

# Families using laughter to defuse stress

## Powerful Patient, 2010 Week 8

Laugh with Joyce and Hillary Gokey as Hillary shares glimpses of her new book about how her family uses laughter to defuse stress.

### About our Guest

"I am currently a stay at home mom. I do a lot of volunteering and subbing at my children's school. I have my Master's in Counseling. I worked as a Special Education Teacher and a Guidance Counselor, before I decided to stay home and raise our kids (Alexander and Anna). I love to run, and have done many marathons. My husband and I did the Lake Placid Ironman in 2007 to celebrate our 10 year wedding anniversary.



Hillary Gokey

"We currently live in Gilbert, AZ but are moving to Minnesota in June. It is bittersweet, as we love it here, but miss Minnesota. My parents live in New York (about 1 mile away from Steve's parents). I have 2 older sisters and a younger brother.

"Writing this book was just a fun adventure. I have never written a book before and do not consider myself a writer. I simply took other people's ideas and put them into a book form. Then I relied on the expertise of others to make it professional. Now that I have made my goal I really wanted to get more out of it.

"That is when I decided to donate half of the royalties to VHLFA. My husband's Uncle Bruce passed away in 1990 from Von Hippel-Lindau, a rare disease with varied manifestations that are difficult to deal with. His father has been battling VHL from very early in his life, and several cousins have also been battling VHL. Any contributions can only help to fight for a cure.

### About Single Married Moms (or Dads)

"I asked my friends and internet correspondents to share their own stories of times when two hands were not enough to deal with the situation at hand. People sent wonderful stories, which I compiled into this book. As people

read it, they say “Too true!” and write to me, wanting to add their own stories to the next edition.

"We all find ourselves in situations from time to time where we could really use another person – either to keep up with three wiggly children, or to cope with some other overwhelming situation. What my extended family has learned in dealing with a difficult rare disease (VHL) and with the varied issues that come up for everyone in life, is to keep your sense of humor.

"One of the stories is about a woman who was in a hurry to complete a long drive and get to her destination, with a car full of three small children, drinking coffee to keep alert on the road. Then the coffee caught up with her, and she needed to stop for gas and go to the bathroom. How can one person handle the purchase and the personal need in a strange location, out of town? She can't possibly leave the children in the car, and her own personal need was urgent. At a time like this, you have a choice: you could get angry, exasperated, start screaming at the sky or (worse) at the children. Or you can simply laugh, take the kids with you into the bathroom, and keep everyone in a good mood.

"Whatever storms await you – and life holds storms for us all – keep laughing with yourself and your family. They are the most precious people in your life.

The book “Single Married Moms (or Dads)” by Hillary Gokey is available through [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or [BarnesAndNoble.com](https://www.barnesandnoble.com). One-half of the profits from this book are being donated by the author to the VHL Family Alliance.