



Gaining Balance

Five Practical Steps for APM WiPM Project Managers 16th November Tele-Seminar Workbook

About Balance

We are making 100 times as many choices today as your parents did a generation ago. That pace of decision making is on track to continue to double every two years going forward.

There is no magic wand solution to balance. Being in balance is like being the pilot of a plane – you are off course 99% of the time. It's your job to re-adjust your balance. It's easier to do this once you've raised your awareness.

The Gaining Balance teleseminar is about getting you to stop and take a bird's eye view.

What is balance to you?

Step 1 - Define your own blend of balance by knowing yourself

Know who do you want to become not what you want to change = balance

Identify your values because values represent who we truly are. Know your values and you make better decisions about your life.

Step 2 - Recognise the power of choice

We achieve balance by consciously including a balance choice as part of our day.

As part of your routine tomorrow you will make choices about what and where you will eat, how you will dress, and what you can do at work to successfully do your job.

Add to that daily list the question,

“What else will I do today to improve my sense of balance?”

Try switching "I must" to "I choose to" This flips perspective and helps you realise that you don't have to do anything – you choose to! This lifts a huge weight.

Step 3 - Stop SAPing your balance

We ourselves are frequently the biggest obstacle to a balanced life
Do you ever say?...

I need to be in control of everything
I'm the only person who can do stuff
It's ok for me to hold everything together
I still find it hard to say 'no' and end up taking on too much and then resenting it

This is SAPing your balance:

S is for should

Stop shoulding on yourself! How?....

Stop... Realise you've said "should"

Look...What are your choices?

Listen...Look at the difference between want and should

Learn....Understand the consequences of saying no to should

A is for attitude

It is your attitude towards life that will determine life's attitude towards you.

You control your attitude. If you are negative it is because you have decided to be negative and not because of other people or circumstances. Act as if you have a good attitude. Remember actions trigger feelings just as feelings trigger actions.

We become what we think about. Control your thoughts and you will control your life.

Radiate the attitude of confidence, of well being, of a person who knows where he is going. You will then find good things happening to you right away.

P is for perfection

Stop trying to be perfect. Try “good enough” instead!

Step 4 – Seek Support

Women are notoriously bad at seeking support, but those who live balanced lives seek and give support. It is essential to build and use your support network. Try the support exercise in this workbook to help you think about support.

Step 5 - start living in the now

Balance is about living life fully today. Life might not be perfect now but now is the only time we have. It is about achieving and enjoying the things that are important to you now and each day as your life progresses, not when most of your life is over.

Q: How can you start living in the now?

A: Start a gratitude diary

Creating a practice of gratitude for all we have in our lives - has been proven again and again by happiness scientists not only to make us feel better in ourselves, but will also boost our immune system, relieve pain and fatigue.

The gratitude diary is one of the most effective exercises I use with clients who are feeling fed up. The more fed up they are, the more things I ask them to note down in their gratitude diary! Try writing down 10 things you're grateful for each day. I guarantee you'll start noticing the good things about your life!

Exercise One – Who Are You?

Part One – Discover You

Spend a few minutes quietly with the following questions in front of you. These questions are aimed to help you start discovering who you are.

1. If you could only use five words to represent who you truly are, which five words would you use?
2. What is absolutely effortless for you? What comes easily and naturally, something you think that, “Hey, this is easy. Why doesn’t everybody find this easy?”
3. What do others say about you? When people are complimenting you, what is it you hear time and again? What’s the pattern that you notice?
4. What do you enjoy doing so much that it fills you with energy? What energizes you?
5. What qualities are missing that you’d like to grow in 2010?

Part Two – Fabulous you and You Version 2.0

Once you've spent a few minutes or so just pondering on those questions, complete the following two statements:

1. This first statement expresses what you have noticed what is great about you/what you excel at doing/where you really shine.

"I am fabulous at.....

And whatever it is that you have noticed that you really are great at and

2. Write this second statement after referring back to your answers to question five in part one. What qualities are missing that you'd like to grow in 2010? "Who" do you need to become so that you feel that you are gaining balance over the next year?

"I am becoming.....

3. Think about how you'd like to grow those qualities: What can you do to discover who you are so that you can define what your unique brand of balance is?

Exercise Two – Identify your values with “Eighty Today”

A brief introduction to values

A balanced life is a life that is aligned with your values. Your values are what make you tick, the “beliefs” or the things that are absolutely essential to you or part of you dies. Values are not morals or principles, nor are they tangible – we don’t “do” them or “have” them. For example, money is not a value, but the things you might do with money might be – fun, freedom, independence, peace of mind, creativity etc.

Identifying and being clear on your values is like creating a map to guide you through decisions in your life. Once you have identified your values you can start to design a balanced life for yourself that is aligned to what feels right for you.

Instructions

Imagine you are attending your own 80th birthday.

Picture yourself donning your best suit or dress, brushing yourself down, fixing your hair and then driving to the hall for the party. As you arrive, many familiar faces greet you – friends of old, family, people you had forgotten you knew.

Picture the hall, full of balloons, streamers and banners saying ‘Happy 80th Birthday’. The guests are milling about, waiting for things to start. Someone rattles a spoon against a cup, coughs and brings the room to order.

They introduce the order of the day – there will be four short speeches about the guest of honour – YOU! The speeches are:

- Someone from your family
- Someone from your work or profession who worked with you for a long time
- One of your closest and longstanding friends

Imagine you are there now. What do you want to hear in those four speeches?

