

A Better Rest (Caregiving)

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Staring at a brain MRI of my youngest daughter three years ago, I realized I had lost control over my future and the future of our family. Everything changed in a second. Dreams and plans died.

Since I could do nothing, I gave it all to God. When I placed our lives in His loving hands, the weight lifted from my shoulders. The truth was, I didn't need to be in control. I needed the same hands that formed the universe to take charge!

If you are seeking true rest in your Heavenly Father's care, practice these principles:

- **Fight Fear and Give God the Future.** Jesus said, *"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."* (Matthew 6:34, NIV) I don't need to become discouraged or fill my mind with negative thoughts about the future; first I claim my identity as God's child. He wants His children to live in the Freedom that comes from giving Him our lives. When I began to live in this truth, I had growing levels of joy and hope.
- **Grow Your Faith—Trust God to teach you as a caretaker (or a mother!).** He didn't make a mistake when He gave me my daughter. He didn't make a mistake when He placed you in your current role. Every time I make a mistake, lose my patience, or become weary, I remind myself God is still working on me! He continually teaches and strengthens me. The Bible says, *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV)
- **Prioritize Your Health.** After I gave God control of my life and trusted Him to teach me to care for my special needs daughter, I gained the confidence to care for my health too. I am God's beloved child and He wants the very best for me. So when opportunities arise for me to rest physically, mentally take a break, and spiritually nurture myself, I learned to accept the blessing. Make a list of ways you can start caring for your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health today. Accept help from others. Develop new habits that cultivate a healthier you.
- **Pray Continually.** In all things, PRAY. When you feel nervous, unsure, worried, angry, resentful, bitter, etc., God always invites you to talk about it. He loves you, and He wants to give you peace and direction for your needs and desires.

As a caretaker or parent, you have no idea what tomorrow might bring—but God is here for you today. He longs to reach out and unburden your heart and mind. Learn to rest in His care.

RESOURCES *Your Best Life In Jesus' Easy Yoke: Rhythms of Grace to De-Stress and Live Empowered* by Bill Gaultiere, PhD, *Battlefield of the Mind: Winning the Battle in Your Mind* by Joyce Meyer, *Expressive Heart Devotions* by Lora Armendariz

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