

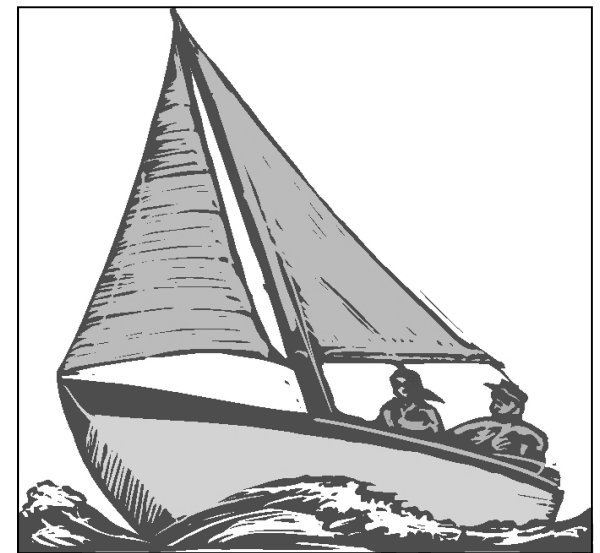
*Life is like riding a
bicycle.
To keep your balance
you must keep moving.*
-Albert Einstein



*Be aware of wonder. Live
a balanced life – learn
some and think some and
draw and paint and sing
and dance and play and
work every day some.*
-Robert Fulghum

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Keeping Balance in a Turbulent World



If trying to maintain balance sometimes makes you feel like a tight rope walker in the circus of life, you're not alone. These days almost all of us have so many demands placed on our time and energy that life can feel like a three ring circus, working without a net. And if you're not up there on the tight rope, you're down on the ground in the midst of tigers and lions, in charge of keeping a dozen plates spinning in air.

Maintaining balance requires holding steady with many responsibilities that are normal, everyday parts of life: home, family, friends and work, while at the same time recognizing and fulfilling personal needs and desires. Finding and maintaining balance requires attention to both the inside, your psychological self and the outside: your relationships, the community and the world.

Only You Can Take Care of You

Consider how well you take care of yourself, both physically and emotionally. Do you eat healthily and exercise regularly? Do you get checkups and take preventive precautions? Do you set aside personal quiet time for yourself, to meditate or simply let your thoughts drift? Do you make time to enjoy nature and art, filling yourself up with positive stimulation and energy?



When you honor your body's requests for things such as taking a walk, eating vegetables, and taking personal time, you charge up your battery and store energy that you may need later. Nurturing yourself enlarges your capacity to help others.



Reaching Outside Yourself Gives Meaning

What do you do to reach outside yourself for sharing and giving meaning to your life? Do you spend quality time with family and friends? Do you give back to the world through your time, energy and experience? Reaching out to others can enrich your life, while contributing to the larger world provides connection and purpose.

Avoid Overdoing It

Unless you pace yourself you may end up off balance and doing too much. When you need or want to, do you say no to requests for your time? Do you find yourself irritable, overwhelmed or resentful?

Balance: Key to a Rich and Fulfilling Life

To discover how well-balanced your life is, keep a log of how you spend your time. In a little notebook you can carry with you, write down the hours you spend under the categories, "For Me" and "For Others." Also make notes of requests for your time from family members, from coworkers or

professional obligations..

Include requests from your physical and emotional self: I wish I could take time to go on a walk today, or Gee, I'd love to take a nap.

Happiness is not a matter of intensity but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony.

-Thomas Merton

Also check out your reactions to the time you're putting in. Do you resent the responsibilities at home? Feeling like you never get to do what you want to do?

Do you rearrange your time, taking away from what you plan to do for yourself in order to do for others?

Put It Into Practice

After a week or so you can expect to have some pretty clear information on where there is balance in your life and where you might look at making some adjustments. You may also come to see what's important to you, and how you can make the changes that will create a life of health, well-being and joy; a balanced life.

