

ARLM Professional Journal

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Association of Resort & Leisure Ministers

INTRODUCTION

We are glad once again to bring you several professional articles to assist you along your journey. We face very special and unique situations in our calling as Resort/Leisure Ministers. Our hope at ARLM is that we together can walk along beside you in prayer, encouragement and networking. I want to thank Brad Lartigue, Jennifer Capshaw, and Gary Mathis for their willingness to share their articles and talents and experience with all of us. Please take the time to read and enjoy these articles. Each one will bring you refreshed thinking and information which will help you along the journey.

Know that your ARLM family is with you in prayer every day, understanding what you do and your strong call from God to reach those in your special sphere of influence. This Fall 2008 Journal includes the following articles:

Fit for Ministry by Brad Lartigue – Brad is a long time resort missionary with a deep dedication to fitness and health. For many years he has served as a mentor and leader to those in the resort ministries field and brings us real things to think about in our life as we serve the Master. Brad serves as the Resort Chaplain and minister to Big Sky Montana and Yellowstone National Park.

Building relationships with Ministry Partners by Gary Mathis – Gary has served as a pastor and field minister in resort settings for many years. His experience at building relationships with Churches, Association and State conventions is proven in his work. Gary serves on the staff of the Charleston Baptist Association in South Carolina where part of his many responsibilities is to Resort/Leisure Ministries in the Charleston area.

The Importance of Your Personal Devotional Life by Jennifer Capshaw – Jennifer and her husband Scott have worked side by side in ministry for many years. They serve with the Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries in Gatlinburg, Tenn. She is a great servant of our Lord, following His will and leadership. Her life and ministry demonstrates that she is connected with God. That her personal devotional life is in order keeps her a humble and willing servant.

I want to remind you that in October of 2009 we will gather for our national meeting. Begin to pray now that God will (as always) be with us and that we will be refreshed and inspired. Watch for the details; they will soon be on the way to you.

I hope you find these articles useful and inspiring as you carry out your call. Blessings.

– Dr. Billy Hutchinson, VP-Professional Development

FIT FOR MINISTRY: Staying Physically Fit in Resort Ministry

By: Brad Lartigue
Yellowstone Christian Innovators

The Biblical Foundation

So, God put himself in the form of flesh (Jesus Christ) to understand the things that we experience in this human form. His example and model for living comes from a verse in St. Luke 2:52 that says, “And Jesus grew in wisdom, stature and in favor with God and mankind.” These are 4 areas of life that WE ALL need to grow, whether as an individual or as a married couple. When you are not growing in these areas together, it’s like that cord is being weakened and weakened everyday until it breaks.

1) *This verse says to GROW in WISDOM* - If you’re not learning or growing wise about the various passions that you have in life, you will achieve less success in your ministry. Or if you’re growing in wisdom, yet you’re not growing in this particular area along with your spouse, then slowly you’re going to grow apart. Be wise about the world and pursue these knowledgeable things together.

2) *GROW in STATURE* - Now this is an area that most Americans have a problem. We live in a culture that makes it easy to have unhealthy practices with our body temple. Encourage each other and be disciplined physically with what you eat, how you exercise and doing those things together as a couple or with a friend.

3) *GROW in favor with GOD* - Your spiritual life is more than attending church and hanging out with “Followers of Jesus.” It’s about having a personal relationship with God the Father, Jesus Christ our Saviour and the Holy Spirit that ties us together as a family. This spiritual tie is the “glue” that keeps things together, yet there has to be discipline in this area, just like the other areas. We should always be working on our intentional and interactive life with the “source who gives us life.” Part of that is fellowship with other believers in Christ. There’s a verse in Proverbs that says, “As iron sharpens iron, so one brother (person) sharpens another.” We do that when we fellowship with others who are positive role models, who have the reflection of the life that we want to live as well!

