



FINDING
HARMONY
AS WE
Struggle
TO **Juggle**

By E. Jeffrey Hill

Finding balance in our lives can be tricky. Here are four suggestions that can help.

Life is hectic. We have so much to do, especially once children enter the picture. There's school, work, Church callings, housework, hobbies and activities, and any number of other things claiming our time. It's no wonder that so many of us feel stressed.

There is no one formula for creating greater harmony in our lives, but we can each do specific things to



experience greater joy, including engaging in rejuvenating activities, setting aside time to be with our families, and focusing on the Savior.

1. Increase Energy

Busy schedules or long work hours often leave us feeling tired and worn out. When that happens, many people find they have little energy left for service at home or at church. However, we can boost the energy we have throughout the day in several simple ways.

Communicating with our Father in Heaven while at work is an often-overlooked way to increase energy. One father said he prays frequently at work, sometimes vocally and sometimes silently, and feels blessed with energy that helps him perform more effectively in his job. As the Spirit helps him solve work problems, he feels he has more time and energy for his family and Church service.

We can also increase our energy by participating in activities that renew us. For example, frequent physical exercise increases our stamina and often gives us a boost throughout the day. Peaceful music can soothe the soul. Some people find talking to a friend to be energizing. A short nap is often invigorating. Having a few minutes alone in quiet solitude can rejuvenate the mind.

The commute to and from work can also be a good time to renew energy. One mother reviews scriptures she has memorized as she walks to work, and she arrives at her job with a clear mind. A father listens to conference talks as he drives home from work. By the time he greets his family, he has forgotten about frustrating workday experiences and is ready to focus on his family.

2. Simplify Your Life

In the Book of Mormon, King Benjamin counseled, “And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength” (Mosiah 4:27). Sometimes as we seek to please and help those around us, we agree to do too many things and neglect the activities that are the most important.

One way to simplify our lives is to follow the prophets and stay out of debt. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum



of the Twelve Apostles promised great blessings to those who pay an honest tithing, spend less than they earn, learn to save, honor financial obligations, and teach children sound financial principles.¹

Try to combine activities as much as possible. For example, a couple that goes on a walk together can get needed exercise, talk about their children, share ideas about Church callings, express their affection, brainstorm solutions to problems at work, and be rejuvenated. This one activity is of great value because it can contribute to so many facets of life.

3. Focus on the Most Important Things

When Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve was in law school, he had to make the most of limited time with his daughters. He recalls, “My favorite play activity with the little girls was ‘daddy be a bear.’ When I came home from my studies for a few minutes at lunch and dinnertime, I would set my books on the table and drop down on all fours on the linoleum. Then, making the most terrible growls, I would crawl around the floor after the children, who fled with screams, but always begged for more.”²

We have been counseled that our families should take priority over other commitments. We strengthen our families when we set aside undisturbed time to be together. Elder Oaks taught, “Parents should act to preserve time for family prayer, family scripture study, family home evening, and the other precious togetherness and individual one-on-one time that binds a family together and fixes children’s values on things of eternal worth.”³

Having regular family meals is one way to make the time we spend together more meaningful. President Ezra Taft Benson taught, “Happy conversation, sharing of the day’s plans and activities, and special teaching moments occur at mealtime because mothers and



CHOOSE THE BEST THINGS

“We have to forego some good things in order to choose others that are better or best

because they develop faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and strengthen our families.”

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “Good, Better, Best,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 107.

fathers and children work at it.”⁴

Parents can also take advantage of bedtime to increase quality time with their children. They can read or tell stories, pray, sing songs, and read the scriptures together. This is also an ideal time to teach the gospel. Additionally, these interactions may be just what a parent needs to put aside the frustrations of the day.

4. Center on the Savior

As we center our lives on the Savior, the needed happiness, energy, and peace we seek will come.

President Howard W. Hunter taught, “I am aware that life presents many

challenges, but with the help of the Lord, we need not fear. If our lives and our faith are centered on Jesus Christ and his restored gospel, nothing can ever go permanently wrong.”⁵

When the primary focus of our life is to become a disciple of Jesus Christ, everything else—employment, home, and church—falls into place. Sheri L. Dew taught, “Coming unto Christ means walking away from the world. It means placing Christ and Christ only at the center of our lives.”⁶

Each of us can experience greater joy and harmony in our lives as we learn to balance our responsibilities. We may feel an increase in happiness and energy as we spend more time on uplifting activities and set aside quality time to spend with our families. Most important, as we center our lives on the Savior we can receive the faith and endurance we need to help us on our journey through life. ■

NOTES

1. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Earthly Debts, Heavenly Debts,” *Liahona and Ensign*, May 2004, 40–43.
2. Dallin H. Oaks, “The Student Body and the President,” in *Brigham Young University 1975 Speeches* (1975); available at speeches.byu.edu.
3. Dallin H. Oaks, “Good, Better, Best,” *Liahona and Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 105.
4. Ezra Taft Benson, *To the Mothers in Zion* (pamphlet, 1987).
5. *The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1997), 40.
6. Sheri L. Dew, “We Are Women of God,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 98.