

INTRODUCTION

Too Much to Do, Too Little Time

Everyone today has too much to do and too little time. You often feel overwhelmed with your duties, tasks, and responsibilities. The challenge for you is to simplify your life in such a way that you spend more time doing the things that are most important to you and less time doing those things that are not important at all.

The best news is that you have the power, right now, to live a life with no regrets, where you feel fully engaged in your relationships and everything you do. You can choose to live a life where each day holds meaning and purpose and brings you joy. You can live a life that is focused, positive, and completely in balance with the person you really are deep inside.

The desire for peace of mind and the idea of living a balanced life are central to your happiness and well-being. When you start to live your life in balance as the very best person you could possibly be, you will enjoy the happiness you deserve and experience harmony among all the elements that make up a successful life for you, as you define it.

Your Balance Point

We are all unique individuals with our own values, vision, purpose, and goals. Each one of us has a different way of achieving true balance. Each person experiences true balance when she is operating at her own unique *balance point*. It is from your balance point that you experience the highest level of clarity, commitment, strength, and confidence to pursue your ambitions, both personally and professionally.

The key to success in any area is, first, to start from the right place, and second, to know what steps you need to take to get where you want to go.

In karate, this starting point is the *ready stance*. In ballet, it's *first position*. In painting, you *prime your canvas*. In baking, you *set the oven*. Every area of life has a correct point from which to start.

Finding Your Balance Point

Your greatest need is to understand how to identify your balance point, move to it at will, and automatically return to it whenever you want. You need to establish your balance point before you can set and achieve the goals that are important to you and live a life that is harmonious and truly balanced.

True Balance

True balance is what you experience when everything in your life feels as if it is in perfect harmony. When you enjoy true balance, you feel clear and focused. You go through your day with courage and confidence. You know what you want to accomplish, and you take the necessary steps to accomplish

it. Physically, you feel calm and relaxed. You have the health and energy to do whatever you choose to do.

Emotionally, you feel grounded and happy. You feel connected to others and appreciate your own unique self. Your mind, body, and spirit are in perfect alignment. You feel at one with the universe. This is your goal.

The Inner Experience

True balance is something you experience deep inside. It can be achieved only when you are confident with your choices. Once you have identified what enables you to enjoy this feeling of true balance, it is easier to find and easier to maintain.

You are experiencing true balance when you feel inspired and fully engaged in everything you do. Everything you choose to invest your time and energy into has special meaning for you. True balance is never threatened or influenced by the choices of others because it is a state of mind that is unique to each person. Your requirements for true balance will be exactly what you alone want and need.

False Balance

Generally speaking, people are impatient. They want whatever they want, and they want it now, even if they didn't know that they wanted it one minute ago. As a result, they gravitate readily to the quick fix of getting back into balance with as little effort as possible. They can easily be attracted to activities that will bring them a sense of false balance rather than doing those things that are necessary for them to achieve true balance.

In our society, we quickly turn to consumption to feel better. We drink too much, eat too much, and buy too

many things we don't need in search of an *external* means to achieve some form of relief or balance. These false balance options are usually just Band-Aids. They don't really change anything in our lives, except temporarily.

If you take a yoga class, you are not going to suddenly become more flexible. The flexibility you desire will require many weeks and even months of steady work on yourself.

If you spend two weeks on an extreme diet, you may drop a few pounds, but you will seldom achieve your ideal weight. And whatever weight you lose, you will quickly put back on again as you revert to your previous lifestyle.

If you go on a vacation but spend the majority of your time distracted by work and e-mails, you are not going to come home feeling refreshed or reconnected to your loved ones.

Too many people are seeking a magic pill that will solve their problems and help them achieve their goals quickly and easily. We want quick solutions to problems that have taken years to develop, and this is simply not possible.

Beware of Easy Answers

As it happens, numerous experts, coaches, psychologists, and counselors claim that they can help you find peace of mind and balance. Unfortunately, many of their methods are flawed. They don't work for two major reasons. The first reason is that most of the solutions offered by so-called authorities offer only a quick fix. They don't solve the root problem that is causing your unhappiness and imbalance in the first place.

The second flaw in their ideas is that what brings balance in the life of one person will not necessarily work for another.

You are unique. There never has been and never will be anyone exactly like you. You have had a unique set of experiences, starting in early childhood, that has made you the person you are today. You have made different choices and decisions throughout your life, tried different things, made different mistakes, and gone in different directions from anyone else. The person you are today is a sum total result of thousands of small actions, thoughts, feelings, decisions, regrets, and events that, in combination, no one else has ever experienced.

Because you are special and unique, there are no pat answers or simple solutions that you can take out of a box or a book and apply directly to your life to solve your problems and achieve your goals.

Just as with most medicines, any advice or insight that you acquire may have side effects and cause unexpected reactions. You should always keep an open mind when you hear new ideas and then think about which parts of these ideas might apply directly to your own personal situation.

Falling Victim to False Balance

Many people are lured into the trap of false balance because they are unfocused and feel so overwhelmed with being out of balance that they don't even know where to start their quest. They feel as if they are spending their lives treading water and hoping not to sink. They are often stuck in a comfort zone, doing the same things in the same way, and disconnected from the reality of what a balanced life looks and feels like.

Often, they don't like and respect themselves. They lack the confidence to make tough choices and to take the actions necessary to align their lives with what they truly value.