

ABIDEE

Magazine for Adventist Pastor's Wife - Dutch Caribbean Union - Second semester 2021





Abide Magazine

This magazine is especially prepared to stimulate spiritual vitality, to nurture emotional growth and to encourage every pastor's wife of the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao to live a balanced healthy life, and encourage them to be a good christian witness in the home and community, to be a wonderful mother for their children, and a big support for their husbands in the ministry.



Content:

Jesus, my Captain!



Lifesaver for Workaholic



Lifesaver for Negaholic



Lifesaver for Martyr
by Caregiving



Lifesaver of Growth



History of the Lifesaver



Dangerous Lifesaver!

NOTE: All unnamed article is contribution of the editor



Dear colleagues in pastoral ministry:

D Maybe you as I, have felt like we are drowning— with house chores, in our career, helping at church, time flies, the week goes by— and we haven't accomplished all that we proposed to do.

Are you a negaholic? Are you a workaholic? Are you martyring yourself by caregiving? Do you struggle with spiritual growth? You know, thank God there is always a solution, and remedy and relief. Thank God for Jesus Christ, our Captain!

Author Sharon Platt-McDonald said in her book *Overcoming With God*, "Every time I think of the things I cannot do or don't feel equipped to do, I hear God gently reminding me that He is equipping me for the task He has called me to. One of the scriptures that has really come alive for me is Isaiah 40:29 '*He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.*'

Here God gives the reassurance that He will make up for our inadequacies. We just have to make ourselves available for Him to do this work of transformation in our lives.

And when praying to overcome our weaknesses, a good place to start is God's Word. See also these other texts of Isaiah 40:3; Philippians 4:13; Romans 8:26.

Striving to overcome our natural weaknesses is not an easy task, but "*Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (1 Corinthians 15:57)

Kindly,

Anna Maria Manuela Croes



How To Let God Be Your Life-Preserver When Life's Storms Rage

Kathryn Shirey says *We have such dreams for our lives* – graduate from college, marry our perfect match, move into that house with the white picket fence, give birth to perfectly healthy babies, land that dream job, and so forth... Then reality hits. Sometimes it's just one dream that feels out of reach and other times the broken dreams seem to pile up one on top of another.

Such was the place she found herself. Happily married and ready to start a family, but suddenly negotiating the world of infertility. Her dream of a family was falling apart. She wasn't sure if or how they'd ever move from 'couple' to 'family'. On top of that, she was traveling out of town every week for her job, working inhuman hours and knew she had to change jobs – but to what? Not to mention she was working too much to have the time and energy to start a job search. Throw in a few more missed expectations and ideals she could never quite live up to and the stress of it all began to drag her under.

She was drowning. She was carrying such a weight of worry she could hardly breathe. Panic attacks became a new normal as she wrestled with the reality that she couldn't fix it all on her own. This was not how Kathryn pictured this phase of her life playing out. This wasn't the place she wanted to be.

Sometimes you have to sink in order to grow closer to God.

As Kathryn and her husband entered the first round of in vitro on their journey to start a family, she became convinced science had mastered life. Doctors and scientists could spark life in a test tube. This was their answer! Science would give them a family. Oh, and she'd make this job situation better and she'd somehow find a solution to all the other stresses. She thought if she just pushed hard enough, she could solve all her problems. So, when none of those worked out – when they didn't get pregnant, when the job opportunity fell through, when she couldn't see a way through the other issues – she began to sink and she says: If I couldn't solve my problems, then who else could? I felt lost, overwhelmed, and alone. I had my eyes focused on the storms around me and I couldn't stay afloat.

Will you allow yourself to drown under the weight of the world or will you cry out to God for help?

A friend suggested a radical alternative as she shared this struggle over a hot drink one morning. A different approach that seemed crazy to her and unlikely to produce the results she wanted. He suggested she try handing all of this over to God and let Him carry the burdens a while. His answer to her problems was to cry out to God for help.

At that time, she believed in God and knew he was real, but thought of him only as a distant, supreme being; not someone who is intimately involved in our lives. She prayed, but never expected a response. So, she couldn't imagine how this would help. What could God do about her problems, after all?

Despite her reservations, Kathryn was desperate, so she decided to give prayer a try. She went home that morning and began to pray for God to start carrying the burden for her. She even tried to visualize handing over the worries which felt so heavy on her shoulders.

It took several weeks of praying this before she began to notice the change. Several weeks for her to start believing the words she was saying in that prayer and to open her heart to the possibility that God might actually answer. She slowly began to feel the weight on her shoulders get lighter. She began to feel her chest unwind a bit and she could breathe easier. Then she noticed she wasn't as worried and anxious about all the issues, all the things she couldn't fix in her life. She started to feel at peace with life, even with all its problems, and she began to feel hopeful about the future.

What had changed? Her life circumstances certainly hadn't changed. She was still traveling across the country for work every week. She still wasn't pregnant. Nothing had really changed, yet she felt different. She felt calm and at peace.

What changed was she asked God for help and he answered. He was right there beside her the whole time, just waiting for her to ask.

But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. ([Matthew 14:30-31a](#))

When you start drowning in life's storms, let God be your life-preserver

Life can be tough! There are no promises of an easy life in the Bible. Nowhere are we told that if we just follow Jesus then our life will be full of good things and easy times. No, no promises of any sort like that. (See [John 16:33](#))

What we actually get from Jesus is a promise that life will be hard. He's clear that we will face trials and hardships, some of which will not be resolved to our satisfaction on this side of heaven.

