

Middlesex COG Summer Focus...



Rest. Renew. Rise.

"Those who wait for the Lord will renew their strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary." Is. 40:31

Summer Schedule

[June] Rest*

June 12th: Dealing with Defeat

June 19th: Determining what to do different

June 25th: Developing a plan for R&R

[July] Renewal

July 3rd: Deciding and Doing!

July 10th: Renewing Faith

July 17th: Renewing Vision

July 24th: Renewing Commitment

July 31st: Renewing Relationships

*No Classes during June. They will resume on **July 10th** as is indicated by **bold** dates.

1. Describe your current experience of defeat, exhaustion, or chaos. How are you feeling? How are these experiences impacting your heart, mind, spiritual life, work, and/or family?
2. What is the primary place you blame your "burn out," exhaustion, etc. on? (i.e. schedule, finances, a relationship, God?) Why?
3. Make a list of the top 3 areas of struggle for you, and evaluate if they are the root of exhaustion, or only a symptom.

What's REALLY wearing you
down?

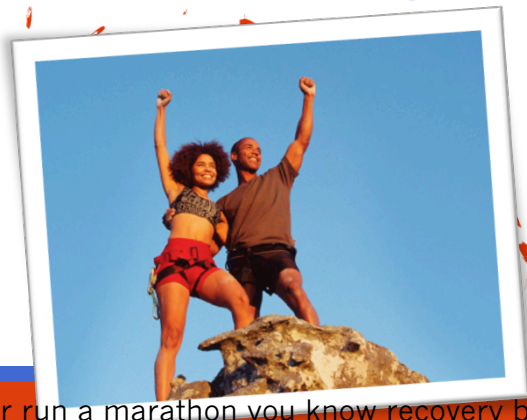
Identify EXHAUSTION



Dealing with Defeat

By fellowshipping with it, then facing it!

"I Know the plans that I have for you, says the Lord. Plans to Give you hope, and a future..." Jeremiah 29:11



R&R

Opportunities:

Prayer Room: Open Tuesday s and Thursdays, 7-9 a.m. for personal or intercessory prayer. Scriptural reading and guided prayer will be offered at 8 a.m.

Renwal Planning: Schedule a time to meet with pastoral staff and volunteers to discuss and/or discern plans for personal renewal, ministry involvement, or fulfilling a personal dream/goal. Email at admin@midcog.org

Relationship Renewal: July classes will be a shorter than normal to allow time for food, prayer, and small group fellowship.

Online Resources: Go to www.midcog.org for links to online blogs, podcasts (audio sermon), devotional material and more from the staff and others.

rest + renewal = growth



<Connect> If you've ever run a marathon you know recovery begins when you step into the finishing chute. The 26+ mile race is so exhausting that runners will grab Gatorade along the way in order to begin the process of recovery, while recognizing that the real period of recovery is still to come. Recovering from a marathon can take weeks. Olympic marathon champion, Frank Shorter, has said that, "You're not ready to run another marathon until you've forgotten the last one." To be successful in present and future races, we must effectively deal with the exhaustion of the current race through long periods of rest.

<Direct> Read Jeremiah 29:1-14

In the same way, that marathon runners stand on the other side of a race in total exhaustion, here in Jeremiah 29, the prophet is speaking to a group of Israelites who are sulking in defeat. They are hundreds of miles from home. They have experienced the biggest battle of their lives, and now Jeremiah's advice to them is the same advice given to our marathon runners: rest and recover. After everything that the Israelites had gone through the last thing they wanted to hear is to remain where they are. They want to be home and to keep fighting, but Jeremiah says rest—for the next 70 years! Plant yourselves. Marry the people. Have a family. Most of all pray for the wellbeing of the land that you are now in.

<Reflect> We deal with the exhaustion, and even the defeat of another race to run, task to be done, or battle to fight. The Scripture is clear about what needs to happen in the aftermath of these times. 1.) Don't move too quickly. The tendency is to get away from the stressful location or to move on as if nothing happened. Jeremiah says "stay put". Resting in the struggle creates the opportunity to experience full recovery. After you have rested with the defeat and exhaustion, then, 2) seek the wellbeing of those who put you in this position. Jeremiah 29:7 instructs the Israelites to seek the welfare of their enemies. What is the place that you are trying to "rush" through in your life? What are you doing to help those who have put you in places of defeat? Identify, accept it, and start to consider others who are involved in it all...

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