

## A story about *BALANCE*...

Listen to the story and have a conversation. As a family, listen to the audio of the *Balance* story or choose a family member to read it by picking a name out of a hat or having someone volunteer. Then have a conversation guided by the questions below.

- What happened?
- What did he learn?
- Has something similar ever happened in our family?
- How can we apply lessons in the story to our lives?

## Definition of *BALANCE*

*Live your best life. Be mindful of self and others while focusing on what's meaningful and important in your life. Inner happiness and fulfillment come when your mind, body, and emotions are nurtured by the choices you make.*

When we're in balance we make time for the things that are important to us. Staying in balance is an ongoing process about choices. We're constantly making choices about what we do, what we say, how we feel, what we think, etc.

When questions arise about how we spend our time, we make choices depending on what's important in the moment. We may choose to give up time with friends to finish a project for work or school, or we may choose to put aside something we're doing to help a friend. Many of the choices we make every day—choices about school, work, hobbies, sports, family, friends, health, etc.—are about balance.

*Balance* is not about rigidly devoting equal time to everything that matters to us, and it's not about totally immersing ourselves in one area of our lives to the exclusion of all others.

*Balance* is about considering everything that's meaningful and important to us when we make choices about how we spend our time and energy. When we find the right balance we are happy, healthy, productive, and fulfilled. **Make *Balance* a habit in your family.**

Please note: For younger family members *Balance* can be described as making choices that give you a smart brain, a healthy body, and a happy heart.

## Affirmations for *BALANCE*

Affirmations are positive statements that we say repeatedly to ourselves to help change our limiting thoughts and beliefs to positive thoughts that lead to confident action and success. Here are affirmations about *BALANCE*. Use these and come up with others that relate to your family. Individual family members can also create their own personal affirmations. Be sure to write them as present-tense first-person statements.

Choose an affirmation that feels right for you and say it to yourself often ... maybe even write a few on cards and tape them on your bathroom mirror and other places you'll see often to remind yourself to say them every day.

**Make positive self-talk a habit—it really works!**

### **Ages 4 to 7:**

- I know that some things are more important than other things in my life.
- I do things that give me a smart brain, a healthy body, and a happy heart.

### **Ages 8 to 11:**

- I know that some things are more important than other things in my life.
- I make choices that give me a smart brain, a healthy body, and a happy heart.
- My choices keep me happy.

### **Ages 12 and up:**

- I stay aware of what's meaningful and important in my life.
- I make positive choices about how I spend my time.
- I balance my activities to nurture my mind, body, and emotions.
- My choices lead to a fulfilling life.

## ***BALANCE* ACTIVITY**

Create a family-focus “grab bag.” Instead of presents, this will be a grab bag full of fun ideas for family activities. Everyone thinks of as many ideas as they can for fun things the family can do together and writes them on separate pieces of paper, folds them, and puts them in a “hat” or a basket or whatever. These should all be activities that the family has never done before (or a variation of something done before) and can range from small at-home activities (maybe a special supper where each person is responsible for preparing one part of the meal) to bigger outside activities or outings (like driving to a new place to have a family hike). There could also be some that will go on a family wish list. Decide together how often you will pursue one of the activities and take turns choosing one randomly from the hat. This could easily become a tradition in your family with everyone adding ideas as they think of them, and you could even come up with a system for labeling them (long, short, home, out) to enable choosing activities that fit the moment. Most of all ... have FUN whenever you **focus on family!**

## Reflection for ***BALANCE***

Explore thoughts and experiences. Use the following questions to help everyone explore their thoughts and experiences about *Balance* and share them with the family.

- How much time each day or each week are you spending on activities that bring you fulfillment and joy?
- Think about the importance of *Balance* in your life and consider how you can make more time for these activities.

## Review for ***BALANCE***

End the week with a review of the **BALANCE** Key.

- What did we learn?
- How have we applied it?
- What changes have we seen?
- How do we feel about it?
- How will this impact our family in the future?
- What have we noticed about the Keys from previous weeks?