



SAMPLE PACK



Enjoy these 10 Mental Health Moments emails designed to boost your emotional and spiritual health. To receive future emails delivered weekly to your inbox:

Visit <https://christianfamilysolutions.org/>
(sign-up form is on our homepage)

Or scan the QR code



www.christianfamilysolutions.org

800-438-1772



Regain Control in Stressful Times

Stress can sometimes feel like an unstoppable force, leaving us overwhelmed and powerless. But even in the most chaotic moments, there are steps we can take to regain control and bring calm back into our lives.

Psychological Insight: Stress is a physical response—your heart races, your breathing quickens, and adrenaline surges. **One of the first steps in coping with stress is to address these physical reactions.** Here are two simple but effective techniques to slow down the stress response and help you regain a sense of control.

- **Deep breathing** - Take a few slow, diaphragmatic breaths to calm your body.
- **Muscle relaxation** - Release the tension in your body by massaging your temples, unclenching your jaw, or stretching.

Biblical Perspective: In Psalm 46:10, God reminds us, "Be still, and know that I am God." In moments of stress, we can find peace in the knowledge that God is in control. Even when life feels overwhelming, He invites us to be still and trust in His power to guide us through.

Application: The next time you feel stress creeping in, pause and take a few deep, slow breaths. Focus on relaxing any tense muscles. As you breathe in, repeat to yourself, "Be still," and as you breathe out say, "and know that I am God." Trust that He is with you, helping you regain control in the midst of stress.

In His Peace,

Christian Family Solutions

Sarah Reik, LPC, BC-TMH, CEAP





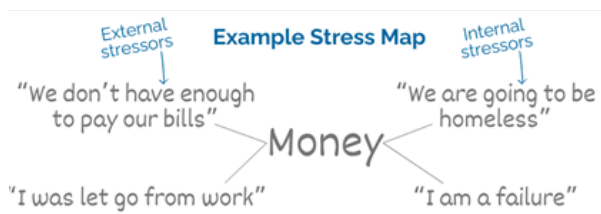
What's Causing Your Stress?

Psychological Insight: Stressors can be categorized as external or internal. External stressors are things like work deadlines, a difficult relationship, or physical illness. These are the challenges outside of us.

However, the **majority of the stress we experience is actually internal**—thoughts and worries that spiral out of control, like "I'm a failure" or "What if something goes wrong?" The thoughts we have about a stressful experience often cause more stress than the experience itself.

Biblical Perspective: Jesus invites us in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Whether your stress stems from external pressures or internal worries, know that you can bring them all to God. He understands your burdens and offers you rest and peace in return.

Application: Take some time this week to identify your stressors. Consider making a **stress map** like the one shown. Under each category or "root cause" of stress, write the external stressors related to it on the left and internal stressors on the right.



Are your stressors mostly external, like work or family responsibilities? If so, are there things you can do to remove or mitigate these stressors? Are there responsibilities you can delegate?

You'll likely realize that many of your stressors are internal, like fears and doubts. Offer each one to God in prayer. Ask Him to help you manage your stress, both from the outside and within.

In His Grace,

Christian Family Solutions

Sarah Reik, LPC, BC-TMH, CEAP





Find Healing through Acts of Kindness

Psychological Insight: Research published in [The Journal of Positive Psychology](#) highlights that engaging in acts of kindness can significantly boost well-being, especially for individuals struggling with anxiety or depression. Participants who performed simple acts of kindness experienced greater improvements in social connection and overall life satisfaction compared to those using other therapeutic techniques. Helping others **redirected their focus away from internal struggles and fostered a sense of purpose and fulfillment** ([ScienceDaily](#)).

Helping others doesn't have to be elaborate. Small gestures like offering a listening ear, sending an encouraging note to a friend, or volunteering a couple hours for a local community organization can make a difference. These acts can increase feelings of empathy, lower stress, and foster a sense of connection, all of which are vital for mental well-being.

Biblical Perspective: Scripture reminds us of the joy and peace that come from serving others. We're following Christ's example when we demonstrate His love through our actions. Jesus says in Matthew 5:16, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

When we shift our focus to helping others, we also not only bless them but can experience God's love and grace more deeply in our own lives.

Application: Consider how you can help someone around you—whether it's offering your time, resources, or simply a kind word. After you engage in an act of kindness, reflect on how it impacted your emotional well-being.

Praise God for the opportunities to help, and trust that **He is using your kindness to bring healing to both yourself and others.**

In His Service,

Christian Family Solutions

Sarah Reik, LPC, BC-TMH, CEAP





Rise to the Challenge

Psychological Insight: How do you perceive adversity?

