

# THE ADRENALINE GOD

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**“YOU ARE DOING YOUR OWN MINISTRY, THE KIDS, AND YOUR CHURCH AS A WHOLE A DISSERVICE WHEN YOU CREATE THE FALSE ILLUSION THAT LIFE IS ONE BIG THRILL AFTER ANOTHER.”**

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Kids of the new millennium are looking for a rush, a thrill, a high-risk adventure that produces a non-stop flow of adrenaline. Excitement is the catchword; big events are the hot item.

With society pushing the adrenaline surge to an all-time high, some youth ministries are asking: should we follow suit? Is providing repeated spiritual thrills and one spiritual high after another the next step for those involved in student ministry?

A resounding ‘*no*’ should be heard across the land! Big-time excitement is unable to sustain a kid over the long haul of his or her spiritual journey. Sure, it may attract them, but it will not maintain them. What works? Connecting young people to deep relationships grounds them for a lifetime of involvement in God’s body, the church.

Could our pursuit of excitement and thrills and our lack of attention to relationships be a cause for the high exit rate of high school seniors from church after graduation (over 70%)? By being event driven through the teen years, are we actually setting ourselves up for failure? Are we unknowingly bowing a knee to the adrenaline god because of the pressure to keep up with the techno-Jones?

One thing is true: we are doing our own ministry, the kids, and our church as a whole, a disservice when we create the false illusion that life is one big thrill after another, and people are only there for the in-between times. Quite the contrary! Life is actually somewhat routine, typically a matter of engaging in daily discipline. And deep relationships – with God and others – is the high point of it all!

How’s your ministry doing in connecting kids to relationships? Here are a few diagnostic questions to ask yourself:

- Do you sense a lot of motion but little progress?
- Does attendance drop dramatically during the dry times?
- Does your calendar dictate more than your purpose/mission?
- Do leaders and kids “hang out” even when there is no official event?
- Do your events allow adequate debriefing and processing?
- Is there a small group emphasis in place among your students?
- Are there post-attraction avenues for students who attend events and take spiritual steps towards Christ?
- Is your overall growth plan based on events or relationships?