

## *Balance Activities*

### Balance Exercises

What better way to learn than through experience? So, to learn about why *balance* is good, invite your family to experience balance through exercise. To do this, clear a space in your living (or largest and easiest-to-clear) room. Then, get a long ribbon, string, or flat bit of cardboard to create a “balance beam” on the floor.

Invite everyone in your family to walk the “beam,” being careful to keep one foot in front of the other and both feet touching the beam at the same time.

After everyone has walked the beam ask: What do we learn about balance from that exercise? What does balance help us with? What do we feel or notice when we focus on balance?

Then, invite everyone in your family to a different kind of balance exercise. Using the same cleared-out space (and picking up the “beam”), have everyone take turns balancing on one leg (be ready to spot little ones who might need help). Try it by simply holding one leg up and then by placing one foot on the side of the knee. Use arms however necessary. Once you’ve gotten good at that, try balancing on one leg with your *eyes closed*.

Then ask: What do we learn about balance from that exercise? What does balance help us with? What do we feel or notice when we focus on balance?

## Scavenge for a Stool

A three-legged stool is a classic example of balance. Each leg needs to be exactly the same size, set exactly the same distance apart to achieve a well-balanced stool. Take away just one leg or set just one leg askew, and the whole stool topples.

While it'd be fun to make a stool using three wooden pegs and a round seat, it's also fun to look around the house for items that could make a stool—a stool fit for a stuffed animal, doll, or small toy.

To do this, go on a little scavenger hunt around your house. Find something that could serve as a seat and three “legs” for the stool. See what it takes to achieve balance—and test it by setting a stuffed animal, doll, or small toy on the stool.

Then discuss what this taught you about balance.

## Spiritual Balance—Sabbath rest

The Creation Story tells us that after creating the world in six “days,” God rested on the seventh day. In the Jewish and Christian faiths, many practice *Sabbath* rest or, God’s work, work, work, work, work, work, work, rest, rhythm to achieve a balance in their weeks.

While it seems easy to take one full day to rest and not work, as anyone with a full calendar knows, it’s hard! But as anyone who has put Sabbath rest into practice knows, it’s so worth it. They understand why God made resting on the Sabbath a commandment!

As a family, choose a week and a day to put the benefits of Sabbath rest to the test. To prepare for the Sabbath, plan to get all paid work and chores done during the non-Sabbath days. Plan meals ahead of time that require minimal preparation—or plan to eat out or get take-out.

Then, free your calendar! Make the day a time of rest (take naps!), of worship (either at church or by singing a hymn or favorite kids praise song together), of play (do something your family loves to do together), and of delight and wonder.

The best Sabbaths are free of guilt-inducing “shoulds” and are filled with activities (or non-activities) that refresh body and spirit and turn our attention to God.

## A Time and Place

One of the ways the Scriptures talk about balance in our lives is by telling us (in lovely, lyrical fashion) that there is a time for everything.

Together, read the words of Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8.

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:  
a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.*

After the first reading, spend a few moments with your eyes closed. Then, read the words again out loud.

This time, encourage everyone to draw a picture or write a short story or poem about what a day—in which everything has its own time and place would look and feel like.

What does this verse say about balance?

