

**COMMENTARY** By DR. DHANPAUL NARINE

# Living a Life of Balance

**R**ead, dance, pray, sing, love, laugh, eat, celebrate and appreciate. And yes, you are allowed to worry because positive worry is good. We all want to be happy. We resent being thrown off our axis. Our everyday existence is a search for happiness. Our consciousness is bombarded with wants, desires, information and materialism that we often lose our sense of balance.

The world is trying to throw you off balance and events are conspiring to make your life miserable. It is time for new beginnings. The moment is ripe for a life of balance where peace of mind will help us to reach our true potential. It is simpler than it seems. The idea is to realize that material objects alone cannot bring about this balance. We need spiritual and emotional wellness to connect with our inner selves and to create the conditions for a balanced life.

dle and when that happens you will feel overwhelmed. It becomes a recipe for failure.

also for others. The maxim 'do unto others' still holds true.

An essential aspect of maintaining balance is how far you are able to go out of your way to help those in need. Remember, a kind word from you or a visit to someone who is not well can go a far way to help them and to keep your emotional balance in good health. You never know what difference a word from you can make in the lives of others. The rule is to just be nice.

things. It is good to be thankful for what you have because in this way the chances are you will end up having more. If you lose sleep and worry about what you don't have you will end up being nervous, unsure of yourself, and envious of others. You will think that you don't have enough and if you keep thinking that way you probably never will. It is only when you have inner peace that you can positively influence the lives of others. At the beginning of each day list four things for which you are grateful and your

be kind to them.

How would you know if you are living a balanced life? The most apparent sign is that you enjoy life. You wake up greeting the world with a smile. You find yourself happy without any particular reason and you want to share it with others. But life is not all about smiles. There are times when your plans might go in a different direction and you find yourself dejected. How do you maintain your balance in such a situation?

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How does this balance occur? Most people agree that the physical self needs attention. You can accomplish little if you are unwell or unhealthy. The first goal then is to have a healthy body. In addition to exercises, eating healthy, playing sports, walking or reading are all recommended. The aim is to do these in moderation. If you over exert yourself it would be like burning the candle at both ends and this does no one any good.

Balance means setting goals and priorities. What is really important to you? If it is to get an academic qualification, a job, get married, or start a family the approach is still the same. You need to take your time, make a plan and stick to it. If you run without thinking or planning the chances are that you will bite off more than you can han-

It goes without saying that organizing and structure are important. There are those that may want to make a list and periodically revisit it to determine what has been achieved and what is still to be done. But in any plan things will go wrong. The rule here is to expect the unexpected and when your projects are derailed you should work to bring them back on track. It helps if you can see the funny side of life sometimes and laugh and tell yourself that in life setbacks are just temporary.

We live in a society in which people are on the go most of the time. There are persons that hold down several jobs with little time for anything else. They work seven days a week and will not listen when they are told to take regular check-ups. Unfortunately, an illness in such situations can be serious. You should try to find time for yourself and

Being nice is a powerful tonic and many of us are still to unlock its magic.

It is important to foster an attitude of gratitude but to do so silently does not make much sense. Gratitude needs to be expressed. People should know that you care, so take time off and let someone see how much you care and appreciate them. In this age of social media expressing gratitude is easy. Then there is service to others. Volunteering your time for a social cause brings enormous benefits. Mahatma Gandhi says, 'The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.' If you can find the time to help others without looking for any thing in return it is even better.

The secret to living a balanced life means giving thanks for small

happiness will multiply. There is much that has been written about living life in the present. It does not mean that you have to forget the past. Indeed in order to live a balanced life one should learn the lessons from the past and use them to plan the present. Everyday is a new day, a fresh start, a beginning with purpose. Don't waste it. Rather, focus on the present, use the sum total of your experiences and choose to be happy. Celebrate yourself by being your own best friend. When this happens you will find it easier to connect with others and to

yourself. What are you hearing? Once you have identified the problem you should take steps to fix it. Tell yourself that it is no use becoming depressed and go into a shell. Your body and mind want you to find a solution so you should seek help and there are ways in which this can be done if you really try. In many cases speaking to someone can be a good start.

But there are situations that cannot be changed no matter how hard you try. The death of a loved one, the loss of a job, having to move your residence because



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of various reasons and so on are cases that call for positive thinking. Worrying negatively about them won't change anything and it's no point blaming yourself. Rather, you should emerge stronger from the experience. Positive worry allows you to face reality.

One of the most neglected aspects of balance is patience. We are always in a hurry. We live in an instant society. We want to see the results now and social media adds to our frustration. But patience is indeed a virtue.

According to one psychologist, 'patience leads to mindfulness and mindfulness brings you balance.' If you practice patience you do not lose your temper in the traffic or waiting in a line to be served. Why get angry over little things when the universe has so much beauty to enjoy?

Finally, how about keeping life simple? You constantly hear that someone wants to live the simple life. What does this mean? Simplicity means keeping things in perspective. It is said that simplicity is perhaps most important in keeping one's balance because in balance everything is simple. Keep it simple because simplicity is the best virtue. If you keep your diet, relationships, work schedules, faith and time-keeping simple it would be easier for you to let go of the unimportant things and to maintain the balance you need to move forward.

Finally, be kind to all. As Confucius says, 'a person who is really kind can never be unhappy.'

