

Don't Stress...
Your Life is Calling!

*5 Things You Can Do Right Now to
Permanently Eliminate Stress
(So You Can Get On With Your Life)*

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**Includes
easy-to-follow
checklists!**

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The Wake Up Call, or “How to Spray Perfume on the Garbage”

It was Sunday, October 2, 2005.

For several days previous, I had been experiencing a strange sensation in my chest. It wasn't exactly pain, more like pressure--like someone was stepping on me or squeezing my heart. And it was random--nothing in particular seemed to bring it on.

It began happening frequently enough, though, that on Saturday I told my husband that the next time I felt it, I was going to call the nurse.

The next morning I said good-bye to my husband (he was going to a race and would not be back until the evening) and proceeded to get myself ready for the day. I showered, got dressed, and made breakfast for the kids--you know, the normal stuff.

And then, without warning, I felt it again.

“Well,” I sighed, “I did say I was going to call if it happened again.”

So I called the nurse and began to describe my symptoms. She asked me a few questions and then said scariest words I had ever heard in my life:

“Margie, I want you to hang up the phone and call 911.”

It was like a bullet tearing through me.

I started to cry.

I knew what she was saying. She thought I was having a heart attack.

“Margie--” I heard her say, “Will you do it?”

I had to compose myself.

“Yes--” I said. “As soon as I find someone to watch my kids...”

My mind was racing. How could this be happening? I was young-- only 37! I was a vegetarian--aren't we supposed to be immune?

I called my friend, Susan, and choked out, “Susan, I need you to come over right now.”

She came immediately, without even asking what was going on. She's like that.

Then I called 911.

When you call 911, they stay on the phone with you until help arrives, so I was still talking to them when Susan got there. I hardly had time to explain before the ambulance pulled into my driveway.

Thinking quickly, Susan offered to call her husband to come watch the kids so she could ride with me to the hospital.

So that's what we did.

The EMTs hooked me up to several machines and whisked me out to the ambulance.

It's funny how your mind works during an emergency--

The only thing I could think about was how mortified I was at what the neighbors might think (and how grateful that none of them emerged to find out!).

The technicians were friendly and asked me lots of questions. I overheard one of them call the hospital and relay the answers I provided, and I remember joking with him, "You must be a good husband--you're a really good listener."

My own husband was not reachable. We tried calling him several times throughout the day, but he was not in cell phone range. He would not hear the story until it was all over.

At the hospital, I was hooked up to more machines, had blood drawn, and was interviewed and examined by the nurse and the ER doctor.

And after all that--

They could find nothing wrong with me.

Again, it's funny how the mind works. I mean, I didn't *want* to be sick, obviously, but at the same time, I hated to go through all that trouble for nothing!

The ER doctor suggested that I make an appointment to see my regular doctor.

At the time, my life was blessed by a wonderful, amazing, holistic family practitioner, whom I visited the next day. As we talked, he noticed that I was sighing frequently. He asked me about it, and I said, "Yea, that's just how I breathe. People are always commenting on it."

(And that was true--people were always asking me what was wrong, and I was forever saying, "Nothing! I'm just breathing!!!")

Dr. Mathis said, "Well, sighing like that is a sign of stress. What's going on in your life?"

That's when it all poured out, and the answers flooded in: *Stress* had landed me in the hospital.

Looking back now, it was hardly surprising.

By all accounts, I was a supermom--overworked and over committed, raising my two kids, active in my church, my kids' school and my community, and struggling to make ends meet by running three (yes, three!) failing businesses from my home.

I honestly felt that if I did not personally hold the world up, it would come crashing down.

And here's the best part: I thought that the world needed more people like me! "I have to do everything," I thought. "If everyone else would just step up and do their part, then I wouldn't be so stressed out."

At the time, like most people, I thought the solution was to *manage* my stress.

Dr. Mathis gave me an herbal supplement that was supposed to make me feel calm and relaxed. I started lighting candles in the evening and listening to classical music. I did yoga, took hot baths and got massages.

Unfortunately, while these things felt *great* (and I'll bet you feel good just reading the above paragraph--go ahead, read it again), they were only treating the symptoms, and not the cause.

It was like spraying perfume on the garbage: **It may smell better for awhile, but until you take out the trash, the stink just won't go away!**

It wasn't until I learned how to actually *eliminate* the stress that my life finally started turning around.

As I started putting the pieces together, life felt good.

I couldn't believe how I could sail through life's challenges without getting worked up like I used to. I was happy--happier than I can ever remember being. People started saying things to me like, "Margie, you are not the same person I met 10 years ago."

I was like a piece of old furniture. Stripped, sanded, and refurbished, I was still me, but I became a shinier, happier, and more beautiful version.

I decided to start writing about what I was experiencing and the things I found that were helping me along the path. I even started a blog, www.StressFreeLikeMe.com, so I could document my journey.

And then an amazing thing happened.

Why I Wrote this Book, or “How to Gain a Following by Losing a Contest”

In January of 2008, I sat down and thought about my life. I thought about what I enjoyed--what I wanted to do more of. I thought about what I wanted to accomplish--where I wanted to be within the next year.

I decided that I wanted to become a known author.

