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Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Baby Steps

By Joyce C. Lock

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From early childhood, my mother would agree that I was one of the most timid people you'd ever meet.

I was terrified to speak. Outside of family (my comfort zone), I often never spoke.

Hiding behind my husband's coat tail for a number of years, he was good at socializing. I just tagged along. Were it not for him, I'd have never gone in the first place. I would have been too frozen to speak. Having him around took a lot of pressure off me. If I thought of a few lines, fine. But, otherwise, I could enjoy following as he mingled among the people, with maybe an occasional smile or two.

When the opportunity came to not have to play the church piano or organ, but to finally get to sing in a church choir, I was so grateful. Though I couldn't speak the words, I could share my love for the Lord in song. It wasn't that I never wanted to play again, because I did. It was just that I'd discovered a greater ability to worship, making my heart the instrument.

As years came and went, growing in the Lord, God began showing me prophetic things. Sometimes, those things were so wonderful I'd feel like I was about to burst just to tell someone. When I'd attempt to share, people would immediately quote scripture so fast I couldn't take it all in to even know if I agreed or disagreed with their point. It was so intimidating, I'd close my mouth and just slither away.

When messages came with urgency, I'd have to share 'do or die'. It's God's Word to share such things or the blood will be upon your hands. Yet, because of their unbelief, God gave me a stammering tongue so others wouldn't understand what I was trying to express. It truly became a long term thorn in the flesh. I'd spend hours, days, and weeks (and sometimes even months) just laboring to make one important point in a way that others could finally get it.

Often feeling like I think the Apostle Paul must have felt, excellent in knowledge but rude in speech, my words would often create unintended offences. Being misunderstood became a hurtful way of life. Walking on eggs was a royal pain, mostly on my part – never being aloud to be real. Retreating, I'd

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often find comfort in expression through pen.

Having had the opportunity of first hand observance of some of the most wonderfully gifted encouragers in the world, and the effect they had to lift up people ... one day, God said, "Now, it's your turn." I couldn't speak! I'd already promised God I'd go where He'd send me, "But, you know I can't speak!!!"

It isn't that I refused to go. I truly wanted to keep my word to God. But, if I walked up to someone – my brain would go dead. Words seemed to vanish. "God, you know that!"

God responded, "Well ... could you say that you like their tie?" I paused, then responded, "It might kill me, but I 'can' say that."

After working up some courage, I walked up to the person God directed me to and said energetically, "I really like that tie!" The guy seemed both startled and surprised, as if no one had ever given him a compliment. He gave a big smile, but his 'thank you', seemed to be the only thing he could figure out to say (as if he'd never had opportunity to say it before).

Shew! I was glad that was over.

God showed me a lady, wearing a red dress. Passing in a church crowd, I made mention of how nice that color looked on her. Her face lit up and her mouth flew open. But, no words followed. It was as if no one had ever noticed before. She was both pleased and speechless. But, moving on through the crowd, it didn't leave time for her to feel pressured to respond. Though just for a brief moment, it felt good to have made a difference.

Then God said, "See that lady over there? Go say something nice to her." 'Something nice' means I'd have to figure out what the compliment is. I looked and saw she was wearing a pretty broach. I had the first line, but she filled in all the rest. It's just amazing how people's faces would light up when someone acknowledged their presence. All I had to do was speak first, then we'd find amazing things to discuss.

Oh, man. This was so cool! Just say something to the person in need that God shows you and stand back and see what He does with it. (Faithful is He who called you, who also will do it.) Hey! God's Word works!!!! And sometimes, all they need is someone to care that they came.

I was getting pretty good at this. Man this was a breeze. Just about that time ... God upped the ante.

"Now, I want you to go say something spiritual." Oh, no! Of all things, this would be harder. "Bubububut, God, you didn't tell me what to say!" "Observe," He said. "Find something nice to say about their ministry."

Every time I'd get comfortable, God would say, "Let's learn something else."

(Once, years ago, I was in a crowd and someone came from behind and touched my shoulder to get

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my attention. Feeling something spiritual happen from head to toe, I immediately had to turn and see who it was that touched me. It was so awesome, I never forgot it. The only explanation I know of is that his spirit transferred to mine.)

Again, God sent me with a message to another lady, before church was to start. This one wasn't even a really big deal. It was just something she needed to be informed of. But, she had a crowd gathered as she stood gabbing about the weather. I waited patiently for at least 10 min. and it was almost time for church to start, still not having gotten her attention.

I asked God what I was suppose to do. He said, "Remember the touch? Now it's your turn. Reach up and ever so gently place your hand upon her shoulder, then wait for her response."

