

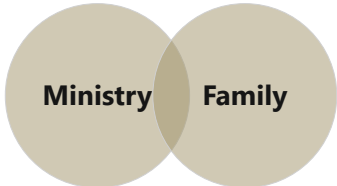


Family and Ministry



3/9/2022 – Bluffton North

The Challenge of Balance



What is unrealistic?

What is normal?

What are signs of trouble?

Topic Areas

1. Understanding Rhythms and Seasons
2. Expectations – Choosing Who to Disappoint
3. Practicing Being Present

Understanding Rhythms & Seasons

God created patterns, rhythms and seasons and placed them throughout creation.

They help to balance and sustain healthy life and relationships.

- Day and night; Work 6 days, rest the 7th
- Times of work and rest; Times of exertion and rejuvenation
- Times of socialization and solitude
- Times for feasting, mourning, remembrance

Consider ways rhythms apply to:

- The individual
- The couple
- The family

Remember

Wherever there is an excess,
there will be a deprivation.

Wherever there is a deprivation,
there will be an excess.

Building a Rhythm

How do I build daily, weekly, and annual disciplines/habits/rhythms to support healthy balance?

- Personal
- Realistic
- Balanced
- Flexible

These rhythms often address our weak areas by doing the opposite of what comes natural to us.

From: Sacred Rhythms

Expectations: Choosing Who to Disappoint

Expectations are often assumed and not communicated, then readjusted and moved as things progress over time.

Sources of internal pressure and “guilt”:

- Internal, Interpersonal, Family
- Organizational, Congregational, Cultural

Sometimes we need to directly set, communicate, or re-define expectations.

- Our Church? Our children?

338

Expectations for Success in Ministry and Family

Christ and Success - How could Jesus say, “It is finished!” ?

- Success was centered around what He was called to – His larger mission.
- It was not gauged by doing all the tasks that could possibly have been done.

How does this play out in family and ministry?

- Think of the many ways Jesus disappointed people.
- Not done out of rebellion/conflict, but He was focused on His larger mission.

We will disappoint people in life... let's make sure we are disappointing the right people!

339

Keeping Boundaries with Expectations: Yours and Others

• Boundaries: Internal and External

- Expectations others have for you.
 - Realistic and unrealistic; In your control vs Outside of your control
- Unrealistic Expectations: “*To fit everything in.*”
- Learning delegation to the level of discomfort

• Consider Ways Boundaries Can be Helpful Around:

- Activities – “*we are out to eat*”
- People – “*my grandchildren are here for the weekend*”
- Time blocks – “*for the next hour*”
- Events – vacation rules
- Locations – “*When quieting down before bed, I don't _____*”
- After hours – “*I don't look at my email after _____*”

340

Being Present

- There are few gifts greater than being present with another.
- We must remind ourselves to attend to the present.
- Being present is a state of mind and attention.

341

Being Present: That's our 'thing'!

Think of a key relationship and what bonded you.

• What makes the relationship with the two of you special? (an activity, a shared interest, etc.)

Think about creating (not forcing!) this kind of connection and shared memories with **each** of your key family relationships.

• Obviously, the number of people this involves makes a huge difference.

• These will often change throughout the years.

• It doesn't just have to be “one thing”

Simple Tips to get you started:

- Eye contact, focused attention, affirming physical contact
- Do they know that they have your full attention?

342



Discussion Groups

343

Discussion Questions

- 1) Where have you found it most difficult to get into (or keep) a healthy rhythm? Personally? As a couple? As a family?
- 2) How has the challenge/tension of feeling guilty or disappointing people played out in your life?
- 3) What stood out or resonated with you as Bro. Jeff and Sis. Lynne shared their testimony? Even if your life situation is different, in what ways could you identify with their experience?
- 4) What ways have you already been developing "our thing" together as spouses or with the family members? Where could you improve your practice of being present?