

## ***The Balancing Act Handout Tips***

This speech addresses finding balance in three areas: our spiritual/religious life, our families/social network and in our financial/economic life.

### **Spiritual/Religious Life**

Tip #1 You have to evaluate when it is a good idea to go back to church -- it may not be for quite a while.

Tip #2 Church nurseries will not be a good place for your heart child. If you must attend church, it would be better to sit with the general assembly.

Tip #3 It's okay not to go to church; you can find ways to be spiritual without going to church.

Tip #4 It's okay to doubt and to challenge your relationship with God.

Tip #5 It's okay to be angry, overwhelmed and powerless for a while. After you've gone through enough grieving, you need to work to take back control and to do what you can to make your life better.

Tip #6 Your sense of spirituality may change and you may find comfort in new activities.

Tip #7 Some people find certain works of literature helpful in dealing with their religious crisis. "The Special Mother" by Erma Bombeck and "Welcome to Holland" by Emily Perl Kingsley are frequently mentioned by heart families.

Tip #8 Even if your heart child survives, you will be going through the grieving process. Books by Elizabeth

Kubler Ross on grief, death and dying might be helpful.

Tip #9 Another helpful resource is *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* by Harold S. Kushner.

Tip #10 "Religion" and "spirituality" are two different things. A person can be spiritual without necessarily being religious.

### **Families/Social Network**

Tip #1 Your social network will grow and change with your child's needs. Sometimes it hurts when we lose part of our support network.

Tip #2 Many of us are connected to support groups, Care Pages and other social networks. For some this is helpful but you will have to evaluate when it stops being helpful and when you need a break.

Tip #3 It's okay to take a break from providing help to others or even from receiving help from others when you're feeling too overwhelmed.

Tip #4 It's okay to ask for help from family and friends and to give them a chance to feel like they're part of the solution.

Tip #5 There are meaningful chores your children can do that will help them become productive members of your family and society.

## ***The Balancing Act Handout Tips***

This speech addresses finding balance in three areas: our spiritual/religious life, our families/social network and in our financial/economic life.

Tip #6 It is important for every member of the family to have something to look forward to each month -- a club meeting, a get-together with friends, a manicure or even just a walk on the beach. Make time for you and you'll be a happier person for everyone to be with.

Tip #7 Even children need down time sometimes.

Tip #8 Sometimes the people who will understand you best are the people you think know you least.

Tip #9 Remember, your whole family is grieving the loss of a perfectly healthy child and everyone grieves differently. Be kind.

Tip #10 If you don't allow your friends to help you in a time of crisis, what kind of friend are you? Friends allow each other to help in a graceful and grateful manner.

### **Financial/Economic Life**

Tip #1 You need to decide if having one parent stay home is right for your family by looking at the Risks and Benefits of that situation.

Tip #2 You can be creative with your work situation -- and your boss may be happy to help you brainstorm ways to be there for your family and still be there for your job.

Tip #3 You should consider what federal, social programs are available for your family.

Tip #4 You should consider what state and community social programs are available for your family.

Tip #5 Don't let your pride prevent you from gaining help for your family.

Tip #6 Let the hospital social worker help you find resources for your family. Or use the Internet to see what is available.

Tip #7 Your church and neighbors may be happy to help you, if they know what you need.

Tip #8 Be creative and find inexpensive ways to have fun with your family.

Tip #9 Check out the Yahoo! group "Freecycle" which is in communities all over the United States. This is a chance to recycle your unused items by giving them away to people in the community *and* you can make requests for items you need, too.

Tip #10 Many communities have La Leche Leagues or other support groups for mothers that encourage co-op babysitting and other kinds of help to prevent burn out. Check with your local librarian for a list of the organizations in your community which might be able to help you.