For some time, I had been writing short stories--stories about my life and how they relate to success principles. I put them in my blog and reread them for my own pleasure.

Now, I wanted the world to read them.

No sooner had I put this thought out into the Universe than I received an email from 4-time best-selling author Mark Joyner, announcing a contest called “Be the Next Best-Selling Author.” He was putting together a course not just on becoming an *author*, but a *best-selling* one. You could win one of three spots in his class (a \$1000 value) by recording a short YouTube video of you or someone else reading one of your stories.

I could not believe the timing.

Immediately, I wrote and filmed my heart attack story and figured out how to post it on YouTube.

Since one of the prizes was going to be given to the person who had the most views, I began telling everyone I remotely knew about the video and asking them to watch it and send it to their friends.

Alas, I did not win the contest, but as the video made its way around the globe, I learned something shocking.

Over and over people said to me, "Wow, that happened to me, too," or to their sister or to someone else they knew.

I was stunned by just how many people were, like me, being sent to the hospital because of a manmade condition--*stress*.

I realized I was in a position to help.

I had already escaped the tar pit--I had an obligation to share what I've learned.

Are you ready?

The Case of the Aching Tooth, or “Stop Complaining and Go the Dentist!”

Not long ago, I had a toothache.

My tooth bothered me every hour of every day. I thought about it, complained about it, and worried about it. I had a huge cavity that I looked at, talked about, cleaned and put medicine on.

This went on for months, and yet, I did not go to the dentist.

Why?

Because going to the dentist meant finding the phone number, picking up the phone, calling the office, figuring out a time to go, arranging for child care, getting in the car, driving all the way to the office, waiting in the office, undergoing the exam *plus* whatever treatment was necessary, paying more money than I thought I should, driving all the way home, and dealing with the effects of the treatment.

Nah...I'll just complain, thanks.

I complained and fretted and worried and, yes, *stressed*, until the pain got so bad I just couldn't take it anymore.

And then I reached a critical point: The *actual* pain from the tooth overpowered the *imaginary* pain of getting it fixed.

So I finally took the necessary steps (in my case, it was so bad it had to be pulled), and *voila*--no more pain in my tooth. Sheesh. What took me so long?

I have found that stress in our lives has become so commonplace, expected and, unfortunately, even admired (but we'll talk about that later), that it is like a dull ache in our lives. It's there--it's there all the

time--but it hasn't gotten so bad yet that we are motivated to do anything about it.

And that's unfortunate, because now that I am on the other side, I can see how amazingly wonderful and miraculous it is to live stress-free.

Most, though, because their lives have not yet gotten painful (or stress-*full*) enough to take the necessary steps to change it, will choose to complain instead.

My hope for you is that you will decide today--*right now*--that you will not put up with stress for one more second. You deserve to live a life that is joyous and fulfilling and beautiful and abundant. You are not required to sacrifice these things for anyone or anything. You are not required to delay your happiness for any reason.

What you'll find in the remainder of this book are 5 simple things you can do *immediately* to create a stress-free life and start experiencing the amazing, rewarding joy that is your birthright. It's not about *managing* your stress, it's not about *reducing* your stress, it's about **eliminating** stress from your life.

To make it even easier, I've included checklists for each chapter and an entire section of resources that can help you on your journey.

Please note that I am not a doctor, social worker, psychotherapist, or licensed life coach. If you are having serious issues with depression or are feeling like you simply cannot handle your life, please visit one of those professionals.

What I can offer you, however, is a view from the other side and a hand to hold onto as you, too, make the transition from stress-*full* to stress-**free**.

So let's get going. Your life is calling!

Step One: Get Your Financial House in Order

If you were to walk down the street and ask ten people what stresses them out, you might get a variety of answers--my job (or lack of it), my health (or lack of it), my love life (or...well, you get the idea), my kids, my family, war, gas prices, and the list goes on.

But there is one thing you will hear over and over and over: Money.

Study after study has shown that *money* (or lack of it!) is the number one cause of stress in modern life (and even the number one cause of divorce).

So what are the five steps for eliminating stress from your life?

1. Get your financial house in order
2. Get your financial house in order
3. Get your financial house in order
4. Get your financial house in order
5. Get your financial house in order!

OK, I'm just kidding. But it is the *first* step.

When people are stressed about money, there are generally two things that are eating at them. (I'll bet you can guess what they are--they're probably eating at you, too!)

The first is *debt*, the second is *finding a way to make more*.

Now when it comes to debt, the first thing you need to do is put things in perspective.

I have talked to hundreds of people to help them get their financial house in order. When I ask them what they are going to do with the money they make, the very first thing that comes out of their mouth

is almost always, "Get out of debt." It's amazing how many people feel burdened and bound by debt.

And, of course, I have been there, too.

But I had an experience one day that completely changed my way of thinking, and I want to share it with you.

I was on a business training call and one of the speakers was talking about Donald Trump. I do not remember now what exactly she was saying about him, but she mentioned in passing that at one time Donald Trump had \$900 million in personal debt. Yes, that's *nine hundred million* dollars in *personal* debt.

