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5 Steps To Managing the Impossible

When it comes to our lives and our work--what does balance look and feel like?

Allison Nazarian | April 13, 2010

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As I grabbed for a shampoo in aisle three of my local grocery store, my eyes rested on the label. Using words like "gentle," healthy" and "normal," this shampoo promised me balance.

Balance.

Must be good, right?

I continued down the aisle, with my promise of balance safely inside the wagon, thinking:

But what is it?

Not literally what is it ("a state of equilibrium"), but when it comes to our lives, our work, our realities--what does balance look and feel like? And, would we know it if it hit us in the face?

From our businesses to our lives to our hair--yes, our hair!--we are working quite hard to find, achieve and harness (in a bottle, even) this elusive balance.

Yet, the most successful people I know, work with, talk to and connect with are actually pretty darn imbalanced.

Yes, imbalanced.

As an entrepreneur, your life is your work and your work is your life. And your work is part of one big, sometimes-messy, generally imbalanced collage whose pieces work most beautifully together.

Here, then, is what you can consider your five-step plan for doing away with the pursuit of balance from your work, from your life and maybe even from your vocabulary:

Stop the Madness

Admit it, you spend a lot of time seeking balance or something related to it. (By "seeking balance," I mean anything from adjusting your schedule to telling your kids to stay out of your home office to desperately wishing for a vacation even to eating healthier and exercising.)

So work with the tide, not against it. Once you lose attachment to perfect balance, you'll find that you've freed up a whole lot of time and energy you can now use for more productive, realistic, satisfying and/or profitable pursuits.

No More Pretending

Here's the thing: If you pretend you are all balanced and perfect, your clients will feel the need to do the same. As your

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clients feel the need to do the same, so too will your colleagues feel the need. Then your friends, your spouse, your kids, your next-door neighbor, the lady in the grocery store..and so on.

Pretty soon, everyone is working pretty darn hard to pretend they have something that doesn't exist. Lots of manpower, man hours and man-just-about-anything-else is being devoted to the pursuit of something that can't be pursued because it isn't real.

Imagine a child (maybe yours) spending time looking for the actual human forms of Santa Claus or the Tooth Fairy. What you would tell them about finding the meaning of those ideals, in real life, right here, right now?

Look Within

Look around. Do people seem frazzled and stressed out or calm and balanced?

The ones who are out of sorts are generally the ones trying to be, do and manage the impossible.

The ones who seem satisfied and smooth; they are the ones who have the most realistic expectations of themselves and of others. They understand what is possible, and what is impossible. Your perfect state of imbalance will come from within, not from modeling yourself after what or whom you think you should or need to be.

Welcome Yourself Back to Reality

Reality is right here. It is what exists in this moment--on your balance sheet, in your email, on your website, on your "To Do" list.

Focus on that reality. When you think about "balance," get clear on what the result of that balance would be. You can have that, whether "it" is more money, a more efficient business, additional free time or anything else. Once you start looking at things as they really are, you will begin to get and have more of what you want.

Pat Yourself on the Back

The unsaid but underlying idea of seeking something you don't have (like balance) is that you are lacking in some area, that you need to catch up, that you aren't making the grade.

With this mindset, surely you will get more of the same. So instead of this theme of failure to achieve something like balance, why not remind yourself often that you are doing a great job? Instead of wondering why you haven't achieved something that may not really exist, embrace what you have accomplished continue making amazing things from the "raw material" that is you.

Allison Nazarian is widely known as one of the most honest and innovative voices in marketing, blogging and the online world today. The author of [Copywriting 101](#) and [One Minute Copywriter](#), Allison has been featured in the Wall Street Journal and Fortune Small Business. Allison writes on the entrepreneurial life, working from home, working moms and real life uncensored.