



BALANCE

All of life is a balancing act. More often than not, we find ourselves challenged with upheavals that disrupt our equilibrium. Changes in employment or income unseat our balance financially, socioeconomically, and internally as we struggle with fear and the need to redefine ourselves. The smallest things can shift the balance in our state of health. Lack of sleep, missed meals, constantly being on the go from one thing to the next, living in a culture that does not promote downtime or make self-care a priority, all of these and more can unbalance our systems, causing fatigue, illness, and stress. Mental and emotional health becomes compromised when our lives are out of balance. When we overextend in some areas and neglect others, we may find ourselves sinking into depression, anxiety, addictive behaviors, maladaptive coping methods, or other signs that we are no longer in balance. Relationships can easily throw us off center, as many of us make sure our partner's needs are met before our own, then find ourselves emotionally and psychologically drained and depleted without knowing quite how we got there. In an effort to regain balance, there is often a tendency to over-correct. Shutting down or tuning out the world and focusing only on oneself can seem liberating, even peaceful at first, but eventually becomes a rather contrived and lonely existence. The key to living in balance is found in nature. It is the cyclical flow of the universe: the tide goes out, the tide comes in; we inhale, we exhale; the sun and moon rise, the sun and moon set. If we can incorporate an intentional, conscious pause several times into each day, to reflect on whether we feel calm and balanced at that moment or not, we are being proactive about maintaining healthy balance in our daily lives.