

## Permission to be Task-Oriented

Mary had been a church planter's wife for over 20 years. She was the type of person who always kept a list because of the many demands in her life, including a job and two children as well as the church. Mary seemed to always find the most efficient way to get a job done quickly, with the least resources. This was an asset as most of the time ministry occurred on a shoestring budget and with less personnel than they needed. Mary and her husband worked as a team and they effectively thought through ministry and personal decisions together. Yet, in spite of their successful ministries, Mary always felt that she wasn't enough of the stereotypical empathetic pastor's wife. Mary was kind and caring, but she always felt driven to "do" ministry, rather than sit and listen to people's problems or just "be" with them. Her mind was always racing toward the next item on her list that needed to be done. She'd rather make a meal and clean it up than be the guest.

Mary came to her first coaching session with a number of thoughts and questions written down. She told me that she felt a huge relief when she read her signature strengths: Achiever, Strategic, Responsibility, Focus, and Discipline. She stated that if God had made her this way, it must be acceptable for her to be a busy, task-oriented pastor's wife.

She went on to inform me that her husband had three talents in the Relationship Building category, one in the Influencing category and one in the Strategic category. Together, they made a dynamite team. He had the patience with his Relator and Adaptability themes to take care of people's needs, so she could stay task-oriented. His Learner strength meant that he truly enjoyed getting to know all about the new people who came to their church. Mary was amazed that God had brought her a man with the perfect strengths to complement hers. She felt called to ministry as a teenager and realized that her husband's strengths allowed her to do the ministry to which she felt called. Likewise, her strengths allowed her husband to be with people, because she joyfully took care of most of the practical tasks that needed to be done at home and church.

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