

CARING NETWORK BULLETIN

September 2002

Simplifying Life

Life is so complex and hurried now. We run our lives like a factory floor trying to squeeze more and more production out of it. We don't take time out for rest and preventative maintenance. Like a machine that is overused and under maintained on the factory floor, we are in danger of running the "machine" into the ground. I would offer the following items for consideration in order to simplify your life:

- **Prioritize:** Although people will try to convince you that you can do it all, unless you have figured out how to beat the time/space continuum, you cannot do it all. Life is a potpourri of choices. The quality of our life is largely based on how we make those decisions. Do things that are important first. The Scripture gives us advice in this department, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness". If we faithfully follow that advice, a lot of other things will fall into place.
- **Learn to say "no":** People will sell you, guilt you and bug you into biting off more than you can chew. The reward for hard working people is more hard work. The ecclesia is no exception. Families must take time to be good fathers, mothers, husbands and wives. We also have to factor in our different abilities. If there is a proper distribution of ecclesial labor, It is not only healthy for everyone, a lot more can be accomplished.
- **Plan for "downtime":** Every once in a while my family has a "no electricity night." We literally go the night with no electricity. What we find is that we play games by candle/lantern light, talk, relax and spend quality time together. It also makes you realize how much of our life centres around gadgets -- TV, radio, computers, telephones -- all life complicators, not simplifiers.
- **Concede defeat in the rat race:** It has been said that even if you win the rat race, you are still a rat. For those who believe in something higher than "going for all the gusto", we should realize that "keeping up with the Joneses" is not all it is cracked up to be. Half the Joneses are divorced, up to their ears in debt, and daily on the phone to their therapist. We should concede defeat to this crazy what someone needs to know, that someone

race for wealth, pleasure and material possessions, and focus on the race for eternal life. The Apostle Paul says "having food and raiment let us be therewith content." (1 Tim 6:8)
By Brother Kyle Tucker of Richmond VA

Supporting others dealing with Grief

How many times have you said to yourself, "I really want to call a brother or sister to let them know how sad I feel about their loss. I want to let them know that I'm thinking of them, but I just don't know what to say?" We might struggle with this and sometimes the struggle is so great that it paralyzes us and we do nothing!! We can't do nothing; this is an opportunity! The following was submitted by a sister who has suffered the loss of family members. She hopes her reflections give us the courage to seize the opportunity to show we care.

When our son died, I remember brothers and sisters offering words of comfort by reminding us that we would see our son in the kingdom, and suggesting that perhaps he had been spared further trauma that we may experience in the future. These attempts at cheering you up actually deny your need to feel the pain and grief that you feel. My husband said when someone gave him a great big hug and said "I'm sorry, I don't know what to say" that meant more to him than all the things people say to try and make you feel better. You just need to be allowed to express your grief in whatever way you have to, and their acceptance of that is sometimes all that is needed.

The pain you can feel when you are grieving can isolate you from everything and everyone, even our Heavenly Father. Talking in prayer can seem too big an effort; we may feel too numb with pain to be able to express ourselves. I can remember just letting the phone ring because I just couldn't bring myself to talk to anyone. Leaving a message to say you're thinking about them and available to listen when they're ready can be the best thing at this time.

Grief is such an intensely personal journey and one's moods can change from day to day as you struggle to cope. It's not as if you pass through the different phases of grief and keep going forward. Sometimes you go back and forth through the various stages and relive the emotions again and again.

It can be helpful to give someone who is grieving a call and share your own feelings, such as how sorry you are to hear about the death of their loved one, and that you've been thinking of them often and remembering them in your prayers. Sometimes a call like that may be just what

cares and is thinking of them, and perhaps they'll be able to share a little of their burden with you.

The following are a few Do's and Don'ts from a booklet entitled "The Grieving Process".

- **Do** say you are sorry about what happened to their loved one and about their pain.
- **Don't** avoid them because you are uncomfortable. Being avoided by friends adds pain to an already intolerable and painful experience.
- **Do** encourage them to be patient with themselves, not to expect too much of themselves, and not to impose any 'SHOULD'S' on themselves.
- **Don't** say "You ought to be feeling better by now", or anything else which implies a judgment about their feelings.

From "The Grieving Process" booklet, assembled by Against Drunk Driving (ADD), PO Box 397, Postal Station A, Brampton, ON L6V 2L3, Canada

Caring Network Resources

- Christadelphian Care-Line, 1 866 823-1039 Toll Free
- Caring Network Website, www.caringnetwork.ca

Just when we think we've mastered something, the bar is raised. Matt 5:43, 44, 46, 47

43 You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? (NIV)

What is virtuous is generosity of service to those who hate us, who may taunt us, and who may readily do anything to harm us. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." To persist in good works to such is properly to manifest the generosity of the Father to all, for as Paul says, "In so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

A New Life, by Bro. John Marshall, chapter 17 – Good Works

Upcoming Events

CONFLICT SEMINAR

The Caring Network, with the help of the Williamsburg Foundation, is offering a seminar on Conflict. The leaders will be Brother Norman Fadelle of Elgin Ill., and Brother Jeff Maney, of Rockford, Ill. Their purpose is to help us handle conflict effectively, with a Scriptural point of view.

**When: November 2, 2002, Lord willing
From 9:30 to 4:00, with registration at 9:00**

Where: Centennial Recreation Centre, Brampton,
(where the Brampton ecclesia meets)

Action: Register with Bro. Bob Chisholm NOW!

2301 Harcourt Crescent, Mississauga, ON L4Y 3Y7
Home Phone 905-272-0340 Fax 905 615-0917
Email: rdc@ashlar-stone.com or, register at
www.caringnetwork.ca

Appeal for Care-Line Resources

We are grateful that we have received a number of volunteer brethren and sisters willing to serve as resource persons to our Care-Line. We would be glad of additional volunteers. Ideally, they would be brothers and sisters with some expertise or experience in a field of caring assistance. Such areas could be substance abuse, bereavement, old age problems, marital problems, teen-age issues and so forth. The resource brothers and sisters would form an expert group with whom our Care-Line helpers could consult, or at times the resource folk might deal directly with the brothers and sisters needing assistance. Those interested could contact Sister Joy Jennings at bobjoy@bfree.on.ca

Appeal for Financial Assistance

As of September of this year, the Caring Network has a bank balance of \$2,699. Forecasted expenses, including the November 2 seminar, will reduce this to about \$1,000. Should any brethren wish to make donations before the end of the year, they can be sent to Brother Donald Elliott, 17 Trillium Court, Guelph, N1G 4P8. Those wishing a tax receipt should make the cheque payable to "Hamilton West Ave. Christadelphian Ecclesia". Otherwise, the cheque may be made out to the "Christadelphian Caring Network."

Please share it with us

Please send your suggestions or submissions to: Sis. Jennifer Daniel, jenniferdaniel@telus.net, or 4 Foxwood Court, Port Moody, BC V3H 4W7, 604 469-2392