



TECHNIQUES
FOR BALANCE



MUSINGS



THE HUMAN
CONDITION



ORTIYKMWOYBNT-O

Balancing Act: The Newsletter (No. 222, February 2018)

BALANCING ACT: BLENDING LIFE, WORK, AND RELATIONSHIPS®

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Balancing act is in four sections this month:

1. Techniques for Balance
2. Musings
3. The Human Condition: Privilege
4. ORTIYKMWOYBNT-O Department

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See Writing on the Wall, featuring Koufax the Wonder Dog.



TECHNIQUES FOR BALANCE

- If you haven't been able to do it in 30 days of honest trying, then you need help. Get it.
- Stop thinking of your work as remedial. The best companies, executives, athletes, and entertainers use coaches because they are smart enough to realize we can all use help to progress.
- If you want to witness really low self-esteem, watch the driver who refuses to allow the next car to merge.
- This should be simple, but apparently, it's not: Never use your fingers to push food onto a fork, never smell the cork (it's meaningless), and don't cut the pasta. By the way, "gnocchi" is pronounced "nyo-key," not "knock-ee."
- Pressing both the "up" and "down" buttons to get an elevator is extraordinarily rude, since it stops the elevator moving in the direction you're not going and delays the passengers.
- Don't assume familiarity with someone you first meet. There's nothing demeaning to you if you use Mr., Ms., Dr., etc. Let them invite you to call them by their first name.
- You're not on an airline for the culinary experience, or for the seat size. You're there to get from one place to another rapidly, and if you're in coach, you're there to do it inexpensively. Get over it.
- How is it that a clerk in a 7/11 or Cumberland Farms can be gracious and polite, but a clerk in Saks or Bergdorf's acts as if you're being done a favor?
- I find side conversations in a small meeting to be extremely arrogant. As a facilitator or host, I shut them down.
- The funniest Christmas Card I received was one where Santa had come down the chimney with his sack, and the milk and cookies said, "Wow, Santa, what do you have for us?"

MUSINGS

I'm watching the animals who live around here soldier on through the frigid winter temperatures: a variety of songbirds, wild turkeys, deer, ducks, squirrels, fish, rabbits, raccoons, and so forth. They have no choice—if they want to survive they have to find ways to find food and warmth and escape predators which are trying to do the same.

A domestic animal would have a hard time. House pets aren't equipped to survive without the support to which they've become accustomed since birth or adoption. To survive in harsh, competitive environments, you must watch others who do so, learn from them, and experience the repercussions of your actions.

That's why I'm concerned about a generation of coddled, protected, insulated students who have been taught by misguided (or politicized) faculty that free speech doesn't extend to those who disagree with them, that they need to be warned ahead of time so they can avoid difficult scenes and dialogue in books, that they deserve a safe zone to be commiserated with when things don't go their way. They expect every slight grievance to be addressed by the rest of



Giving others feedback is among the simplest of things. Seeking it out for yourself is among the most difficult.

Alan Weiss

humanity and resolved in their favor. We've taken away grades in favor of simply passing or failing (and it's rarely the latter) and we've done away with comparative excellence by eliminating valedictorians in the name of crazed egalitarianism.

Is there a remedy for these kids, who are encouraged by schools to choose their own pronouns for recognition by others, but who are not encouraged to hear other views? Can they exist in the Darwinian dynamics of American capitalism?

Harsh winters weed out the sick and the weak. Herds and societies perpetuate themselves by survival of the fittest, not the unfittest. No great scientist arrived at her or his station by slipping by on poor grades for the sake of inclusion. No great entertainers achieved fame because they were told it was their turn, regardless of their talent. No athletes are named most valuable player because of their tendency not to rock the boat.

When you place a heated glass into very cold water, it shatters. We just may be looking at the shattered generation.

THE HUMAN CONDITION: PRIVILEGE

I was the second person in the first class line waiting to board the plane, when a man barged past me and the woman in front of me to stand near the jet way door. The woman asked him why he wasn't standing in line like everyone else.

With that, he spun around and pointed to himself. It turns out he was wearing what I'd call "fatigues," and he was indicating that armed forces members are always invited to board first (though often *with* first class, not before it). He said to her, "Are you blind?"

This was a man purportedly serving his country (I couldn't see any rank on his outfit and I doubt he was an officer) with an attitude that he was due special treatment that justified rudeness.

