

Take Care

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As I've mentioned before, one of the most important things you can do for yourself and others in your life to achieve balance and to manage stress is to take care of yourself. In our fast-paced society, taking time for self-care is often put on the back burner, and yet it's so important in dealing with stress and simply getting through everyday life.

The Lord instructed us to love others **as we love ourselves**. It's tough to completely be loving and giving to others when we don't even act as if we love ourselves well enough to take care of ourselves and our bodies.

There is a reason the Lord designed a Sabbath. The purpose of the Sabbath was to REST! "Rest" includes slowing down long enough to recharge ourselves to prepare for what's ahead. Even though we are no longer under the old law, the concept is a practical and healthy one.

Here are some self-care techniques that work well for me:

- ♥ First of all, breathe! When I'm stressed out, I breathe very shallowly. Take a few deep breaths. It feels SO good and can help you to relax and be present.
- ♥ Take care of your body by eating nutritious foods and drinking plenty of water. Get as close to nature as possible in your diet.
- ♥ Spend quiet time in prayer and/or meditation by yourself or with others.
- ♥ Move your body. You don't need to necessarily work out at a gym. Do a physical activity you enjoy, such as walking, hiking, or golfing if that's what you're into.
- ♥ Try to get enough sleep at night. That may mean making an effort to go to bed earlier. Ask yourself whether you really need to watch that TV program that is keeping you up at night.
- ♥ Do something you love to do for relaxation. Play!
- ♥ If you are sick, spend a day or two in bed, and stop feeling guilty when you do so. You're not doing anyone any favors by making yourself sicker and spreading your germs around. Allow others to take care of you!
- ♥ As I've said before, I think it's beneficial to go on mini-retreats. If you want to refresh your memory as to what I've said about mini-retreats, read my previous article entitled "Slow Down!" Here's a link to that article: <http://www.followyourheartlifecoaching.com/Slow%20Down.pdf>

If you can learn to take care of yourself, you will be able to not only handle the next transition that comes along in your life, but you'll be able to function better in everyday life. It can have a very positive effect on your relationships as well.

Take good care!