



TECHNIQUES
FOR BALANCE



MUSINGS



THE HUMAN
CONDITION



ORTIYKMWOYBNT-O

Balancing Act: The Newsletter (No. 231, November 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: LCD
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Monthly, fast advice on consulting techniques with case studies.

Listen to my new, free Podcast Series on iTunes or on ContrarianConsulting.com: [The Uncomfortable Truth](#). We are now on a WEEKLY schedule!

TECHNIQUES FOR BALANCE

- It's a good idea to allow other people to complete their thoughts before you choose to radically disagree with them.
- Don't hesitate to tell people when something they've said is hurtful. If it were accidental, they will have learned something, and if it were deliberate, they'd be put on notice that it's unacceptable.
- I am an independent, and I will say this in all candor: If we all went back to examine what we did when we were 17, we'd have to empty out most of Congress, university faculties, sports teams, local legislatures, and executive suites.
- Daily I deal with people globally who, aside from their business issues, are facing terminal illness, the loss of loved ones, ethical problems, affairs, and

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



crime. The next time you think the universe has dumped on you because a proposal wasn't accepted, think again.

- I'm astounded, with the wealth of this country, and our focus on huge issues such as climate, that we don't emulate other countries' progress in things such as automated processing at airports, credit card processing at the restaurant table (so the card is always in sight), spotless public restrooms, and courtesy on the roads.
- When you drive a car, or a boat, or fly a plane, do you focus on what's behind you or where you're going? The same thing with writing: Stop rereading and worrying about what you've written, you've safely traversed that road. Instead, focus on where you're going. What's the next thought, the next sentence? No plane lands backwards.
- You are not obligated to listen to "feedback." If you choose to listen, you're not obligated to accept it. If you do accept it, you're not obligated to continue using it if the results aren't salutary.
- There's a reason they're called "courts of law" and not "courts of justice."
- A young guy walked out from behind a car into a crosswalk with a hoodie covering his peripheral vision and his face buried in his smart phone. I was bearing down on him with two-and-half tons of metal. Technically, he may have been right expecting everyone to magically halt as soon as he appeared, but he'd be just as dead being right as if he'd been dead wrong.
- British Air has a hugely funny safety video which I watch every time. Why can't everyone do that?



All feelings are appropriate. But what you do about them is a different story.

Alan Weiss

MUSINGS

Why does virtually every TV newscast look the same?

There are two "anchors" seated behind a desk. Usually one is male, one is female, one is black, one is white, or they are of clearly differing ethnicities. There is a weather person and a traffic person. If the weather person is male, he will make quips as the omnipresent computer-generated maps rotate. If a female, she will receive a full-body shot on camera at some point and will be wearing stilettos and showing too much skin, especially at 7 in the morning.

The field reporters will be places they needn't be. Reporting on election machine malfunctions the day prior, there is zero need to be shot live in front of that school the next morning (nor is there a need to even show a photo of the school, which is irrelevant to the story). The field reporters will always thank the anchors by name and, as often as not, say, "Back to you guys" at the end of the 30-second report. They will then be thanked by name by the anchors. (All of these people will have their demo reels out to larger markets or by vying for the anchor jobs at their current network.)

There will be "happy talk" among the studio reporters and anchors, and they'll often all be on camera at the conclusion of the broadcast, vamping for 60 seconds, all laughing hilariously.

Why is this? Why don't some broadcasts change their hackneyed look, their trite interactions, their stereotypical productions and personnel?

Because they don't respect us. Because they have no creativity. Because they take no risks. They think they have a "formula" and don't want to mess with it and perhaps lose viewers and prized advertising revenue.

According to Pew Research, TV local news broadcasts declined in viewership by about 10% from 2016 to 2017 alone. I'm sure broadcast news executives are stunned by this and can't imagine why, or blame younger people, or blame technology and the internet. Because they know they have a product that's good—everyone is doing it.

Odd—I never wanted to be doing what everyone else was.

THE HUMAN CONDITION: LCD

I've observed that we often operate on the basis of the lowest common denominator. That's a useful practice in math, but in life—not so much.

When I'm working with a group, I address myself (speed, sophistication, language) to the top third. I expect the second third will run hard to stay involved, and the bottom third will just have to get what they can. When you *start* with the bottom third, you'll quickly lose the top third and the middle third won't try very hard. Yet this is how our schools often work, and also our businesses.