The lady finished her sentence, turned around and spoke to me in such a spirit, I think my knees almost melted. She ministered to me in such a miraculous way, I was in awe. Her speech instantly moved from insignificant to spiritual. It was so wonderful that I turned to see if anyone else had seen it. I almost said out loud, "Did you see what God just did!?!". But, they didn't see. The crowd had vanished. They'd missed a blessed opportunity to witness the Power of a Touch.

In big ways and little ways, I began practicing the things I'd learn. Whenever I couldn't remember someone's name, which was most of the time, if I so much as tapped their shoulder, they'd greet with an instant smile. I'd say, "Hi", to people on the street – something they hadn't heard since years gone by (unless they'd visited the South). I'd look to notice little things, in letting others know their ministries were appreciated.

There's a verse that says the giver receives the greater blessing. I found it to be very true, as these people would begin ministering to me! And, as someone would begin to care about them, they were in turn multiplying seed by caring about others.

My youngest daughter once said, "Mom, that is so weird, walking up and talking to and helping people you don't even know." Could it be that this very thing of encouraging others could even be contagious on the streets? I don't know, but people are a lot kinder in our local stores than they were just a few years ago.

I never was able to be an encourager in the same way that others were. But, God didn't call me to be someone else. And with each new step, I learned something wonderful about God.

Next, He sent me to a visitation training program. Then I knew God had lost His mind! But, I'd already promised I'd go wherever He called and I'd already gone farther than ever imagined. (I didn't say I didn't dread it though.)

But, much to my amazement and appreciation, God didn't make me learn all the perfect quotes and memorizations. I didn't have to practice how to intimidate other people with scripture.

I failed the course, was accused of not submitting to authority, and was asked to leave the class. God never promised there would be no pain. But even amidst a hurt greater than I had ever known inside a

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church, not even good enough to serve God, He gave me a very special promise. The words He'd written upon my heart, He would bring to remembrance whenever I needed them.

God had something different in mind for me to learn ... how to minister, looking to the needs of their heart. In my weakness, God became my strength. And, I finally learned to speak by taking Baby Steps.

God doesn't call the equipped.

He equips the called.

I Co. 1:27-31

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<http://www.aspecialplace.net/ChristianityMadeSimple/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/HeavenlyInspirations-originalwritings/>

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In addition to being a published author and poet, Joyce C. Lock created the religion column, "Christianity Made Simple" for Peru Daily Tribune, continues to write inspirational articles for area

newspapers, and shares further in online and e-mail ministries.

Helping Your Baby Sleep Well

By Linda Davis

Should you let sleeping babies lie? Babies spend most of their day sleeping. It is during sleep that their body grows and gets stronger. Regardless of whether your baby is a heavy sleeper or a light one, it is important to take steps to enhance their sleeping patterns by recreating the environment of the womb.

First create a cozy sleeping area. Although cribs are the first sleeping space that most parents think of for their newborn babies, the space may be too large for your baby sleep in comfortably. Why? You have to keep in mind that for nine month his or her little body was snug inside the uterus. Having such a large space between their body and the walls of a crib can make them feel uncomfortable and scared. It's best to let your baby sleep in a bassinet or a baby carriage for the first few months after his or her birth.

Second, help your baby relax with soothing sounds. Inside the womb, your baby experienced the sounds of his or her mothers body. For many months your baby was comforted by the sounds of a heartbeat or the gurgling sounds of a stomach. These internal sounds helped to keep the baby happy and relaxed. When putting your baby to sleep the sound of a humming fan or the soft sound of a music

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box will help them sleep better.

Don't undermine your baby's sleeping habit by not letting them sleep too much in the day. If your baby has problems sleeping at night and this is interrupting your sleep, you may try fix this problem by keeping the baby up during the day. While this may work with small children by causing them to be more tired at night, it is not recommend for a newborn baby. This will only cause your baby to become sleep deprived, which in turn will cause the baby to sleep more restlessly. A well rested baby has healthier sleeping patterns than one that's tired due to being kept awake during the day, when they really wanted to be sleeping.

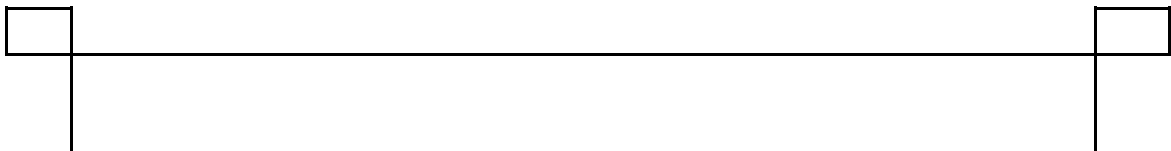
For the parents of a newborn child, a good night's sleep can seem elusive. It does get better as the child gets older, but in the mean time, you can take these few steps to encourage your baby to sleep well.

Linda Davis contributes to several web sites, including

and



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