The world we live in today is for the most part LOUD...especially for women it seems. The responsibilities of children, husbands, household chores, Church callings, community service, jobs and so forth, seem to pull us in every direction, demanding our time and attention. Add to that the actual “physical noise” and even the “visual noise” of the world and it is easy to become overwhelmed and physically and mentally drained.

It seems then that it is essential for us as Latter-day Saint women to make a conscious effort to slow down and find ways to allow the peace and tranquility that come from God into our lives. Just knowing that God is there and that He loves us and wants us to be happy brings great comfort. If we will take a few minutes each day to “Be still and know that I am God,” (D&C 101:16) we will find that our lives will be calmer. We will be better able to cope with challenges and allow ourselves to hear the sweet whisperings of the Spirit.

We would like to suggest a few small and simple ways to “Turn Down the Volume”:

**Take a Walk**

Walking seems to be the perfect exercise that has significant health benefits to body and mind. Even centuries ago Hippocrates said, “Walking is man’s best medicine.” A walk in the fresh air and sunshine, listening to birds singing, is relaxing to the body and is cleansing to the soul. One can hardly deny evidence of God in this setting. Walking is a rewarding, low-impact, high benefit, total body workout. Research has shown that walking contributes to overall health and fitness in the following ways:

- Strengthens your heart
- Reduces blood pressure and risk of stroke
- Strengthens joints and bones
- Helps control weight
- Improves mood and self-esteem, increases mental well-being
- Contributes to brain fitness
- Gives you energy and helps you to have a good night’s rest
- Relieves stress and worry
- Improves balance and circulation
- Boosts your immune system
An invigorating walk among our Heavenly Father’s beautiful creations can melt away stress, and open your heart and mind to the promptings and impressions of the Spirit. The health benefits are not bad either. A healthy body equals a healthy mind.

Rejoice with Music

Music has an amazing power over our minds, our bodies, and our emotions. Loud upbeat music has a stimulating affect, whereas, soft, soothing music can reduce stress, lower heart rates, and has the power to calm and inspire. Beautiful sacred music has the power to teach and testify of truth. It can touch hearts in a way that very few things can. If you want to feel close to God, listen to good music.

- Truly participate in worship services by singing the sacred hymns.
- Make a conscious effort to think about the words of the hymns and the spirit will bear witness of their truth.
- Sing the Primary songs. Simple, eternal, gospel truths are set to music you won’t forget.
- Be inspired by classical music. It can have a calming affect on a frustrating day.
- Make Sundays more peaceful by listening to CD’s or a radio station that plays sacred music.
- Listen to contemporary LDS artists. Their songs generally convey beautiful gospel messages.
- Whistle a happy tune! Chores will go faster and your heart will be light.

Remember, “For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart; yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me, and it shall be answered with a blessing upon their heads.” (D&C 25:12)

Prayer, Scriptures & Meditation

These three principles are at the very core of knowing that God is there. They improve sensitivity to spiritual things. The faith and strength of one’s testimony can vary from day to day. Through the daily practice of prayer, scripture study and meditation, our testimonies will remain strong and we will be prepared to receive personal revelation and guidance.

Here are a few thoughts and ideas to make these activities more meaningful:

- A humble, reverent attitude is vital for communion with God. Without inner peace, the cares of the world can drown out the promptings of the Spirit.
- Fasting, meditation and contemplation intensify our ability to receive spiritual things.
- Go to prayer with the intent of listening rather than talking. You may hear more.
• Relate what you read in the scriptures to your personal life. Ask yourself questions such as: “How does this apply to my life today?” or “What lesson can I learn from this?”
• As you approach your scripture study, consider the words the prophets have used to describe how we should read the scriptures...diligently, pondering, meditating, and feasting.

We owe it to ourselves to have an established routine of prayer, scripture study, and meditation. You will be happier because your soul will be in better harmony with the Lord and your desires will be more righteous.

Plant a Garden

There is something about working the soil and planting a seed that brings you closer to God. It is like a magic that creates a reverence for the earth, and life, and God’s perfect creations. The ordinary miracle of watching a seed sprout and grow is indesputable evidence of God’s hand in all things. We have been told by our prophets to plant gardens, that we may become more self-reliant. Planting a garden, even a small one, allows for a greater degree of self-reliance. “Self-reliance...is an essential element in our spiritual as well as our temporal well-being.” (Thomas S. Monson  Ensign, Sept. 1986)

It is exciting to watch your garden flourish and grow as you tend and take care of it. It is also very rewarding as you harvest the bounty of what you have sown.

Some benefits of planting a garden include:

• The food is fresh and you know it is chemical free. Home-grown just tastes better. There is nothing like picking a ripe tomato off the vine and eating it on the spot.
• You can save money on your grocery bill. Your initial investment offers a great return.
• The exercise and fresh air are good for you.
• You strengthen family bonds as you work together in the garden. Your children won’t thank you now, but will later realize the lessons they learned in the garden...the law of the harvest, hard work and the value of strengthening family ties.
• Many of the things you grow in your garden can be frozen or bottled, thus adding to your food storage.
• Surpluses can be shared with family and friends.