If we have faith, though, we can approach these trials with hope and peace, knowing Jesus is by our side. We may not see the resolution we desire in this life, but as believers we can rest in the hope that God is by our side throughout the journey. (See [Matthew 10:29, 30](#))

When we begin to drown, we can allow ourselves to be pulled under or we can cry out for help. Not that we necessarily choose to go all the way under, but sometimes not calling for help, thinking we can pull ourselves out on our own, produces the same result. It's hard to ask for help or even to know what help to ask for.

What will you choose? Go it alone in your struggles and drown in the stress and worry? Or, cry out for help and give God a chance?

This "drowning" experience was the turning point in Kathryn's faith journey. It was also the turning point in this struggle. Even though it would still be months before any change in her situation, her heart began to change. She began to face this challenge with hope and peace, knowing the end results were in God's hands – no matter how it all turned out.

So, what storms are you facing in your life? Does it feel like you're drowning and about to go under for the last time? Reach out to God and let him be your life preserver. Ask for his help and let God carry the burden for a while.

[How To Let God Be Your Life-Preserver When Life's Storms Rage | Prayer & Possibilities \(prayerandpossibilities.com\)](#)



"[In the conquest of Jericho], Israel had their part to act to show their faith in the **Captain of their salvation**. Battles are to be fought every day...As God's agents you are to yield yourselves to Him, that He may plan and direct and fight the battle for you, with your cooperation. The Prince of life is at the head of His work. He is to be with you in your daily battle with self, that you may be true to principle; that passion, when warring for the mastery, may be subdued by the grace of Christ; that you come off more than conqueror through Him that hath loved us. Jesus has been over the ground. He knows the power of every temptation. He knows just how to meet every emergency, and how to guide you through every path of danger. Then why not trust Him? Why not commit the keeping of our soul unto God, as unto a faithful Creator?

(2BC 994, 995; 3T 457)



LIFESAVER FOR WORKAHOLIC

CAROL's mom was pregnant with her when Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941. That event must have jarred her the way 9/11 shocked us. With her stress hormones and anxiety very high, she affected her whole body and also the fetus that was growing within her.

Sensitive to the physical and emotional threats in her universe, Carol was born and toddled around in a state of irrepressible uneasiness. It was like growing up in the war zone of an alcoholic family—a place where children live in constant fear of what may happen next.

Put on top of that her grandfather's fire-and-brimstone preaching that scared her as much as the war did. As an adolescent, she wouldn't even have *considered* using their national sedative, alcohol, to relieve her fears. She had been told that drinking was a sin punishable by death. If you drink you go straight to the lake of fire or hell or purgatory... On herself she tried to find a way to anesthetize her feelings—one that God would not frown upon. Perhaps if she tried to be perfect, if she could figure out how to earn both her Dad's and God's approval, she would stand a better chance of making it out alive. Her dad was financially stressed, and her mom was clinically depressed.

Because she thought it was her duty to make her Mom and Dad happy, she began to overachieve, overwork, and overdo everything... Straining herself to gain the approval and acceptance of both God and man. Carol says: *"I was driven to justify my existence in the here and now and to earn my eternal*

She recalls the first time she received a compliment for doing a kind deed. Her freshman year in high school, she gave a couple of items from her own meager wardrobe to a needy classmate. As far as she knows, her motive was unselfish, but when she was commended publicly for her kind act, she was instantly hooked on adulation. Here was the affirmation she had been looking for all her life.

From then on, she was willing to do almost anything to earn accolades. Systematically she sacrificed herself to win approval, carrying altruism to such an extreme that she nearly destroyed herself, figuratively, if not literally. She *may* have come close to killing her “caregivers” with kindness too. Being helpful boosted her ego. It shored up her sagging self-esteem. She deluded herself into thinking that she was unselfish by nature.

If she could have seen herself as others saw her, she might have questioned her motives. She sighed frequently and loudly and complained to anyone who would listen. Gradually she perfected her “poor me” persona. Moaning and groaning, whining and complaining are the martyr’s way of leaking anger out to get attention from unsuspecting sympathizers... She caught herself thinking that God had singled her out to carry a heavier-than-average-burden because He knew she could handle it. When she finally woke up and smelled her superior attitude, she was mortified.

Workaholicism, caretaking, and control became a self-perpetuating cycle. By the age of 45 she was toast— burned out from overwork and overworry. The more she tried to control her behavior, the more she lost control. She knew she had to change. She tried to tear herself away from her obsessive compulsive behavior, but she couldn’t. Months later, finally defeated, she admitted herself to a hospital-based treatment program for addiction and codependence— the broad diagnostic category within which compulsive caretaking, control, martyring herself and negaholicism fall.

HER ADVICE FOR US TODAY:

- [Recovery is a process.](#) Longstanding, deep-seated habits don’t go away overnight. Recovery is a process, not an event.
- [Recognize.](#) It’s OK to admit defeat. It is actually a relief. So you can stop trying to accomplish the impossible.
- [One day at a time.](#) Carol was not cured, but she no longer enjoyed martyring, obsessing, worrying, or being depressed. She didn’t get high on being mistreated, and set herself up to be abandoned. She prefers peace and serenity to the insanity of overwork, compulsive caretaking and relentless self-pity. She cherishes herself now and treat herself with respect.
- [It is easier to pursue health and happiness than to entertain one’s misery indefinitely.](#) Letting go of old attitudes and developing new skills takes time, but the end result makes the effort worthwhile.
- [Daily surrender.](#) Surrender yourself every day anew to God, feed on His Holy Word, talk heart to heart with Him, ask Him to take over, guide you, forgive you, and restore you to His own image and likeness, and God will do it. *“So you are not to look at yourself, do not let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ”* (SC 72)

HELP THE SINKING SOULS

“There are souls who are starving for sympathy.. For the bread of life; but they have no confidence to make known their great need... The matter has been presented to me thus: A drowning man, vainly struggling with the waves, discovers a boat, and with his last remaining strength succeeds in reaching it, and lays hold upon its side. In his weakness he cannot speak, but the agony upon his face would excite pity in any heart... All heaven looks on as these men in the boat beat off the feeble, clinging hands, and a suffering fellow sinks beneath the waves, to rise no more. *A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another.*” (TM 351)



WIFESAVER FOR JOHNSON



Book: Carol Cannon “*Hooked on Unhappiness*”, chapter 3

“But, why are you so negative?”

