



*Rick & Sue McCoy*

## Are You Prepared to Vote?

One of the most important elections for the future of our country is coming **November 3!**

### *Begin to prepare now!*

- **Pray** for safety and peace at all polling places, political events and rallies, accurate ballot counting, truth and honesty in candidates, and unbiased media coverage
- **Make sure you're registered to vote**
- **Read** the new platforms for both parties that will come out of their conventions
  - Democratic August 17-20
  - Republican August 24-27
- **Compare and contrast** how the two party's platforms line up with the Word of God
- **Find out** who is running for office in your local, state, and federal positions and their qualifications and position on issue important to you
- **Get involved** in the campaigns for those people you support
- **VOTE NOVEMBER 3**

**Father has a good plan for our country and He needs YOU to elect Godly righteous statesmen and stateswomen to help Him do it!**

## BUILDING BOUNCE!

In our second quarter Love Letter I (Rick) wrote an article about bouncing back from all the negative emotions and feelings that we can experience from bad things we have walked through in life. I talked about how difficult and painful it can be when we experience the loss of a loved one, events that wound our heart or physical body, making mistakes, not receiving love and approval from our parents, and dealing with falling back into sinful behaviors or actions. When I wrote that article, COVID 19 was not even an issue, but Sue and I got to practice what I wrote as our entire travel plans to Europe in celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary were cancelled! In this article I want to pick up where I left off and give you some thoughts and actions that you can take to prepare yourself to walk through future difficulties in victory and peace!

### Building Joy Capacity

Joy is a powerful emotion that helps us enjoy life and remain positive and connected even when things don't go well in our life. It comes from a part of our brain that can continue to grow and store more joy all of our life. Joy acts like the colliding of two opposing wave lengths that cancel each other out keeping us in a state of peace and rest even in the midst of the storms of life. The joy in us can cancel the effects of negative emotions in our heart and allow us to return to joy from them. "Joy gives lovers the fuel to endure, friends the strength to persevere, and families the ability to recover." (*Transforming Fellowship*, Chris Coursey)

Joy is the normal state that we were meant to live in. In the first eighteen months of life babies are meant to live in joy and build a capacity for joy. That joy capacity is what allows us to jump back up from the hurts and unsettling events in our life. Only in joyful relationships with God and others will we fulfill the deepest longings of our heart. Increasing levels of joy makes it easier to build healthy joy bonds with other people and be able to stay relational even during difficult situations and conflicts with others.

Joy is the first emotion that a baby desires and seeks! Little children, especially, are continually searching for people who are pleased to be with them. They are always looking into everyone's eyes (the door to our heart) and observing their facial expressions to see if that person is pleased to be with them. **Joy comes when we know someone is pleased to be with us.**

The joy in us creates an atmosphere of life, rejoicing, praise and worship. Just being around joyful, positive-thinking people will make us feel more joyful. Joy is the feelings, emotions, and excitement that come from our expectation of good! Our Father is always full of joy because He sees the beginning from the end and is constantly looking for the good in everything. Jesus was even joyful facing the death on the cross because He saw what was coming after that! **Heb. 12:2**

Here are some of the benefits of joy: 1) Joy helps us heal our heart and create a stable and consistent identity that can last a life time. 2) Joy releases dopamine in the pleasure center of our brain that gives us good feelings and helps us manage pleasure, pain, and emotions effectively. 3) Joy keeps us from feeling overwhelmed and unable to recover from upsetting feelings. Weaknesses in the joy center are often associated with people with anxiety, depression, and attention deficit disorders, eating disorders, and obsessive-compulsive disorders.

Our mother or primary care giver is our first source of joy. Joy initially came from being close through activities like gentle touches, nursing, holding and cuddling, Rocking and lying next to them, especially During those first three months of life. This is the “storgé” or mothering love that we all needed growing up! Our parents were also to train us early in life to return to joy from negative emotions. At three months, babies start looking for joy in the eyes and on the faces (smiles) of everyone they come in contact with. When the baby finds someone who is pleased to be with him, joy explodes inside and they smile and start to giggle. Joy and the capacity for more joy begins to grow with each new encounter with people who are pleased to be with you.

We were made to be relational and as each new person who is full of love and joy comes into our life, we learn to be more joyful like them. The joy strength that comes through our many healthy relationships with others allows us to return to joy from negative situations! However, if our relationships are with people oriented to fear, our identity becomes unstable and disorganized. As we grow and our brain develops, other sources of joy can also help build our joy capacity. Sue and I have begun to have more fun with each other with spontaneous joy smiles, silly gestures or faces, taking funny pictures, and watching comedy movies and comedians on YouTube and TV.

## Appreciation and Quieting

Quieting skills are a good thing to use when you are starting to become overwhelmed, tense, fearful, anxious, worried or other signs of stress like panic, rapid heartbeat, sweating, nervousness, fatigue etc. However, if you wait until your body is beginning to go into fight, flight or freeze mode, these techniques might no longer be available as the left side of your brain begins to shut down! Thrive Today and Jim Wilder have developed a set of exercises you can do called “Shalom Your Body.” You can watch Jim Wilder demonstrate these on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRy3KeAUIFw>

One effective way mentioned by Jim Wilder is to calm yourself by deep breathing; you fill your lungs as full as you can through your nose, hold, and then exhale through your mouth, hold, and then breathe again. Deep breathing and rhythmic breathing with each other are two things

Sue and I use to help us relax before we fall asleep or to calm us down if we start to get into one of those “heated discussions!”

