Tips for Finding Peace in a Full Life

If trying to maintain balance in your life makes you sometimes feel like Terrifico, the Terrified Tightrope Walker in the Circus of Life, working without a net while the crowd below holds their breath in anticipation of a slip, you're not alone. These days almost all of us have so many demands placed on our time and energy, life can feel like a three-ring circus. And if you're not up there on the tightrope, you're down on the ground in the midst of tigers and lions, in charge of keeping a couple of dozen plates spinning in air.

Maintaining balance isn't easy. It requires holding steady with the many responsibilities that are a normal and everyday part of life: caregiving, home, family, friends, church, and work, while at the same time recognizing and fulfilling personal needs and wants. **Finding and maintaining peace when life can be so complicated and demanding is both an inside and outside job.**

Inside

Only you can take care of yourself.

Consider how well you take care of yourself, both physically and emotionally. Do you eat healthfully and exercise regularly? Do you get check-ups and take preventative precautions? Do you set aside personal, quiet time for yourself? Do you make time to enjoy nature and art, filling yourself up again and again?

"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you." Isaiah 26:3

Outside

Reaching outside yourself gives meaning.

Think about how you reach outside yourself to share and give meaning to your life. Your caregiving is a big part of this for this season. Do you spend quality time with family and friends? Do you give back to life through your time, energy, and experience? Contributing to the larger world provides connection and purpose.

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:" 1Peter 4:10

Balance

The key to peace and a fulfilling life.

To discover how well balanced your life is, keep a log of how you spend your time. In a little notebook, you can carry with you, **write down the hours you spend under the broad headings: "for me" and "for others."** Also **make notes of requests for your time** (from family members, from coworkers, or professional obligations). Include "requests" from your physical and emotional self: *"I wish I could take time to take a walk today."* Or *"Gee, I'd love to take a nap."*

Also, **jot down your feelings about the time you're putting in**. Do you resent the responsibilities at home or caring for your loved one? Do you feel like you never get to do what you want to do? Do you rearrange your time, taking away from what you'd planned to do for yourself in order to do something for others? How does that feel? Honestly?

After a week or two, you can expect to have some **pretty clear messages on where there is balance in your life and where there is not**. You might also come to see what's important to you and how you can make changes in your life that will create a life of health, well-being, and joy—a peace filled balanced life.

"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. "Eph 5:15-17

Rayna Neises understands the joys and challenges that come from a season of caring. She helped care for both of her parents during their separate battles with Alzheimer's over a thirty-year span. She is able to look back on those days now with no regrets – and she wishes the same for everyone caring for aging parents.

To help others through this challenging season of life, Rayna has written No Regrets: Hope for Your Caregiving Season, a book filled with her own heart-warming stories and practical suggestions for journeying through a caregiving season.

Rayna is an ICF Associate Certified Coach with certifications in both Life and Leadership Coaching from the Professional Christian Coaching Institute. She is prepared to help you through your own season of caring.

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