

Relief from the pressure cooker of life

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Daily pressures. We all have them. Possibly you just started a new job. Perhaps you're a graduate trying to plan your future based on what you want to be "for the rest of your life" or maybe you're a teenage unwed mother, or her parents for that matter, trying to rearrange their lives to make room for one that wasn't planned. Any of these scenarios can make anyone's emotions rise to a boiling pressure cooker.

It appears that in our pursuit to make things simpler with the many conveniences of cell phones, microwaves, automatic teller machines and online shopping and banking that we have only added to the pressure cooker of life. To me, it seems that today life has gotten...well...disconnected and far too complicated.

I tend to live for the moments that I can enjoy the simplicity. I've tried little by little to go back to some of the uncomplicated basics, farm fresh eggs - laid daily. I'm growing my own tomatoes, no high fructose corn syrup in my weekly created home menu, reusable, cloth "green bags" taken to the stores, a stainless steel canteen for my daily water bottle instead of plastic, timed sprinklers and outside lights. Anything we can do to make our lives simpler gives us more time to let off steam - to enjoy the life we have, because as you probably know, life goes by too quick.

In my time away from the house I try to grasp those simple moments as well with a very interesting hobby of mine. People watching. That's right while I'm sitting at the stoplight I often wonder about the people in the cars around me observe the young adults at the mall. I watch the families at the park interact and I ask myself "I wonder how their pressure cooker is? What's going on in their lives? Did they cry this morning? What about? Are they happy?" Usually about that point in my daydream oasis, the car behind me honks or if I'm in a store, someone runs into me heading for the sale rack at the mall or I nearly get grazed by a frisbee at the park and suddenly I'm brought back to reality.

But seriously, people are amazing - so different, yet so alike. We come from many walks of life, many cultures, beliefs and upbringings yet we all have dreams, opinions and moments that we live for when we can turn the pressure cooker off.

So what would you say if I told you that Jesus dealt with stress and pressures too? That's right. Actually, imagine growing up knowing you were the Savior of the world and getting ready for that role? Now there's some stress I can't even fathom and I was the oldest of eight children.

Matthew 27 tells a count of the stress that Jesus went through from the betrayal and death of his friend to his own death (for us) on the cross. Talk about a pressure cooker! Yet even as stressed as Jesus was he turned to his Father in Heaven. Worried beyond belief and hoping for another solution to "save the world" Jesus prayed in such anguish until he nearly sweat blood (Luke 22:44). I can't say that I've ever been under that kind of pressure before. You? But, God created us all for a reason and a purpose. Jesus' was to walk on the earth as God in the flesh, live as a man and die a selfless death to show a great love. This was his Father's will and as most children he wanted to do whatever his father expected of him.

Today, while you're stressing over your new boss, career, unexpected addition to the family or whatever it may be, please be encouraged. Speak up! Your Father in heaven is a great listener. It is great that we have friends and family we can turn to when life gets to us but I once heard it said, "when life gets tough do you run to the phone or to the throne?"

We all have tension and anxiety in our day and in our life that gets us to our boiling point in this pressure cooker world. But next time the load gets too much and you want to honk at the person still sitting at that "green light" remember Jesus knows about that weight and believe it or not even though now he sits on the throne He knows what you're going through. Oh, and he's also a good listener.

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