



COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY

“Celebrate Life with Margin”

Appendix of Activities and Illustrations

Activity #1 - How Do We Use Margins?

Supply each participant with a sheet of paper that includes only a border around the perimeter (example on next page). Give them instructions to use the paper for anything they like – writing a poem, making a list, copying a scripture, drawing a picture, doodling, etc. Give them about five minutes to create. Then ask some to share examples of what they did. Make the following observations with them: Did they work inside or outside the margins? Did any include the border/margin as part of their work? How does their choice reflect their personality – staying in the box vs. free to go outside the box?



Activity #2 - Balloon Juggle

Divide in groups of 5-7. Give each group member a balloon and instruct them to blow it up and tie it off. Ask them to stand in a circle. They should begin by tapping their balloon in the air to the person on their right, while at the same time receiving the one from their left. They are to keep all the balloons in the air moving around the circle from person to person. After they are moving the balloons in this pattern, ask them to hold one hand behind their backs and keep the balloons going. If they can handle that then ask them to change directions.

Discuss: How does tossing balloons feel like life?
What helped them to keep the balloons in the air?
How did it feel with an arm behind their backs?

Activity #3 - Margin/Marginless Statements

Divide into eight groups of 3-5. Give each group an envelope containing a piece of paper with one of the following statements on it. Ask them to discuss what this means to them and be prepared to report their thoughts back to the larger group. After 10-12 minutes for discussion have the first group begin sharing.

Marginless is fatigue;
Margin is energy

Marginless is red ink;
Margin is black ink.

Marginless is hurry;
Margin is calm.

Marginless is anxiety;
Margin is security.

Marginless is culture;
Margin is counterculture.

Marginless is the disease of the new millennium;
Margin is its cure.

Marginless is activity;
Margin is intentional.

Marginless is heavy;
Margin is lightweight.

Activity #4 - Would You Rather.....

On opposite sides of the room position two large posters one with the letter A and the other with the letter B. Be sure that the letters are large and can be clearly seen by all. Ask the entire group to go to the center of the room. As you read each "Would You Rather Question" they must choose either the A or B answer and move to stand next to that letter. After all are in place, ask one or two to explain why they chose that answer.

Would you rather always take a cold shower or sleep an hour less than you need to be fully rested?

Would you rather always lose or never play?

Would you rather be able to stop time or fly?

Would you rather be happy for 8 hours a day and be poor or be sad for 8 hours a day and rich?

Would you rather be invisible or be able to read minds?

Would you rather be rich and ugly or poor and good looking?

Would you rather give up your cell phone or your calendar?

Would you rather go to an amusement park or to a family reunion?

Would you rather live without music or live without TV?

Would you rather spend the day surfing the internet or the ocean?

Would you rather not be able to use your phone or your email?

Would you rather give up your computer or your pet?

Activity #5 - Inside and Outside The Margin

Give each participant a sheet (4 ¼ x 5 ½) with only a margin/border printed on it. Ask them to take their final 5-10 minutes and write the following: Inside the margin write what their priorities are – those things on which they need to focus their time and outside the margin those things that interfere and steal their time, overloading their schedule. Ask them to keep this in their Bible or post it in a place where they will see it and it will be a reminder of living with margin.

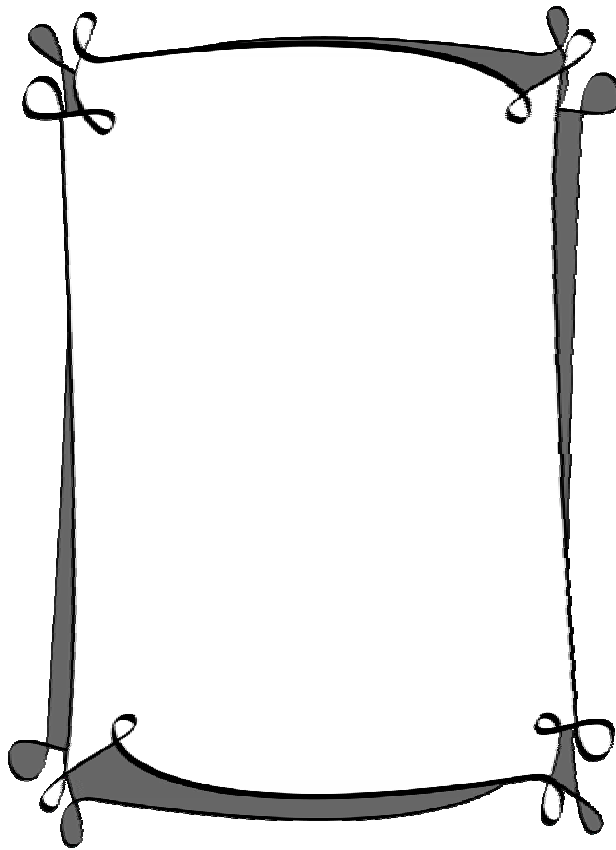


Illustration #1

OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR

My Days Are Numbered

By RICK MORANIS

Published: November 22, 2006

The average American home now has more television sets than people ... according to Nielsen Media Research. There are 2.73 TV sets in the typical home and 2.55 people, the researchers said.