NED

Married, the father of three children, he was the personification of well-disguised pain and misery. He was so depressed that if he had fallen into a ditch or an open grave and a passerby had started shoveling dirt on him, he wouldn't have moved a muscle to keep from being buried alive. Ned alternated between two emotional extremes: weeping pitifully and seething

with rage. But only the people closest to him were aware of his drastic mood swings.

Throughout childhood and adolescence, Ned was systematically scourged—verbally and physically—by his parents and peers. Four ideas were implanted in his mind— you are ugly; you are stupid; you are worthless; and you are a failure. Ned incorporated these erroneous messages into his belief system.

Because his parents had 8-children to support, Ned worked in the family business throughout childhood and well into adulthood without pay. He received free room and board but no salary— not even gratitude. This deepened his sense of worthlessness.

At the age of 33, he met a woman at church and fell in love. After a short courtship, they were married. Emily, his wife, failed to notice that Ned had self-esteem shortage so severe that everything she did to make him feel better about himself fell into a bottomless pit. He expected her to give him the sense of value he lacked, but his emotional deficit was greater than the national debt. Emily couldn't pay it off.

Because he felt so inadequate, Ned begrudged his wife's every accomplishment, and she was an extremely accomplished woman. In his mind, her successes magnified his failures. For that reason, he began to sabotage her effort. He went so far as to interfere with her completion of graduate school by throwing away the schedule for her final exam when it came in the mail! He didn't mean to be such a jerk. To understand his history is to understand his dilemma.

Although he was a very talented man, Ned felt inadequate. In order to bolster his sagging self-esteem, Ned began collecting grievances against Emily. His resentments grew to the point that they occupied his every thought. Obsessed with fault finding, Ned focused on Emily's shortcomings— both real and imagined. She responded defensively, and the two of them became embroiled in a deadly power struggle. Each felt compelled to prove the other wrong in order to feel

OVERCOMING NEGATIVITY

right. Not surprisingly, their children were caught in the middle of this covert war. A religious fundamentalist, Ned had always considered it his children's sacred duty to provide him with the respect he lacked, but because he didn't respect himself, his children found it difficult to respect him. The harder he tried to force the issue, the more unpleasant his behavior became, which further diminished their respect.

WHEN DID THIS SELF-DEFEATING CYCLE BEGIN?

In childhood, Ned played the victim role to the extent that it became his very identity. Used and abused as a youngster, he continued to accept— even unconsciously invite— persecution as an adult. Somewhere along the way, he discovered that helping people bolstered his self-esteem. From then on he took self-sacrificial behavior to the extreme, offering his skills to individuals and institutions free of charge, selling his considerable talents for little or nothing, while his family went hungry— literally. He knew his family was being deprived materially, but he couldn't stop. He could not change his behavior.

Today, Ned is hopelessly hooked on unhappiness. He's a compulsive controller and a world-class victim and martyr. He is addicted to negative patterns of thinking, believing and behaving that are destroying his relationships and threatening his life. Ned is held hostage by negative self-perceptions. The shadow of death hangs over him and beclouds the lives of everyone he loves. Exhausted by the ongoing power struggle, drained of emotional resources, he is spiritually bankrupt, and his family is deeply distressed. Worst of all, Ned is imminently suicidal.

There are many wounded souls such as Ned and Emily who are struggling with problems they didn't ask for and don't understand. Tragically, the casualties will be their children.

The good news is that recovery is possible. Carol Cannon says that in her practice she knows hundreds of families that have been remarkably transformed, beginning with one family member who had the courage to change. The 16-year old daughter of a high-profile church administrator wrote a Thank-you note to Carol a few weeks after her father went through the treatment facility where Carol works. This is what the note said: "I have a dad now. For the first time in my life, I have a dad."

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE NEGAHOLISM?

It is a habitual frame of reference— a deeply embedded mental filtering system— through which everything looks bleak. For people reared in the midst of addiction or abuse, such an outlook comes naturally. It's like second nature. Adults who have endured painful experiences as children and who have been unable to express their feelings openly have a truckload of backlogged emotions, that keep replaying like an old record in their mind.

1. Embrace an attitude of gratitude. Start your day off right by thanking God for life, if you woke up, if you slept in a bed, if you have a roof over your head, if there is food in the refrigerator, if you have clothing. ([1 Thessalonians 5:18](#))

2. Spend quiet time with God. Imagine yourself sitting at the feet of Jesus. Focus your thoughts on Him. Pray, and listen. ([Psalm 46:10](#)).

3. Read your Bible. Pray before you begin. Ask God for guidance and the ability to understand and apply His will to your life. ([Psalm 119:105](#)).

4. Focus on your blessings instead of your worries. Matthew 6:34. It takes practice, but with time it will become a good habit. ([Matthew 5:3-10](#)).