I couldn't believe my ears. She must have misspoken. Surely she meant \$9 million--or \$900,000. What individual has nearly a billion dollars in *personal* debt?

So I did some research and found that, sure enough, that was exactly his situation.

Suddenly my measly little \$126,000 mortgage was nothing. It was pocket change. *It was certainly nothing to be stressed out about!*

So, before you do anything else, tally up your debt and put it in perspective. Is it really that big? Unless you are a high roller, chances are, it's not. Breathe a sigh of relief.

Next, put in place a debt elimination plan.

You may have heard the old adage, "What you focus on, expands." This principle is true with everything, but it's especially true with debt. The more you focus on it, the bigger it appears. The bigger it appears, the more stressed out you will become.

In the movie *The Secret*, life achievement guru Bob Proctor says, "Most people have a goal of getting out of debt. That will keep you in debt forever! Whatever you're thinking about, you will attract.

"You'll say, 'But it's get out of debt.'

"I don't care if it's get out or get in--if you're thinking debt, you're attracting debt. Set up an automatic debt repayment program, and then start to focus on prosperity."

In other words, when you follow a system for eliminating your debt, you have the freedom to stop stressing about it.

There are many options for setting up your plan. I've included some recommended resources in Appendix A.

Make sure your system includes budgeting so that no new *personal* debt occurs, and then let the system take care of it.

That's it.

Now go do it--I'll wait.

Did you do it?

Hey--stop reading!

The subtitle of this book is "5 Things You Can Do Right Now..."

So do it right now!

All right, now that that's done, you're ready to move on to the next part of getting your financial house in order: making more money.

First, please notice something important. I did *not* say make more money so you can get out of debt! You see, most people think that making more money will automatically solve their problem. It will not. Debt is a habit, and unless you fix the habit, the more money you make, the greater the debt you will have. Ask Donald Trump.

But, back to making money.

Many people think that getting a better paying job (or a second or third job) is the solution. If that's you, please note:

**The answer is not a job.
The answer is not a job.
The answer is not a job!**

I said in the beginning of this chapter that the number one thing that causes people stress is money. Do you know what number two is? Jobs.

Bosses, co-workers, commuting, day care...it all adds up to one big stress mess.

So what's the answer?

In order to really be stress free about your finances, you must find a way to make money that:

1. Allows you to be in control. If you are looking for true freedom, then where you work, how often you work, and how much money you make should all be determined by you, not a boss.
2. Is simple to understand. Let's face it--if you have to spend a lot of time trying to figure it out, you're only going to end up being more stressed out.

3. Provides a level of income that sustains or increases your standard of living, not just brings in a few extra bucks each month.
4. Provides a way to make money without you being there (leveraged income).

There are a lot of options for making money without a traditional job. Among them are investing in real estate or the stock market, starting your own brick and mortar business (you know, one with an actual store where people walk in and buy stuff), providing a service (like mowing the lawn, fixing computers or giving massages), or running a mobile, internet business.

They all have their pros and cons, but I only recommend one--*a mobile, internet business*. This is the only type of business that matches all four of the above criteria.

Real estate and the *stock market* are great, but there is a big learning curve.

Brick and mortar businesses also have a big learning curve (though franchises reduce this significantly). In addition, they have a lot of overhead, and, though you are in control, they do *not* provide you with freedom. Many small business owners are the most stressed out among us!

Providing a service is a popular way for people to step out into entrepreneurship, but the problem with this type of work is that you must be there to do it. How much you make is limited to how many hours you can actually work.

No, if you're looking for freedom, then an internet business is, in my opinion, the best option.

But how do you get started? Well, I have tried and failed at several different business models (remember the three failing businesses that

contributed to my hospital visit?), and only *one* meets all four of my criteria--is simple to understand, allows you to be in control, and provides a significant and leveraged income.

To find out more, visit my website at:

www.YouCanHaveWhatYouWant.com

Or give me a call at 1-888-454-5421. I will personally answer the phone, and we'll put together an action plan to get your financial house in order and start you on the road to stress free living.

OK, so here's your first checklist:

I am getting my financial house in order...

- ✓ I have tallied my debt and put it in perspective. Compared to Donald Trump, it's not that big.
- ✓ I have put together my debt elimination plan. As I follow it, my debt is automatically being eliminated, so I can just forget about.
- ✓ I have an income stream that is simple to understand, allows me to be in control, and provides a significant and leveraged income.

Step Two: Get Your Physical House in Order

While money may be a pretty obvious thing that is stressing you out (or *did* stress you out--you took care of that in the last chapter, right?), there is something else that is very subtle, yet very damaging to your stress level.

To illustrate, look up from this book and let your eyes settle on some object in the room. It could be a picture on the wall, a dirty dish, a paper--anything. Whatever your eye lands on.

Now, how does that object make you *feel*? You may have very strong feelings (the picture reminds you of how much you love someone--or that you're mad at them!) or you may have none at all ("It's just a piece of paper, sheesh, Margie!"). Just take note of that feeling.

Now, what does that object remind you that you have to *do*? If it's a picture, maybe you need to call that person (or someone else) or go buy a birthday present. If it's a dirty dish, maybe you need to put it in the dishwasher or scold your kids for leaving it out. If it's a piece of paper, maybe you need to read it, throw it away, fill it out, mail it, or file it. Again, just take note of what it makes you think of.

