



PWOC

Protestant Women of the Chapel

WORKSHOP: HELP! I AM OUT OF BALANCE!

By Deb Easterling

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: How do we achieve *balance* with the many roles we have as women? What is God's view on balance in our lives? God's desire is for us to seek Him, follow His lead, and receive His peace. Seeking Him leads to Godly balance which leads to God's peace.

INTRO: Take a gallery walk around the room to read quotes that are posted. Choose your favorite one and be prepared to say why. After everyone has chosen a quote, you will share in groups of 2-3.

1. A PIECE OF THE PIE

In the time we have, we will

- Explore the roles God has given us
- Consider the roots of our busy lives
- Explore tools to keeping our lives "in balance"

Balance:

- *the state of having your weight spread equally so that you do not fall*
- *the ability to move or to remain in a position without losing control or falling*
- *a state in which different things occur in equal or proper amounts or have an equal or proper amount of importance*
- *harmony: a state in which various parts form a satisfying and harmonious whole and nothing is out of proportion or unduly emphasized at the expense of the rest*
- **Synonyms:** equilibrium, poise, stability, steadiness



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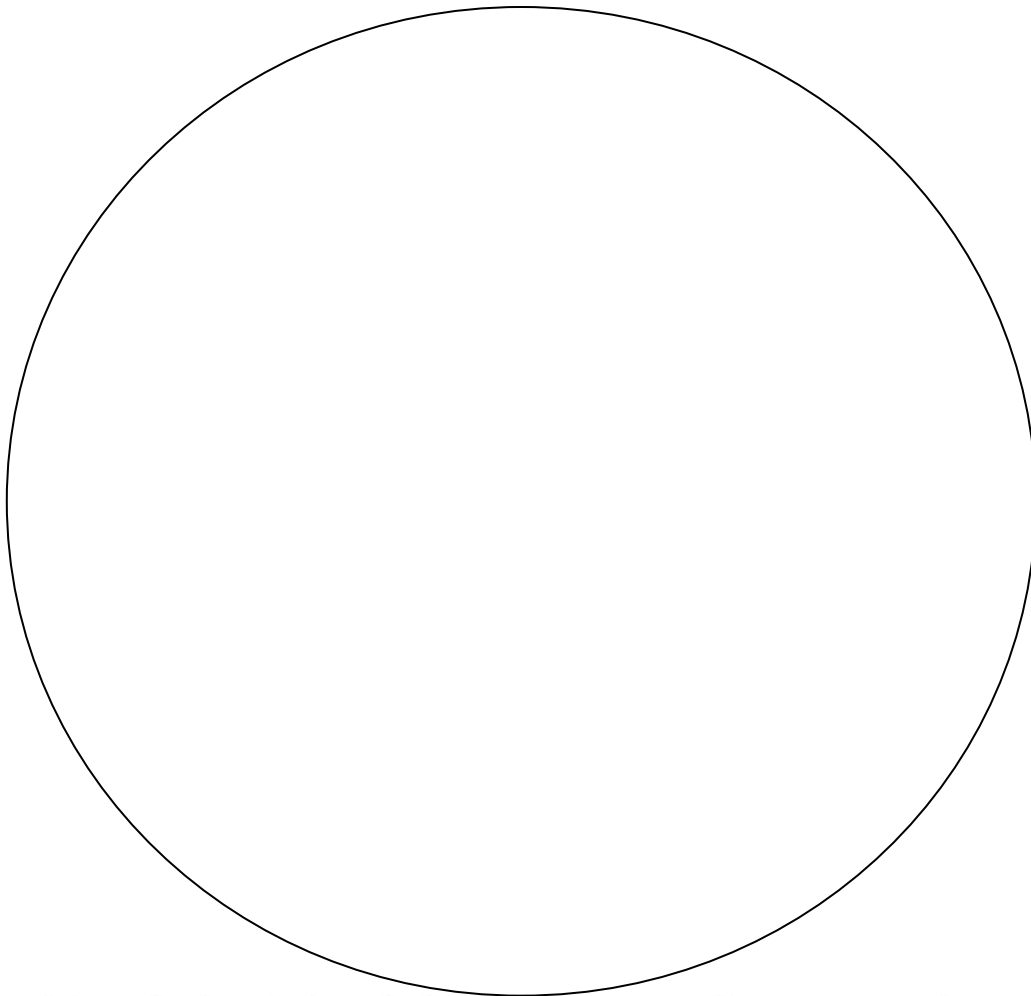
Calling:

- *a strong inner impulse toward a particular course of action especially when accompanied by conviction of divine influence*
- *the vocation or profession in which one customarily engages*

Embracing both concepts- balance and calling- can be a powerful shift in our lives. Think about it. Could it be that God Himself could help us arrange our lives in such a way as to have harmony and stability? Could it be that He has a specific calling for us each day? Imagine living life, compelled to action by God Himself. That's an exciting way to live!

