

CALMING MY MISSIONARY NERVES

I WAS EXCITED
TO BE A
MISSIONARY.
SO WHY WAS I
SUDDENLY SO
NERVOUS?

COPING WITH FEARS

It's normal to feel nervous when you're in a new and unfamiliar situation. Learning how to prepare emotionally for your mission and other life events can help make these transitions easier.

Here are a few ideas from the booklet *Adjusting to Missionary Life* ([2013], 20) that may help if you feel overwhelmed by anxiety:

- Take a short break.
- Be kind to yourself.
- Refocus on gratitude.
- Take one step at a time.
- Help someone else.



By Cindy Ford

I entered the Provo Missionary Training Center on July 20. When I said good-bye to my family, I was confident, happy, and so excited to leave! I had heard that some people struggle in the MTC, and I was determined to not be one of those people.

However, only 10 minutes after entering the MTC, a wave of panic hit me. No matter how hard I tried to shake it off, I couldn't change the way I felt. The reality of being away from family and friends for 18 months struck me. Could I make it that long?

For three weeks I pleaded with the Lord for help, peace, and understanding. I talked to my leaders, received blessings, and tried to have faith and wait patiently for answers. I studied diligently and tried to be obedient. I was determined to stay.

One night at the end of my third week, I was praying—pleading still—for help. The words of Isaiah, which I knew from a song, came into my mind:

“For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.

“In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. . . .

“For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee” (Isaiah 54:7–8, 10).

At that moment, I felt Heavenly Father answer my prayer by lifting this huge burden I had carried for three weeks.

During my last week at the MTC, I was perfectly and completely at peace. I felt gratitude for my Heavenly Father and for the Savior and His Atonement. I was grateful for His love, His tender mercies, and all the faithful people I served with.

The Atonement of Jesus Christ is real and powerful to save. In *Preach*

My Gospel it says, “As your understanding of the Atonement of Jesus Christ grows, your desire to share the gospel will increase” ([2004], 2). Although I still had to face challenges out in the field, I had a witness that the Savior's Atonement was real and that the Lord was mindful of me. I learned that God will strengthen and guide all those who humble themselves, have faith, and ask for the things they need—even, and especially, His missionaries. **NE**

The author lives in Utah, USA.

Additional Resources

- *Adjusting to Missionary Life*, lds.org/manual/resource-booklet-adjusting-to-missionary-life
- Elder Gregory A. Schwitzer, “Prepare to Serve,” *New Era*, Apr. 2017, 34–37.
- Wendy Ulrich, “The Hardest Part of Being a Missionary,” *New Era*, June 2016, 36–40.
- Robert K. Wagstaff, “Preparing Emotionally for Missionary Service,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2011, 22–26.

PROFESSIONAL HELP



“Because your health is so important, if you develop symptoms that require medical treatment, be sure to get good professional help. In some cases, if your symptoms are severe, you'll be honorably excused from your mission. And you'll be blessed for having kept yourself worthy. If you return home early, please know that the Lord loves and appreciates every effort you made to serve Him. Anyone who goes on a mission and tries his or her best has had a successful mission.”

Elder Gregory A. Schwitzer of the Seventy, “Prepare to Serve,” *New Era*, Apr. 2017, 37.