4) *GROW in favor with MANKIND* - Making a difference in other people’s lives socially and in your community where God has placed us. We don’t always have a problem with this area. We need to hangout and fellowship (be social, if you will) with individuals and couples who have the type of healthy relationships and marriages that you want to aspire to have. At the same time, we need to be “salt of the earth.” How many “seeking” (non-believing) friends do you have or what non-church community-building endeavors are you a part of?

The Key Questions and Answers about Eating and Exercising

Why do I eat what I eat? Each of us must take a new look at why we choose to eat what we eat. Rather than continue our mindless, unconscious habits, we need to be intentional and rational about what we choose to put into our bodies. We need to take a cold, hard look at the bad habits into which we have fallen and choose to make a change when we find ourselves in error. In the context of the verse Luke 2:52, Jesus probably did not eat processed, high-sugar, high-fat, high-salt, low-fiber foods.

Did Jesus Exercise? What application can we conclude?

Many Christians seem to believe that exercise is of very little value. They base their opinion, in part, on what the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy: “Bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things.” (1Tim. 4:8). However, biblical times were vastly different from today with regard to people’s need for additional “bodily exercise.” When Jesus walked the earth, most people walked from 3 to 10 miles a day in the course of their daily lives and work! It is estimated that Jesus possibly walked a total of 24,901.55 miles in his lifetime as a result of the many travels to and from Jerusalem as a young kid of 5 to an adult of 30. This is equivalent of our world’s distance at the equator. So, as you can see, people in Jesus’ day did not need to engage in additional exercise. Extra exercise was usually only done in the Roman Empire to increase muscle size and strength for participation in spectator sports. Certainly Paul valued physical health: he simply believed that getting bodily exercise for the purpose of engaging in sports was not as profitable as using one’s time and energy to develop spiritual strength.

Get Started NOW - Determine Your Exercise Heart Rate Range

*In starting an exercise program, you need to determine your exercise heart rate range. Your target heart rate should be between 50 and 80% of your maximum heart rate. To determine this range, subtract your age from 220. Multiply that number by .5 (50%) and then multiply that number by .8 (80%). Here’s an example: a forty-year-old person would subtract 40 from 220 ($220-40= 180$); $180 \times .5= 90$; $180 \times .8 = 144$. The exercise heart rate range is 90 – 144 beats per minute. As you begin your exercise program, keep within your range. After a couple of months, increase the intensity to 60-70% of your max. After several more months, as you become physically fit, increase the intensity of your exercise.

Chart your “Plan of Action”

- 1) Choose this day whom you will serve: God’s design for your body temple or your own selfish desires.
- 2) Write down a list of problem areas that you feel are a struggle, whether it’s what you eat, lack of exercise, stress or amount of sleep.

- 3) Enlist the help of a friend whom you think is physically fit or could be a personal trainer to you.
- 4) Work with a friend, workout partner or trainer to research, develop and write a “Plan of Action” for your fitness goals and write out a covenant contract that you will sign with your accountability partner. Okay it with your doctor if need be.
- 5) Don’t be a “gerbil.” Get outside and incorporate a moderate to strenuous exercise at least 3 times a week for 30 minutes each time, at or above your *exercise heart rate and “break a sweat.”
- 6) Join a local fitness team. Whether you are into trail running, cycling, swimming, rock climbing, hunting, fishing, golf, cross-country skiing, hiking, kayaking, etc., you need to invest in your health! If you’re the type of person that has begun a fitness program, only to taper off and eventually shove it aside, then you need to try something new. Join a club (like the local Masters Swim Team) that caters to the sport that you enjoy and see how the benefits of growing in wisdom, stature, God and mankind will be the end result of this investment.
- 7) Not the least of these, Pray to God for your dedication to honoring the body temple that God has given you. As you rise in the morning and Thank God for embracing you with life, pray that God will guard your heart, eyes, mind and body to make the right choices of balancing your day with devotion to Him by what you eat, what you will do to strengthen yourself in mind, body and spirit. Tap into the power of Jesus that is promised when He says that “we can do all things through Christ, who gives us strength,” and then do just that! Keep a journal, chart your progress along the way and see how God has increased in your life.

