



Soul Matters

What does it mean to be a
people of BALANCE?

What Does It Mean To Be A People of Balance?

When we talk of balance, it's natural for calm and rest to be the first things that come to mind. There's no getting around it: many of us are tired. We're overworked, over-busy, over-committed. Striving and stress have become the badges we wear to prove that we are of worth. We are often so weighed down by responsibility and worry that it only takes one drop of something unexpected to tip us over. So, yes, we long for rest. Yes, we want less to manage and juggle. Yes, we need balance's reminder that a place of calm and peace is possible.

And yet, pointing us to peace and calm is not all that balance is about. Remembering this is at the center of this month's work. Indeed, there is no better month than March to help us embrace balance's *many* meanings.

For instance, take the religious holidays in March. [Lent](#) reminds us that balance is a place of reassessment, renewal, preparation, and even repentance. It honors the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert preparing for his ministry and the path to the cross. The balance he sought in the desert was not that of restful escape, but that restorative re-centering. Balance got him ready, rather than simply offering him relief. [Passover](#) also puts its own spin on balance. It is a time to retell the story of the exodus of the Jews from Egypt after centuries of slavery. For it, balance is a matter of remembering, of pausing to put yourself back into a story that connects you with others and anchors you in a counter-cultural narrative. During Passover, the balance one finds is not that of calm but that of reconnection. There's also [Ostara](#), the Pagan celebration of the Vernal Equinox. It honors the balance of day and night, but more importantly it celebrates the way this balance is a tipping point on the way to Spring. It's a reminder that stillpoints are rarely still. They are a place of turning, a space where shifts happen and new life emerges. And finally the Hindu holiday of [Holi](#) also needs held up, with its ritual of restoring one's belief in the power of good over evil. It's a reminder that balance and calm isn't just found by taking a break from life, but by trusting in its goodness once again.

March is also the month in which we honor many people who gave their lives to the cause of justice. The list is large:

- The [Selma–Montgomery March](#) happened March 21-25, 1965
- [James Reeb](#) was murdered on March 11, 1965
- [Viola Liuzzo](#) was murdered on March 25, 1965
- March is Women's history month with its call to remember the long history and continuing work for Women's equality.
- [Susan B. Anthony's](#) death was March 13
- Archbishop [Oscar Romero](#) was killed on March 24, 1980

These anniversaries remind us that being a "people of balance" is often the opposite of keeping things calm. In order to move toward a balance of justice, we have to upset the current state of things. Oppressive systems need challenged and toppled. We need to sacrifice our calm and comfort, and instead "go all in." Achieving a balance of equality requires us to be purposefully off-balance with our culture, or as Martin Luther King jr. said, we need people who are

“maladjusted.” Being out of sync with “the way things are” is the first step toward a better balance for all.

Add all this up and suddenly “balance” takes on a new meaning. Actually, it takes on *many* new meanings. The observances of March remind us that balance is not simply a destination, but also a place of invitation. It’s not a static space of peace, as much as a stillpoint on which we pivot and turn to something new. It’s not just about rest, but about resting up *for a journey*. Yes, balance allows us to catch our breath, but it’s also about finding our center so we can end all our aimless wandering around. It’s fine to think of balance by imagining the Buddha sitting peacefully under a tree, but we can’t let that overshadow the image of a diver balancing way up there on her diving board, pausing to re-gain her composure and courage so she can leap and go “all in.”

Another way to put all this is to ask, “What is your balance *for*?” Maybe instead of asking each other, “Have you found balance?” we need to ask “Where is your balance taking you?” Yes, balance sometimes can be an end in itself, but this month and its observances remind us that more often balance is a means to a greater end. In other words, maybe balance isn’t the prize but the springboard. Maybe balance isn’t the goal, but the source of strength that gets us where we need to go.

Which means that our most important questions this month might actually be, “Do you know where you’re trying to get to?” and “Which kind of balance will help you along your way?”

