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Seesaws and Spheres

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Most people think about balance like a seesaw. When one aspect of their life becomes unbalanced or out of sync with the rest, that side of the seesaw falls. Inevitably, the other side goes up. As we are putting less energy into the down side, we are able to push more of our efforts into uplifting another aspect of our lives. This way of thinking leaves us with only two possibilities: up or down. In an ideal world, that may be possible, but it doesn't represent our individual and collective realities.

When I think about balance, I like to picture it as a sphere, much like the world we live in. The outer edges of this sphere contact many different surfaces at various times or not at all as it rolls along. Inside this sphere, I picture fluid thrashing about in every direction--- creating spirals and ripples and waves. All of these motions are seemingly in sync with one another yet each aspect experiences its own reality. Seesaws rely so heavily on what the other side is doing, but in the spherical version, each aspect is interrelated yet starkly unique.

SEESAWS AND SPHERES

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So, when I think about balance in this manner, it makes me feel more comfortable with the idea that it's okay to not have all aspects of my life in complete balance. For instance, when I'm exercising consistently and eating healthy, nutritious foods, I can feel good about myself, even while knowing I may not be staying as hydrated as I should. Keeping healthy through working out and eating right are like the solid outer surfaces of the ball. The lack of water intake is like the fluid within the sphere just spiraling. But, I know that the fluid spiral will eventually dissipate and that aspect of my life will be in balance again.

Our lives are incredibly ever-changing and it's easy to feel bad about lacking consistency in our various habits. Instead of being disappointed in ourselves for not achieving this unrealistic, perfect balance in our lives, we should celebrate our wins and our losses, our ups and our downs.

The wins allow us to feel proud of what we have accomplished, and the losses serve as a reminder that there is always room for improvement and another goal to work towards. The very fact that we have losses means that we *are living, breathing, beautiful creatures that get to experience such an extraordinary existence.*

Balance, to me, is all about appreciating whatever stage I am in currently and allowing myself to enjoy the journey. Change is an inevitable and constant part of our lives. We must learn to adapt to our new circumstances every second that we are living. That can seem like an overwhelming and daunting task until we remind ourselves that it's okay to not have our life completely together all of the time. In fact, no one has this perfect life . Perfection in everything is unattainable and, frankly, would be boring to not have challenges to overcome or goals to work toward.



- ▶ **Take a deep breath**, and when you exhale, release with it all of those societal expectations that you must have it all.
- ▶ You are the only one that gets to determine how you feel about your life and the concept of balance. The way I think about my life being in balance in this very moment is different than how I thought of it when I was younger, and it will be different when I am older.
- ▶ Balance in our lives is dynamic and continually fluctuating, just like how ocean waves crash on sandy shores haphazardly and eternally. Embrace this newfound perspective in thinking about balance as a sphere rolling throughout space, changing course in response to whatever comes its way.
- ▶ Life can be messy and clean, chaotic and still, frustrating and peaceful, and it can be everything in between. Know that each of these stages are valid and important, and remember that **YOU**, and only you, are the creator of your own perfectly imperfect version of balance.



- ▶ Samantha Sostorecz is a second year medical student. She was a EMT and a lead cornea transplant donor coordinator before medical school. She is currently interested in the field of Emergency Medicine and hopes to bring love and compassion to her future work as a physician. She is the founder and creator of Life in Scrubs Blog (www.lifeinscrubsblog.com). Samantha is from Easton, Pennsylvania and graduated from the University of Pittsburgh.

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