5. Wear a smile on your face. If you see *grumpy* in the mirror, smile! It will disappear when you focus on your blessings and flash a big grin. ([Proverbs 15:13](#)).

RESEARCHERS claim it takes 15-20 days to create a new behavior pattern. So be patient and gentle with yourself. Some days you'll progress 2-steps forward, and other days you might go 2-backward and 1-forward. You'll soon discover that your practice has transformed into a healthy, positive pattern that overflows with God's love, grace, joy, and peace.

[Five Keys to Overcoming Negativity \(crosswalk.com\)](#)

WHY IS MISERY ADDICTION DIFFICULT TO DIAGNOSE?

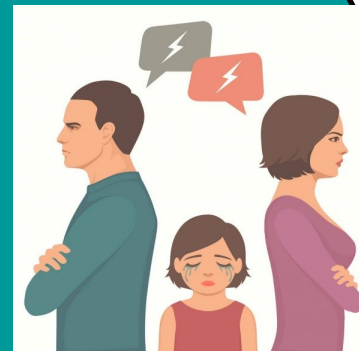
- Like alcoholics, misery addicts are the last to know that their behavior is problematic. Other people can spot their symptoms a mile away, but *they* can't.
- Nobody wants to be miserable.
- Misery addicts don't enjoy being unhappy.
- It isn't fun.
- They grew up in the presence of a victim or martyr— a parent or grandparent who griped and complained a lot—and they don't want to be like them.
- Sad reality, children learn what they live with.

20 QUESTIONS FOR NEGAHOLICS

See if you have these problems. Maybe you are a negaholic and are not aware of it.

1. When you wake up in the morning, are your first thoughts pessimistic?
2. If someone says, "Good morning," do you think, *What's good about it?*
3. Do you often feel inferior to others or "less than"?
4. Do you find it necessary to complain to friends, family, and even strangers about minor annoyances in your life?
5. When you walk in a room, do you immediately notice the negative— the flaws in the décor or the dust on the windowsill?
6. When you make new acquaintances, do you immediately notice their negative traits?
7. Do you open most conversations with a complaint?
8. Do you collect grievances against people and institutions?
9. When you talk about the traumas in your life, do you include more detail than necessary or exaggerate for effect?
10. Do you give more of your time, energy, or money to people and institutions than you can afford to give?
11. Do you fail to represent your rights in relationships because you don't want to hurt or offend others?
12. Do you hesitate to state your preferences to friends and family and then consider them inconsiderate if and when they don't meet your needs?
13. Do you accept unacceptable behavior, tolerate the intolerable?
14. Do you doubt people's sincerity?
15. Do you compare yourself unfavorably with others?
16. Do you invite people to take advantage of you?
17. Do you have an inordinate need for sympathy and attention?
18. Do you ever wish you could stop thinking so critically about yourself and others?
19. Have you tried your best to be more optimistic?
20. When you have failed, do you try harder?

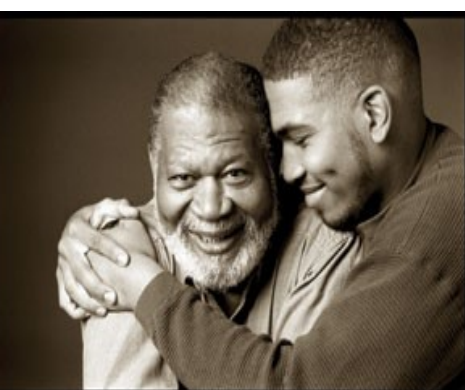
Satan delights in contention.—Satan is constantly seeking to cause distrust, alienation, and malice among God's people. We shall be often tempted to feel that our rights are invaded when there is no real cause for such feelings...Contentions, strife, and lawsuits between brethren are a disgrace to the cause of truth. Those who take such a course expose the church to the ridicule of her enemies and cause the powers of darkness to triumph. They are piercing the wounds of Christ afresh and putting Him to an open shame.— 2 MCP 497, 498..."Let there be peace in the home, and there will be peace in the church." (2 MCP 503).





LIFESAVER

**FOR MARTYRS
OF CAREGIVING**



MOST martyrs reach the point where they are no longer victims. They're *volunteers*. Convinced that they are responsible for everyone's health and happiness (everyone's but their own, that is), they base their worth on their ability to sacrifice themselves with little or no regard for their own health and safety.

They are people who rely on the caretaker persona for meaning, identity and value. Some are emotionally dependent on the shot of self-esteem they get from rescuing and repairing people. They need to be needed. But many times when they don't pay attention, the person can become obsessed in this, risking their own health and that of their family.

Sixteen year old **KELLY** said: "My mom thinks she is Mother Theresa. She runs all over the place helping people, giving them Bible studies, buying them clothes, furniture, whatever. She's never home. Yesterday, I told her I wished she would spend less time helping others and more time hanging out with Dad and me. I couldn't believe what she said, 'How can I do any less when Jesus gave His *life* for me?' How could I argue with that? Ten minutes later she left the house to go on another of God's errands."

And psychologist Carol Cannon says: "This well-meaning woman's determination to perform her Christian duty would have been OK if she could have sacrificed herself without sacrificing her family. But that was impossible. She made people into projects. And once she undertook a project, she couldn't let it go. Incidentally, her attempts to rescue and repair people are sometimes invasive and unwelcome."

CAREGIVING BEHAVIORS

- Try to make themselves indispensable to others.
- Anticipate other people's needs and fulfill them.
- Do things for people that those individuals *should* do for themselves.
- Give disrespectfully, that is, without consulting the recipient's preferences.
- Give without permission— foist unsolicited advice or assistance on people.
- Give to get, whether the payoff is appreciation, gratification, or a shot of self-esteem.
- Give to gain control, the rationale being, "After all I've done for you, I have the right to tell you what to do".
- Give generously, but complain afterward, which is a subtle form of bragging.

