

# Spiritual Tip

## Start Writing Down Your Prayers

By Rick Warren

"I will climb my watchtower and wait to see what the LORD will tell me to say and what answer he will give to my complaint. The LORD gave me this answer: 'Write down clearly on tablets what I reveal to you.'" (Habakkuk 2:1-2 TEV)

Because Habakkuk wrote down what the Lord said to him, we have the book called Habakkuk. Because David wrote down what God spoke to him, we have the book of Psalms. They asked God a question, God gave them an answer, and they wrote it down.

If your prayer life is stuck in a rut and you feel like you're saying the same prayers over and over, one of the best things you can do is start writing down your prayers. It makes it more personal, and it helps you be more serious about your prayers.

This is called the spiritual habit of journaling. It's a habit that will help you refresh your prayer life. But don't make it too complicated! Simply write down what you're saying to God, and write down what God's saying to you.

After you get your notebook, remember these two practical suggestions to help make your journaling more effective.

First, put a vertical line down the center of the page. On one side, write what you say to God. On the other side, write what God says to you. As you write down what you say to God, don't expect him to always say something to you immediately. Sometimes he'll answer later in the day, or he may even wake you up in the middle of the night.

Then, on the same sheet of paper, draw a horizontal line, and above the line, write "Yesterday" and record the events of your day. Underneath the line, write "Life Lessons." The next day, look back on the events of the day before and ask, "What lesson was God trying to teach me through those events?" God is trying to teach us lessons through the everyday events of our lives, but we miss them all the time. When you take time to write them out in this way, it will help you focus on hearing God's voice and what he wants you to learn from him.

Journaling is a very powerful habit. It helps you focus your thoughts. It helps you remember what you said and what God said. It helps you test the impressions that you get from God.

It also helps you worship as you thank God for speaking to you. "O Lord, now I have heard your report, and I worship you in awe" (Habakkuk 3:2 TLB).

### Talk It Over

- How does recording the events of your day and lessons you learned help you test an impression to see whether or not it is from God?
- Why do you think journaling is called a "spiritual habit"?
- Why do we often miss the lessons God is trying to teach us?

# Marriage Tip

No. 93

## 9 Things Your Husband Is Always Thinking About – Part 2

By Dave Willis

One of the greatest challenges in marriage is navigating the differences between the typical male thought process and the typical female thought process. God (in His wisdom and His sense of humor) gave men and women very different perspectives. When these differences are understood, the husband and wife can harmonize with each other and see the world with more depth and perspective than either can do alone.

To help you ladies understand the mind of your man, I've listed below the main things that seem to dominate our thoughts. I hope these insights spark some rich conversations in your marriage. Since I'm obviously not an expert on what women think, I'm going to try to talk my amazing wife, Ashley into share the secrets of a wife's thoughts on her blog.

If your husband is like most guys, his thought are probably dominated by...(continued from last week) (In no particular order)

### 5. Food.

This one might seem carnal and shallow, but we think about food all the time. If you took all the brain space we use up thinking about food and sex, most of us would have the mental capacity to memorize an encyclopedia! I've been thinking about my next meal the entire time I've been writing this article!

### 6. Money.

Most men are wired with a need to be a provider for their families. We'll often think hard about ways to make ends meet and generate more income to provide. Sometimes this healthy need to provide can consume us and evolve into an unhealthy need to generate wealth motivated by selfish ambition more than family provision.

### 7. Sports (but not necessarily for the reasons you're thinking).

We love seeing modern-day gladiators battle it out on the field and we even will sometimes live vicariously through them (since we all have an inner gladiator inside), but this isn't the only reason we like sports. We also like sports because on that field or court, everything makes sense. The lines are clearly drawn, the rules are known by all and scoreboard is always in view. We wish all parts of life were this clear and measurable. We want "success" but don't always know if we're winning or not in most areas of life.

### 8. Pain from the past.

Just like the "instant replay" in sports, most of us have a few major life regrets or scars inflicted on us that we are tempted to keep replaying in our minds. They haunt us until (or unless) we learn to embrace the richness and depth of God's grace. If a man won't embrace grace, he'll lock himself in a mental prison where he will punish himself (or those around him) for the wrongs he's done or the wrongs that have been done to him.

### 9. Leaving a legacy.

Every man wants his life to count. He wants to be respected by his family and he wants to make a lasting contribution to the world that will endure beyond his own lifetime. Most men feel the constant pressure of wanting to leave a legacy, but not knowing where to start or how to do it. We often need to be reminded that being a faithful husband and dad is the best legacy of all (even if there's never a marble statue carved in our honor).