Next, pick a couple more objects and go through the same exercise: How does it make you feel and what does it remind you that you have to do?

If you're like me (and I'm guessing you are, or you wouldn't be reading this book!), then it won't take very many objects before you start getting completely overwhelmed and *stressed*.

You may not realize it, but your physical environment has a powerful effect on you. Of course you do not go through your house consciously thinking about how all these things are weighing on you,

but *unconsciously* you are absorbing the feelings and reminders of every single thing that comes into your experience.

Everything you own comes with a mental cost. Each thing must be tended to, cared for, cleaned, dusted, moved, and kept track of.

So if you want to eliminate stress, then you must get your physical house in order. You must get rid of everything that causes you stress--either because it makes you feel bad or because it reminds you of stuff you have to do!

This can, unfortunately, be a very painful process, because in many ways, getting rid of these things is an admission of *failure*. For me, it meant getting rid of yards of fabric for clothes I intended to make--someday, books that I intended to read--someday, projects I really did want to complete--someday.

The somedays were piling up, and I finally had to admit to myself that, in fact, I was not a superwoman and there would never be enough hours in the day to do all that I wanted or felt I had to do.

Appendix A lists several resources to help you develop a plan to get this done, and although I know I said you are supposed to follow all of the recommendations in this book **right now**, I recognize that you're probably so buried that it's not going to happen overnight.

So I will give you two pieces of advice that you can implement immediately.

First, start with the room that needs the *least* amount of work--the one that is cleanest and the least cluttered.

Approaching it this way, you will finish quickly, will feel a sense of accomplishment, and will not get as overwhelmed and discouraged as

you would if you were starting with the room that needs the most work. Remember, your goal is to *be stress free right now!*

This approach will also provide you with a place of refuge. It will provide you with one room where you can go when you're feeling stressed out. You will be able to sit in that room and let your eyes wander. You will feel only good things in that room. You will be able to relax.

I promise you, it's a great feeling--and that great feeling will motivate you to work on other rooms or other areas.

You will begin to crave that relaxed, easy feeling everywhere in your house.

Second, when you're cleaning out this room, I recommend you follow the advice given by Esther and Jerry Hicks in their book, *Ask and It is Given* (The Teachings of Abraham).

They suggest that you only keep things that are relevant to your *now*: "Look around the room, focus upon an item, and ask yourself, 'Is this item important to my immediate experience?' If the answer is yes, leave it where it is. If the answer is no, put it in [a box]. Then pick up another item and continue the process as you focus on each item in the room."

This exercise is a powerful way to clear away all those "somedays" and prevent yourself from cluttering up your future with today's to do list. I no longer "clean my house," I "clear my stress." I am not just putting away junk, I am *making room for peace*.

I remember one of my first projects was my bedroom dresser. This dresser had become the collection hot spot--everything from papers, to clothes, towels, kids' toys that needed fixing, and more ended up on the top of my dresser. Also on my dresser was an object that a

relative had given me which, for several reasons, I truly despised. Despite the fact that that relative rarely visited and certainly never went in my room when they did, I felt a obligation to keep it displayed.

That day I finally had the courage to put it away. What a sense of relief!

When I was done, my dresser was completely empty, and it was only wood shining on top. The clutter was gone, but now looking at it, I felt empty. The barrenness made me think, "What could I put on my dresser that gives me *good* feelings?" I looked around and found a box that contained the rose my husband gave me on our first date, as well a stuffed animal he gave me our first Valentine's Day, and I put those objects on the dresser.

Now, instead of looking at a pile of junk when I arise in the morning and feeling a slight irritation at all I have to do, I am reminded of the love my husband has for me and how blessed I am that I have been given such a gift.

That is the kind of thing you can expect to experience when you get your physical house in order and begin living *your* stress free life.

So...

I am getting my physical house in order...

- ✓ I have created my one room sanctuary by removing anything that does not make me feel good and peaceful.
- ✓ I am beginning to create more rooms like this so that my entire home becomes a refuge from the stresses of life!
- ✓ I only keep things that are related to my *now* visible. I no longer collect things to do "someday."

Step Three: Put Your Life on AutoPilot

The other day I went jogging at a local park. When I jog, I take my car key off of the ring and stick it in my bra. I also stick my cell phone in my bra. I leave the key ring on the passenger seat and throw my purse in the trunk.

On my way home from the park that day I passed a used book store and decided to stop in. I parked my car and grabbed:

- the single key from the ignition
- my cell phone
- the key ring from the passenger seat
- my purse from the trunk

I was also wearing sunglasses, so I had those in my hand, as well as the single key, the key ring, and the cell phone. I put my purse on my shoulder.

As I perused the shelves, I occasionally had to set down my things so I could flip through a book. I put down my purse, the single key, the key ring, the cell phone, and my sunglasses. When it was time to move on, I picked up the single key, the key ring, my cell phone, and my sunglasses, and put my purse back on my shoulder.

I did this several times.

