



Cristina Gottardi

Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

Luke 10:38-42

Life sometimes feels like one long to-do list. It always seems like someone else manages it better than we do. There is nothing new in frenetic activity, and the longing for space, for time to think and just catch our breath, particularly at this difficult time.

In our story, Mary is lovingly devoted to Jesus. She hangs on his every word. We might ask – What if Martha had been like this too? Who would have cooked dinner?! Presumably – eventually – someone would have had to call for a break and the work would have been shared?

Jesus validates Mary's choice. She is sitting, listening, taking time to reflect, to learn, and to be with God. Of course, Mary would need to work too.

But Jesus here reminds Martha that all of us need a balance between activity and rest, between doing and being, between throwing ourselves into work and responding to demands, and proactively looking after our deeper selves. It may be you can only carve out a minute or two at a time – but those are precious already. Find time today to sit at the feet of Jesus, and listen, to him, to yourself, to the deeper, quieter voices of life.

A “Have a Go” habit: Mary moments

- Now you are practising your “Martha” habit with your cup, sitting at Jesus' feet, try a “Mary” make over: pick any household task such as boiling a kettle.
- As you do the chore slow down, see Jesus there while you take a little longer...try not to multi-task...breathe deeply and be aware of Jesus near you.
- Repeat [Psalm 16:8](#) “I keep the Lord always before me”...whatever chore or task imagine doing it with and for Jesus.



[Looking for support?](#)



[What can offer help and support](#)

[Next reflection](#)

[Read the next reflection in the series](#)

The *#FaithAndMentalHealth* reflections were written by Rev Prof Chris Cook. Ruth Rice developed the "Have a go" habits.

Bible readings are taken from The New Revised Standard Version (Anglicized Edition), copyright 1989, 1995 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. All rights reserved.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/mental-health-resources/supporting-good-mental-health/day-six-switching-focus>