- Do challenges paralyze you, or do you rise to them?
- Are mistakes strikes against your value, or opportunities for growth?

Seeing difficulties as challenges, rather than crushing defeats, helps us become more resilient and bounce back faster.

Biblical Perspective: The apostle Paul is a role model for this attribute, as he was a man who rose to challenges. In his words, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed." (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)

Application: What's something you're currently walking through that's unexpected, difficult, or not going as you planned? Make the decision to view it as a challenge, not a defeat. Speak God's truth: though hard pressed, you are not crushed. With His help, you can rise to any challenge.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, you know what trials and tribulations we face every day when no one else knows or sees it. There is no place I can go in life that you have not already stood. Thank you for going before me, and behind me, for hemming me in, and for laying your hand upon me. Help me more and more each day to "consider it pure joy" when I face challenges in my life. Remind me that your grace is sufficient, and that your mercy endures forever. I love you, Jesus. Amen.

You can explore [resilience techniques](#) like this further in our free [online course](#).

In the grip of His Grace,

Christian Family Solutions

Kent Robinson, LPC





Commit to Your Goals

Psychological Insight: What drives you - your goals or your feelings?

We've all said or at least felt, "I'm just not feeling it." Whether it's skipping the gym or procrastinating on homework or other tasks, allowing feelings to override your commitment weakens resilience. **True resilience is built by sticking to your goals, even when emotions tell you otherwise.**

Biblical Perspective: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Hebrews 10:24-26)

Application: Make a list of what you value—faith, family, health, career, service to others—and set goals aligned with those values. *(This one might take a little time this week!)* Commit to those goals and enlist a small circle of people you trust to help you and hold you accountable.

Don't let your feelings dictate whether or not you work towards those goals. Next time "you're just not feeling it," do it anyways because you've committed yourself to it. Sticking to what you value strengthens your resilience far more than being ruled by temporary emotions.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, you work in me the will to live according to my vocations and your purpose. Lord, I get tired sometimes and I just want to escape from the things that I value. Help me to turn to you in those times for rest and rejuvenation. Help me to recommit myself to serving you and my neighbor with the gifts and talents you have given me. When I feel weak, remind me that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I love you, Lord. Amen.

You can explore [resilience techniques](#) like this further in our free [online course](#).

In the grip of His Grace,

Christian Family Solutions

Kent Robinson, LPC





Let Go of Things Outside Your Control

Psychological Insight: Do you find yourself overthinking, often asking "What if?" or "If only...?" When we dwell on things outside our control and influence – whether in the future or past – we can feel stuck and helpless.

Resilient individuals focus their time and energy on what they can control or influence, letting go of the rest. This builds confidence and increases resiliency and hope.

Biblical Perspective: "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Matthew 6:34)

Application: When you feel stressed, ask yourself, "What can I control in this situation?" This includes people, present situations, and things from your past or future. If you can influence or control it, great. **If you can't, let it go.**

You'll be amazed at how freeing this can be, especially when you let it go into God's capable hands. Trust Him to handle all the people and things you have no control over.

Prayer: Gracious Father, sometimes I get anxious when I try to control things that are outside of my personal control. It can feel scary, like life is out of control. But you are in control of everything seen and unseen. May I always remember to run into your loving arms of protection and mercy when I feel like the world is unraveling around me. **Give me the peace to accept the things I can't change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.*** I love you, Father God. Amen.

** Adapted from The Serenity Prayer by theologian Reinhold Niebuhr*

You can explore [resilience techniques](#) like this further in our free [online course](#).

In the grip of His Grace,

Christian Family Solutions

Kent Robinson, LPC





Reflecting on the Past...Preparing for the New Year

Psychological Insight: Reflecting on the past year can be a healthy way to process both the highs and the lows. Even if 2024 was a challenging year, take some time to look back so you can process your emotions, identify values, and [make thoughtful decisions moving forward](#). As you reflect, ask yourself:

- What were my biggest blessings?
- What challenges did I face, and what did I learn from them?
- Are there any habits or patterns I want to leave behind?

Biblical Perspective: David demonstrated the power of reflection. His psalms often focused on God's intimate knowledge of him and His ongoing guidance, **using those truths to renew his trust in God's plan**.

The apostle Paul also reflected on his past and God's grace in his letters, using those reflections to encourage others and set his sights on future ministry. Paul also knew when to **leave behind guilt, regrets, fear, or failures**. In Philippians 3:13-14, he writes, "But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

Reflecting on God's faithfulness in the past can **give us hope and courage for the future**. Let's take time to reflect on how God has worked in our lives over the previous year and trust His plans for what's ahead.