When **KEVIN'S** seven-year marriage ended, Kevin, a nurse in his late thirties, began to use caregiving as a way to occupy lonely hours and fulfill his need to be needed. Because he was extremely versatile, he volunteered to help friends and former patients in every way he could. He remodeled their houses, repaired their cars, and fixed their broken appliances. He was very popular, because he never charged his "customers" a penny! His need for attention and approval drove him to work harder and harder. Pleasing people was payment enough. His schedule became increasingly hectic. He grew weary from overwork and lack of sleep. In order to keep up the pace, Kevin

increased his caffeine intake. When he injured himself while overhauling his cousin's car engine, he added narcotic painkillers to his regimen. It was downhill from there. He popped pills on a regular basis to avoid the pain and exhaustion brought on by his excessive behavior. Eventually, he became a full-blown addict, which nearly cost him his career and his life.

The consequences of **MATTHEW'S** caregiving were different than Kevin's. Husband and father of five, Matt was a leader in his church and community. When his pastor encouraged the congregation to seek out needy souls and win them to the Lord by providing for their material needs and then inviting them to church, Matt began looking for someone who needed help. He met an ideal candidate— Tony, a troubled teenager who was in desperate need of a father figure. When Matt's wife, Maria, learned that the troubled teenager was the same age as their oldest daughter, she tactfully cautioned Matt about the risk of befriending him. In spite of her warnings, Matt persisted. He even invited the young man to live in their home. Then he proceeded to let him get away with things he didn't allow his own children to do. The children were confused by the double standard. Their father was compromising the values and principles he had instilled in them. Their mother begged Matt to turn his charge over to the care of professionals who were more qualified to help him, but Matt could not bring himself to do so, even in the interest of protecting his kids. .. This speaks volumes about the addictive nature of Matt's caregiving. He made rescuing and repairing Tony his highest priority. He did so to the detriment of himself and his family, and he continued to do so in the face of adverse consequences. Eventually, his daughter ran away with the boy and became involved with drugs.

THE DIFFERENCE

Healthy way to give care:

- Is genuinely concerned about the needs of others, while at the same time letting them take responsibility for themselves and their problems.
- We must not rush to rescue them.
- We don't feel compelled to fix them.
- Showing respectful concern for another person by sharing one's personal experience, strength, and hope without invading his or her boundaries.
- Giving only when asked.
- Helping without expectation of reward.
- Let go of loved ones and their problems and allow them to grow up.
- Let them learn how to deal with their own difficulties and enjoy the self-respect that comes from doing so.

Unhealthy way to give care:

- Doing things for another person that he should do for himself.
- Trying to solve his problems.
- Minding his business.
- Violating his boundaries in order to rescue or fix him.
- Managing his life.
- Monitoring his conscience.
- Such behavior keep the recipient sick and render him or her infantile.



TO PONDER UPON:

- It's OK to say No to friends or family members in order to take care of one's own needs.
- If you can't do something without resentment, don't do it! Or change your attitude before you do it.
- Healthy caretakers are happy, content, serene, unhurried.
- Compulsive caretakers are stressed, weary, worn out, resentful.

- Healthy caregivers are able to accept help as well as give it.
- Compulsive caretakers nurture others but will not accept nurturing in return. They would rather withdraw or pout than ask.
- It's OK to fix *things*— but not people.
- Compulsive caretakers rush in where angels fear to tread.

VICKY can't stand to see her grown daughter's apartment in a mess. Every time she visits, she goes on a cleaning spree that leaves her exhausted. Afterward, she complains bitterly to her husband. Her daughter is highly offended by her mother's actions. Giving generously but bragging or complaining afterward is a symptom of unhealthy caregiving.

HOPE FOR TODAY

REGRET and remorse are the hallmarks of misery addiction.

WALLOWING in remorse feeds misery and turns you into very unpleasant company.

IF YOU DON'T WANT to drive the people you love out of your life, you need to change.

MISERABLE moms are no fun.

FREEDOM from guilt and maudlin self-reflection comes with working the 12-steps.

ENGAGE in this process with help of a sponsor's help so that you don't have to impose your guilt and shame on the people who have already been hurt enough by your addiction and codependence.

YOUR SIGNIFICANT other will be willing to forgive. You don't have to pay penance.

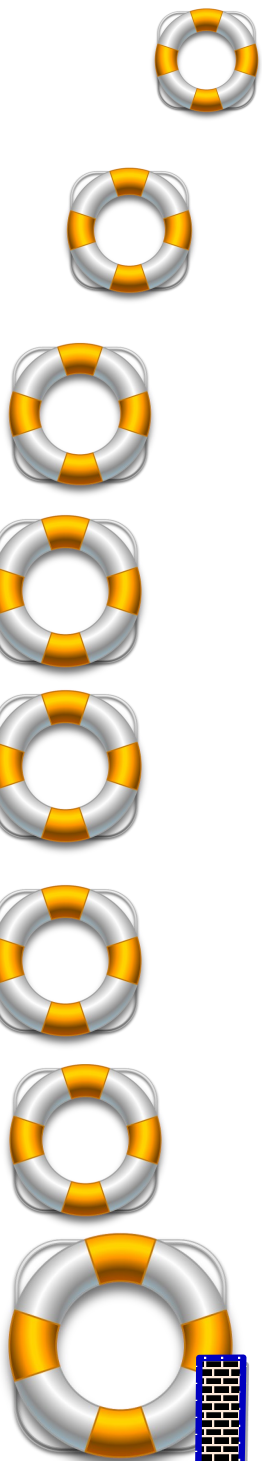
WALLOWING in guilt will serve no purpose except to maintain your misery.