— *The Associated Press, Sept. 21.*

I HAVE two kids. Both are away at college.

I have five television sets. (I like to think of them as a set of five televisions.) I have two DVR boxes, three DVD players, two VHS machines and four stereos.

I have nineteen remote controls, mostly in one drawer.

I have three computers, four printers and two non-working faxes.

I have three phone lines, three cell phones and two answering machines.

I have no messages.

I have forty-six cookbooks.

I have sixty-eight takeout menus from four restaurants.

I have one hundred and sixteen soy sauce packets.

I have three hundred and eighty-two dishes, bowls, cups, saucers, mugs and glasses.

I eat over the sink.

I have five sinks, two with a view.

I try to keep a positive view.

I have two refrigerators.

It's very hard to count ice cubes.

I have thirty-nine pairs of golf, tennis, squash, running, walking, hiking, casual and formal shoes, ice skates and rollerblades.

I'm wearing slippers.

I have forty-one 37-cent stamps.

I have no 2-cent stamps.

I read three dailies, four weeklies, five monthlies and no annual reports.

I have five hundred and six CD, cassette, vinyl and eight-track recordings.

I listen to the same radio station all day.

I have twenty-six sets of linen for four regular, three foldout and two inflatable beds.

I don't like having houseguests.

I have one hundred and eighty-four thousand frequent flier miles on six airlines, three of which no longer exist.

I have "101 Dalmatians" on tape.

I have fourteen digital clocks flashing relatively similar times.

I have twenty-two minutes to listen to the news.

I have nine armchairs from which I can be critical.

I have a laundry list of things that need cleaning.

I have lost more than one thousand golf balls.

I am missing thirty-seven umbrellas.

I have over four hundred yards of dental floss.

I have a lot of time on my hands.

I have two kids coming home for Thanksgiving.

Rick Moranis is the creator of a country music album, "The Agoraphobic Cowboy."

Illustration #2

- More Americans than ever say they are anxious and depressed.
- We don't take the time we need to heal from major events (death, illness, etc). We experience them and then move right back into the fast lane.
- "There is a psychic instability in our day that prevents peace from implanting itself in the human spirit."
- Four out of five Americans report the need to reduce stress in their lives, often resorting to tranquilizers.
- The negative aspects of stress result in the loss of 225 million work days annually in the U.S. which is the equivalent of nearly one million people for every work day.

Excerpts from Margin by Richard A. Swenson

Illustration #3

"Marginless is being thirty minutes late to the doctor's office because you were twenty minutes late getting out of the bank because you were twenty minutes late dropping the kids off at school because the car ran out of gas two blocks from the gas station – and you forgot your wallet.

Margin, on the other hand, is having breath left at the top of the staircase, money left at the end of the month, and sanity left at the end of adolescence.

Marginless is the baby crying and the phone ringing at the same time; margin is Grandma taking the baby for the afternoon. Marginless is being asked to carry a load five pounds heavier than you can lift; margin is a friend to carry half the burden. Marginless is not having time to finish the book you're reading on stress; margin is having the time to read it twice."

-Richard A. Swenson

Illustration #4

"So many of us feel we have no time to cook and serve a lovely three course dinner, to write the long, thoughtful letter, to ever so patiently tutor the child. But other generations, not so long ago, did. And we have more timesaving devices that they did."

- Peggy Noonan, regular contributor to The Wall Street Journal

Illustration #5

We live in nanoseconds. We drive fast, eat fast, shop fast, cook fast, read our Bibles fast, pick up our kids fast, sleep fast, etc.

Supercomputers operate at Trillionths of a second. The human brain has no reference for a trillionth of a second.

International currency traders watch their display screens and if they move fast enough at just the right moments they can make 100s of thousands of dollars.

Those with college students know that they can deposit money in an account that their son/daughter can spend within the hour.

We text message because its faster than a real conversation and less of an interruption.

Max Lucado has said, "America is the only nation with a mountain named Rushmore."

Illustration #6

There is a bumper sticker that reads "God is my co-pilot." But the truth is God doesn't even want us in the cockpit. He doesn't want us driving 60 miles an hour in a 45 mile an hour zone. He doesn't want us overscheduled, always in a hurry, and spending time on gadgets that have no eternal significance. He wants us to be available as He is "passing by".