Application: Use these ideas to guide your reflection and goal-setting:

- **Reflect on the Year** - Write down three blessings you're thankful for and three lessons you learned.
- **Embrace Grace** - Let go of guilt or regrets from the past year, trusting in God's forgiveness and plan for your future.
- **Ask God for Wisdom** - Pray over your goals and seek God's guidance in shaping your priorities.

In His Grace,

Christian Family Solutions

Sarah Reik, LPC, BC-TMH, CEAP





Play the “What If” Game - Optimism Edition!

Worry often leads us to play the “What If” game in our heads, but it doesn't have to be a game of worst-case scenarios. What if we flipped the script?

Psychological Insight: Anxiety thrives on negative assumptions, but imagining positive possibilities can reduce stress and increase resilience. When you find yourself asking, “What if this goes wrong?” instead ask, **“What if things go well?”** Training your brain to see the brighter side doesn't just reduce worry - it builds a habit of optimism.

Biblical Perspective: Ecclesiastes 8:7 reminds us, “Since no one knows the future, who can tell someone else what is to come?” As Christians, we don't know how our current earthly challenges will unfold, but we can rest in the certainty that **our ultimate future is secure in Christ**. We can trust in God's plan and **face uncertainty with hope**.

Application:

- **Reframe Your Thoughts** - The next time you catch yourself worrying, challenge it with a positive “What if.” For example:
 - Instead of “What if...this project turns out to be a disaster?” ask yourself, “What if...this project helps me grow?”
 - “What if...no one talks to me?” → “What if...I make a new friend?”
 - “What if...this challenge overwhelms me and I fail?” → What if...I'm successful and this leads to something greater?”
- **Pray for Trust** - Bring your fears to God and ask Him to guide your thoughts toward hope and positivity.

Our future is held by a loving God who promises good things. Let's imagine the possibilities with faith and joy.

In His Peace,

Christian Family Solutions

Sarah Reik, LPC, BC-TMH, CEAP





Comfort When Feeling Lonely

Psychological Insight: True connection comes from authenticity - being vulnerable and open with those around us. Loneliness often deepens when we hesitate to share our real thoughts and struggles. Being truly seen by another person is one of the most comforting experiences in life, but it requires taking the step to open up in real conversations.

Biblical Perspective: It's natural to long for companionship, but when we make human relationships our primary source of security, we can end up feeling even more unfulfilled. Instead of idolizing the comfort and security of human relationships, we are called to first seek fulfillment in our Creator.

Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6:26-27, "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?" This reminds us that God knows our needs and will provide in His perfect timing.

Application: Consider these to feel more connected...

- **Deepen Your Relationship with God** - The only source of perfect security and comfort, where we always feel heard and understood, is God Himself.
- **Be Authentic in Relationships** - Share your true self with trusted friends or a faith community. Real connection happens when we are vulnerable.
- **Engage in Meaningful Activities** - Instead of turning inward, turn outward and serve others. Help that elderly person at church, drop off a meal for someone who is sick, write anonymous notes of appreciation to people at work, join a Bible study or start one of your own.
- **Trust God's Timing** - If you're longing for deeper friendships or companionship, bring this to God in prayer and trust in His perfect plan for your life.

In His Service,

Christian Family Solutions

Melissa Partl, LCSW, CTRS-E





Finding Purpose in Suffering

Psychological Insight: Grief and suffering can leave you feeling lost and hopeless. It's natural to want answers - to ask "Why is this happening?" or "What did I do to deserve this?" However, psychology suggests that finding meaning in suffering can be transformative. [Studies show](#) that individuals who reframe their struggles as **opportunities for growth and learning** experience greater emotional resilience and mental well-being.

Biblical Perspective: Scripture does not shy away from suffering. Jesus warned his followers that they would face trials (John 16:33), and Jesus himself felt grief. It's okay to feel sadness. It's an emotion to pay attention to and not something we can easily escape.

The Bible also says that suffering is not meaningless. Romans 5:3-5 reminds us: "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And **hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit**, who has been given to us."

Even Job, who endured unimaginable hardship, did not receive a reason for his suffering, but he was reminded of God's power and love. **We, too, may not always understand our trials and pain, but we can trust that God is always walking alongside us.**

Application: Consider these the next time you're walking through grief, suffering, or another trial...

- **Shift Your Perspective** - Instead of asking "Why is this happening?" try "How can I grow spiritually or emotionally?"
- **Look for the Lessons** - Keep a journal to record insights, strength, lessons, or other blessings gained.
- **Find Ways to Help Others** - Turn your pain into a testimony. Share your story with someone who may need encouragement.

In His Wisdom,

Christian Family Solutions

Julie Straseske, LPC

