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**How to Live Well By Achieving Balance**

**By Brian B. Carter, MS, LAc**

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That Elusive "Balance":

A Great Tool to Help You Achieve It

I used to hear people discuss trying to achieve "balance" and I had no idea what they meant. I wasn't very busy, wasn't married, didn't have numerous commitments to numerous people, didn't have a mortgage, and wasn't even getting paid much to do what I did.

That's all changed now. I have many responsibilities – a wife, a mortgage, several jobs, many career goals, half a dozen informal "life" students, patients to take care of, people I don't have time to catch up with, friends I haven't seen in a month, readers who want their questions answered, kittens who meow and need lots of love, and one day there will be children as well!

Now I know how they felt when they pined for that elusive balance.

The question of the era is: How do we get all our work done, satisfy our loved ones, make our dreams a reality, exercise our bodies, engage our minds, have fun, relax, spend time, stay healthy, serve others, refresh ourselves with solitary time, stay connected with God, read new books, expand our horizons, feel good – how do we fit all that into the week without feeling overwhelmed and exhausted?

We know the answer to that question is balance – somehow we must put the right time and energy into each one – but how can we find, achieve, or improve on that elusive balance?

Obviously everyone is different. Some of us are great at spending time with loved ones but not so efficient at work. Some of us meet all our career goals but neglect our loved ones and never exercise. Some of us do family and career well but are quite unhealthy. So, we all start where we are. But where do we go from there?

Since everyone is different, what works for one person may not work for another. What you need is a comprehensive map of how health, love, fun, enjoyment, achievement, and efficiency all fit together.

## How to Live Well By Achieving Balance

You need to know how a deficiency in one area can impact the others. You need to know how to overcome your weaknesses with your strengths.

This map of life must integrate mind, body, and spirit – it must explain how our emotions can get in the way, and how we can make them healthy– it must show how bad mental habits lead to physical problems. It must give remedies for our habitual imbalances. It must suggest viable strategies for improving our health, our habits, our abilities, and ourselves.

You know where you are. Balance is where you want to go. You need this map of life to get there. But who has such a map? Where would you find it?

Chinese medicine has a mind–body life map that acknowledges your uniqueness, explains how

everything is connected, describes imbalances, and suggests remedies for them. When you fail, it can explain why and what to do next.

This Chinese medicine map of life is quite forgiving. You don't have to be or live perfectly. It's better if you improve, because you prevent disease and save money, but if you mess up, and while you are making progress, you can take advantage of remedies that return you to balance, increase your energy, relieve stress and pain, improve mental function, and smooth out your emotions.

This is essential, because then we are not thrown miles off course with every mistake or surprise – we get back on track immediately – we don't make the bad decisions or plans that come from the disturbed emotions of someone who's been thrown off track. Thus, we get where we're going faster, and save time and grief.

Since life is always a journey, always a learning experience, hardly ever an arriving or stopping except for a short rest, Chinese medicine is an indispensable guide and companion for the confusions and vagaries of the adventure.

Acupuncturist, Herbalist, and Medical Professor Brian B. Carter founded the alternative health megasite The Pulse of Oriental Medicine (<http://www.PulseMed.org/>). He is the author of the book "Powerful Body, Peaceful Mind: How to Heal Yourself with Foods, Herbs, and Acupressure" (November, 2004). Brian speaks on radio across the country, and has been quoted and interviewed by Real Simple, Glamour, and ESPN magazines.

### **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.

## How to Live Well By Achieving Balance

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 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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What Balance Looks Like For You

You Can Balance Your Life in just 20 Minutes a Day!

Top Ten Reasons To Have A Balanced Life

Six Steps for Creating Work-Life Balance

The Role Of Whey Protein In Achieving Significant Muscle Gain

Webcam Watcher

101 tips to stay fit and live longer.

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