



Character Building Ministries
 1320 Saddleback Road, York, PA 17408
 (570) 772-1643
www.CBMinistries.com

EDIFY

The Newsletter of Character Building Ministries

FALL 2007

Character Building Ministries is dedicated to the edification of Christian camp staff by equipping them in the Word of God.



DownTime

Joel Rishel

Down time?
 What's that?
 It's that elusive thing that we used to enjoy back when life was slower and the task list was shorter.

Maybe you don't think you get any down time. Maybe you

Continued inside ...

This free Newsletter is sent to leaders and directors of Christian youth camps who are concerned about the spiritual growth and development of their staff.

What's Inside?

Five Suggestions

These five practical suggestions will help you maximize your down time, and in the process, will position you to better fulfill what God has for you.

The 5-Year Club

This was our eleventh year, and we have seventeen more camps joining our prestigious 5-year club. Look inside to find out who they are.

Book Review

In need of a good read this fall or winter? Take a lot at what our staff recommends for building relationships.

need to reevaluate how you use your down time. Maybe you need to start slashing some of your up time. Here are five practical suggestions to maximize the precious little down time that you do have, especially this Fall and early-Winter.

1. Prioritize your Personal Devotions

First and foremost, your personal relationship with Jesus Christ must be prioritized daily. I would encourage you to restore this habit if you have somehow neglected it over the summer.

The reality is that in ministry there are some days that start at 6:50 a.m. with a crisis and end at 11:20 p.m. with a sigh. You can't avoid these days, but you can prepare for them. The most effective way to be equipped for a nonstop 16-hour whirlwind is to be in the habit of spending 6:30-6:50 a.m. alone with your Savior (times are approximate, but you get the idea). Build the habit now so that it will become routine.

Some days, of course, you will have more time to linger and meditate. But at the very least, seek to read a portion of God's Word and speak to Him in prayer. Remind yourself of the gospel—your sins are many and your needs are great; God has already made provision to meet your greatest need in the sacrifice of His Son on the cross; your relationship with God is that of a

son or daughter to your loving father. These core truths will reorient your perspective on the trials and temptations of the day, and they will position you to receive sustaining grace.

2. Expand your Reading Diet

Off-season is the ideal time to pick up that book you've been wanting to read. But wait! Before you pick it up, I would suggest that you plan ahead and evaluate the scope of your reading diet.

There are, certainly, a number of things that you will find necessary to read for your particular niche of camping ministry. In addition, there will be other books recommended to you for your church life, marriage, and parenting. Of the remaining things that you choose to read, is there a balance between history and fiction, between spiritual and entertainment, between books that stretch you and ones that relax you? If there is an area that is lacking, select a good book to fill that void. In case you are at a loss for book recommendations, check out the book review of a new release at the bottom of this page.

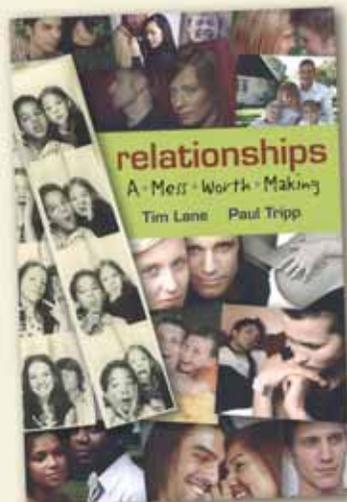
Read in small chunks of time. Take larger portions of a day off to read. Skim a book. Reread another one slowly. Read out loud. Read standing up. But read.

BOOK REVIEW

Relationships: A Mess Worth Making

by Tim Lane and Paul Tripp

New Growth Press, 2006)



Have you ever wondered if relationships are really worth it? How do you handle the messy issues and personality conflicts that seem inevitable in relationships?

Tim Lane and Paul Tripp bring biblical clarity and hope by showing God's plan for resolving conflicts and relating with others in ways that re-

flect God's glory and respect one another.

Warning—this book contains straightforward talk about sin. Isn't that why our relationships are so messy in the first place? This book also talks about the forgiveness and reconciliation that we can experience because of the sacrifice of Christ. This is truly fresh hope for less-than-perfect relationships and for people who are ready to give up on close friendships.

Just like caring friends, Lane and Tripp will help you look at your own heart first. They will give you hope, not that relationships will somehow become easy, but that, by the power of Christ, you can learn how to move forward to experience what God has for you. "When God reigns in our hearts, peace reigns in our relationships" (page 13).

~ Reviewed by Joel Rishel

3. Take a Personal Retreat

A personal retreat is one or more days away from your normal environment for the purpose of developing your personal life and/or strategizing some long-range plans.

Ever feel like you're doing lots of things, but not sure how much is actually getting accomplished? Ever notice how there are some things in your life that you know should change, but they never do? Ever feel like there's something wrong, something lacking, but you're not quite sure what it is? Take it from me, you need a personal retreat.

Getting away allows you to take a step back and objectively evaluate where you are and where you would like to be. Then through an extended time of reflection, you can readjust your priorities and map out a plan to move forward with God's calling on your life.

4. Cultivate Relaxation

God did not create us to be high-speed, 24/7, super-octane powerhouses. One of the benefits of down time is that you can slow it up a bit and enjoy the blessings of legitimate relaxation. This could come in the form of a movie night, some extra naps, a daily walk, surfing the net, family game night, or a trip to Starbucks—at least, these are some of my favorites.