Think hard and deep. What kind of a father, mother, wife, husband, or sibling do you want them to say you were?

How do you want your peers to describe your contribution to work?

What of those friends, how might they recount the years?

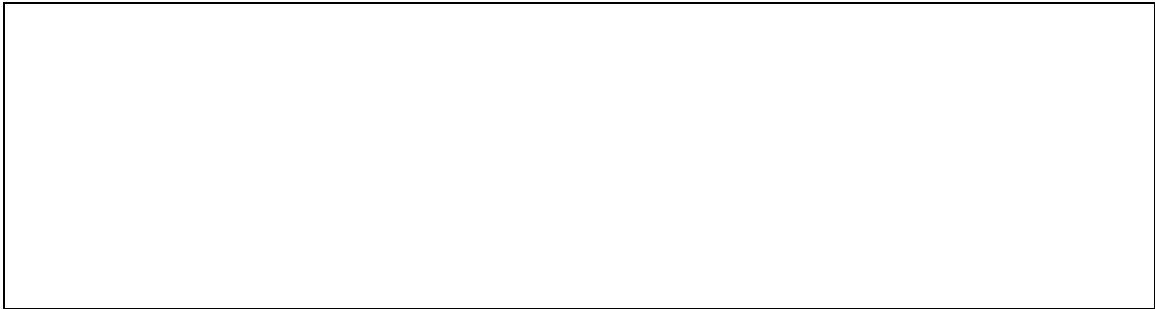
What difference did you make to your community, your own universe?

What difference have you made in your guests’ lives?

Key points from speeches

Jot down thoughts or words as they come to you in the boxes

From your family



From work



From your closest friends



Exercise Three – Identify your Inner Circle of Support

Who are your best supporters? Take just 30 seconds now and write the people that come immediately to mind. Just scribble down the first 3 or 4 people that you think of.

Now brainstorm how you can actively seek that support that you know is there within these wonderful people in your life.

Speak to one or two people in your “Inner Circle” of those people this week, and talk about ways you can support each other. If you are reluctant to ask for support, tell them this, and seek their help!

Exercise Four – Identify your Joy

Gather together the following five things:

- A blank piece of paper
- A black Biro
- Three highlighter pens – yellow, blue and pink

Write, using the biro, for 10 minutes all the different things that bring you joy: your favorite flower, your favorite song, how you like to dance, your favourite place, anything!

They can be little things, big experiences or little experiences. Just think in terms of all the experiences that bring you joy. You might find it difficult, but just sit there and give yourself about 10 minutes, and allow the ideas to come.

Once you've completed writing your list of all the things that bring you joy, **highlight in yellow those items that are the most joyful for you.**

The next step is to highlight **in blue the things that you're currently *doing* that bring you joy.**

You might find that you have an overlap: So, you might have something that's in yellow that is something that's really joyful to you, and you might have put a blue over that yellow, to show that you're doing it already – i.e. you will have some things highlighted in green (**yellow + blue makes green**).

Finally, **highlight in pink all those things that you know bring you joy but you haven't got around to doing yet.** You've been postponing them.

Once you've done this, you'll find you've got a very colorful picture. Now, if your page is full of green, where your yellow and blue highlighters are combined, then that's great, because you can see that joy's a big part of your life. But if your page is full of yellow and pink highlights, and you haven't got the blue, it means you're not engaging in joyful activities.

Commit to pay attention and start looking to do one or two things over the next week that will bring you joy.

Further support: Complimentary Coaching Consultation

If you feel you'd like tailored coaching, call or email me to book a complimentary 30 minute "chemistry call". I have limited spaces for personal coaching clients and the purpose of the chemistry call is to check that I'm the right coach for you and discover more about you and what you want to achieve from coaching. All personal coaching takes place over the phone.

amanda@amandaalexander.com or amanda@coachingmums.com

tel: +44 (0)1829 752656

Further Support: Six Month "Be your own Fairy Godmother" Group Coaching Programme for Working Mums starting January 2010

Be Your Own Fairy Godmother (BYOFG for short!) is an unique programme for working mothers who want to make 2010 their best year ever. It takes place from the comfort of your own home via evening teleseminar and webinar (don't worry – it's easy; all you need is a phone and if possible a PC!).

BYOFG is a new and enhanced group coaching programme based upon the success of my FaB (Fulfillment and Balance) programme that won rave reviews from participants in 2008 and 2009.

FaB made real, positive differences in the lives of all the women who completed the programme in 2008 and 2009. BYOFG will do the same and more in 2010. It is for working mums who are ready to soar in their lives and their careers.

You don't have to attend every BYOFG class, as they are all recorded, and you can still join if you're in the UK or abroad, at home or on business.

The 2010 BYOFG programme covers **topics such as:**

1. Simplifying your life
2. Eliminating mental and physical clutter
3. Identifying your values
4. Getting your personal needs met
5. Learning to say no
6. Simple time management techniques for women by women
7. Easy ways of keeping your relationship going with your partner
8. How to keep friendships going in a hectic life

9. How to feel happy consistently
10. How to create time for yourself
11. Ways of slowing down in an adrenaline fuelled world

If you'd like to be on the priority notification list for BYOFG, drop me an email to amanda@amandaalexander.com with the subject header "BYOFG Priority List"