**15 Signs of Leadership Fatigue**

**By Chuck Lawless**

Given the stress many church leaders are under during this COVID-19 crisis, I’m updating and reposting this word from 2015 to encourage each of us to be aware of leadership fatigue.

Living by a “get me through the day” philosophy – You may begin the day with prayer, but just surviving the day is your prayer theme.

Losing vision – A leadership vision assumes a commitment far beyond today. Fatigued leaders, though, don’t consider beyond the end of this workday.

Developing poor sleep patterns – The patterns may vary, but they still reflect fatigue: too much sleep as you seek to avoid perceived reality, or too little sleep when you can’t get perceived reality out of your mind.

Declining spiritual disciplines – This change may be one of the first signs of trouble for leaders who have previously been faithful in spiritual disciplines. Weariness leaves little room for anything that requires “discipline.”

Continually repeating lessons and sermons – Finding something in the file is much less draining than the hard work of developing a sermon or lesson. Leadership fatigue convinces you that “nobody will remember the previous time anyway.”

Faking joy and excitement – Few actions are more exhausting than pretending to have joy you don’t have. Every sentence is hard, and every nod of the head feels like a ton of weight on your shoulders.

Frustrating family members – Leaders who fight to get through the day often let their guard down when they get home – and all the stress of playing the game for eight hours gets dumped on their family.

Magnifying minors – What used to seem insignificant is unexpectedly huge because we’re tired.

Failing to return emails and phone calls – Communicating with people takes time, energy, and focus. Weary leaders tend to delay responding to others, if they choose to respond at all.

Misdirecting affections – Fatigued leaders sometimes turn to others for affirmation. That’s when that church member’s look seems sexier, that hug feels like a caress, and that increasingly intimate relationship seems justified.

Decreasing exercise – Professional and emotional fatigue quickly leads to physical tiredness. Exercise becomes that much more difficult.

Focusing on a “grass is greener” syndrome – It’s amazing how leadership fatigue affects the lenses through which we see other options. Every other role, it seems, is suddenly better than our current one.

Avoiding people who speak truth – When we know we’re tired of leading, it’s just easier to avoid people who know us well enough to recognize the problem.

Lessening excitement over new possibilities – In this current crisis, we’ve been excited about increased viewers, etc. – but that excitement wanes under the increased workload.

Becoming numb – It might begin with painful tears. It might continue through unhealthy means to deal with the pain. The end, though, is numbness – and little left to offer.

If you’re dealing with leadership fatigue, tell us how we might pray for you. I want our readers to help each other.

The above article, “15 Signs of Leadership Fatigue,” was written by Chuck Lawless.

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This article may not be written by an Apostolic author, but it contains many excellent principles and concepts that can be adapted to most churches. As the old saying goes, “Eat the meat. Throw away the bones.”