Our Spiritual Exercises

Option A :

A Reminder to Re-Balance

Sometimes balance is as simple as remembering to take a moment to breathe. The problem is we're not so good at reminding ourselves and remembering on our own. In recognition of this, take a week this month and commit to the practice of a "daily pause" - or maybe a few daily pauses. You can keep it simple by setting an alarm on your phone reminding you to take a break. Or you can use one of the recommended apps below to help remind and guide you. You'll also need to decide what to do during your daily pauses. Some of us will step away and go for a walk or find a quiet place to be by ourselves. Others will keep it short and sweet, staying put and just taking 5 deep breaths. Still more will use the time for brief meditation. Figure out what works for you.

Here are some apps that might help:

- PauseAble: <http://www.pauseable.com>
- AURA: <https://www.aurahealth.io>
- Breathe: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/breathe-daily-breathing-reminders/id976954751?ls=1&mt=8>
- The Now: <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/the-now-mindful-living/id347667121?mt=8>
- 7 Second Meditation: <http://www.7secondmeditation.com>

Come to your group ready to share how it went. Did daily pauses make a difference? Did you have to readjust your strategy because your first plan wasn't cutting it? What exactly helped you re-balance? Deep breathing? Remembering gratitude? Silence? Self-talk?

Option B:

Trying Sabbath on For Size

When talking about balance, it's hard to avoid the biggest recommendation of the Judeo-Christian world: Honor the Sabbath! The Bible tells us that "on the seventh day, God rested." Whether you believe in God or not, you've got to admit that this is a pretty significant endorsement. The emphasis here is, of course, on *taking a whole day*. Sometimes pausing for a few minutes of deep breathing is fine, but for many of us imbalance runs too deep for a quick pause to touch. So, if you're up for some deeper work this month, take on the challenge of a Sabbath day or two. How you go about it is up to you. Indeed, figuring out what "a day of Sabbath" means to you is central to the exercise. Below are some articles and videos to help you design a Sabbath that fits you. Come to your group ready to share how you shaped your Sabbath and how it ended up re-shaping and re-balancing you.

For Further Exploration:

- **Digital Sabbath: Unplug for 24 hours**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LWZkL5Xsno>
- **The Case for the Sabbath, Even if You're Not Religious, Menachem Kaiser**
<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2010/03/the-case-for-the-sabbath-even-if-youre-not-religious/38187/>
- **The Art of Stillness: Adventures in Going Nowhere, Pico Iyer**
<https://vimeo.com/110792530>
- **The Case for A Secular Sabbath, Pico Iyer**
<https://ideas.ted.com/why-we-need-a-secular-sabbath/>

- **Soul Time, Sabbath Time, by Karen Hering**
<http://karenhering.com/soul-time-sabbath-time/>
- **How to Have a Secular Sabbath**
<http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/sustainable-happiness/how-to-have-a-secular-sabbath>
- **First Steps Toward Sabbath Practice**
<http://iym.ptsem.edu/resources/foundations/sabbath/sabbath-lesson-3/>

Option C: Put Down Their Work & Pick Up Your Balance

Often our imbalance is our own doing. Frequently, we just take on too much. But sometimes it's not that simple. Sometimes, our imbalance is about us taking on too much *that is not really ours to do or fix*. In other words, it's often accepting responsibility for *other people's* weight and worry that tips us over. Or as organizational consultant, Betsy Jacobson, puts it, "Balance is not better time-management, but better boundary-management."

So this exercise invites us to regain our balance by letting go of that which is not ours. The instructions are as simple as they are challenging:

***Identify one way in which you are taking on something
that is not really your responsibility.***

***Then find a kind way to put up a boundary
and give their "work" back to them.***

Here's a great reflection by Rev. Meg Barnhouse to give you some motivation:

Sorry, Hon, Not My Table

Rev. Meg Barnhouse

<https://www.questformeaning.org/big-questions/sorry-hon-not-table/>

Come to your group ready to share what you "gave back," how you put up that boundary and how it gave you back a bit of balance. There will likely be some bumps in the road and some costs. Come ready to share those too, and what it taught you.