# Parenting Tip

## The Introvert Parent's Guide To Raising An Extrovert

By Kathy West

Do you ever feel drained by your child's high energy? Or are you trying to give your child enough outlets but not sure how? If you're a more introverted parent, you may enjoy these tips from TYPE 2 Child Whisperer contributor, Kathy West.

**With a sigh, I told my 3-year-old, "Mommy needs some quiet time."**

**Her response: "Well, I need some loud time."**

That's how it was with us—a constant push and pull between my child's need for noise and new people, versus my need to quietly recharge.

If you're an introverted parent, you understand.

You love people, and you love your child.

But if your day is full of both, you may end up feeling so drained that you want to climb into a sound-proof, people-proof hole and close your eyes.

Been there.

And I've learned that our energies don't need to play tug-of-war anymore.

Your family and needs are unique, so your situation will obviously not look the same as mine. But here are some lessons I'm learning about the introvert-extrovert, parent-child dynamic that may help you both feel more balanced:

### **Create easier days by understanding your energy**

The terms introvert and extrovert can be misleading. Being an introvert doesn't mean you're anti-social. And being an extrovert doesn't mean always being "on." Both are just a different way of moving through life. You and your child will be

more balanced when you honor your natural approaches.

The Child Whisperer has been invaluable for me in understanding us both.

It clarifies the movement and the motivation behind my daughter's extroverted behavior. (She's a Fun-loving Type 1 Child who needs waaaaay more social time than I do.) Just understanding where we're both coming from cuts down on conflict.

### **Prevent meltdowns by honoring needs upfront**

Kids want their lives to be as happy as their parents do. They don't throw fits for no reason (though it may seem they do). A meltdown is usually connected to more than the matter at hand, but kids may not yet have the skills to say so.

If my child gets cranky, whiny, or defiant, I look back at the whole day. I can usually see where she didn't get enough social outlets to energize her.

The Child Whisperer has helped me read the message behind the tantrum (and now prevent it in the first place). Thankfully, we don't do meltdowns much these days.

### **Resolve guilt and anger by meeting your own needs**

Do you get upset with your child when you wish you wouldn't? Ever feel resentful if you don't get a quiet minute? It can happen when your needs aren't met.

When I get anxious, grumpy, or impatient with my child's high energy, that's usually a sign that I haven't taken care of myself. Even one quiet minute alone during a busy day can help me regroup.

Instead of guiltting yourself for getting upset, identify your need and meet it.

### **Create daily joy by planning for "yes."**

I like a good plan. But my daughter wants to move on her ideas. Right. Now.

And though I can teach her to identify what's reasonable, the answer doesn't need to be "no" or "wait" as often as I think.

I'm practicing saying "yes" a little more often when she wants to get messy or have friends over. I also schedule "spontaneous" time—windows of time in which I plan to not have a plan so I can say "yes" more easily. Those times aren't just fun for her. They've brought me joy in ways I couldn't expect.

When we engage our children positively as they are, they experience themselves as acceptable and worthwhile.

### **Give both of you breathers by making spaces.**

Your extroverted child needs space—space to be social or space to explore.

And you need space—space to unwind or to re-center yourself.

Not only that, your quieter energy can feel like a drag to a high-energy child. The greatest relief to me was to understand that as an introvert, I needed to give my extroverted child some space! That space can give us both the breathers we need.

For example, when my daughter was younger, I arranged a play co-op with two other parents. Once a week, one of us took all 3 kids while the other two moms got a few hours for themselves.

A little bit of space can look a million different ways. Get creative!

### **Experience the best by assuming the best**

Extroverted children and introverted parents move through the world differently. But at heart, you both want the same thing—harmony, joy, and love.

Assume that's where your child is coming from. In other words, when they express their big energy, know that they're not trying to put you out or get under your skin. They're just expressing who they are in the way they know how.

That's what my daughter was doing on that night she said she needed loud time.

So we had a loud-time dance party together.

Which put her in the mood to go right to sleep.

Turns out, to get your quiet time, sometimes you just need to get a little loud.

Check the website: [www.thechildwhisperer.com](http://www.thechildwhisperer.com) for more insights for raising other girls: (1) TYPE 1 The "dreamer" girl, (2) TYPE 2 The "shy" girl, and (3) TYPE 3 The "louder" girl.

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