

March, 2017

I'M ALIVE 2 THRIVE



Newsletter, Volume 2

In this issue:

- Being Still: a Gift and a Commandment
- Practical applications in learning to “be still”
- Good reads
- Now what?

Being Still: a Gift and a Commandment

Information is everywhere. Books, e-books, television, Internet, emails, texts, social media outlets, billboards, blogs, news feeds, news tickers, the list goes on and on AND on and on.

How do we know what to attend to at any given point in time? Work? Family? God? Entertainment? Friends?

What is important? What is relevant? What has priority?

So many things compete for our attention. Are we becoming a society of people plodding through life only able to give “continuous *partial* attention”?

“Continuous partial attention” is just that... “partially attending—continuously”. This occurs when we allow ourselves to be hyper-alert to all things around us. This seems to be in response to our desire to “not miss ANYTHING”. Linda Stone has coined the term “continuous partial attention” and notes that it creates the sense that we are on a constant state of “high alert”.

This constant state of high alert affects our total being...physical, social, and spiritual. Research discusses “*email apnea*” where our natural breathing rhythm is interrupted when we tackle mounting emails. The phenomenon of “*Blackberry orphans*” has been discussed where our children have become “orphaned” by parents working on their electronic devices when they are home and to be spending time with their families. Even “sacred” times are subject to being affected, such as vacations. One statistic suggests that “85% of computer users say they would take a laptop with them on vacation”.

Creativity, productivity, and decision-making is reduced when we allow ourselves to be subjected to “information overload”. We are “bored” with inactivity. Sitting through commercials seems like “torture”.

This question begs to be asked, “Why do we allow ourselves to be subjected to this?” We know we are to “be still”. What keeps us from it?

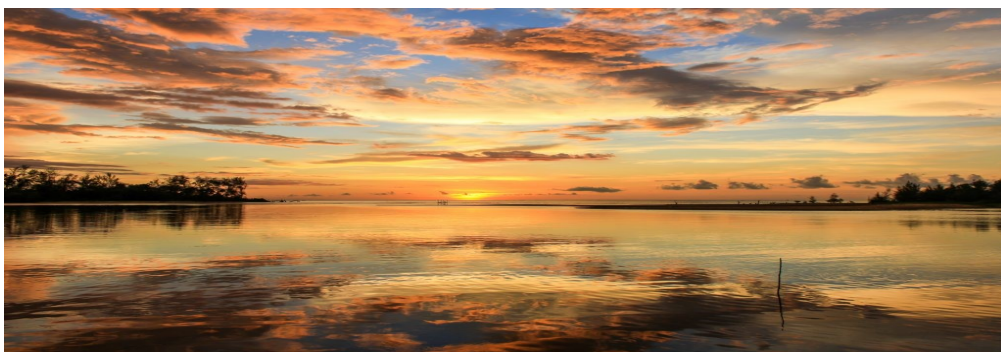
We must make the conscious choice to “be still”. The word “be” suggests action on our part. It is not “just going to happen”. We have to take ownership of our mind, body, and spirit and the influences we allow.

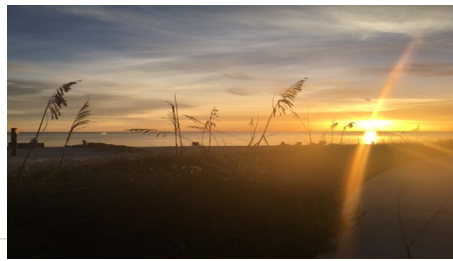
“Be still and know that I am God.”

Psalms 46:10

“...The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”

Mark 2:27





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How do we “be still”?

Intentionally. We must **plan** to “be still”. We simply can not wait for our life to slow down, because, quite frankly, it won’t. Our life is determined by the choices we make. If we do not “choose” to slow down, our calendar will be filled and overfilled to capacity. Every moment taken.

- **Plan your “still” time.** Early in my career, I caught a glimpse of a dear colleague’s calendar. She had written down on a particular day at a particular time, “Think about ____.” I remember calling her out on that and us having a good chuckle about her having to make time “to think”

about a particular issue. Her workday was so full, she simply did not have time to “think”. Over the years, I have thought about this encounter often. I, NOW, make time, or schedule time, to “think”.

- **Embrace the process, not just the outcome.** “Being still” for those of us addicted to information and activity may seem, almost, painful at first. You may find yourself at odds trying to empty your mind of your “to-do” list. Don’t engage in chastising yourself for “getting off-track”. Just simply acknowledge that your mind is busy and get back to “being still”.
- **Start with small increments of time.** It may be unrealistic to “make” yourself sit still for 30 minutes or meditate on one scripture for an extended period of time. Test yourself. Time how long it takes for your mind to wander. Start there and stretch the amount of time slowly. God created time for us, not him. He will bless the time you spend, the “quality” of the time you spend with Him.
- **Determine what works for you.** Many people journal. Some take audio notes. Others draw. Some people find they are more “with it” in the morning, whilst others are “on” in the afternoon or night. God created you uniquely. What works for some, doesn’t work for others. I’ve known people who follow a “formula” for prayer or developing a quiet time. Don’t think just because someone else journals...then, you HAVE TO! God desires you to be the creation He created...not someone else.
- **Use any and all of God’s creation.** The wind; the birds; the Holy Word; divinely-inspired devotionals, books, or poems; a candle. Use something that inspires you to help you connect with God in your “still” time.
- **Breathe.** Literally, breathe God in. Say the name of “Jesus” or one of the Holy Names of God while you breathe. Breathing connects you to His creation.

Good Reads

Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives by Wayne Muller

Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence by Sarah Young

Jesus Today: Experience Hope Through His Presence by Sarah Young

The Bible Promise Book for the Overwhelmed Heart by Janice Thompsen

Now What???

If you determine to “be still” in your endeavor to T-H-R-I-V-E, please let me know how you’re doing in the process.

You may use the contact form found at imalive2thrive.com. I’d love to hear from you.