Option D:

Finding Balance by Facing F.o.M.O

F.o.M.O. stands for the “fear of missing out.” It’s a trendy phrase but captures something deeply true about what throws our entire culture out of balance. We are constantly bombarded with images of others who’ve “made it” or found “the good life.” This plants the deadly seed in our mind that we’re failing, or worse, that we’re missing out. It’s the classic feeling that “the grass MUST be greener on the other side of the fence.” It throws our lives significantly out of balance.

If any of this echoes with your own struggle, then take some time this month to get in touch with your own F.o.M.O. This is more of a reflective exercise than a doing exercise. Your instructions are to set aside some time to engage the recommend pieces below. Let them lead you where you need to go. Allow them to help you better define your own brand of F.o.M.O. Then come to your group ready to share what you learned, and what you’re going to do with your insight.

For Reflection:

- School of Life on FOMO: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrC_MSG9zSU
- Jason Silva on FOMO: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsSmFZNrpLc>
- Fighting FOMO: <https://www.artofmanliness.com/2013/10/21/fighting-fomo-4-questions-that-will-crush-the-fear-of-missing-out/>

Option E:

The Resource Calling You To Balance

Sometimes none of the exercises speak to us. Or maybe this is an extra busy month and you need an exercise that is less extensive. If so, consider this more reflective option.

Make time to read through the “Companion Pieces” section of this packet and pick the one or two resources that “have your name on it.” Similar to how we work with the questions in the “Your Question” section. Treat the resources as spiritual companions trying to help you hear the holy in your daily living. Come to your group and share which of the resources lit up in neon lights as you read, watched or listened to it. And what you think it is trying to get you to see, hear, do or change.

Your Question

As always, don't treat these questions like "homework" or a list that needs to be covered in its entirety. Instead, simply pick the single question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal is to figure out what being a part of a people of balance means for you and your daily living. So, which question is calling to you? Which one contains "your work"?

1. What if the problem is not about being busy and all those balls you're juggling? Could the balance you seek be about connecting who you are inside with how you use your time outside? Are you sure that you are overwhelmed, or just out of alignment?
2. What "congruence" is calling to you? What "alignment" is your deepest self longing for?
3. As a kid, when did you have that feeling of everything being in perfect balance? Is that just a nice memory? Or might it be a guidepost to what you need in your life right now?
4. What happens when you sit quietly in a room? Do the voices you hear center and balance you? Or leave you off-balance and pulled off-center?
5. We struggle between our desire to save the world and savor the world. But what if it's really a matter of listening better to both of them? How is what you savor calling you to save or protect something? How are your efforts to save world asking you to get better at finding moments of personal balance and joy?
6. Psychologists say we need a balance of work, love and play. Which of these three legs needs more of your attention? Have you become a one or two-legged stool?
7. Are you trying too hard to make something work? Might balance for you be a matter of accepting defeat or finally letting it go?
8. Are you off-balance because you're in a tug-of-war? You do know that you're allowed to simply let go of the rope, right?
9. What if balance isn't about doing a better job juggling what is, but instead a matter of returning to something that was?
10. Is it time to give up one of your passions so the other can fully live? Is trying to balance them all cutting you off from connecting fully with any one of them?
11. Are you out-of-balance because you've taken on too much or taken on too much *that is not really yours to do or fix*?
12. Is your life out of balance because you are taking on too much or because you want too much?
13. Do you really need better time-management? Or could better boundary-management be your true work?
14. Is time to toss balance to the side and go all in?
15. Do you ever get sick of people telling you that you need more balance in your life?
16. Are you trying to both hold on to and let go of someone at the same time?
17. **What's your question?** Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to hear it.

