



Steve Mann with his triplet daughters

Yes, our gorgeous triplets, Sydney, Molly and Giselle (listed in birth order) are just over one-year-old and we've survived (just barely). Now I can't say that this has been the easiest year of my life but it has certainly been one of the most fulfilling. As a matter of fact it's been an 11 year ride so far. Susan and I had been trying to get pregnant for 10 years before we were blessed. On top of that we also have a teenage son, he's 17, all grown up now and he presents his own set of challenges. Being a parent of supertwins (as they are called in the parlance of the day) presents its own unique challenges. So without further ado, I present to you my top ten list of things I've learned in my first year as a parent of triplets:

1 Don't negotiate with your spouse; just do - The more you do, the more chits you will have saved up to negotiate on those days when you really need to. Also, both of you are working hard so if you have the energy to get it done, just do it.

2 Play Zone Defense, man-on-man **DOES NOT** work - We've tried man-on-man, "you take Molly, I'll take Giselle" but what about Syd? Whoops, you have to play zone, and when possible, deal with more than one at a time.

3 Let your heart get big - As any of you know when having children, your heart swells. Well imagine what it's like: the love, the caring, the defender in you, how much that's multiplied with more than one. Just let it be and enjoy it.

4 Don't get too attached to sleep but grab it when you can - There really is no substitute for a good night's rest. Really sleep is in my Top 5, but I've learned to do with less for a period of time. As the girls got older we actually got to sleep

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more, but I am more fulfilled and tired at the end of a day with them than any 18 hour work day could ever do to me.

5 The problem with triplets is that someone always has a problem - Giselle is hungry; okay got that. Molly is tired; okay got that. Sydney needs a change; okay done. You see, it's never one and done. There is always someone who needs attention. **PLAY ZONE!**

6 Get in Shape - We have 2 sets of stairs in our house and there are a lot of steps in each stairwell. When I go up and down, usually ten times a day, I'm carrying over 20lbs in each arm. Staying in shape and staying healthy is good for you and essential for them.

7 Love your family but don't demand their help - Let them give what they can give. I say this with all the love in my heart. We love our relatives on both sides but really our families have no idea of the immensity of the work involved in taking care of three infants. We accept that and are grateful for the help they have given us. You need to seek out other families with multiples if you're to learn how to do this right.

8 Burn out will happen - Yup, both Sue and I have each had our burn out periods where we're just not thinking the way we should to resolve issues. When that happens the other takes over.

9 No one thinks they can do this but everyone can - As we say to people who say to us, "better you than me" or "how do you possibly do it" our response is, "What are you going to do, give them back?"

10 I now truly understand the term "labor of love" - That's what it is, a labor of love, but to get all those smiles and kisses everyday and to see them develop, it's worth every bottle, diaper, and trip to Costco. Yuck!



by Steven Mann
Father of Sydney,
Molly & Giselle