PIE ACTIVITY:

Draw lines on your "pie" below to create pieces to represent each role you have in your life (i.e. wife, mother, teacher, employee, ministry leader, school volunteer, etc). Do your best to proportion the pieces according to the amount of time you invest in each one. Which pieces are the largest/smallest? Share your "pie" briefly with your neighbor.



Now, let's consider...which pieces are God-given? Which pieces did we choose for ourselves? Take a few moments –pray- ask God to reveal Himself to you concerning your life and all that you are involved in right now. You may take a moment to journal/make notes, if you wish.

- ***Which of these pieces did you give to me, Father? Did I choose any without asking You first?***

- ***What are my specific callings for THIS TIME?***

II. EVALUATE/BASIC TOOLS

Evaluate: Busyness can be a cover for root issues. Pray. Listen. **Why** are you so busy?

Discovering the *why* can lead you to some surprising insights which can help you more accurately evaluate which roles God is truly calling you to. You have nothing to prove- you are created in Christ Jesus- you are HIS workmanship. Believe this.

- ***For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, **which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.** Ephesians 2:10***

Journal your answers to these questions in the space below...be honest. You are encouraged to continue exploring these questions later- perhaps with your spouse.

- 1. Do I have a frantic or overwhelming pace in life right now? Is it worth it?**



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2. How will this continued pace impact my family, my health, my ministry?

3. Will these things matter in eternity?

***Basic Tools* for conquering busyness, honoring your husband and family, and bringing your life into balance:**

Read the following list and mark what speaks most directly to your mind and heart.

(adapted from - Rick Ezell – How to Balance Your Life and Ministry)

- **Respect the priority of your marriage:** Set a non-negotiable date night. Communicate. Do devotions together. Honor one another above yourselves. Surprise your spouse. Love him/her according to their personal love language.
- **Always get your spouse's permission/blessing** before saying yes to ministry positions. What you do affects your spouse and your family.
- **Set boundaries:** Set a limit to how many nights you are out a week doing ministry. Give your spouse veto power over your schedule. Do not miss your own kids' events for ministry purposes. Allow ample time for rest at home, listening, and fun.
- **Set the tone in your home:** Ensure that your home is a refuge of affection, warmth, and encouragement. If you are too busy, you set a tone of stress and chaos. May the Word of God be visible in your home and in your actions.
- **Be intentional with your own children:** Include your kids in ministry. Allow them to enjoy the perks about serving at church. Be present when you are home. Find unique ways to encourage and celebrate them. Be creative and fun!
- **Eliminate the unnecessary.** Many of the things we engage in are not necessarily wrong – they are simply not necessary.
- **Ask for help.**



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- **Do what you can.** . . . Mark 14:8. She has done what she could... (Jesus anointed at Bethany). *What is your "what you can"?*
 - Mark 14:6-9 (NIV) "Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. **She did what she could.** She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."
- **Consistently monitor and assess your involvement** – does it match up with the direction you sense God has given you?

Note: 5 out of the 9 tools are directly related to family. Is this significant to you?

ACTIVITY:

Go back and rank the Basic Tools from 1-9 in order of importance for your own life, for this season. You may share your thoughts with your neighbor, if you would like to.

III. THE WHOLE PIE/FOUNDATIONAL TOOLS

Where are all of the pieces connected in a pie? _____

What is the center when our life pieces come together? _____

- *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.* Romans 12:1
- Is Balance more about allowing God to BE my center and having everything flow from that? Ponder it...as we move into some **foundational** tools!



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Foundational tools for keeping *Godly* balance in our lives: *The following list was compiled through wisdom gained from several sources - please see resource list in the appendix.*

- **Seek first His Kingdom**

- But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Matt 6:33 (ESV)
- *What God says is first today is first today!* -Jill Briscoe
- *It's a great release to know that the secret to 'doing it all' is not necessarily 'doing it all,' but rather discovering which part of the 'all' He has given us to do and doing all of that.* -Jill Briscoe

- **Abide in Christ. . .Stay connected to Him – 24/7**

- *Remain in Me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me.* John 15:4 (NIV)
- *Keep the focus on Christ: Doing things for Christ in ministry is not synonymous with abiding in Him. Protect your personal time with God above everything.* -Kristin Charles
- Check your spiritual barometer – *The reason many people's lives are out of balance is because of something internal, not because of something external on a calendar. Often it is not because of something physical, but because of something spiritual.* -Rick Ezell