Organizations invest most of their developmental dollars in remedial work, trying to bring underperforming people up to "average." What they should be doing is investing heavily in their top people who can immediately provide the largest gains. Such investment and "stretching" also keeps top people involved and incented, and not looking for more interesting pastures.

Many behavioral problems in schools are actually kids bored out of their gourds by classes that include "mainstreaming" and address the most basic learning needs daily, and nothing beyond.

I've belonged to a struggling professional group for years which I think has continued to decline because its tacit strategy is to make every member as successful as its least successful member. (I heard once about Air Canada that "We're not happy until you're not happy," but I've always had good experiences on that airline).

The LCD philosophy is nefarious and insidious. Don't allow your kids to be victimized by it. Don't you be undermined by it. Everyone needs and deserves help. But find the opportunities that best suit your desire for progress.

And don't sit back and pat yourself on the back about your progress when you find yourself in an environment that isn't designed to challenge you.

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

We were returning to Boston from overseas as usual through Global Entry. The system issues a ticket with your photo on it when you're successfully processed.

I had given mine to the immigration officer when I noticed that my wife was being questioned for some reason. When I asked her what happened she told me this:

She had filled out the computer screen correctly, and processed her fingerprints, and looked at the camera for the retinal comparison. But Maria is only five feet tall. This machine didn't adjust, and the immigration guy was staring at an approved re-entry that had a photo of the top of my wife's head.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Very Special Offering: Alan's Riff

I'm inviting you to join me monthly in 2019 for Alan's Riff, a semi-improvisational hour with me during which I'll discuss combinations of the following:

- Current political and social trends and events
- The economy and financial options
- Business trends, interpretation, and predictions
- The current headlines

- The arts and entertainment
- Ideas and provocations that challenge you intellectually

I'll take any questions in advance and also during the calls via computer. Every call will be 60-90 minutes and recorded for your ongoing use.

My intent here is to enable you to:

- Become a well-rounded, informed, object of interest
- Understand how to view and dissect issues
- Develop as an engaging conversationalist
- Ask questions that you can't ask elsewhere
- Improve your sense of self by being better "educated"
- Take better advantage of opportunities around you
- Improve your critical thinking skills
- Stand out in a crowd

Fee: \$1,200.

Prior to Nov. 15: \$950.

Sign up here: [Alan's Riff](#)

Thinking BIG

You can't "think outside the box" if you're still in the box. And any box is too small for any true entrepreneur. Yet you probably don't realize the dimensions of your current, unconscious confinement. Join me for a BIG day in Miami in January to learn how to instantly think in larger terms, be seen in a larger light, and live large.

Sign up here: [Thinking BIG](#)

Fifth Annual Million Dollar Consulting® Convention—2019

Almost 60% of our 2018 attendees immediately signed up for next year in Washington, DC during cherry blossom season. We already have an Emmy-winning anchor woman and Hall of Fame speaker; the global leader and author on sales strategy; two marketing and strategy experts from Europe; and someone who will demonstrate how you can instantly create super media promotion, among others in our lineup.

Sign up here: [Fifth Annual Million Dollar Consulting® Convention—2019](#)

Growth Access

This is my intellectual property repository, approaching \$100,000 of video, audio, textual, and workshop materials available to you without restriction and for life for a one-time fee of \$2,500! We add to it regularly, and most recently included six livestream recorded broadcasts of an hour each from last year. Imagine reviewing the video "In the Buyer's Office" just before you go to the buyer's office.

Sign up here: [Growth Access](#)

Million Dollar Consulting® College - The first in two years.

I've slimmed it down to three days, take only a dozen people, and deal with all aspects of attraction, conversion, implementation, and expansion. Extensive role plays and exercises. Who knows if I'll do another in two years—or ever? We're half full, join us in December in

a world-class property. Lodging and most meals are included in the fee.

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

Workshop Workshop

Learn how to create, organize, deliver, and support a workshop with minimal labor and time. A lot of people attend my sessions twice, the second time to watch how I do it. This is the first reprise of a session I did five years ago. You'll emerge with a template to create and deliver workshops effortlessly and rapidly for any client or for public sessions.

Sign up here: [Workshop Workshop](#)

What in the World is Going On?

Join SAC for a best practices webinar "Creating Value Globally" with Omar Khan on Wednesday, November 14th at 10am PDT/1pm EDT. This webinar is included as a benefit of SAC membership. If you're not a SAC member, you may attend for \$79 (still a great deal!) by clicking [here](#). Or, you could [join SAC](#) and enjoy these events each month without paying for them separately.

Sign up here: [When in the World is Going On?](#)

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