

# Dealing with burn out - from Viv's journal

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN A LONG, AND RATHER EMBARRASSING STRUGGLE FOR ME. I was diagnosed with Burn out in June...I was put on anti depressants, and I needed to take time out from the ministry I live for - because the way I was doing it was killing me! Burn out is something no one will ever understand completely until you go through it. It is much worse than anyone could imagine, or those suffering it will ever let on. It encompasses your whole being and leaves you sucked dry - not able to sleep properly, eat properly, think properly or cope with everyday emotional and physical elements of life. It also affects your spiritual life....and the worst is - the whole time - you think, it can't be happening to me, and so you hide it from others, and even yourself. There is no quick fix. It takes months and months to get better. I honestly believe that I am now on the road to recovery...and that admitting all that follows; my burdens were lifted. For me, confessing all this to my Saviour aided my journey a thousand times faster than pills, or counseling, or sleep or a holiday ever could. Those things helped - and I'm grateful - but my God needs all the credit here!

## **Dealing with my burnout....**

### **from Viv's journal.**

#### **Step one - admitting that I was wrong.**

I thought that I could change the world.

I thought that I was invincible.

I thought that I was an energizer bunny, never losing my bounce.

I thought that I could carry MY ministry alone.

I know the theory of team work, but to share meant SHARING responsibility, control, my heart, my disappointments, my joy, my victory, my ideas...and I protected these.

Instead I built up walls around my heart, stopped trusting people and chose to work alone rather than have to deal with anyone else.

I thought that I would please God through my tasks and events, excellently organized; that somehow through my busyness I might earn His love - I WAS WRONG!

#### **Step two - seeking forgiveness**

Lord please forgive me for all these things.

Lord, forgive me for needing so much CONTROL and so much RECOGNITION that I stopped listening for your voice and tried to run everything on my own, but in your name!

Forgive me Lord, for that was a GREAT mistake! Jesus, I'm so sorry! Everyone could see through my disastrous journey except me! Forgive me Lord, for those I hurt along the way.

Firstly I hurt me - when you created me so perfectly in your image and I pushed and abused my mind and my body for so long.

Forgive me for hurting my friends and family on the way down my path of self destruction.

Forgive me Lord, for setting a bad example of a child who loves you. CLEANSE ME, PLEASE!

#### **Step 3 - the truth.**

I cannot save the world, only God can.

I cannot do anything that is unselfish, alone...

By being too introspective and isolating myself, I cut myself off from so many blessings and become utterly selfish, and self centered - to understand love, one has to practice giving it!

I do not need to be good at everything - God gifted others as well, and often others will do something better than me.

God loves me first, and foremost, all my good intentions and actions need to come as a result of His love in my life - not an attempt to keep it!

God does not need me to burn out doing his work. He never asked for that. He is a LOVING God!

Spending time with God is more important than a hectic schedule or full program.

Spending time in God's presence, undisturbed,

is worth more than anything else worthwhile I could do in a day - and is needed more than food, exercise, TV or friends.

**Step 4 - the difference.**

JESUS. JESUS, JESUS.

Not my church, not my job, not my calling, not my efforts, not my friends or even my sacrifices, Just Jesus.

Jesus - please help me to desire that intimate friendship with you - that can satisfy me completely. Help me to trust you Lord, as my FATHER, my SAVIOUR, and my FRIEND.

Holy Spirit - please fill my life with your presence. May I be more willing to let you have control and guide my thoughts and actions each moment of each day. Give me faith Lord, to believe in your promises, your timing, and your LOVE. Give me Grace Lord - to remember this

struggle and hold onto what I've learnt. Help me grow....thank you Jesus, amen.

I am now back at work, and taking life slower. I have an amazing boss, who is understanding, and I realise that things have to be done differently from now on. I won't bore you with the changes I'm making ...but know, that they will be done with God and not ahead of Him. This approach makes ministry sometimes more difficult - God doesn't stick to deadlines that SU or others impose - But that's okay - the rewards with God are greater - Peace of mind, and doing it God's way is worth more than any amount of money or a pension plan!

God bless

Viv