Finally I made my selection and brought it up to the counter. I handed the man the book and set down the single key, the key ring, the cell phone, and the sunglasses, so I could retrieve my wallet from my purse. When I was ready to go, I picked up my things. I put the purse on my shoulder and picked up the key ring, the cell phone, and my sunglasses, but wait--where had the single key gone?

The man behind the counter helped me look. We revisited the places I had stopped. We looked all over the counter where I had put everything down.

Finally, I checked my purse. Sure enough, the key had slipped into the outside pocket. Whew!

Of course, at that moment, I felt rather silly.

You see, the entire time I was in the store, I had my purse on my shoulder. Why didn't I just put the single key back on the key ring, and then put the key ring, the cell phone, and the sunglasses in my purse? If I had done that, nothing would have gotten lost. It would all have been in one place. Each stop along the bookshelves would have taken less time.

When you carry things in your conscious memory--things you have to do, places you have to visit, people you want to be sure and call, etc.--it's like trying to keep them all in your hands. Stuff gets lost and forgotten, it takes up more time, and, well, it's just more stressful.

However, when you carry them in your unconscious memory, it's like tucking them safely in your purse (sorry, guys--briefcase, for you, I guess!). You can recall them at any time. Your hands are free to do other things, and you can relax.

The more things you can put on autopilot--stuck in your purse or briefcase so you don't have to think about them--the more free you will be from the stress of having to "carry" them around in your brain.

So what types of things can you put on autopilot? Your entire life!

OK, maybe not your *entire* life, but there are definitely some areas that you can automate so you don't have to think or do much about them.

Here are some suggestions:

1. *Getting out of debt.* Do I need to say it again?
2. *Making money.* If you need help with this, visit my website, www.YouCanHaveWhatYouWant.com or call me at 1-888-454-5421.
3. *Getting your house in order.* If you're not in a position yet to have someone else come clean your house, I *highly* recommend FlyLady. Check out the resources in Appendix A for more info.
4. *Bill paying.* It took me a long time to give up my control of paying the bills, but if you really want freedom, this is absolutely the way to go.
5. *Shopping.* There are two ways that I automate my shopping:
 1. I shop with Melaleuca once a month, in one sitting, from the comfort of my own home. Check out the resources in Appendix A for more info.
 2. I decide a week in advance what we're going to have for dinner each night. When it's dinner time there is no stress about what I'm going to fix. When I go to the grocery store there is no stress about what to buy.

I'm sure you will be able to figure out what things in your own life could be automated. The trick, of course, is having the willingness to let go and let someone else (or a system) take care of things for you.

As you start doing something of these things, I recommend occasionally looking in the mirror and saying:

"I am not responsible for personally running the world."

You may want to say it several times.

Oh by the way, one word of caution: Don't get stressed out about following the system--or creating a system to follow, or making sure you're following all the systems all at once.

If you are a chronic stresser like me, then you have a tendency to *create* more and more things to stress out about (we'll talk about why that is a little later).

Just work with a few of the things I have recommended. Over time, you can add more or develop your own. **The key is to keep it simple.** Do not create systems that are more complicated than the original problem! Oh boy, have I fallen into that trap....

I am putting my life on autopilot...

- ✓ I am following a system for getting out of debt.
- ✓ I am following a system for making money.
- ✓ I am following a system for getting my house in order.
- ✓ I am following a system for paying my bills.
- ✓ I am following a system for doing my shopping.

Fill in your own:

- ✓ I am following a system for _____.
- ✓ I am following a system for _____.
- ✓ I am following a system for _____.

Step Four: Surround Yourself with Support

Remember when you were a kid and your parents were worried that you were hanging out with the wrong crowd? Or maybe you have kids of your own and you raise an eyebrow when you see the friends they have chosen.

When we look at others, we can instinctively see the effect that the people they hang out with have on them. It is obvious that birds of a feather flock together.

And yet we often fail to recognize the effect that the people we surround *ourselves* with have on *us*.

As you begin to make these powerful changes toward stress free living, you will likely find that certain people in your life won't like it.

People do not like change, and they particularly don't like *you* to change--especially if you were the one they were relying on to get stuff done.

If you are like me and most other chronic stressers, you have spent a lifetime putting your life on hold for the sake of other people. You have put aside what *you* want to do for what *they* want you to do.

In addition, you may now notice that you are surrounded by other people who are also very stressed out.

I live in the Washington, DC area. Here, stress is considered a fact of life. You are considered abnormal if you don't have it. The more stress you have, the more important you are. I guess you could say that in the Nation's Capitol, a life of stress is "politics as usual."

(Sorry...I couldn't resist.)

You can expect that there is going to be some resistance to your new life. People may be resentful, or even jealous.

They will think it's not fair.

Feel free to give them a copy of this book.

In the meantime, surround yourself with people who support you--people who are positive and encouraging--people who believe that a stress free life is your birthright. That it's the way you are *meant* to live.

You may find these people through your church, your local community, or even online.

In my own life, fortune found me a group of positive, happy, like-minded individuals who lead by example--showing me what life *should* be like--and who encourage, uplift and support me without any financial compensation--it's just what they do. We get together daily on the phone and meet up face to face several times a year.

