

## **BALANCED BUSYNESS?—Marylin Nease—Texas**

Deades ago, my husband and I hosted my three sisters and their spouses for a weekend at our Dallas home. After watching my sisters and me together, my husband observed, “You and your sisters don’t know how to sit down and rest. You always have to be doing something.”

Really? How could that be?

I clearly remember a day in my childhood when my older sister, Linda, saw Daddy approaching the house and, laughing, she called out to Mother, my two younger sisters, and me, “Look alive! Here comes Daddy!” We laughed along with Linda as we got up from resting and returned to our chores.

Yes, we learned early to be productive! We were taught to make a difference while we’re here!

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“There aren’t enough hours in a day!” I remember my mother saying these words while she ran our six-person household. She also volunteered in church activities, with 4-H club, in a homemakers club, and so forth. When our youngest sister started junior high, Mother added employment at our local college.

“I don’t know how I ever had time to work!” This second statement I heard from my Aunt Frances and from my husband’s Uncle Mel in their retirement years.

These two expressions say everything I’ve absorbed about planning my personal schedule. The first implies that life offers everyone a lot to do. The second suggests that some of us complete our employment, then raise a hand to volunteer for more work, and next wonder how we became so busy.

Recently, my sister Frances and I discussed how such busyness happened to us.

I’m retired after teaching 41 years. Now I’m the one choosing what keeps me busy. I’m active in DKG. I recently agreed to lead a book club. Our family dog and I walk 30 minutes most mornings; every morning and evening I do strength training; on Wednesdays I attend a yoga class. Monthly, I meet Frances for lunch and catching up. When we can match dates, I get together with other close family and friends. I read and garden. All of these activities are good for my mind and body, but I also rejoice when I see an unscheduled day on my calendar!

Frances says she’s the same way. She’s retired after a career in mortgage banking, yet she, too, stays busy—for instance, accepting volunteer jobs on her church’s finance committee, with her town’s city council, and in her grandchildren’s schools. She also volunteers her skills in a quilting group and a garden club. Plus, to help friends in need, she volunteers as an estate sale organizer and as a financial advisor. She and her husband walk their two dogs daily.

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My final thoughts on all this sisterly work and busyness? Our parents raised us to be productive, to help out, to make a contribution to the greater good, whether in our own family or in the lives of our larger community. I think Mother and Daddy would be proud!