

January 1, 2023

## How To Stress Less (#4)

by Ken Weliever

“Gratitude is a strong strategy to help minimize stress in our lives” affirmed Najma Khorrami, in Psychology Today.

“Gratitude lowers stress hormones in the body,” stated Khorrami a global public health professional. She explains the process this way.

*When a sudden stressful event or circumstances arise, the body responds naturally by releasing adrenaline and cortisol. Cortisol is responsible for increases of glucose in the bloodstream to facilitate activity in the brain and repair of tissues. When stress persists and turns into chronic stress, cortisol and other hormones are active routinely, which can lead to:*

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Digestive problems
- Headaches
- Heart disease
- Sleep problems
- Weight gain
- Memory and concentration impairment

The article shares several studies that confirm the value of gratitude in reducing stress levels in our lives.

In a similar post, “The Neuroscience of Gratitude and Effects on the Brain” from Positive Psychology.com written by Madhuleena Roy Chowdhury and reviewed by Dr. William Smith, gratitude is called “a natural detox to the body.” They reveal that “studies have indicated that people who feel more grateful to {God}, are healthier and stress resilient in life.”

This is the fourth in a series of five posts discussing how to stress less, not only during this holiday season, but in life. God’s strategy for reducing stress is found in Philippians 4:4-9.

So far, we’ve observed the benefit of a joyful attitude, complete trust in God, and a vibrant prayer life. In this text Paul reminds us to be thankful.

*“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Phil. 4:6).*

### GIVE THANKS CONSTANTLY

Bible writers from Old to New Testament exhort us to be thankful and remind us regarding the source of our blessings. Over 100 times we read of the importance of thanksgiving. Here are five.

*Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! (1 Chron. 16:8)*

*Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. (Ps. 100:4)*

*“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever” (Ps. 106:1)*

*“giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 5:20).*

*“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thess. 5:18).*

Following these Biblical exhortations will help you reduce stress in your life. A post from The National Institute of Health offers this insight.

*“Taking the time to feel gratitude may*

## Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

## Important Dates

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

improve your emotional well-being by helping you cope with stress. Early research suggests that a daily practice of gratitude could affect the body, too. For example, one study found that gratitude was linked to fewer signs of heart disease.”

“We encourage people to try practicing gratitude daily,” advises Dr. Judith T. Moskowitz, a psychologist at Northwestern University. “You can try first thing in the morning or right before you fall asleep, whatever is best for you.

Expressing gratitude fits perfectly into our prayer life. Thanking God daily for our blessings ought to be a regular practice for all Christians.

Developing an attitude of gratitude can further be enhanced by keeping a gratitude journal one source suggested. Each day write down what you are thankful for that day.

Furthermore, develop the habit of expressing gratitude to people around you—family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and fellow Christians. Whether verbal or through written “thank you” notes, this action removes the focus from yourself to others. It helps you recognize the good things and good people in your life, even in the midst of problems. And it will help you minimize stress.

In a post from the Mayo Clinic web page, “Being Grateful is Healthy,” Dr. Amit Sood, a stress management and resiliency expert advises, “cultivate deeper gratitude by being thankful for the simple and the ordinary. It will help you become happier and more resilient.” Or as Robert Brault opined, “Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.”

Of course, God didn’t reveal His Word to improve our health, increase our wealth, or make us happier. Or as D. L. Moody once quipped, “God didn’t give us the Bible to make us smarter sinners.” But isn’t it interesting that following God’s Word for our spiritual well being also will improve our physical, mental, and emotional health.

Today if you’re feeling all stressed out, employ the advice of author Brenda Nathan, “Interrupt anxiety with gratitude.”

*{used with permission from thepreachersword.com}*

## Prayer Requests

**Jack Wilson** is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

**Jerry Richardson** is still undergoing treatments to strengthen his immune system. He is having some tests run for his lungs.

**Karen Hallmark** has improved but continues to struggle and could use our prayers.

**Dinah Williams** continues to have mobility issues.

**Don Simmons** is home and still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

**Randall Vanaman** is having difficulties with his feet.

**Baby Valor** went home but will require more care.

**Mike and Debbie McMurray** are travelling.

**Dorothy Steadman** is staying with Hank in Seguin.

**Elaine Kersch** is recovering from a fall.

*If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.*

**“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”**  
**(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)**

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord’s body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord’s will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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