If you don't have a group like that, I'd be happy to welcome you into mine. Just give me a call at 1-888-454-5421, and I'll introduce you. Or visit my website at www.YouCanHaveWhatYouWant.com and read about our community.

Robert Kiyosaki, author of *Rich Dad, Poor Dad* has said, "The quickest way to change your life is to change your environment."

So increase the amount of time you spend with happy, positive, stress-free people, and reduce or eliminate the amount of time you spend with depressed, negative, stressed out people.

It's as simple as that.

I am surrounding myself with support...

- ✓ I have found a community of people who are positive, uplifting, and support me in my dreams and goals. I spend time with these people every day.
- ✓ I have identified the people in my life that are negative, doubtful, and discouraging. I am quietly spending less and less time with these people every day.

**Without Step Five, It Will All Be for Naught, or
“How to Make Your Life 7 Times Worse,” or
“The Simplest Part is the Hardest”**

Once there was a landlord who had a really horrible tenant. This guy was a real jerk--trashing every room he was in, leaving food out to get rotten, smelly, and infested, playing loud music late at night and basically being obnoxious to the neighbors.

When the landlord found out what was happening, he raised a ruckus and kicked the guy out. Then he hired a contractor to come in and sweep the place clean. The contractor did a great job, and no one could tell that it had once been the dwelling place of such a vile person. It was clean and beautiful. The landlord was happy.

One day some time later, the former tenant was walking by the neighborhood and saw his old house. He went up to it and peaked in the window. It was really nice--and it was empty.

So he went and got seven of his buddies. The eight of them broke in and started living there, causing even more of a disturbance than the first guy had by himself.

The landlord was beside himself. How did this happen? What could he have done differently?

The answer is simple.

The landlord failed to find a new tenant for the house.

You see, if the original tenant had found the house occupied, he would not have come back with his buddies. That only happened because the house was *empty*.

This story, in case you do not recognize it, is straight from the Bible (Matthew 12:43-45) and teaches us a valuable lesson.

Many people are under the mistaken impression that once they remove the undesirable things from their lives, they will naturally feel content, happy, and stress free.

This is simply not the case.

Nature abhors a vacuum, and when you remove something from your life, nature will move quickly to fill it. You must, therefore, put something desirable in its place, or something undesirable is likely to rush in.

Without question, this will be the most difficult part of your journey toward stress free living.

Most people just don't know what their life would be like without stress. I know that was true for me--after so many years, I had learned to identify with having a busy, stressful life. That's who I was!

And even though I said I hated it, that I wanted to change, and that I wanted things to be different, when it came right down to it, I couldn't imagine my life any other way.

That's why so many of us, even though we may do all the other steps, end up like a deer in the headlights when the things that used to stress us out are gone. "Oh no! What now?"

And, as ridiculous as it may sound, we *sabotage* ourselves. We unconsciously create stressful situations or just continue to feel stressed because we simply don't know any other way.

The old tenant and seven of his buddies just move right in.

So what can we do to prevent this?

The answer is simple, but first you have to understand why it's so hard.

Believe it or not, stress is actually *beneficial* to our lives.

What we call stress is actually our body's natural fight or flight response to impending danger. In these situations, it can save our lives or the lives of those we love. The occasional stress can also help us get through big projects or important deadlines.

In addition, stress is necessary for building strength. If you have ever done any body building, then you know that lifting weights puts stress on your muscles, which causes tiny tears. During rest periods, these tears are repaired, making the muscle stronger than it was previously.

All this is good.

But for some of us, stress becomes an addiction.

Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, in their book, *The Power of Full Engagement*, write, "Stress hormones such as adrenaline, noradrenaline and cortisol fuel arousal and create a seductive rush--the so called adrenaline high. When we operate at high enough intensity for long enough, we progressively lose the capacity to shift to any other gear."

And they continue, "[While stress hormones] may be temporarily energizing...over time they prompt symptoms such as hyperactivity, aggressiveness, impatience, irritability, anger, self-absorption and insensitivity to others. Override the need for oscillation long enough and the symptoms may extend to headaches, back pain, gastrointestinal disorders, and ultimately to heart attacks and even death."

Hmm...sound familiar?

So when you are learning to be stress free, you are fighting a *physical* battle.

But there is also a strong *emotional* component which, for me, was a powerful realization: **Stress alleviates guilt.**

Not only that, but in certain situations, it is *admirable* to be stressed. People will consider you *a unfeeling cad* if you are not.

How could you not feel stressed when you have a sick or dying child or parent?

How could you not feel stressed when you're under a deadline at work?

How could you not feel stressed when your in-laws are coming over and the house is a mess?

How could you not feel stressed when the country is at war?

How could you not feel stressed when gas prices are so high?

How could you not feel stressed when you're under a mountain of debt and you don't know where the rent money is coming from?

When I experienced situations like these, I somehow felt that by being stressed out *I was proving that I was concerned*, that yes, I wished things were different, that yes, life is difficult and painful and challenging, that yes, there is too much to do and we must all pitch in. *Stress was my badge of honor.*

And yet, my being stressed out did nothing to improve the situation, did it?

It only alleviated my guilt that I couldn't do anything else.

