

# REFRESH STUDY GUIDE

Embracing a Grace-paced Life in a World of Endless Demands

Shona Murray &  
David Murray



## How to Use this Study Guide

“I feel so overwhelmed.”

Do you race from one thing to the next, unable to keep up with all the demands of your ever-growing to-do list? Are you overcommitted and overstretched, but don't know how to slow down when the world just says to speed up? Is there any hope for rest in a world of never-ending demands?

Many women don't realize they're running at an unsustainable pace until it hurts them physically, emotionally, and spiritually. In *Refresh: Embracing a Grace-paced Life in a World of Endless Demands* wife and husband team Shona and David Murray want to help you slow down to a more grace-paced life—enabling you to avoid the pitfall of burnout, cultivate sustainable habits for the future, and experience the rest of body and soul that God intends for you.

This Study Guide for *Refresh* has been designed to help individual readers apply the book to their own lives and assist the process of moving from theory to practice.

It has also been written in such a way that will enable couples to work through *Refresh* (for women) and *Reset* (for men) in tandem. There is a separate Study Guide for *Reset* that reflects the differences between the male and female experience of stress, anxiety, burnout, depression, etc. However, both the books and the Study Guides have been written to help couples work through them together. The handful of Study guide questions that are different for *Refresh* and *Reset* are marked by an asterisk (\*).

The Study Guides for both *Refresh* and *Reset* and have also been composed to facilitate group discussion of the material. Again, this could be done in separate men's and women's groups or together.

There is no copyright on this study guide, so print and photocopy as many as you need.

For more resources on how to live a grace-paced life, visit David Murray's blog at <http://headhearthand.org/blog>



## Introduction

\*1. “Overwhelmed. Exhausted. Depressed. Panicky. Stressed. Burned out. Broken. Paralyzed. Drowning. Empty.” Describe a time in your life when these words were true of you. What were the consequences?

\*2. What attempts have you made to experience the second set of words: peaceful, calm, joyful, content, quiet, rested, refreshed, and fulfilled?

3. Brady Boyd said: “Ultimately, every problem I see in every person I know is a problem of moving too fast for too long in too many aspects of life.” Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

4. What factors should you consider when you are trying to gauge what is a healthy pace in your life?

\*5. What factors are causing so much burnout among women in our culture?

\*6. What are the five wells of grace? Which of these are missing from your life?

7. Some of God's best gifts are listed under the receiving well of grace: a weekly Sabbath, sufficient sleep, physical exercise, family and friend relationships, Christian fellowship. Which of these are notably absent in your life and why?

8. Why are millennials especially at risk of burnout?

9. What are some of the differences between men and women when it comes to burnout?

## Station 1: Reality Check

1. Have you had a dramatic “reality check” experience in your life? What happened and what did God teach you through it?

2. Why has God connected knowing him with stillness (Ps. 46:10)? What are you doing to strengthen that connection?

3. Why do women find it hard to reach out for help?

4. J. R. Briggs said: “Self-care is the first step in caring for others, for loving your neighbor as yourself.” What are you doing for your own self-care?

5. Which category of warning signs are flashing most in your life? Physical, mental, emotional, relational, vocational, moral, spiritual, or pastoral?

6. Which warning signs confirmed your fears? Which of them surprised you?

7. Are there other warning signs flashing in your life that are not on the list?

8. Measure how serious your warning signs are by using these three criteria:

How many?

How deep?

How long?

9. Where are you on this spectrum?

Stressed → Anxious → Overwhelmed → Burned out → Sad → Depressed → Suicidal.

10. How can burnout be a good thing (Job 23:10)? What good do you want God to bring out of your crisis?



## Station 2: Replay

1. “Many practical problems are rooted in wrong theology. Other practical problems are rooted in wrong theology.” What are your thoughts about these statements? Can you give an example of this from your own life?

2. Where does God publish his instructions about how to live as dependent, finite creatures? What are you doing to learn both sets of instructions?

3. The interconnectivity of the physical and the spiritual means that the health of the body affects the health of the soul and vice versa. How have you seen that kind of interconnectedness play out in your life?

4. Although none of us would say we are unlimited, most of us think we are less limited than we actually are. How do you know when you are living beyond your creaturely limitations?

5. What are the practical implications of the truth that God is our Creator?

6. Do you think your stress issues were mostly caused by life-situation or lifestyle? What life situations or lifestyle issues have impacted you the most?

\*7. List the life changes and challenges you have experienced over the past two years.

8. What are you doing to change to a Philippians 4:8 media diet?

9. Many people have influenced us over the years, especially our parents. What personal examples are influencing your lifestyle choices, perhaps unconsciously?

## Station 3: Rest

1. How many hours of sleep a night do you usually get? Do you think it's enough? What would be your optimal amount?

2. What sermon are you preaching by your sleep patterns?

3. Which of the consequences of sleep deprivation did you find most startling?

4. Which of the consequences have you experienced in your own life?

5. How have your sleep habits affected you spiritually?

6. What kinds of discipline or routine will you try to put in place to improve your sleep health?

7. What role does faith have in increasing and improving sleep?

8. What models from church history or your own life are influencing your decisions about how much sleep you need?

9. What truths can help you to sleep longer and better?

## Station 4: Re-Create

\*1. What are some of the extremes to avoid in the area of recreation?

