

Keeping YOUR LIFE IN BALANCE



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These eight suggestions can help you face life's many challenges without feeling overwhelmed.

Coping with the complex and diverse challenges of everyday life, which is not an easy task, can upset the balance and harmony we seek. Many good people are trying very hard to maintain balance, but they sometimes feel overwhelmed and defeated.

I have a few suggestions that I hope will be valuable to those of you concerned with balancing life's demands. These suggestions are very basic; their concepts can easily be overlooked if you are not careful. You will need a strong commitment and personal discipline to incorporate them into your life.

1. Establish Priorities

Think about your life and set your priorities. Find some quiet time regularly to think deeply about where you are going and what you will need to do to get there. Jesus, our exemplar,

often “withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed” (Luke 5:16). We need to do the same thing occasionally to rejuvenate ourselves spiritually as the Savior did.

Write down the tasks you would like to accomplish each day. Keep foremost in mind the sacred covenants you have made with the Lord as you write down your daily schedules.

2. Set Attainable Goals

Set short-term goals that you can reach. Set goals that are well balanced—not too many nor too few and not too high nor too low. Write down your attainable goals and work on them according to their importance. Pray for divine guidance in your goal setting.

3. Budget Wisely

Everyone faces financial challenges in life. Through wise budgeting, control your real needs and measure them carefully against your many wants in life. The prophet Jacob said to his people: “Wherefore, do not spend money for that which is of no

worth, nor your labor for that which cannot satisfy” (2 Nephi 9:51).

Remember to always pay a full tithing.

4. Build Relationships

Stay close to your parents, relatives, and friends. They will help you keep a balance in your life. Build relationships with your family and friends through open and honest communication.

Good family relationships can be maintained through gentle, loving, thoughtful communication. Remember that often a glance, a wink, a nod, or a touch will say more than words. A sense of humor and good listening are also vital parts of good communication.

5. Study the Scriptures

Search the scriptures. They offer one of the best sources we have to keep in touch with the Spirit of the Lord. One of the ways I have gained my sure knowledge that Jesus is the Christ is through my study of the scriptures. Presidents Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) and



Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) called upon members of the Church to make the study of the Book of Mormon a daily habit and a lifetime pursuit.

The Apostle Paul's advice to Timothy is good counsel for each of us. He wrote, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

6. Take Care of Yourself

Many people, including me, have difficulty finding the time for sufficient rest, exercise, and relaxation. We must schedule time on our daily calendars for these activities if we are to enjoy a healthy and balanced life. Good physical appearance enhances our dignity and self-respect.

7. Live the Gospel

The prophets have taught repeatedly that families should teach one another the gospel, preferably in a weekly family home evening. This family practice, if we are not very careful, can slowly drift away from us. We must not lose this special opportunity to "teach one another the doctrine of the kingdom" (D&C 88:77), which will lead families to eternal life.

Satan is always working to destroy our testimonies, but he will not have the power to tempt or disturb us beyond our strength to resist when we are studying the gospel and living its commandments.

8. Pray Often

My last suggestion is to pray often as individuals and as families. You can know the right decisions to make each day through constant, sincere prayer.

The prophet Alma summarized the importance of prayer in these words: “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and watch and pray continually, that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long-suffering” (Alma 13:28). When I am in tune spiritually, I find that I can balance everything in my life much more easily.

Stay Focused and Do Your Best

Other suggestions could be added to these. However, I believe that when we focus on a few basic objectives, we are more likely to be able to manage the many demands that life makes on us. Remember, too much of anything in life can throw us off balance. At the same time, too little of the important things can do the same thing. King Benjamin counseled “that all these things [be] done in wisdom and order” (Mosiah 4:27).

Often the lack of clear direction and goals can waste our time and energy and contribute to imbalance in our lives. A life that gets out of balance is much like a car tire that is out of balance. It will make the operation of the car rough and unsafe.

Tires in perfect balance can give a smooth and comfortable ride. So it is with life. The ride through mortality can be smoother for us when we strive to stay in balance. Our main goal should be to seek “immortality and eternal life” (Moses 1:39). With this as our goal, why not eliminate from our lives the things that clamor for and consume our thoughts, feelings, and energies without contributing to our reaching that goal?

Not long ago, one of my children said, “Dad, sometimes I wonder if I will ever make it.” The answer I gave

to her is the same as I would give to you. Just do the very best you can each day. Do the basic things and, before you realize it, your life will be full of spiritual understanding that will confirm to you that your Heavenly Father loves you. When a person knows this, then life will be full of purpose and meaning, making balance easier to maintain. ■

From an April 1987 general conference address.

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