We all know people who sail through life's challenges without worrying about anything. My husband, who asked to be mentioned in this book, is one of them.

Those people are sickening. Those people are unfeeling. Those people are *cad*s. If those people would just get stressed out like the rest of us, then life would be better for everyone!

Um...are you starting to see how ridiculous that way of thinking is?

Here's what I know: As long as you believe that people who don't get stressed out about things are unfeeling *cad*s, *you will always get stressed out about things*. Because you will not let yourself be a *cad*!

So you must decide to today that *it is OK to not feel stressed*. No matter what is going on around you, no matter how bad it may seem, ***your stress does nothing to help the situation***.

So relax. Let go. Enjoy life. Breathe. Appreciate the glory, the wonder, and the life that is all around you. It's been calling to you all along, just waiting for you to notice it.

I know it's hard. It's really, really hard. And yet it is so simple.

From this day forward...



**EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY DAY...
I CHOOSE TO BE STRESS FREE--
NO MATTER WHAT!**

In Conclusion

Recently, our community gathered together to I attend a conference in Rome, Italy. Everyone's favorite speaker was a man named Shawn Achor, a positive psychology teacher from Harvard University.

One of the things we love about Shawn is his ability to bring to light *scientific evidence* of the positive effects that being happy, living stress-free, and having a positive outlook have in every area of our lives.

Shawn had spent two days with us--lecturing, conducting small group exercises, giving assignments, answering questions--and at the final question and answer period, someone asked him if he had any books he would recommend on the subject of positive psychology.

Shawn replied that we could go to the resources section of his website, www.ShawnAchor.com, for a list of books, but added, "The point, though, is that you need to *put into action* the things that you have learned here these last couple of days."

Then he laughed and said, "I have spent more hours reading about the positive effects of meditation than I have *actually* meditating. That's nuts!"

His point, obviously, is that it is easier to *read* about making changes than it is to actually *make* those changes.

I have provided here a simple, step-by-step process for you to remove the major stresses of your life and take a stand for keeping them out.

Now you just need to get up and *do* them.

Decide that you will no longer live with that ache in your tooth.

Make the necessary changes to *eliminate* the causes of your stress.

Choose to remain stress-free *no matter what*.

And finally, fill your clean, empty house with *a new tenant*: joy, love, enthusiasm, excitement, and peace.

Stress free living does not mean doing nothing. It means doing what you want to do in a relaxing, enjoyable way.

Welcome to your new life!

Margie

I am living a stress free life...


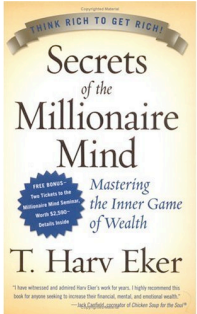

- ✓ My financial house is in order.
- ✓ My physical house is in order.
- ✓ My life is on autopilot.
- ✓ I am surrounded by support.
- ✓ I choose to live stress free.

Appendix A: Resources All in One Place

Getting Your Financial House in Order


Programs for getting out of debt/managing your finances:

- ✓ Check your local listings for debt consolidation services. Go with a non-profit or government agency.


	<p>Dani Johnson's <i>War on Debt</i> program: www.WarOnDebt.com</p> <p>Note: Dani is one of my mentors and has absolutely changed my life. Her material is all Christian-based. I recommend ALL of her products and seminars.</p>
	<p>T. Harv Eker's <i>Secrets of the Millionaire Mind</i> (book and seminar): www.SecretsOfTheMillionaireMind.com</p> <p>Note: I do not recommend Harv's seminars in general, but his wealth management system is brilliant.</p>
	<p>If you have not seen the movie <i>The Secret</i> (far more powerful than the book of the same name), rush out right now and get it. You will learn much more than how to manage finances--you'll learn how to manage life. www.TheSecret.tv</p>

Getting Your Financial House in Order (cont.)

For help with finding a business opportunity that meets all four criteria—is simple to understand, allows you to be in control, and provides a significant, leveraged income:

	<p>Visit me online at: www.YouCanHaveWhatYouWant.com or call me directly at 1-888-454-5421.</p>
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If real estate and investing are really your thing:

	<p>I recommend anything and everything by Robert Kiyosaki. Start with <i>Rich Dad, Poor Dad</i>, found online or in any bookstore. Visit Robert online at: www.RichDadPoorDad.com</p>
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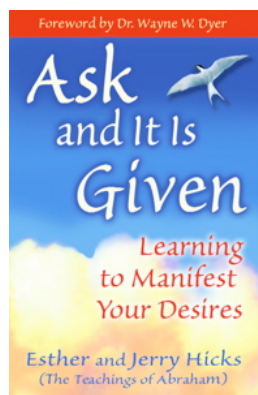
Getting Your Physical House in Order



If your finances are not to a point yet where you can have someone else clean your house, I highly recommend the FlyLady system: www.FlyLady.net

This system teaches you how to divide your house into sections, develop correct habits, and manage cleanliness in small bursts of effort. It completely revolutionized my life and continues to do so for more than a quarter of a million others.

Note: The emails can get overwhelming, so I recommend learning and implementing as much as you can from the website first. Sign up for the emails if you are looking for a community of support in this area.