My personal recommended list of Books to consider:

“What would Jesus Eat?” by Don Colbert, M.D.

“Toxic Relief” by Don Colbert, M.D.

“What the Bible Says about Healthy Living” by Rex Russell, M.D.

“Nourishing Traditions” the cookbook that challenges politically correct nutrition and the Diet Dictocrats by Sally Fallon

“The Bible’s Seven Secrets to Healthy Eating” by Joyce Rogers

“Celebration of Discipline” by Richard J. Foster

“Building God’s Temple” by Dr. Dick Couey

“The Aerobics Program for Total Well-Being” by Dr. Kenneth H. Cooper

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH MINISTRY PARTNERS

By: Gary Mathis, *Special Ministries Coordinator*
Charleston Baptist Association

For those involved in ministry, most relate to numerous entities for information sharing, serving, training, funding, etc. This list may include, but is not limited to, area churches, our local association, our state convention, the North American Mission Board, and the Association of Resort and Leisure Ministers. We may even relate to more specialized groups such as Port Ministries International, Campers on Mission, or the Christian Golfers Ministry. In addition to personal friendships, we have relationships in the professional realm, business world, local neighborhood, and faith community (hopefully not just Baptist!). As ministers, we need to strive to build relationships that encourage and assist us in ministry.

Reasons for Relationships

Let's consider two of the reasons we need these relationships. One reason we need to build relationships is for encouragement. Every once in a while it is good to receive a pat on the back or to hear words from our ministry partners like "good job" and "well done." The Bible is filled with numerous references to this subject, such as to "encourage one another and build each other up" (1 Thess. 5:11). While it may be true that all we need is to know we are faithfully serving the Lord, there is still great power and motivation through encouragement received from other people who appreciate our work and ministry. If you appreciate encouragement, make sure you are also offering it to others. Your supervisor may be having a crummy week. A fellow minister might be feeling unappreciated. A ministry partner may have just faced a setback causing feelings of inadequacy and discouragement. Then you show up with a smile and a few genuine words of encouragement. Like most areas of a good relationship, encouragement must come from both sides.

Another reason we need relationships is for the assistance we have to offer one another. How rewarding it is to learn from and share resources with one another. In 1998 I moved from Texas to West Virginia to pastor a church and begin a ski ministry. Growing up in Corpus Christi, I didn't know much about ski ministry. O.K. Let me be honest. I knew nothing. Therefore, I tried to learn from those already doing it. I called Bill Black in the Smokies, attended a ski ministry conference in the Rockies hosted by Steve Hoekstra, and read about Debbie Wohler's ministry at Lake Tahoe. I later met, talked with, and learned from Brad Lartigue of Big Sky Country. Although we need to be creative to reflect the needs of our unique settings, we certainly don't need to re-invent the wheel. Others can assist us through their knowledge and experience gained by both their successes and failures. Asking questions and learning from others is a great tool.

Many of us serving in resort ministries are dependant upon and grateful for the sharing of resources. This may include funds for salaries, equipment, or training. It may be through the assistance of mission teams. It may be through supplies collected by a children's mission

organization. Every year, the International Seafarers Ministry of the Charleston Baptist Association receives thousands of handmade knit caps made primarily by Baptist women to give to seafarers as Christmas presents. It is always a joy to be able to share some of these caps with a group that we have a great relationship with. The Charleston Port and Seafarers Society is an ecumenical ministry that focuses on another part of the Port that we don't serve. The assistance through sharing of this resource helps to make sure that more international seafarers who visit the Port of Charleston receive a Christmas present and gospel tract.

Keys to Building Ministry Relationships

A vital key to building ministry relationships is to be intentional. We must seek relationships out, as they do not usually come looking for us. Every person reading this article probably thinks they are busy persons. Most ministers, including resort and leisure ministers, have more tasks on their to-do list than they have hours in the day. We are so busy that if we don't spend time and energy fostering ministry relationships, we will feel like we are on our own. If we expect great ministry relationships to just happen upon us, then we are going to be disappointed. On rare occasions, this may happen, but most likely we need to be proactive in seeking relationships that will be an asset to our ministry. Otherwise, we will miss the blessings and possibilities.