Obviously, some forms of entertainment are inappropriate for Christians. But I would also add that *any* form of relaxation or entertainment can become sinful and idolatrous if you desire it more than you desire God. Try this. Before engaging in relaxation, pause and thank God for the blessing you are about to enjoy. Ask God to guard your heart against making His gift more important than Himself. This is what He made us for.

5. Build Relationships

In the midst of busy seasons, we tend to stretch our relationships. Ministry takes a toll on everything, including close relationships. During seasons of down time, we have an opportunity to rebuild and strengthen any relationships that may have been damaged. Evaluate if there is any repair work that needs to be done with any of your friends.

5-YEAR CLUB

We have a tradition of honoring camps who have used Character Building Ministries' devotional books for five years. However, this is more than a tradition for us; this is heartfelt gratitude to God for what He is doing through you. This year, out of the 285 camps that ordered from us, we are especially grateful for these 17 camps for their continued support.

Army Lake Camp EAST TROY, WISCONSIN

Arrowhead Camping Ministries SOUTH GIBSON, PENNSYLVANIA

Barnabas Family Ministries GIBSONS, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

Beaver Camp LOWVILLE, NEW YORK

Camp Chattooga/Athens Y Camp TALLULAH FALLS, GEORGIA

Camp Gilead CARNATION, WASHINGTON

Camp Ladore WAYMART, PENNSYLVANIA

Camp of the Woods Ontario DRYDEN, ONTARIO, CANADA

Cortland Bible Club Camp PITCHER, NEW YORK

Cumberland Springs Bible Camp DAYTON, TENNESSEE

Grace Bible Camp & Retreat Center GOSHEN, VIRGINIA

Marmon Valley Farm ZANESFIELD, OHIO

New England Camp Cherith LYMAN, MAINE

Pocono Plateau Camp CRESCO, PENNSYLVANIA

Rock River Christian Camp WEST POLO, ILLINOIS

Star Lake Camp BLOOMINGDALE, NEW JERSEY

Warner Camp GRAND JUNCTION, MICHIGAN

But don't leave it at that. Identify a few close relationships that you can take to the next level of accountability and prayer and support. And seek out some new relationships that you think God wants you to build. The investment of relationships is an invaluable and necessary currency in camp ministry.

These are some things that I've learned from others, and I hope to simply pass these along to serve you. Don't let your down time slip away without benefitting from it. 📖

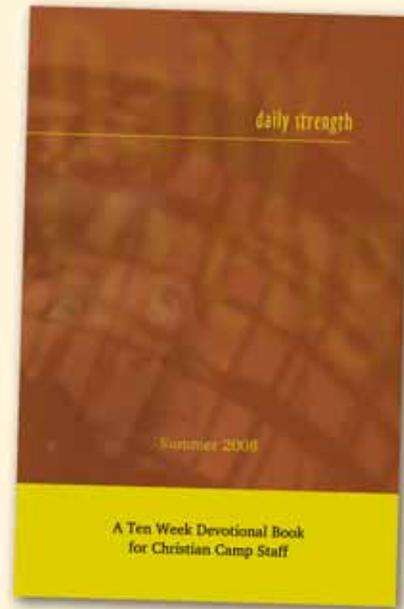
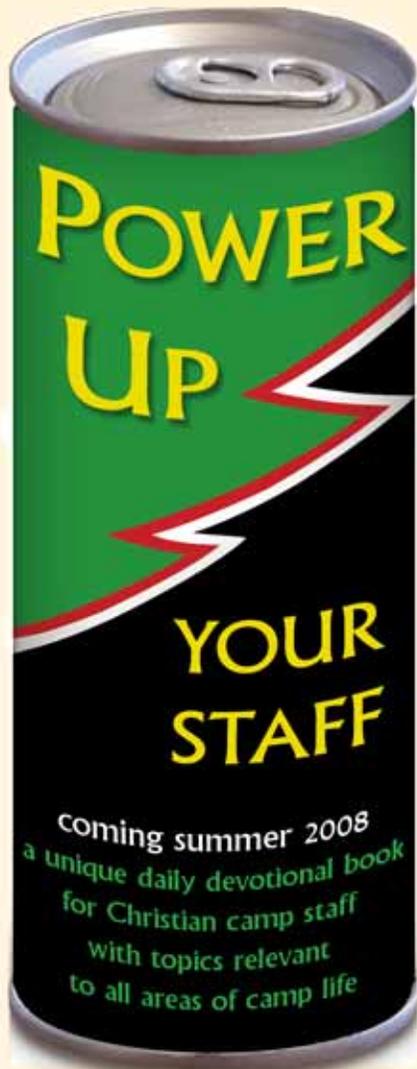


Joel Rishel is the Director of Publications for CBM and former Program Director for Camp Susque in Trout Run, Pennsylvania. He is currently serving as a pastor at Chesapeake Community Church near Baltimore. You can email him at JoelR@CBMinistries.com.

Character Building Ministries
1320 Saddleback Road
York, PA 17408
www.CBMinistries.com

EDIFY

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
RANDOLPH, NY
PERMIT NO. 31



Return this card for a **FREE** sample copy
of our devotional books.

Camp Name _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone () _____

Return to: Character Building Ministries, 1320 Saddleback Road, York, PA 17408