—even though you cannot imagine that to be true. Your marriage may or may not make it, but you will heal, if you submit yourself to the care of the Great Physician and follow His direction. So, settle in, breathe, and take one day at a time.

One way you can support your recovery is by establishing a daily rhythm that you follow consistently. Wake up at a set time each day. Have a morning routine that includes elements of self-care and space to connect with God. Eat meals and snacks at a consistent time each day. Set aside time to do a few chores. End the day with the same night-time routine. The more consistent your daily rhythms are, the more your brain calms down. Your nervous system knows what is coming, and your traumatized brain is soothed by the predictability and stability of your daily rhythm.

If establishing a daily rhythm seems too overwhelming, then start by doing one thing consistently. There is a Swahili proverb that says, “Little by little the bucket fills.” Small steps toward change will eventually result in huge transformation.



## Self-Care Strategies

The more stressful life is, the more self-care you need. Make space for yourself this week.

- **Pay attention to your body.** What does your body need today? Make time to nurture your body.
- **Reduce your stress level.** Is there any choice you can make to lower your stress today? If you can't think of anything, call a friend, and ask her to help you brainstorm.
- **Pray over your day.** Take an extra thirty minutes in the morning, and review your agenda for the day, inviting Jesus into your plans and asking Him to give you the grace and strength you need.
- **Do one thing you have been putting off.** If something is hanging over your head, it will drain your energy. Do the task, invite someone over to help you do it, or delegate it.
- **Eat a healthy meal.** If you've been struggling with mindful eating, just make the choice to eat one healthy meal today. Fuel your body with lean protein, vegetables and complex carbohydrates. Try to avoid sugar for one meal.
- **Drink at least 64 oz of water today.** Notice how drinking enough water impacts your energy levels and ability to focus.
- **Tag team it.** Invite a friend to help you accomplish necessary tasks. You can offer to do the same for her. Two sets of hands make light work.