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Encouraging Self-Discovery and Empowerment



The Value of Balance by Charlyne Gelt, Ph.D.

“We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts we make the world.”
— Buddha



“Life is like a balance beam! Don’t fall off!”



In life, as in rock-stacking, balance is not an option!

Does the value of balance remain a mystery to you? Are you stuck in either or thinking? Are the obstacles in your life challenging you to find balance, to breakdown “walls” of resistance? Or, are you waiting for a life crisis to push or motivate you to take action? You can make a difference in your own life! We learn to avoid the pitfalls through the practice of balance, awareness, and focused attention. “When properly focused, awareness has the ability to carry out quite specific commands. Without our participation any incident is essentially meaningless, the whole universe is meaningless. We are the ones who give meaning to events, and we give meaning to events through intention” (Chopra, *The Spontaneous Fulfillment of Desire*).

A delightful metaphor for the importance of feeling centered, and the strength and joy of *a life in balance*, is the art of rock stacking. Rock stacking requires development of a fine sensitivity for the feelings and energy of each individual rock. Certain rocks seem to refuse to be stacked. Silently resistant, they remain stuck in the earth, unmovable, even defiant: “No, I can’t do this! It’s just not possible!” But with certain rocks, there seems to be a

kind of fluid dance, an unspoken dialogue between the rock and the artist that marks a path of change. A shift of the rock's energy as well as our perception of what is possible is revealed. Rock stacking then is a metaphor for the benefits of balance, and for the delicate equilibrium of sensation, intuition, thinking, and emotion.

Creating balance in our personal lives is a multi-layered challenge that requires conscious awareness and the interaction of body and mind. It begins with a tug at the heart, an emptiness inside, or an emotional awareness that some of the beliefs we counted on may be outmoded or no meet our needs. For example, in our society, the principal goal has been external validation and achievement, with a constant pressure to increase skills, knowledge and expertise for the purpose of acquiring material wealth. Millions of people have been programmed to reach only such superficial goals. Yet, there are many ways to get fulfillment besides the outward-oriented ones our culture teaches us. Emotional balance, however, requires awareness, intention, and a desire to transform that external pseudo-intimacy, interpersonal impoverishment, and disconnection. If that's where you are at, and feel empty inside, know that it can be replaced with meaning and self-worth derived from the joy of connection, caring and the giving of oneself rather than things. Sometimes, we have to go to the place of fear in order to grow up, to move through anxiety and recover our lives from outmoded defenses.

Balancing internal needs and external goals requires awareness and intention. Emotional balance is a healthy internal goal that offers validation on multiple levels. Questioning, what keeps you chained to those outmoded beliefs is another way of letting go of them.

Why Not Walk the balance beam?

If your life feels out of balance to the point where it is negatively affecting your health and well-being, *why not try something different?* Try moving away from either or thinking to finding a better balance in all things. Ask yourself some questions, such as what keeps you chained to outmoded beliefs of a dependent, powerless child? What restrictions from your past keep you from expanding your comfort zone, exercising your creativity, or expressing yourself more fully?

People get stuck, locked in old behaviors and old thinking patterns that impact all aspects of our lives. Perhaps they have bought into fear based family myths and dysfunctional beliefs that become obstacles to healthy problem solutions, such as, "*The women in our family don't get divorced,*" "*smile at all costs,*" "*anger is bad,*" or, "*I have to give up myself to be loved.*" These notions can adversely affect our physical health, keep us emotionally split, and *out of balance.*

Just imagine yourself breaking free of these constraints! What would your life look like?

True awareness transforms stuck thinking into wisdom, thereby expanding one's emotional repertoire. Like rock stacking, balance requires awareness and attunement to the body-mind connection. This, in turn, helps us become responsive rather than reactive, flexible rather than rigid, and centered rather than fragmented, even when chaos hits.

Schedule an appointment to work on your own struggles in individual, couples, or group therapy. Please call: Charlyne Gelt, Ph.D.; www.drgelt.com; 818.501.4123

Thank you for your support!

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