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**Find Your Balance**

**By Helaine Iris**

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Find Your Balance

Helaine Iris

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The other day I was introducing myself to a group of busy professionals. I told them I especially loved to work with women who feel they are overworked and have no life; and lack balance between their work life and their personal life.

As I was heading out the door to my next appointment a woman from the group stopped me and said she really wanted to work with me, and she could totally relate to being one of those out of balance women.

Neither of us had our calendars so she took my business card and promised to be in touch to set up an appointment. She seemed inspired about finding balance in her life and I was excited at the prospect of a new client.

Days later when I hadn't heard from this woman I began to wonder why she didn't call. She seemed so ready and enthusiastic. I casually mentioned it to a friend who reminded me that she was probably too busy and overwhelmed to even follow through with scheduling an appointment. It was clear evidence of how much she really needed some support. "Duh", I thought to myself.

Most of us are in the same boat, we all live in the same demanding culture...some of us work, some of us raise families; some of us do both. We juggle a million details, we manage the best we can and still barely have time to breathe. We often have to beg, borrow and steal for personal time. Can you relate to this?

Here's my bottom line. You have a CHOICE about how you want to live your life. Whether you work for a large company, own your own business or are a stay at home parent how you live your life is up to you. This might sound like a no brainer. You know you have choice, but do you really feel like you have

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one?

I want to challenge you to take a step back and look at your life. Evaluate your priorities and ask yourself if you are living by choice OR by default? Is your life in balance? I believe the first step in restoring balance and living your life by choice is to acknowledge that you're not.

How do you achieve a balance between your life and your work?

First, identify the obstacles or excuses that keep you from changing anything. The most common excuse I hear is, "I'm TOO busy". Are you willing to break the "I'm too busy" excuse in order to have more balance in your life?

Second, set up some very simple structures in your life that will begin to make the difference.

Barbara was a woman in her forties with a family who was putting her heart and soul into her job. She liked her work. She was working a lot of hours and bringing work and worries home with her at night. When she began as my client she was nearly burned out and was considering leaving her job because she felt so out of balance.

Over several months we worked on a program to recreate balance in her life. By the time we were a month or two into it, she had fallen back in love with her job, and her husband and she told me she finally knew who she was and what she wanted from her life.

The following is the backbone of what Barbara and I worked on: 5 strategies to bring balance into your life. I'd invite you to play with them, perhaps take them on as homework and see if they bring you results.

1. You are number one. Contrary to what you're taught you have to take care of yourself first. You know when you are on a plane and the flight attendant gives you the briefing about what to do if oxygen is needed? You must put the mask on YOURSELF first before assisting others. What good can you be to anyone if you are in terrible shape yourself? So, the first order of business in creating balance is SELF CARE. Do you eat well, do you exercise regularly, and do you take vacations?
2. Get to know yourself. Answer the questions: Who am I? And what are my values and priorities? A good way to engage with these questions is through journaling. Get a special journal and begin a relationship with yourself. Light a candle; spend 5 minutes a day writing for you.
3. What are you currently tolerating? What sucks your energy and drains you? What are the annoying things that if you eliminated them would free up more time? It can be anything from a squeaky door that bothers you to not having office equipment working well to relationships that are draining or toxic. Make a list of these things and begin to handle them. Get them off your plate.
4. Develop a really good support system. Let's face it we all need support and sometimes it's hard to ask for help. Often times the difference between getting successful results or not depends on how well supported you are.

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5. Nurture your spirit and your dreams. What lights you up? Is it nature, culture, great conversations with friends, your relationship to a higher power? Consider spending regular time every week with these things. This is the time that refills the well, so to speak. By paying attention to what inspires you, you begin to build a reserve of energy to draw from when you are stressed.

Play with these 5 strategies (even if you only can manage one or two, you will receive benefit) and see what starts to happen...

Creating work/life balance takes courage, commitment, willingness and support. When you incorporate these structures and strategies into your life you will get results.

Aren't YOU worth it?

It's YOUR life...imagine the possibilities!

~~~~~Helaine Iris is a certified Life Coach, writer and teacher who loves her life. She works with individuals, and self-employed professionals. For a solution focused, free initial consultation visit her website <http://www.pathofpurpose.com> or call her 603-357-8546 or email her [helaine@pathofpurpose.com](mailto:helaine@pathofpurpose.com)

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### **What Balance Looks Like For You**

**By Angie Dixon**

Recently, in an online group, we talked about "balance" and an article one member had read decrying the demise of balance altogether. We all had different ideas about what balance is and how to reach it, and I realized, after a number of posts, that we were all right.

I believe it is possible to "achieve balance in our lives." What I don't believe is that the way you create balance is going to match the way I create balance. I don't believe that dividing my time 50/50 or 25/25/25/25 is right for me, though it may be for you.

How do YOU create balance? Easy. Find times when you feel like things are going exactly as they should, that everything in your life is perfectly in alignment, and that you're doing what you need to do, when you need to do it. That's balance. Then "creating" balance becomes RE-creating it. Once you know what to do, you can do it again. And again.

When you're struggling to find what's next out of the middle of a dozen or more things, when everyone feels downhearted and discouraged because they're not getting enough of your time even though you're running between chores and family as fast as you can, you're not in balance.

Imagine your life as a series of circles, arranged around an inner circle. The inner circle is you. If you're

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just running the bases and touching each circle with your toe as you go by, you're not in balance. But if all those circles are close in to your inner circle, touching or overlapping not only you but each other, chances are you're in balance.

Balance comes when you're doing what you want to be doing, when it needs to be done. It's not about fifty percent of your time being home and fifty percent being work, or any other formula. It's about doing what is important at the time.

Angie Dixon helps small business owners get their acts together. She is a personal development coach specializing in helping people integrate their home and work lives so they feel less stretched and more balanced. Get her FREE EBOOK on balance at

. For questions or

to discover how coaching can change your life, contact Angie at

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