Source: Book by Carol Cannon
Hooked on Unhappiness, chapter 8

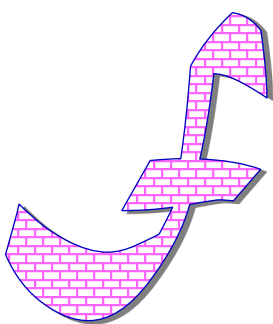


1. **When you were young, did you find it necessary to take care of or comfort anyone close to you? How did you protect them or try to take away their pain?**
2. **How were you rewarded for your effort?**
3. **Did being kind and helpful become part of your persona?**
4. **Have you ever taken care-taking to the extreme and ended up hurting yourself or harming someone else?**
5. **Make a list of the negative consequences of your excessive caretaking. Turn to a source of wisdom and strength outside yourself, GOD, as you understand God, or a good friend, and express your feelings of pain and remorse.**

"Come unto Me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest"
(Matthew 11:28)



LIFESAVER OF GROWTH



ulfillment as a minister's wife is something that must be learned but cannot be taught. Your unique blend of personality, experience, needs, and abilities sets the pace for your growth. These factors also largely determine your response to sharing life with a minister. How-to information can help you deal with major concerns and some minor irritations, but you will have to decide ways of balancing your public role with your private life. Only you have firsthand knowledge of what makes things work well in your situation. Start where you are, apply the ideas that seem most meaningful in your need, and see what happens.

Here are some general strategies to consider:



EXPECTATIONS.— Think back to your first ideals about being a minister's wife. How well do you match those ideals now? Do you often wish you were not a minister's wife? If so, think of the things that trigger the wish. Perhaps you can locate a pattern of events or pressures that get you down. Check to see if your expectations of ministry are realistic. Someone may have promised you a bed of roses. What about expectations of yourself? Maybe you've demanded more of yourself than is necessary. Celebrate all the gifts you bring to your role, and value the support you give your husband.



ROLE PRESSURES.— Take advantage of fellowship with other minister's wives. Ask how they feel about their role. Share problems and ways of coping. You'd be surprised what a relief it is to know you're not the only one feeling that way about problems! Attend seminars and retreats provided by your denomination that focus on your concerns. Examine your successes and flops in serving as a minister's wife. What things make you feel most competent, and what makes you feel most vulnerable? Look for ways your strengths can balance less-than-optimum areas. List the things that make being a minister's wife the most interesting. What can you do to increase your list?



TIME DEMANDS.— Try reducing the number of events, activities, and leadership tasks you take on. List all the things you absolutely *must* do and put these in order by priority. Concentrate only on the top third of the list— the rest probably aren't that critical. Deal only with the first key items and temporarily set the others aside. Do these tasks first in the day or at the time you're at the peak of your strength. Once the very necessary items are cleared away, you'll probably feel less pressure in tending to the others. Give yourself plenty of time to carry out tasks. Allow a little cushion of time for unexpected snags or surprises. Make a list of the things in your role as a minister's wife that make the most demands on your time. Do these items really merit all that time? When you know a particularly heavy schedule is coming up, be sure to build extra rest time into your day. Running yourself ragged will work only a short time before your body and mind rebel.



FUN AND ENCOURAGEMENT.— Focus on the parts of being a minister's wife that you enjoy, that encourage you to go on, and that give you a lift. See how you might expand these areas. Accept all the encouragement you can get. Let others affirm your efforts in being a minister's wife. Find some ways to feel release from routine. Choose a hobby, craft, or recreation you can do regularly just for the fun of it. Don't try to make a living out of needlework, for example, even if you love it— do it just for sheer pleasure. Use this kind of activity for enjoyment more than accomplishment.



RENEWAL.— Open your life to God's possibilities. God is greater than we know, far beyond the limits of our experience. He can bring hope and healing in ways you may

not expect. Faith needs an ever-widening vision of God and His power: *“that your minds may be opened to see His light, so that you will know what is the hope to which He has called you, how rich are the wonderful blessings He promises his people, and how very great is His power at work in us who believe.”* (Ephesians 1:18-20)

RESOURCE: “Winning Ways For Minister’s Wives, p. 76, 77.



EKINDLE

Psalm 138
Philippians 1:3-6
Ephesians 2:18-23

Our lives can sometimes feel as if nothing is happening. We wake, get dressed, go to work and take care of responsibilities. We fix meals, pick up dry cleaning and pay bills. Life is so daily. Trying to measure the depth of my relationship with God or the growth in my life is like trying to watch the snow melt— an unfulfilling exercise in futurity.

Monitoring our spiritual or personal growth isn't up to us. This process, this daily living our faith, is a gradual (and as wonderful) as spring emerging. And like spring, the results aren't up to us. Our job is to be willing to let God be God, and to trust Him with the results.

Debra Klingsporn, *Women's Devotional Bible*, p. 297



“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6)

“Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness,— all depend upon our union with Christ. It is by communion with Him, daily, hourly,— by abiding in Him— that we are to grow in grace. He is not only the Author, but the Finisher of our faith. It is Christ first and last and always. He is to be with us, not only at the beginning and the end of our course, but at every step of the way.” (SC 70)

History of the:



LIFESAVER



Lifesaver

IF you've ever fallen out of a boat or off a dock as a kid – or maybe even as an adult – you were probably pretty happy to find yourself bobbing in the water instead of sinking into the deep. That is, if you were wearing a life preserver or someone tossed you one fairly quickly. But have you ever stopped to think about the history of this interesting and oft neglected piece of marine equipment? Known throughout the recent past as life savers, life jackets, life buoys, perry buoys, cork jackets, kisby/kisbee rings, and even Mae Wests, life preservers have a rich history and have saved many thousands of lives.