Companion Pieces

Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection

The below recommended resources are not “required reading.” We will not analyze these pieces at our small group meeting. Instead they are here to companion you on your personal journey this month, get your thinking started, and open you to new ways of thinking about what it means to be part of a people of balance.

Word Roots

From Latin *bi* (two) and *lanx* (plate or dish) to balance scales, both sides being equal. Add to this the idea of a still point from *stille* (at rest) and *peuk* (which includes the idea to mend).

Wise Words

I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.

E.B. White

There is peaceful
There is wild
I am both at the same time
Nayyirah Waheed

To do two things at once is to do neither.
Publilius Syrus

All of a person’s misfortune comes from one thing, which is not knowing how to sit quietly in a room.
Blaise Pascal

Work, love and play are the great balance wheels of our being.
Orison Swett Marden

The key to keeping your balance is knowing where you lost it.
Anonymous

Letting go helps us to live in a more peaceful state of mind and helps restore our balance. It allows others to be responsible for themselves and for us to take our hands off situations that do not belong to us.

Melody Bettie

I am trying to remember you
and
let you go
at the same time.
Nayyirah Waheed

I try to take only as much as I can give.
Anonymous

Balance is not better time-management, but better boundary-management.
Betsy Jacobson

Busy people have goals; productive people have priorities.
anonymous

Wrap your summer fingers around her wintered soul.
Sub Rosa

Your joy is your sorrow unmasked.
And the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was often times filled with your tears.
And how else can it be?
The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.
Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter’s oven?
And is not the lute that soothes your spirit, the very wood that was hollowed with knives?
When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy.
When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.
Khalil Gibran

The spiritual life is, in part, about seeing our lives as an invitation to the best party in town. Our challenge is to stay awake to that, to continually pull ourselves back from the mindset that our days are simply a series of challenges and responsibilities. It's all about balance. We are called to look around and see all that must be done. We are also called to look around and see all that has been given.

Rev. Scott Tayler

It's dark because you are trying too hard. Lightly child, lightly. Learn to do everything lightly. Yes, feel lightly even though you're feeling deeply. Just lightly let things happen and lightly cope with them. I was so preposterously serious in those days... Lightly, lightly – it's the best advice ever given me... to throw away your baggage and go forward. There are quicksands all about you, sucking at your feet, trying to suck you down into fear and self-pity and despair. That's why you must walk so lightly. Lightly my darling.

Aldous Huxley

When I was little my mother put me in several ballet classes in hopes to bring some grace to my stumbling gait. I grew up walking on eggshells, wobbling to keep my balance on a tightrope that never really ended. My instructor pinched my thighs and shook her bony finger at me every tuesday and thursday for three and a half years. 4 am, I'm still tiptoeing around the creaks in the stairs as if anyone would notice an empty bed. This Christmas I came across the broken remnants of the ballerina ornaments my younger sister used to play with. I never did master the delicate posture I was expected to adopt. My feet fell a bit too heavy, I suppose, on the ice tonight. I'm not cold anymore, just exhausted from attempting to balance the wrong things for too long.

Rebecca Suzanne

Speak the truth, but not to punish.

Thich Nhat Hanh

[Thich Nhat Hanh] looked at me in a quiet, piercing way that stopped my breath, and said slowly:

“Speak the truth, but not to punish”...

Understanding this koan is a work in progress for me but the more I ponder it, the more it seems to

be about balance, speaking up against injustice with courage and passion but with greater awareness of the dangers in becoming overly adversarial and treating those who disagree as foes... We must be willing to stand in the shoes of others if we are to debate controversial issues with equanimity and avoid gridlock... Thich Nhat Hanh's koan brought me back to his advice to hold our anger with an energy of mindfulness, like the sun shining upon a flower, penetrating deeply until the petals open. Anger can give us the mettle to speak with courage and conviction, but also the venom that blinds us to the views of others.