You can also help shift your mind onto something more peaceful or enjoyable by thinking about peaceful or beautiful scenes from your past, pleasant memories that bring a smile to your face, or enjoyable experiences like family reunions, vacations, musical events, etc.

You can also focus your attention on pleasant smells like from a flower or some essential oils, or perfumes. You can listen to quiet and calming music as you think on good things from the past. It also might be helpful to focus and take control over your body by tightening and then releasing muscles or muscle groups in your arms, legs, and back. You can also rub or have someone massage muscles that might be tense in your body.

Having an attitude of gratitude is also important to keeping your heart open to receive joy and love from your heavenly Father and others. Expressing appreciation helps bring back pleasant memories of events and people from the past or experiences with your Father. Thanksgiving helps us put our focus on people or Father and not the problems or negative feelings from the current or past events in our life. The actual joyful event or encounter is stored in our heart, and every time we remember that stored memory by expressing appreciation, we get an even bigger boost of joy that spreads to those with whom we are sharing it. Expressing appreciation also reduces stress. That’s why sharing appreciation joy stories can be so powerful, impacting both the atmosphere and changing



negative emotions in those who are listening! Now when Sue and I find ourselves stuck in some negative emotion with each other, we are quick to stop and begin looking at pictures of joyful memories or just share joy stories with each other. It's not long until the tension and negative emotions are gone and we can deal with the situation in a healthy loving way!

Appreciation can be as simple as a compliment like, "You look pretty in that dress," or being thankful for something someone has just done for you, "Thanks for that tasty soup you just made." But the effects can change the course of someone's bad day or bring a smile and comfort to someone who is hurting. Appreciation also resets our nervous system to joy and peace. Quiet and rest are the natural state of our body and result in a healthy brain and nervous system. Healthy minds are full of appreciation which fills us with joy!! Sue and I are enjoying each other now more than any other time in our marriage! **Zeph. 3:17** says, "*The Lord your God is in your midst, The Mighty One will save; He rejoices over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.*"

### Some Additional Suggestions

**Anticipation** – What can you look forward to with joy? Focus on the positive emotions and images of doing something special, going somewhere new, being with loved ones, or other fun activities.

**Memories** – Take time to remember the good things that have happened in the past, the ones that make you smile. Avoid thinking about anything in those memories that may trigger negative emotions and feelings and hijack your joy. Look at old pictures, movies, scrap books, old letters, or talk about things you did with someone else that may have been fun or made you smile.

**Experiences** – What can you do that will make you smile or laugh? Engage your creativity and plan doing some fun things with friends or loved ones. Sue and I have had fun over the years in our marriage doing funny, silly, or just fun things together.

**Singing** – It's the fastest way to turn your emotions around! It requires both sides of your brain working together! You don't have to be able to carry a tune or sound great; just sing out your favorite songs!

**Beliefs/Thoughts** – Check up on what you are believing and how that making you feel. Everything we hear or read may not be true or be a mixture of truth and lies. What we believe often affect our emotions and can bring either good feelings or negative ones. Be an "ANT-eater!" Watch out for and cast down all those Automatic Negative Thoughts the devil tries to put in your mind!

**Ask your Heavenly Father how you can build your joy capacity, build loving relationships, keep a positive attitude and hope for the future, and stay in peace and rest. Let Him be your comforter, protector, provider, and healer! Keep building more bounce!**



If you want to delve deeper into building resilience and "bounce" in your life there are several resources available at Deeper Walk International <https://deeperwalkinternational.org>  
At their site you can:

Watch a Free Webinar:

- "Grow Your Emotional Capacity"

[https://secure.lglforms.com/form/engine/s/bgw\\_36Os8R\\_emYRVgbFjA](https://secure.lglforms.com/form/engine/s/bgw_36Os8R_emYRVgbFjA)

Purchase "**Building Bounce**" (4.5 hour webinar) with Marcus Warner and Stephanie Hinman

<https://deeperwalkinternational.org/product/building-bounce/>

Or purchase and read a book!

- **Building Bounce** by Marcus Warner and Stephanie Hinman

- **4 Habits of Joy-filled Marriages** by Marcus Warner and Chris Coursey

## **A Father's Blessing for Staying in Peace and Joy**

I bless you with a greater awareness of Father's presence and love for you. I bless you to experience His love more and more as you open your heart, receive revelations from His Word, and spend quality time soaking and resting in His presence. I bless you to move from just thinking about Father to thinking in rhythm with His thoughts until your automatic response to everyone and every situation is love. May all of your thoughts, feelings, emotions, and desires align with His Love and thinking. I bless you to walk free from the past into your glorious future as His son or daughter. May you become a peace maker and protector to all those around you both in your family and as you go out into the world.