The idea that humans could float on the water without a boat is nothing new. In 870 BC, the Assyrian King Assur-nasir-Pal's army used inflatable animal skins to cross a moat. While not every ancient sailor had such a device, it is fascinating to consider that the technology existed. Life preservers as we know them today – as opposed to various floatation devices employed in situations not involving individuals in need of rescuing – hit the scene when maritime-specific lifesaving organizations began to form. In 1757, for instance, a Frenchman made a jacket out of cork for water emergencies. Norwegian seamen used cork-stuffed vests and even blocks of wood to preventing drowning.

In the same period, other lifesaving inventions attracted interest, but failed to catch on. Cork was a popular material in "modern" life preservers, as was kapok fiber. However, kapok fiber was soon banned not only for its flammability, but also for the fact that it lost its buoyancy when compressed. The main advantage kapok had over cork was that cork was heavy and bulky, and kapok was more effective at keeping a person's head above water. Balsa wood, utilized in the post WWI era, was one of the other life preserver materials whose heyday was short.

In the 1800s, the influence of organizations like Britain's Royal National Lifeboat Institution (which used the kisbee ring) helped popularize life preservers. Shortly after the invention of the kisbee ring in the UK, the US Congress passed a law requiring ships to carry life preservers and similar rules have been in place ever since for military, commercial, and pleasure boats. Nearly a hundred years later, the eponymous Mae Wests were pressed into service in WWII. These were the first inflatable life vests, and they were issued to soldiers because they were compact enough to fit into packs.

During this same era, Congress passed the Motorboat Act on the US home front – and as a result, less bulky life preserver designs came into being. The idea was that if life vests were more

comfortable to wear, people would actually wear them. Unfortunately, it wasn't until the latter half of the 20th Century that easy-to-wear, activity-specific life preservers came into being.

So what's next for the hardworking life preserver? Seeing that shipwrecks and maritime accidents will happen wherever people are boating, it's likely that the life preserver will never stop evolving. We look forward to seeing what engineers and designers do next with this piece of necessary equipment.

RESOURCE:

[The History of the Life Preserver - Fisherman's Outfitter \(fishermansoutfitter.com\)](http://fishermansoutfitter.com)

For a real story how a man was saved by his lifevest during the war, see this video:

[\(258\) "The Life Preserver" - The Encouraging Story of Elgin Staples - YouTube](#)

SOME LESSONS HOW USEFUL A SPIRITUAL LIFESAVER IS:

1. **Many times when we are in a storm we feel that we are all alone.** We think that because we went against the will of God that He is not watching over us. This is simply not true. God is always waiting for us to reach out to Him, and pray. When God answers our prayer, it is usually not in a way that we expect. Because we are in the storm due to our disobedience, God uses it to teach us a lesson. The important thing is that we learn the lesson, and obey.

2. **Sometimes we lose everything except our lives.** That is not necessarily a bad thing. When you have nothing, you have to depend on God. God wants us to depend on Him, even when you have everything.


3. **Not all of the storms in life that we go through are caused by disobedience to God.** Many times we go through a storm when we obey God because the devil is trying to discourage us. Many times God uses storms even when we are obedient to strengthen us and bring us closer to Him. Storms happen and in fact they are inevitable. The type of storm I'm referring to is the one brought on when we deliberately go against God's will.



4. [We have a tendency to be just like these sailors \(Acts 27:30\)](#). We think we see an easy way out of a situation so we try to take it. We don't even care about how those actions will affect others around us. That is one reason why the suicide rate is so high; it's an easy way out. Alcohol and drugs are another easy way out. Instead of dealing with your problems, you hide in a bottle or inside a pill. But the easy way out was not God's way out. God wanted the men to stay on the ship until it crashed against the shore. Paul may or may not have known God's reasoning, what is important is that he chose to obey. So should we. If we see any easy way out but God does not give us permission to go that way, don't.

5. [God takes care of us even when we are about to shipwreck](#). God was concerned that the men had not eaten in fourteen days so He had Paul encourage them. God knew that the men would need their strength in the upcoming ordeal so He convinced them (through Paul) to eat. He does the same thing with us also. He tries to keep our eyes on Himself and tells us that we will live through the storm. Even if the storm is of our own making, He still cares about us. When Paul tells them that no one will die; they cheer up. They follow his example and eat. The people of this world watch us also. They may not know it, but they long to hear from God. God uses us to speak to them. Paul set the example of Christ-like behavior that got everyone's attention. What do people see when they look at you? What do they hear when you talk? What do they read when you write? Do they see and hear someone whose hope is in the Lord? Let's take advantage of every opportunity to guide others to the Captain of our salvation!

Source: [Acts 27 - Shipwrecked in the storm of life. \(spwickstrom.com\)](#)



"The religion of Christ subdues the selfish spirit and transforms the mind and the affections; it lays low the pride of men, that God alone may be exalted. This is what brother A wants. He needs a practical faith in God... He needs to exalt principle and elevate the Christian standard..."

He needs to see the importance of having faith and corresponding works, that he may fairly represent, at home, in the church, and in his business, the purity and elevated character of religion.