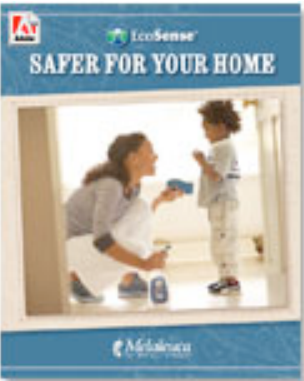



The book that I referenced in this chapter is *Ask and It is Given* by Esther and Jerry Hicks (The Teachings of Abraham). This book is not specifically about housekeeping, but does have some great tips for decluttering your life, as well as your home.

It is also just a fantastic, life-changing book. You can get a copy at: www.Abraham-Hicks.com

Putting Your Life on AutoPilot

In addition to the above resources which will help you develop systems for putting your life on autopilot, I also highly recommend:

<p>Melaleuca, Inc.</p>  <p>The image is a promotional graphic for Melaleuca. At the top, it features the Melaleuca logo and the 'EcoSense' brand name. Below that, the text 'SAFER FOR YOUR HOME' is displayed. The central part of the image shows a woman in a white shirt and dark pants kneeling on a light-colored floor, talking to a young child who is standing and holding a small blue bottle. Several other bottles of household products are scattered on the floor around them. At the bottom of the graphic, the Melaleuca logo is repeated.</p>	<p>Melaleuca is one of the world's largest online and catalog retailers offering exclusive, scientifically based wellness products, such as safe, eco-friendly household cleaners, vitamins, sports nutrition, beauty and personal care products, first aid, etc.</p> <p>I am a huge proponent of not only their products, but the ease and convenience of ordering from my home and having them delivered to my door.</p> <p>You can find out more at: www.Melaleuca.com</p> <p>Melaleuca memberships are available exclusively through referrals. If you know someone who shops there, please contact them. If you don't, give me a call at 1-888-454-5421 and I will help you get started.</p>
 <p>The logo for Simpleology features a stylized 'S' made of two overlapping curved shapes, one red and one blue. To the right of the 'S' is the word 'simple.ology' in a lowercase, sans-serif font. Below this, in a smaller font, is the tagline 'The Simple Science Of Getting What You Want'.</p>	<p>Simpleology is another life automization tool that has revolutionized my life. The simple lessons and online tools help eliminate distraction and keep you focused on the <i>now</i>: www.Simpleology.com</p>

Surrounding Yourself with Support

As described in this chapter, you can find a network of support in lots of places: your church, community organizations, and online in such places as Yahoo! groups, social networks, bulletin boards and forums dedicated to positive thinking and stress-free living.

You are also welcome contact me, and I'll introduce you to my community--a group of people who are dedicated to getting the most out of life and helping each other do the same. My number again is 1-888-454-5421, or you can visit me on the web at:

www.YouCanHaveWhatYouWant.com

Choosing to Live Stress-Free

I mentioned in the beginning that I had tried a number of alternative therapies to try and manage my stress. While those are only minimally helpful for *getting rid of* stress, once you have taken the appropriate steps for eliminating the things that are stressing you out, they are phenomenal for *keeping stress at bay*. Here again is a list of wonderful things I love to indulge in. I'm sure you'll be able to add your own to the list:

- a hot bath/jacuzzi
- soft music
- candlelight
- yoga
- reiki
- massage
- manicure/pedicure

Enjoy!

Appendix B: My Contest Entry

This is the text of the essay I wrote for my entry in Mark Joyner's "Be The Next Best Selling Author" competition, sponsored by Simpleology.com. We were to choose a theme, either "A Moment That Changed My Life" or "The Funniest Moment of My Life." It needed to be under two minutes when read.

The Moment That Changed My Life

by Margie Remmers, <http://www.StressFreeLikeMe.com>

Of course I did not know, then, that it was a moment that would change my life.

I can't say when the pain started, exactly. And it wasn't pain, exactly—more like pressure. Like someone was stepping on my chest.

It would come and go. Sometimes it would last longer than others. Sometimes it would be frequent, sometimes less so. I couldn't pin it down.

When I felt it again that Sunday, I finally decided to call the nurse.

And when I finished describing my symptoms, it happened. The moment I could not have predicted would change my life. The moment the nurse uttered the scariest words I had ever heard: "Margie, hang up the phone and call 911."

Healthy and just 37, it seemed impossible that I—I—could be having a heart attack.

Yet here I was.

In a whirlwind, I was whisked away on an ambulance and hooked up to every machine possible. I was examined and prodded. Blood was drawn. Tests were taken.

The diagnosis? Stress.

Looking back, it hardly seems surprising. I was, after all, overworked and over committed. I somehow thought that if I did not personally hold up the world, it would come crashing down.

It's funny how sometimes all we need is one moment of clarity—one moment to glimpse into where our life is headed in order to summon the courage to change direction right now.

Of course I did not know that that moment would change my life.

I did not know that because of that moment, I would learn to relax and have fun for the first time in years.

I did not know that because of that moment, my life would be completely transformed and I would replace the stress with joy, happiness, enthusiasm, vibrance, energy, and light.

No, I did not know, then, that this was a moment that would change my life.