



Balance

I often chuckle at how hard so many of us seem to be working to find the ever elusive balance that we seek. Some of you are probably personally convinced (and some days I am too!) that balance simply does not really exist. Perhaps you have told yourself that having balance is simply one of those urban legends. Sort of like the Loch Ness Monster, you've heard of it but never seen it.

So what is balance? There are many definitions of balance. According to Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, one definition of balance means to bring into harmony or proportion. Another is to bring to a state or position of equipoise. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to note the word poise in the word equipoise and that certainly sounds like something I'd like more of. Wouldn't you?

So, how do you get it? Simply put, you get balance by developing the ability to prioritize and focus on those things that are most important to you, and to let go of those things that aren't important to you. And, this requires that you have a personal definition of success, a clear understanding of your values, and a means for evaluating all of the demands on your time that you receive on a daily basis. You also need to define what balance looks like and feels like for you. And finally, you must stop comparing yourself to others!

Posted next to my telephone are the top three strategic priorities by which I evaluate or screen all demands on my time. When a demand for my time comes in, I review it against these strategic priorities and then I make a choice as to what I should do. There are only three things that I can do with any demand on my time:

1. DO it. Complete what is requested of me.
2. DELEGATE it. Ask someone else to do it.
3. DISCARD it. Decline the request altogether.

Like most women, you are probably very adept at doing what is requested of you. However, you could probably use lessons on delegating and saying no in the first place.

So, as we move into the second half of summer, my challenge for you is this. Consciously practice delegating and saying no more often. Then, do something just for you. If this fits with your vision of balance, then you are on the right track. If not, then you have more work to do. Remember, you hold the key to balance in your life. If you select which door you open thoughtfully, you will find that balance can indeed be yours. And that's a good thing.

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