Another key is to be conversational. Simply put, focus on two-way conversation. We must be involved with both talking and listening. Too often there is not significant dialogue because the communication is one-way. The most basic level of communication is information sharing, which is important. Others need to hear what we are doing, what we desire to do, what resources we need, what resources we have to offer, and what prayer requests we have. Likewise, we need to know what they are doing, what they desire to do, what resources they need, what resources they have to offer, and what prayer requests they have.

It is through this conversational sharing of information that we determine what people we need to be in regular touch with. We discover people we desire to have a relationship with. We find common interests, such as meeting the needs of a certain people group. We determine commonality in the goals that we are trying to accomplish. We share a similar belief system and values. Our vision for the community is much the same. At this point we have moved to a deeper relationship with our partners, but it all starts by sharing information through conversation.

One more key is to be mutual. Specifically, we must strive to bring about a mutual benefit in the relationship. This means we must be involved in giving and receiving. Too much of one and not enough of the other by one side results in an unhealthy relationship. Too often, especially in dealing with a bare bones ministry budget, we have a tendency to focus on what another person and their organization can do to help and serve us. Too often we walk around with our hand out. We must be careful to not get tunnel-vision to the point

of overlooking how we can serve others and be a partner to minister to others. Imagine how your ministry relationships would improve if you took the initiative to find out how you can serve those who typically have been the servers, givers, and equippers. Seek to meet their needs and beyond. Do more than they even ask for.

Conclusion

As we build these ministry relationships, we must keep in mind that people are the key. Our focus must not be on the entity, an organization, an agency, a convention, and not even an association. All these groups are made up of people. These groups are nothing without the people they are comprised of. Therefore, as you endeavor to build relationships that foster a better environment for ministry, make sure your focus is on the people involved.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL DEVOTIONAL LIFE IN MINISTRY

By: Jennifer Capshaw
Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries

Where does one begin? Let's start at the beginning, the very beginning. God, creator and maker of all living creatures and matter, desired a relationship with His creation. He used his hands to shape and form, and then He breathed life. So began man and woman. Their journey began with breath and so does ours. We breathe and live. We journey through life day in and day out. Then we stop breathing and one day we die. That could be all there is to the story but it is not. Why not? The beginning purpose of our creation was to have relationship with the one who created us. So where does that relationship begin and how does it live within us, mold us, and change us?

The answer is complicated. For each one of us the story is completely different. It has a different beginning, a different meaning, a different life within us, and a different journey. Yet there are some things that are concrete, some truths relevant to us all. One central truth we share is that we were created for relationship. At some point in everyone's life I believe there is a stirring. We come to the realization that there is more to life than simply living. There is a sense of another presence at work. We sense we are not alone. The world is much larger than us, much larger than our comprehension. We experience things we cannot explain. We hear a voice. Some people hear a still small voice whispering "come". Others hear a loud voice demanding our attention. I believe at some point in a person's life, whether they recognize it as such or not, God happens. He cannot be ignored. He must be recognized and answered. What a person responds is what makes it individual and personal.

Some people respond with a whole hearted "yes". Other people respond by saying "let's see what this develops into". Then some people don't respond at all.....at first. Then sadly some respond with a firm "no". For those who respond positively the response is the beginning of a beautiful journey of growth. The journey takes each of us on different paths. These paths cross different cultures, different geography, and different vocations. For all of the people who say "yes" personal devotion becomes one of the key components to their relationship with God. Personal devotion is exactly what it says. It is personal, relating to an individual. It is deeply intimate, closely protected. It is an expression of our dedication, our loyalty. It is our search for knowledge, truth, and our search for God. It is at times overwhelming and humbling. It is a struggle, sometimes achieved, other times not to the level we may wish. It is a never ending journey. It will be a journey filled with searching, listening, crying, heartache, joy, contemplation, and hopefully at some point contentment.

