

THE ELUSIVE BALANCED LIFE



“You remember lesson about balance? Lesson not just karate only. Lesson for whole life. Whole life have a balance. Everything be better. Understand?”—Mr. Miyagi

Few have said it better. Balance is something we all long for. It’s intrinsic to productivity, contentedness, and fulfillment. But it doesn’t come easy to too many of us. Our nemesis, life, and all the directions it pulls us, is a master of getting in the way. We end up as jugglers, knowing eventually a ball or two will get dropped.

Less an achievement than a continuous striving, balance is best looked at as a stream we want to run parallel to our lives, or an interwoven thread that can keep our me-ness together—and our we-ness possible. Because we humans are such instinctual seekers, balance is one of the most studied topics in history. And there are a lot of great perspectives you can mine. It’s all about finding what works for you.

Recognizing the pillars of your foundation and keeping them strong

Numerous studies and theories talk about balance in terms of pillars¹—the key, universal aspects of our lives that form and hold up our foundation.

- **Mental:** It is important to develop a mindset that helps with clarity, confidence, the ability to learn and grow new skills, be creative, and think independently.
- **Physical:** When we take care of our bodies properly through nutrition, exercise, and sleep, we help them to function properly and increase energy levels.
- **Emotional:** The way we feel has a huge impact on our motivation, actions, behaviors, and results. When we acknowledge and embrace our emotions it gives us the ability to understand ourselves and cope with the challenges of life.
- **Spiritual:** It’s critical we don’t neglect what gives us meaning, value, and purpose in life. What makes us feel peaceful, joyful, and centered is up to us, but it needs regular attention.
- **Social:** The relationships in our lives have a lot to say about balance. When we surround ourselves with positive, supportive people who add meaning to our lives, we feel safe, respected, and accepted.
- **Financial:** Our relationship with money, how we manage our expenses and responsibilities, is often a big source of stress and anxiety, so it’s important we take the time to plan, budget, save, invest, and build, giving us time to spend on what we love.
- **Occupational:** The career we choose, and the boundaries we set around it, enable us to find work-life balance. Despite what a lot of us have been taught, it’s possible, with practice, to grow and feel fulfilled in both.

1. The Balanced CEO: [The 8 Elements of a Balanced Life](#)

The journey and the destination

Live in the present! It's all about the destination! We hear both all the time as if they are opposed ways of thinking, but a balanced life is all about making them inextricable. We can be mindful of what and who is around us in the now, taking it in and giving back, while still focusing on the path at our feet and over the horizon.

On one hand, outcome-based thinking,² the mindset that focuses on what we want from something (education, career path, relationship, hobby, etc.) is essential for growth and maintaining purpose. On the other, living in the moment and being present,³ is how we learn most effectively and enjoy things the most fully. They have to go hand in hand down the path—when they don't, we get lost on our way to the destination.

The essential and the nonessential

The line between what we need in our lives and what we just accept is often a very fuzzy one. Things get added and added until it all feels like one big heap that we just keep managing. What once felt like a concerted effort to balance our responsibilities sneakily becomes a broken scale that doesn't seem like it can be fixed.

Finding balance is often a reclamation project where we have to simplify our lives by weeding out the nonessential. These are activities, habits, practices, people, places, or things that add little or no value to your life. Pruning them from your life means allocating more time and energy to the essentials—activities, experiences, and things that spark joy, peace, and calm in your life.⁴

One last thing about balance...

When we try to make healthy changes in our lives we often default to the common guidance "Learn how to say no more." And this is definitely important to live a more balanced life, but it's also important to remember most of life is about compromise. If we say no too much, that rigidity comes back to bite you, inevitably leading back to imbalance. It's not an easy thing to navigate, but make sure you give yourself the grace to both say no to less important things and compromise on the more important ones.

2. Mindful Mind Hacking: [Using Outcome-Based Thinking to Get Un-Stuck](#)

3. PsychCentral: [How to Live in The Moment And Be More Present](#)

4. Hive: [Life Is Short. Relentlessly Prune The Non-Essentials](#)

Important Disclosures

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