

So, You Want to Start A Business?

Written by Jamie Wolf

Wednesday, 03 July 2013 10:38 -



A High Wire Act Poised for Success! Practice Balance, Part 1 of 6

Poise: Noun – Graceful and elegant bearing in a person. Verb – Be or cause to be balanced.

"When you really want to do something right, which is usually what you should be striving for, you tend to slow down." ~Jason Fried

Our lives are busier than ever. Work has become a 24/7 event invading every conscious moment and creeping insidiously into our personal space. Change is moving at an unprecedented rate. Our lives have become, in part, about going through the motions just to keep up. We are so busy from the time we drag ourselves out of bed to the time we fall back into it that we live on autopilot, emotionally and intellectually. Life Happens.

What does balance mean to you? If you could stop the roller coaster and get off, would you really?

Or are you addicted to things that bring you pleasure in a way that masks something else? Do you indulge with too much food? Is your closet stuffed with purchases? Are you a workaholic or road warrior and proud of it? Are you into extreme sports? Do you spend all day at the gym? Do you hide yourself away in the garage spending all your time with your hobbies? Do you skip family events because you're always out fishing or hunting? Do you spend more than your

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family can afford on golf, skiing, or tickets to football games? How many hours did you spend last month on Facebook? What gets your blood pressure up faster – religious discussions or political arguments?

What does any of this have to do with balance? Well, you've lost your balance if you can't engage in a dialogue without shouting to win your point. You've lost your balance if you routinely cram ten pounds of stuff into a five-pound bag. You've lost your balance if you smother your unhappiness under a McDonald's super-sized meal or numb your unhappiness with frequent trips to Target, Walmart, or boutique haberdasheries. You've lost your balance if you hide in the man cave, spend all day in a boat or all night at your computer instead of going to bed with your spouse.

So often the things we fill our days with, the things we protest about the loudest, are tricks we play on ourselves to evade some truth or avoid our own accountability. These tricks throw our life out of balance. So what's a person to do? Consciously, carefully, and intentionally cultivate balance, moving deliberately and with poise. Make decisions to incorporate your new intention. You are not striving for perfection nor seeking fleeting thrills. You are considering what brings you the greatest genuine, lasting satisfaction. What makes you feel as if you've really earned something? What gives you a sense of accomplishment? Of mastery? What makes you feel that you've made a difference? Answering these questions will lead you to consciously choose a more balanced - and fulfilling - existence.

Or you can do what my college science professor did; he chanted "Everything in moderation!" which is a different way to define balance. It's the only practical thing I remember from four years of studying and it became my mantra as well. He'd recently had a heart attack and was getting back on his feet, moderating his diet and his exercise. He had a thing for ketchup. He absolutely adored French fries with ketchup and salt. But his doctor told him that ketchup already had salt, something he needed to reduce to prevent high blood pressure. His doctor continued, telling him to eliminate a lot of other foods and activities he liked as well. But he said he wasn't willing to completely lose all quality of life – things he particularly enjoyed like ketchup – just to have quantity of life. So his pushback on the doctor was that he could have ketchup as long as he didn't have too much (or too many fries!) Moderation is a wonderful common-sense approach to everything: budgeting, dieting, studying, working, disciplining, training, drinking, traveling, praying, everything!

As you go through your day, make a note of your thoughts and actions. Take a few breaths, let your mind wander, and then think about how you might feel if you got your balance back – or found it for the very first time! Then use this partial checklist of questions to help you decide if

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something needs to stay or go in your intentional crafting of a balanced existence:

- Does it really bring you satisfaction? In other words, is it an activity that you really enjoy, that stimulates you intellectually, reduces your stress, leaves you with a sense of accomplishment or peace, or improves your physical health?
- Did you make a conscious decision to engage in the endeavor or is it a default pastime or activity?
- Did you say yes to something out of guilt or obligation but you really wish you'd had the clarity and courage to say no?
- Is it something you don't enjoy because you don't really know how to do it? Could you get help with it? Could someone teach you more to increase your comfort level?
- Is it a chore or responsibility that really needs doing to support yourself, your family, or your life-style? If this is the case, can you be fully present with it and respect it for yielding the life you value and have chosen?

As you take steps to bring your life into balance, you are creating a process far more powerful than the one that controlled your life when you weren't actively engaged. Think of the core strength acrobats have in order to balance on the high wire. They are poised – elegant and balanced. You can be, too!

Be conscious. Make choices. Make mistakes. Reap the rewards. For starters that may be enough to discover new heights and views even if briefly, enough to spur you to seek out balance again until you get the hang of it!

Beaufort resident Jamie Wolf is the author of 'Start Over! Start Now! Ten Keys to SUCCESS in Business and Life' and ten accompanying guidebooks. ☐ If you're ready to be Master of your Fate and Captain of your Soul, she invites you to come on board! Jamie offers online courses and coaching for entrepreneurs and people interested in starting over or in starting their own

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