For a person who answers a call to service as a minister for their vocational field, personal devotion and the practice of it is essential. Personal devotion can be practiced through a

variety of resources, places, and styles. Some practice personal devotion in large adorned cathedrals, others in the majestic beauty of God’s creation, and some in the stillness of their mind. Some utilize great writings from past and present theologians to find connection to and understanding of God, while others quiet their souls through the beauty of musical composition and angelic singing. Still some practice personal devotion in quiet contemplation and meditation. All of these practices are for the purpose of developing a depth of personal devotion that draws us into close relationship with God. If one proclaims to live his or her life in service to God, there must be connection to God. It is through connection with God that we understand His ways, learn of His wisdom, claim His truths, and submit to His authority. As we draw near to the source of our devotion, our calling is confirmed, our path is made clear. God becomes the one who guides our steps and directs our paths, not our human desire to achieve or be known. The individual life within us diminishes and we begin to see and understand the phrase “if there is anything good within me it is God and God alone.” We begin to understand our human inabilities and appreciate God’s sovereignty. As we connect to the heart and mind of God we are able to fully serve. It is then that we serve beyond our ability, beyond our understanding. We serve in response to devotion to God not out of opportunity or a “why not” mentality.

Imagine a person who claims to be a medical doctor but never went to medical school or claimed to be a specialist in the medical field but did not maintain his or her education on the latest technologies or medical advancements. We wouldn’t count that person as much of a medical professional. It is the same with ministers of the faith. A true minister is one who serves out of devotion, ministers out of the abundance within him or her that comes from the only sustaining source of a personal devotional life. If a minister doesn’t maintain a fresh and living personal devotional life, one could ask how effective is his or her ministry?

There may be times when a minister will fall short of his or her own personal goals of a disciplined personal devotional life. There may be times when life’s journey encounters heartache leading a minister to suffer or times when success, even holy success, can distract a minister. Sometimes everything is going according to plan and then complacency sets in. Personal devotional life is the key to balance and sustainability for ministers.

In Psalm 78 God recounts the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to the promised land. God remembers their shortcomings and His anger, then in vs. 38 we read, “He [God] remembered that they were but flesh, a passing breeze that does not return.” God shares an amazing perspective on human life in this verse. Life is a passing breeze that does not return. We do not get a “do over” in this life. We have but one life, one life to live fully devoted to God in service to Him.

May we deepen our devotion to You, oh Lord! May our lives reflect Your glory! May the world know Your saving grace! Amen.

ARLM JOURNAL BOOK REVIEW

By: Dr. Billy Hutchinson, *ARLM VP-Professional Development*

***The Present Future* by Reggie McNeal**

At the time Reggie wrote this book he was serving on the South Carolina Baptist Convention staff. He has since moved on to be a leader and equipper to leaders, churches and denominations across America with the organization Church Leadership Network. The book *Present Future* lets us know that we are now ministering in the future. A quote from the book, "changing the questions church leaders ask themselves about their congregations and their plans, they can frame the core issues and approach the future with new eyes, new purpose and new ideas". In this day of ministry and in our type ministries, we must be leaders that move toward the future. I believe that understanding and working with church leaders is one way to move the idea of Resort/leisure ministries to the forefront of thinking among the churches. This is an easy and understandable read. The book is available at most Christian Bookstores and on Amazon.com. It is a Leadership Network Publication, published by Jossey-Bass Publishing.

Suggested other Books:

***God in the Garden* by Curtis Mitchell**

This is the amazing story of Billy Graham's first New York Crusade. A great read to remind us all of why we do what we do!

***From Geography to Affinity* by Lyle Schaller**

A very thought provoking book about how people are drawn together and how they most likely will be in the years to come. A good read to help us as Resort/Leisure ministers to think about what might be important to people in churches and ministry.