2. What sort of recreation do you enjoy? When is that last time you did it?

3. Is the concept of “body theology” new to you? Up to this point, how have you thought about your physical body in relation to God’s will for your life?

4. What truths can help motivate you to re-creation by recreation?

5. The church has often emphasized the soul to the exclusion of, or the minimizing of, the body. As a result, neglecting the body is sometimes seen as a virtue or a mark of super-spirituality. How is this reflected in your own view of your body and soul?

6. How does God show his interest in our bodies?

\*7. What is “intentional exercise” and how can you add it to your life?

8. What is your motive and aim for improving your physical health?

\*9. What are some of the challenges making it difficult for you to exercise regularly? What is your plan for overcoming them?

10. How do we avoid the danger of going to the other extreme of idolizing our bodies?

## Station 5: Relax

1. On a scale of one to five rate how loud these cymbals are in your life:

- Guilt
- Greed
- Anger
- Vanity
- Anxiety
- Expectation
- Technology

2. What are you doing to silence each cymbal?

- Guilt
- Greed
- Anger
- Vanity
- Anxiety
- Expectation
- Technology

3. Use the digital detox questionnaire <http://headhearthand.org/blog/2017/01/26/digital-detox-questionnaire/> to identify how intoxicated you are. What surprised you most about auditing your technology use?

4. Identify three specific ways you can put your technology in check in order to produce more calm in your life?

5. What will you do to make yourself accountable for #4?

\*6. How will you build a “she-hour” into your daily life?

7. What is stopping you from practicing a weekly Sabbath? Try a practice Sabbath this week and describe your experience of it.

8. What can you do to make your vacations more therapeutic?

9. What factors in your current “season” are affecting your pace and what adjustments are you making in response to this?



## Station 6: Re-think

1. What is the second most important question in the world and why?
2. Write down one sentence or phrase that defines you? What's the phrase that pops into your mind when you think about yourself?
3. Did you relate to any of the sample identities listed? If so, which one? Why?
4. Dive a little deeper. Jot down all the words you think of when you answer the question, "Who am I?"
5. How would you reorder those words to reflect biblical priorities.

6. Why is it so important to expand the Christian component of our identity?

7. What falsehoods are shaping your identity? How will you prosecute them?

8. Think back on one of your failures and write out a couple of ways it helped you.

9. What changes are you finding it hard to accept? What can you do to help you submit to them?

10. What did walking through your identity so intentionally teach you?

## Station 7: Reduce

1. Do you think you tend to have a more “Well-Planned Life” or a “Summoned Life”? How do you avoid the extremes that each of these ways of living tempt us to?

2. What goals do you have for your spiritual life and growth? What steps will you need to take to get there?

3. What goals do you want to set with regards to your family life? What steps will you need to take to get there?

4. What goals do you want to set in terms of your vocational life? What steps will you need to take to get there?

5. What goals do you want to set in terms of Christian service? What steps will you need to take to get there?

\*6. How can you get control of your children's social life so that they don't overwhelm you?

7. Do you have a hard time saying "no" to requests? Why do you think that is?

8. What one thing are you going to prune from your life as a result of reading this chapter?

9. What is your "magic formula"?

## Station 8: Refuel

1. What are “the three pills”? Which are missing in your life?
2. What can you change today to help you glorify God better in your eating and drinking?
3. In what ways have you noticed food affecting your mood and your mind, for good and for bad?
4. What surprised you about the guidelines for medication?

5. What are some of the pitfalls to avoid regarding medications

6. What are some of “fillers” in your life? How could you increase them?

7. What things are “drainers”? Which of these drainers could you minimize in your life?

\*8. One essential filler is “a daily personal understanding of God’s clear calling for you and a whole-hearted contented embrace of that vocation.” What is God’s calling for you at this time and how can you motivate yourself with it?

## Station 9: Relate

1. What things do you or can you put into place in order to guard your devotional times and prevent digital distraction?
2. What practices have helped your devotional times? What has hindered them?
3. What is the connection between personal devotions and personal character?
4. If you are married, what practical thing could you start doing this week to cultivate connection with your husband?
5. What can you do to increase spiritual fellowship in your marriage?

\*6. If you have children, how can you better represent God's love to them?

7. What practical thing could you start doing this week to cultivate your relationship with each of your children?

8. Do you have a pastor or elders in your life that disciple you? How can you make this kind of relationship more influential in your life?

9. What holds you back from cultivating friendships?

\*10. What can you do to start cultivating friendship with an older Christian woman?



## Station 10: Resurrection

1. What are the five most important truths you've learned in *Refresh Gym*?
2. What are the five most important changes in your life resulting from *Refresh Gym*?
3. Do you feel guilty when you slow down? What are you doing to re-educate your conscience?
4. There might be pushback from others when you start running at a slower, more reasonable pace. Can you think of anyone who might misunderstand this new pace in your life? What might you say to that person?
5. What races have you stopped running in? Name two things you've stopped doing.

6. How has your view of God changed in *Refresh Gym*? How has that affected your life?

7. Who have you brought on to your team to help you run better?

\*8. Which of the five grace-wells will you be visiting most regularly?

9. How does the humanity of Christ help you live a grace-paced life?

10. Do you know someone else who needs to visit *Refresh Gym*? What will you do to help her?