Here is his danger; and he will eventually make **shipwreck of faith unless he changes his course of action and firmly connect with the Source of light.**

If his interest in spiritual things were as great as it is in the things of the world, his consecration to God would be entire; he would show himself a true disciple of Christ, and God would accept and use the talents which are now wholly devoted to the service of the world." (5T 275, 276).

["No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." \(Matthew 6:24\)](#)

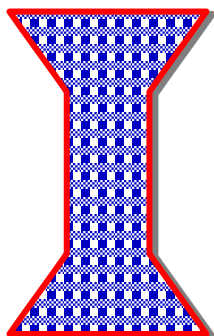


Dangerous



By: Rubia De Cuba

LIFESAVER!



n these times we are living in, we surely need a **LIFESAVER** that is **JESUS CHRIST**. We must constantly keep in mind Galatians 2:20 that reads "*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.*" (NIV)

There is a famous and very dangerous phenomena. God's Word says clearly in Exodus 20:3 "*You shall have no other gods before Me.*"

TECHNOLOGY is not bad; it is good on its own, but pitifully we let it control us and Satan knows how to let us all fall into its snare. If only we are in love with Jesus and really love Him from the heart, we can overcome.

And do you know what is regrettable? The little one, that's the one controlling the whole world. The enemy is very cunning, and many of us are going enslaved after him with his many inventions.

If we pay keen attention, we will notice that there is no respect any longer for the things of God.

- There is no respect for the house of God.
- Homes are being destroyed.
- Marriages are disintegrating.
- Children are neglected.
- There is no more time for the children.
- Give the children all they desire so they will not bother you.
- There is no more dialogue between couples.
- Anywhere you go, in the doctor's office, etc, there is no more communication.
- The cell phone captures everybody's attention and time.

Yes, the greatest snare the enemy is using right now, in our time and age, is the CELL PHONE.

The Bible says in James 3:5 "*So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!*"

Just as the smallest part of the body is the tongue, and it can be so disastrous, so also the cell phone destroys all I mentioned earlier and more.

Let's not even mention FACEBOOK!!! Waw, many of us as Christians display ourselves at church decently dressed, but on Facebook we pose in all kind of ways, nails painted, with short pants, short dresses, all make-upped. Sometimes worse than the worldly people. Where is Jesus? Where is Christianity? Some of us have important positions in the church, who should be consecrated and give a good example twenty four-seven, but are Christians who are not living up to expectations".



Many times you can't even recognize the Seventh-day Adventist Christian women who say they are waiting for Jesus' return. Where is the first love??? It seems that *that* has gone out of fashion.

We don't have time to study the Sabbath school lesson with our children. You hear many excuses, I am tired, I have a headache. *Tomorrow!* But the cell phone, yes, that one we do have time for! There's no time to hear the complains of our children. *"Not now!"* Something happened with the child today. *"You can tell mother tomorrow!"* But other culprits do have time for them and then they rape them. That is Satan's plan. And we can't blame the enemy of our souls, but blame ourselves for our neglect.

Times past when the couple went to bed, there was time to make love, but nowadays they go to bed with the cell phone, and so we get many divorces and separations, because there is coldness in the relationship. The wife or husband is no good, they don't satisfy us anymore. The enemy blinds us and we fall for a friend, as many say, but I have nothing with him/ her. At that moment you see all the faults of your spouse, even though you are many years married to him/ her. Let us not forget. When you married he/ she was everything to you, you tolerated everything. But now that the devil blinded us, he or she is not useful anymore to us, we complain of all the small defects. In the past, when we heard these things, it was from that other far country. But nowadays we don't have to go far, our own island is in this situation.

There is no time to have family worship. Children go to bed without thanking God, without God's word in their heart. There is no morning worship, because I have to answer my cell phone before I leave home. When the children reject God, their blood remain on us as parents. Not on the cell phone.

Many of us let the wave of desire carry us away. Have you ever heard of sex on cell phone? It exists! Masturbation, pornography, etc. All these evils pull us away from God. That happens now in the daily life, every day. And we ourselves are to blame, for we lead ourselves into these pitfalls of Satan. May God help us!

One of the saddest is that many don't carry a Bible anymore to church, nor a hymnal. *"On the cell phone we have everything!"* But the danger is that as soon as a message enters, we answer right away, and we disturb the reverence due to God. We are just like the people of Israel in the past. We want everything, but we don't want to give God His respect, His honour and reverence. And our God is holy!

Let's unravel ourselves from Satan's tangled ball of yarn. Now is the time to put all these things behind us and serve God as it should be.

Our time is short, very short. It is no time anymore to continue in our worship of Satan. Let's change our chip and worship God only, and worship Him truly in spirit and in truth.

Let's not forget, salvation is individual. Let's save our marriages, let's save our children and our home. Technology is good, but it depends on how we use it. Let's not make it our god.

If we are failing in this. Let's go to Jesus Christ. He is the way, the truth, and life. Where we left Him we will find Him still standing there waiting for us. Take an inventory of your spiritual life to see if you are still in the faith.

May God bless each one of us! Women, Maranatha! Christ is coming!

Here I leave you with some texts where we can find more of this topic: 1 John 1:9; 5:3; Matthew 19:14; Malachi 4:6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-8; 2 Corinthians 13:5.

Quotations from E.G. White: *Notes of Ellen-White*, p. 17, title: "Faith versus Presumption"; *Promises for the Last Days*: "Promises for the Family", p. 59; "Promises for Mothers", p. 96-99; "Promises for the Tempted"; p. 136-139.

Written by:
Rubia de Cuba, served 22 years as an elder at the Pos Chikito Church in Aruba. At the moment she is serving in the Bernhardstraat church.