[James Hoggan](#)

Nothing Forced Works

Kay Ryan

Nothing forced works.
The Gordian knot just worsens
if it's jerked at by a person.
One of the main stations
of the cross is patience.
Another, of course, is impatience.

There is such a thing as
too much tolerance
for unpleasant situations,
a time when the gentle
teasing out of threads
ceases to be pleasing
to a woman born for conquest.
Instead she must assault
the knot or alp or everest
with something sharp
and take upon herself
the moral warp of sudden progress.

Life is glorious, but life is also wretched.
Appreciating the gloriousness inspires us,
encourages us, cheers us up, gives us a bigger
perspective, energizes us. But if that's all that's
happening, we get arrogant and start to look down
on others, and there is a sense of making ourselves
a big deal and being really serious about it, wanting
it to be like that forever. The gloriousness becomes
tinged by craving and addiction. On the other hand,
wretchedness—life's painful aspect—softens us up
considerably. Knowing pain is a very important
ingredient of being there for another person. When
you are feeling a lot of grief, you can look right into

somebody's eyes because you feel you haven't got anything to lose—you're just there. The wretchedness humbles us and softens us, but if we were only wretched, we would all just go down the tubes. We'd be so depressed, discouraged, and hopeless that we wouldn't have enough energy to eat an apple. Gloriousness and wretchedness need each other. One inspires us, the other softens us. They go together.

Pema Chödrön, Start Where You Are: A Guide to Compassionate Living

One of the truths we know is that we live in an enchanted universe. The up-there and down-here mingle, the earthly and the heavenly mirror each other. We have no choice but to continue to redeem the world, to save the world from our own selves. We are, ironically, the cause of the breaking and just might be the channel of healing. To make the world whole, we ourselves have to become healed, become whole. Our well-being and the world being well are linked together. To tend to our own inner lives is not selfishness; it is wisdom, it is essential [for the sake of the world].

[Omid Safi](#)

Dark and Light, Light and Dark

Jacqui James

Full text here:

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/5934.shtml>

“We shape language and we are shaped by it. In our culture, white is esteemed. It is heavenly, sun-like, clean, pure, immaculate, innocent, and beautiful. At the same time, black is evil, wicked, gloomy, depressing, angry, sullen. Ascribing negative and positive values to black and white enhances the institutionalization of this culture's racism.

Let us acknowledge the negative connotations of whiteness. White things can be soft, vulnerable, pallid, and ashen. Light can be blinding, bleaching, enervating. Conversely, we must acknowledge that darkness has a redemptive character, that in darkness there is power and beauty. The dark nurtured and protected us before our birth...

The words black and dark don't need to be destroyed or ignored, only balanced and reclaimed in their wholeness. The words white and light don't

need to be destroyed or ignored, only balanced and reclaimed in their wholeness. Imagine a world that had only light—or dark. We need both. Dark and light. Light and dark.”

I Remember Galileo

Gerald Stern

Full poem found here:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse?contentId=34304>

I remember Galileo describing the mind as a piece of paper blown around by the wind,.. but yesterday I saw the mind was a squirrel caught crossing
Route 80 between the wheels of a giant truck, dancing back and forth like a thin leaf,..
It was the speed of the squirrel and his lowness to the ground,
his great purpose and the alertness of his dancing, that showed me the difference between him and paper...
Paper will do in theory, when there is time to sit back in a metal chair and study shadows; but for this life I need a squirrel,...

Balanced

[Denel Kessler](#)

Beyond the thoughts
that keep us bound
fear
suffering
anger
love
we will fly
though it be fleeting

we savor
the height
while craving
the ground below
knowing
it takes both
to make
a soul

An intellectual is a man who says a simple thing in a difficult way; an artist is a man who says a difficult thing in a simple way.

Charles Bukowski

Balance

Charles Barnett

It's always been like this.
The intellectual and the artist
ripping each other to shreds in my head
like wolves in winter, so desperate to eat.