Gardening is about growth, and the personal growth that comes from a successful garden is very rewarding. For some great tips on gardening go to www.LDS.org > provident living home > growing a garden.
Keep a Gratitude Journal

Gratitude cultivates feelings of reverence for God and opens our souls to the influence of the Holy Ghost. When gratitude fills our hearts there is no room for unhappiness. If we are always looking to the future for something we don’t have to bring us happiness, we will never find it. Gratitude allows us to find joy in the here and now.

Recording the abundant blessings received from the Lord in a journal, is a wonderful way to acknowledge God and remind us of his continual love and constant care for us.

A gratitude journal left to children and grandchildren will be a treasure beyond measure. They will learn much about you as they read these short, simple entries.

Elder Henry B. Eyring gave us the perfect example in his talk in General Conference in October, 2007. He said, as he began to keep his gratitude journal, “Every day I would ponder...Have I seen the hand of God reaching out to touch us or our children or our family today? As I kept it, something began to happen. As I would cast my mind over the day, I would see evidence of what God had done for us that I had not recognized in the busy moments of the day...My point is to urge you to find ways to recognize and remember God’s kindness. It will build your testimonies.” (Henry B. Eyring, Ensign, Nov. 2007)

Gratitude as a daily part of our lives can lift and bless us as individuals. Some ways that might help us to develop a deeper “attitude of gratitude” might be:

- Give the Lord credit. Acknowledge the “tender mercies” of the Lord, rather than looking at blessings as luck or good fortune.
- Devote more time in your daily prayers to gratitude.
- Show your gratitude by your actions toward others.
- Recognize trials as blessings. It may be hard as you are going through them, but trials often bring us the most growth. Experience is a great teacher.
- Express gratitude to others. Thank you, is one of the most appreciated phrases we hear.
- Do family history and temple work as a way of showing gratitude for your heritage.
- Pay tithes. By giving back one tenth to the Lord, we acknowledge the source of all our blessings.

In D&C 78:19 it says, “And he who receiveth all things with thankfulness shall be made glorious.” Just remember, “Count your blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.” (Hymns, no. 241)
Attend the Temple

What better place can we go to know our Savior than to His holy house? In the Doctrine and Covenants we read, “Yea, and my presence shall be [in my house], for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God.” (D&C 97:16)

In the temple, our understanding of the Savior’s mission and our love for Him grow. The eternal perspective we gain by participating in temple ordinances gives us greater peace of mind, greater happiness in our lives, and a deeper love for those about us.

President Boyd K. Packer tells us: “In the temple we can receive spiritual perspective. There, during the time of our temple service, we are “out of the world.” Sometimes our minds are so beset with problems, and there are so many things clamoring for attention at once that we just cannot think clearly and see clearly. At the temple, the dust of distraction seems to settle out, the fog and the haze seem to lift, and we can see things that we were not able to see before and find a way through our troubles that we had not previously known.” (Boyd K. Packer. Ensign, Feb. 1995)

The following are some suggestions to prepare us to feel God’s presence in His holy house:

- Plan ahead and allow plenty of time, so time constraints are not a distraction.
- Consciously put aside the rush of daily life and worldly concerns.
- When struggling with personal challenges, come to the temple seeking help through personal revelation.
- Remember that our labors in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection, both individually and as a people.

“The Lord will bless us as we attend to the sacred ordinance work of the temples. Blessings will not be limited to our temple service. We will be blessed in all our affairs.”
(Boyd K. Packer Ensign, Feb. 1995, 32)

Reverence for God’s Creations

M. Russell Ballard tells us that “To truly reverence the Creator, we must appreciate His creations. We need to plan to take time to observe the marvels of nature. Today, we can easily become surrounded by brick buildings and asphalt surfaces that shelter us from real life around us...All the marvels of nature are glimpses of the Lord’s divine power and expressions of His love.”
“When we look to see the evidence of creation all around us, from a grain of sand to the majestic planets, we begin to realized that we are the greatest of all God’s creations; we are created in His image. God created the earth in all it’s magnificent glory, not as an end in itself, but for us, His children. Indeed, we are His children, His offspring, and He is the Father of our spirits.” (M. Russell Ballard, New Era, Mar. 2006, 2-7)

Here are just a few of the many ways we can feel the wonder of God’s creations:

- Gaze into a star-filled sky on a moonless night.
- Enjoy the beauty of a brilliant sunset.
- Appreciate the variety and intricacy of all living things.
- Breathe in the freshness of the air after a rainstorm.
- Be thankful for each of the seasons and the beauties each graces the earth with.
- Hold a new-born baby and contemplate the miracle of life.
- Sense the majesty and power of God at the top of a mountain or at the foot of a roaring waterfall.
- Show respect and reverence for God’s creations by being good caretakers and using the earth’s resources wisely.

“All things denote there is a God, yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and it’s motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator.” (Alma 30:44)

If the Spirit, which is the voice of the Lord, speaks in a still small voice, it shouldn’t surprise us that He asks us to “Be still and know that I am God.” (D&D 101:16) Only when we are still can we learn to recognize the still, small voice.

We pray that some of the suggestions in this handout will be of benefit to you as you seek to be...STILL. May the Lord’s Spirit be abundant in your life.