There was a Senator from one of the Dakotas and, after he left the Senate (or was defeated, I forget), he had to return to Washington and arrived at the local airport at the last minute, had to go through a TSA line, and missed his flight. He was outraged. This guy had always had *privilege*. There are people who never have to make a restaurant reservation, or stand in a bank line, or wait for a retail clerk to notice them. There's a very public figure who belongs to the same cigar club I do in New York and it's generally known that he doesn't pay his bills, his kids' private school tuition, or even legal judgements against him.

Barbra Streisand's lawn was a deep green during California's water crisis, when other lawns turned brown or were ripped up. John Denver, singing about the environment and ecology, had secreted away huge reserves of gasoline under his garage contrary to his conservation persona. As I write this, the government has "closed," and government employees aren't being paid, and next month (if it persists) armed forces members will receive delayed pay as will some social security recipients. But members of Congress aren't affected, they will receive their regular paychecks (in the Senate that ranges up close to \$200,000). They don't have to endure the harm their intransigence and egos cause others.

A woman in my church insists on parking in a fire zone, causing problems for legally parked cars trying to pull out. I asked her why she didn't simply park like everyone else.

"I'm handicapped," she said. Well, the church has 20 handicapped spaces. But I looked at her and asked, "In what way?"

"I'm over 60," she said. Well, so are most of the people in that Mass, and if they all had her attitude parking would be chaos and a fire could be calamitous.

And she wasn't really handicapped. She felt she was privileged.

*ONLY READ THIS IF YOU KNOW THE WELL
OR YOU'LL BE NEEDLESSLY TICKED OFF*

I was watching a particularly inept gate agent whose poor management was delaying the flight and causing passengers to complain. He said he was doing his best, and kept humming a vaguely familiar tune. Standing near him, waiting in the first class line, I developed an "ear worm" and started humming it myself. When I boarded, the flight attendant gave me an odd look, and when she asked if I'd like a drink, she did so again.

I then paid attention to the tune. It was from The Wizard of Oz: "If I Only Had A Brain."

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Super Global Best Practices

I've gathered the best practices of entrepreneurs, boutique firm owners, solo practitioners, academicians, and authors to create a vibrant day of improved performance that will immediately increase your business results and decrease your labor intensity. I'm guessing people will be rushing out during breaks to change proposals, alter online work, and create new initiatives. AND the first five to register in the UK and Australia will be my guests for dinner!

Sign up here: [Super Global Best Practices](#)

Self-Esteem Growth

I've been asked to conduct this for a fourth time, this one in Washington, DC (perhaps there will be cherry blossoms). This isn't remedial, but rather a limited-attendance, intense examination of how to improve confidence and self-worth continually, to fully realize your potential.

Sign up here: [Self-Esteem Growth](#)

The Threescore and More Teleconference

Based on my newest book due out in April, if you are over 50 or plan to be over 50, you need these techniques. We too often surrender control as we mature, rather than seize it and increase it. I'm 71 and on top of my game. Wouldn't you like to be, as well? (Buy the book and receive free admission, see below.)

Sign up here: [The Threescore and More Teleconference](#)

Sign up here: [The Threescore and More Teleconference](#)

The Teleconference on Religion

No conversions expected, this is a friendly discourse on the origins, nature, and influence (or non-influence) of religion in today's world. I'll share some of my personal journey, and prompt you to consider some issues no matter what your beliefs. All proceeds will go to a local homeless shelter.

Sign up here: [The Teleconference on Religion](#)

Threescore and More, The Book

You can purchase this pre-publication, and gain bonuses ranging from free admission to the teleconference above to personal coaching, and even a free workshop seat in May.

Preorder here: [Threescore and More](#)

And one other thing...

The Million Dollar Consulting® Convention

In Boston in April this year, with luminaries such as Suzanne Bates, Chip Bell, and Dorie Clark on the main stage, as well as 12 great concurrent sessions, networking reception—and me! We already have 125 people from all over the world, register while we still have room.

Sign up here: [The Million Dollar Consulting® Convention](#)

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Balancing Act® is a monthly electronic newsletter discussing the blending of life, work, and relationships, based on the popular Balancing Act workshops and writing of Alan Weiss, Ph.D. Contact us for further information at: balancingact@summitconsulting.com.

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