Roundtable

James Broughton

It's all in your head, the first man said.
It's all in your heart, said another.
It's all in your stars, said the man with scars.
It's all in your guts, said his brother.
It's all in your soul, said the man who was slow.
It's all in your balls, said the fast one.
It's all in your things, said the fellow with rings.
It's in no thing at all, said the last one.

We are very good at preparing to live, but not very good at living. We know how to sacrifice ten years for a diploma, and we are willing to work very hard to get a job, a car, a house, and so on. But we have difficulty remembering that we are alive in the present moment, the only moment there is for us to be alive.

Thích Nhất Hạnh

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
A time to be born, a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to get, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.

Equanimity doesn't mean keeping things even; it is the capacity to return to balance in the midst of an alert, responsive life. I don't want to be constantly calm. The cultural context I grew up in and the relational life I live in both call for passionate, engaged response. I laugh and I cry and I'm glad that I do. What I value is the capacity to be balanced between times.

Sylvia Boorstein, from Don't Just Do Something, Sit There

Pause.
Breath.
Repair your universe.
Proceed.
Anonymous

Songs and Music

The Eye

Brandi Carlile

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wl_eNu4NUVI

Cover by 1st U in Rochester NY:

<https://www.facebook.com/firstu/videos/10154505222601845/>

"You can dance in a hurricane, but only if you're standing in the eye..."

Both Sides Now

Joni Mitchel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIYu4EHqQLo>

Living In The Moment

Jason Mraz

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUFs_1vKYIY

Balance as letting go of what keeps us from being centered in the present.

If You Love Somebody (Set Them Free)

Sting

Loving as the balance of holding on and letting go

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSAo2YELOZA>

Esben Engholm cover:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWPIWU_4Plq

Morgan James cover:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIDtEdoAtGo>

Return Again

covered by Neshama Carlebach:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDnGOpRYhwo>

Cover by Green Pastures Baptist Church:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qrQQ-ZX3BA>

Dona Nobis Pacem (musical and visual meditation)

Music by Mark Miller

(Honoring the experience of being balanced and at peace.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZ41dj5x4MA>

Videos

Balance

Oscar Winning Cartoon - *must watch...to the very end*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wJj58aLvdQ>

You might want to watch it at a higher playback speed.

Existential Bummer

Jason Silva

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yb-OYmHVchQ>

Balancing impermanence's call to both hold tight and let go

Complainers (Must Watch)

Rudy Francisco

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8NVLq2fGLc>

A provocative and powerful call to balance our tragedy and helplessness with our agency and power. You may not agree with every word, but it's all worth engaging.

Life's Symmetry

A visual meditation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEQskIsHKT8>

Are you a body with a mind or a mind with a body?

A TED-Ed video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILDy6kYU-xQ>

How to make work life balance work - TED Talk

Nigel Marsh

https://www.ted.com/talks/nigel_marsh_how_to_make_work_life_balance_work

Not your predictable talk on work-life balance. Check it out for one of the most original and clear assessments of our need for "real" work-life balance.

The Impossibility of Work-Life Balance!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPR3o6Hnf2g>

How Did Income Disparity Get So Out of Balance

An interview with Robert Reich

<https://www.facebook.com/georgehtakei/videos/1419517574750364/>

Podcasts

Desperately Seeking Symmetry - Radiolab Podcast

<https://www.kcrw.com/news-culture/shows/radiolab/desperately-seeking-symmetry>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eIWRNotWjGs>

This hour of Radiolab, Jad and Robert set out in search of order and balance in the world around us, and ask how symmetry shapes our very existence -- from the origins of the universe, to what we see when we look in the mirror.

Articles

Black Sheep and Bad Emotions: Why Both Are Necessary for A Life Well Lived

Wisdom Pills

<http://www.wisdompills.com/2016/12/18/black-sheep-bad-emotions-necessary-life-well-lived/>

Soul Time, Sabbath Time

Karen Hering

<http://karenhering.com/soul-time-sabbath-time/>
Sabbath practice as letting time rest without being counted.