- **Prayer** – as a spiritual discipline; to avoid burnout

- *The discipline of prayer is the intentional, concentrated, and regular effort to create space for God.* Henri Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation*
- *A life without a quiet center easily becomes delusional.* –Nouwen
- *Prayer is being unbusy with God instead of being busy with other things.* –Nouwen
- *Once your mind, heart, and body are reunited in prayer, your whole life will become one act of thanksgiving and praise. Then, when your time for prayer is done and you must leave your special place, you will remain prayerful at all times and places, and will be filled with the presence of God.* –Nouwen



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- **Move where and when God directs - Discipline to obey God's direction**
 - *He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.* 1 Thessalonians 5:24 (ESV)
 - Follow the "God cloud" in front of you, as the Israelites did -- even when you would rather not.
 - *It takes courage to disappoint people, especially those you love.* -Jill Briscoe
 - *Jesus was busy all His life, but as the Father directed.* -Jill Briscoe
 - *Sometimes we get so busy rowing the boat, we don't take the time to stop and see where we're going...or what we are becoming.* -Wayne Cordeiro

- **Thanksgiving – Eucharisteo.**
 - **Eu** overwhelmingly good feeling about something. means good or well. It denotes a general good disposition.
 - **Charis** is the Greek word for grace or "freely granted favor." Combined they mean "an outpouring of grace and wonderful feelings that freely flow from the heart in response to someone or something."
 - *The real problem of life is never a lack of time. The real problem of life- of my life- is lack of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving makes time.* -Ann Voskamp

- **Worship. Rest for the body. Inner rest.**
 - *Rest is not always to the body first, but the inner rest that energizes us for the work He has called us to do...the Sabbath of the heart that should happen 24/7.* -Jill Briscoe
 - The Sabbath is for: *The work of the soul as it worships itself into rest!* -Jill Briscoe

ACTIVITY:

Work in a group of 2 or 3. Choose one item from the list of **Foundational Tools for Keeping Godly Balance**. Share either a) How you have experienced God through that practice or b) Why you would like to branch out in this area- (i.e. try something new). After everyone has shared, take a moment to pray for one another.



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REFLECTION TIME: (5 minutes)

Look back through your notes. What has God spoken to you during this time? Please journal/take notes of 1-3 things that have been fresh insights or reminders for you:

To Continue the Journey of Insight and Transformation. . . To consider later:

- **Be honest:** Has He called you to each of those roles you put in your pieces? What actions could you take? Who can hold you accountable?
- **Your Challenge:** On a card, write down 1-3 realistic things you will do within the next two weeks to begin to address the area the Spirit spoke to you. Write down one verse that you need to hear daily.
- **My Challenge to Us:** Take this information home and discuss it with your spouse (in person or via skype!). Ask their thoughts. Receive those thoughts!
- **Place your card in a frequently visible place** and ask one person to hold you accountable, if you are so brave! (Ask God to reveal that person to you).

Don't leave it here. . . continue to ask God to show you how you can keep Him first, abide in Him, be more intentional in prayer, be obedient to His direction, give Him more thanksgiving, and find rest through worship.



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APPENDIX

Resources:

- Kristin Charles Blog - <http://ministry-to-children.com/balancing-family-and-ministry/>
- Just Between Us Magazine - http://justbetweenus.org/pages/page.asp?page_id=74057 (Articles by Jill Briscoe and Becky Tirabassi)
- Rick Ezell article - <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/youth-How-to-Balance-Your-Life-and-Ministry>
- *Leading on Empty* by Wayne Cordeiro
- One Thousand Gifts by Ann Voskamp
- *Spiritual Formation* by Henri Nouwen

Gallery Walk Quotes/Scripture

- *The real problem of life is never a lack of time. The real problem of life --- of my life --- is lack of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving makes time.* -Ann Voskamp
- *Sometimes we get so busy rowing the boat, we don't take the time to stop and see where we're going. . . or what we are becoming.* -Wayne Cordeiro
- *It's a great release to know that the secret to "doing it all" is not necessarily "doing it all", but rather discovering which part of the "all" He has given us to do and doing all of that.* -Jill Briscoe
- *Piglet noticed that even though he had a very small heart, it could hold a rather large amount of gratitude.* A.A. Milne – *Winnie the Pooh*
- *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice...The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. . . And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.* *Philippians 4:4-7, 19 ESV*
- *The reason many people's lives are out of balance is because of something internal, not because of something external on a calendar. Often it is not because of something physical, but because of something spiritual.* -Rick Ezell



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