The Politics of the Brokenhearted

Parker Palmer

<http://www.couragerenewal.org/parker/writings/politics-of-the-brokenhearted/>

Parker speaks to the conflicts and contradictions of twenty-first-century life that are breaking the American heart and threatening to compromise our democratic values.

Why Equanimity (balance) Is an Essential Buddhist Virtue

<https://www.thoughtco.com/buddhism-and-equanimity-449701>

Books

The Upside of Your Dark Side: Why Being Your Whole Self (Not Just Your "Good" Self) Drives Success & Fulfillment

Todd Kashdan & Robert Biswas-Diener

https://www.amazon.com/Upside-Your-Dark-Side-Self-Drives/dp/1594631735/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&qid=1479421787&sr=8-

<1&keywords=upside+of+your+downside&linkCode=sl1&tag=wisdompillsgm-20&linkId=0a64353195e969e46561598fb1e55851>

A call to balance and embrace both the positive and the negative in life.

Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal, and Delight in Our Busy Lives

Wayne Muller

<https://www.amazon.com/Sabbath-Finding-Renewal-Delight-Lives/dp/0553380117>

The Stress-Proof Brain: Master Your Emotional Response to Stress

Melanie Greenberg

https://www.amazon.com/qp/product/1626252661/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1626252661&linkCode=as2&tag=inccom05-20&linkId=cbd2e9774fbde33e05cff6fbc7ef3ad

On balancing ourselves in the midst of the winds and weight of stress.

Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked

Adam Alter

<https://www.amazon.com/qp/product/1594206643?tag=randohouseinc27803-20>

About achieving a better balance in our relationship with technology and social media. Seemingly about our cell phones but really about our dance with all of life!

Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life

Richard Rohr

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/books/reviews/view/21039>

Video overview:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4oq_LyEsiN0

On re-balancing our aims in the second half of life.

Movies

Suffragette

(In honor of March being Women's history month)

<https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/suffragette>

The story of bringing the balance of equality for women in early-20th-century Britain

Iron Jawed Angels

(In honor of March being Women's history month)

https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/iron_jawed_angels/

10 Great Women's History Films

(In honor of March being Women's history month)

<https://nonfics.com/10-great-womens-history-films-to-watch-this-or-any-month-648177884dc0>

Romero

(In honor of Archbishop [Oscar Romero's](#) death on March 24, 1980)

<https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/romero>

The fight to balance a world of violence and injustice with the witness of love and sacrifice.

Selma

(In honor of the [Selma-Montgomery march](#) - March 21-25, 1965)

<https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/selma>

Short Videos on [James Reeb](#)

(In honor of his death on March 11, 1965)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kINPO8X-q3Q>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9E7j2Udwi0>

The Road

https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/10009460_the_road?

A story about finding your balance in a world gone mad by living for others.

Silver Linings Playbook

https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/silver_linings_playbook

A story about life and illness throwing us out of balance and out of connection. Also a story about being pulled back into balance through connection with others.

Inside Out

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2096673/>

After young Riley is uprooted from her Midwest life and moved to San Francisco, her emotions - Joy, Fear, Anger, Disgust and Sadness - conflict on how best to navigate a new city, house, and school. Watching her balance all her conflicting voices makes this movie a gem.

Koyaanisqatsi

https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/koyaanisqatsi_life_out_of_balance

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=LFBijDU8PpE

“Koyaanisqatsi, the Hopi word for “life out of balance” is not your traditional film. It has no plot, no characters and no ending. It does, though, have a very clear message. This film sets images to the haunting music of Phillip Glass showing our disconnection with the natural world and perhaps unwise reliance on the world of technology.”

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**Get a dose of musical inspiration on the monthly theme
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Check out all Soul Matters Spotify links for Dec 2017 - June 2018 at:
<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/spotify-lists.html>



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